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Travel

18-4-0449

Niemeyer, Lucien. *Darfur*. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2009. 128 pp. Illus. with photos by the author. Foreword by Governor Bill Richardson. ISBN 978-0-8263-4619-3, \$45.00.

A bold, beautiful book on a place filled with horrors, *Darfur*, by internationally known photojournalist and author Niemeyer, explains what is happening in this misunderstood part of the world. Niemeyer, who has published numerous photographic books and has previously photographed other African conflicts (like the Rwanda genocide) since the 1990s, takes incredibly moving and dignified images of the Sudanese refugees struggling through the genocide caused by those from North Darfur (backed by the government of Sudan and the nomadic Arab warriors, the Janjaweed) who are moving in and killing those in South Darfur.

The book includes a foreword by New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, an introduction, historical roots of the conflict, descriptions of Niemeyer's trip, and an epilogue. As Governor Richardson writes, Niemeyer's "breathtaking photographs and compelling narrative tells the definitive story of the conflict and will help readers across the globe understand the true nature of the genocide and the people caught up in it every day" (xi). All the images are in color, which makes them more real, more honest, than if they were published in black and white. *Darfur* is a wonderful book which explores and explains a horrific subject. Highly recommended.

Melissa Aho
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Juvenile

Primary (Gr. P-3)

18-4-0450

Barasch, Lynne. *First Come the Zebra*. New York: Lee & Low, 2009. 40 pp. Illus. by the author. ISBN 978-1-60060-365-5,

\$18.95.

Barasch has created an interesting text with complementary illustrations. One might think that this is just an animal picture book set in Kenya; however, the text focuses on several topics besides the animals and their environment. The Kikuyu and Maasai have overpopulated their ethnic area. They now encroach on the animals' traditional space. Consequently, the animal migration of zebras, wildebeests, and gazelles comes very close to the villages. When a Kamba market mother puts her child on the ground to play, she has no idea that the child is in danger of being gored by a warthog. Through the quick actions of a Maasai and a Kikuyu boy, the Kamba child is saved. Through the heritage of the boys, Barasch juxtaposes the herders with the farmers. Their action creates a friendship and respect in the same way that the animals learn to accommodate each other. In a country which has experienced ethnic and political differences, the positive story reminds readers that Kenyans can work together.

Unfortunately, the stereotypical minority Maasai become the spokesperson for the herders. The author does use a few Swahili words and phrases. More could have been integrated for an authentic ambiance. The author's notes provide a context for the story, and ink and watercolor illustrations provide visualization. This story lends itself for a variety of discussion topics. For this reason it is recommended.

Patricia S. Kuntz
Madison, Wis.

18-4-0451

Chang, Grace. *Jin Jin and the Rain Wizard*. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Enchanted Lion Books, 2009. 48 pp. Illus. by Chong Chang. ISBN 978-1-59270-086-6, \$16.95.

In the sequel to *Jin Jin the Dragon*, Grace Chang and Chong Chang continue the story of Jin Jin, the "golden, water-breathing dragon." In *Jin Jin and the Rain Wizard*, Jin Jin realizes he has lost his ability to breathe water. Upon learning it was because he threw away leftover rice, he embarks on a journey to recover his ability. Jin Jin travels back in time and helps a villager sow rice seeds for the first time, but he learns that it has been a long while since the village received rainfall. Jin Jin immediately flies into the clouds to wake Rain Wizard, and together they throw lightning bolts into the sky. The booming thunder dislodges rice in Jin Jin's throat; clouds float from his mouth and pour rain down onto the village below. Jin Jin happily returns home, where he knows he will always "lick his rice bowl clean."

The writing is somewhat stiff, but the plot makes for a charming story. And although the author's notes are rich with background information to help readers culturally situate the story, they would be bolstered by specific bibliographic citations.

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