



The Gift of Nothing

By Patrick McDonnell

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Mooch the cat desperately wants to find a gift for his friend - Earl the dog. He wonders what he can buy the dog who has everything and decides that the answer, of course, is nothing. This simple story features characters from the Mutts comic strips and is the first book for children.

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The Gift of Nothing By Patrick McDonnell Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. The stars of the *Mutts* comic strip, Mooch the cat and his canine friend, Earl, break out of the Sunday funnies into the picture book world. McDonnell applies his spare style, sketching his cheeky characters with only a few deliberate lines. Each has a distinctive feature—Mooch's red ellipse-shaped nose, Earl's Princess Leia ears—that makes them instantly endearing. With plain backgrounds, a limited palette and a small square trim size, the book looks like a blown-up cartoon strip (even the pages have a newspaper-like grittiness). But the story has more depth than the minimalist visuals would suggest. Here, Mooch searches for the perfect gift for Earl. "What do you get someone who has everything?" he wonders. (Earl is the proud owner of a bowl, bed and chewy toy.) Mooch mulls it over (red and black dots and bubbles indicate his deep thinking) and comes up with "*Nothing!* He would give Earl the gift of nothing." But where to find nothing? Mooch tries shopping (because "Millie came home from the store and said, 'There was nothing to buy! '"). But alas, "nothing was not for sale." How he solves the problem is pure delight, reminding young readers that the greatest gift is friendship, not things. Both *Mutts* fans and newcomers will appreciate McDonnell's clever wordplay and lovable characters, who prove that nothing can be everything. All ages.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 1-4—This story features characters from McDonnell's comic strip *Mutts*. Mooch (a cat) wants to give Earl (a dog) a gift, but he already has a bowl, a bed, and even a chewy toy. In fact, he [has] it ALL. In a flash of inspiration, Mooch decides to give him nothing, and sets out to find it. Though the kids say there is nothing to do, they always seem to be doing something. And even though Millie says there [is] nothing to buy, Mooch finds plenty in the stores. In the end, he wraps a big box with nothing in it and presents it to his friend. There's nothing here, says Earl. Nothing...but me and you, Mooch replies. And that's the point. The text is minimal and the small cartoon drawings are executed in black and white with touches of red and surrounded by plenty of white space. As Mooch ponders over his dilemma, he is engulfed by question marks. The picture of the two friends sitting wrapped paw-in-paw as they enjoy nothing and everything is charming. A fine vehicle for a one-on-one discussion of the meaning of friendship and gift-giving.—*Marianne Saccardi, Norwalk Community College, CT*

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Review

'Mutts is one of the best comic strips of all time' - Charles Schulz (*Peanuts*) 'Smart, funny, brilliantly drawn and full of heart' - Matt Groening (*The Simpsons*)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robin Blakely:

Book is to be different for every grade. Book for children until eventually adult are different content. To be sure that book is very important usually. The book The Gift of Nothing ended up being making you to know about other understanding and of course you can take more information. It is extremely advantages for you. The publication The Gift of Nothing is not only giving you much more new information but also to become

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William Luke:

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