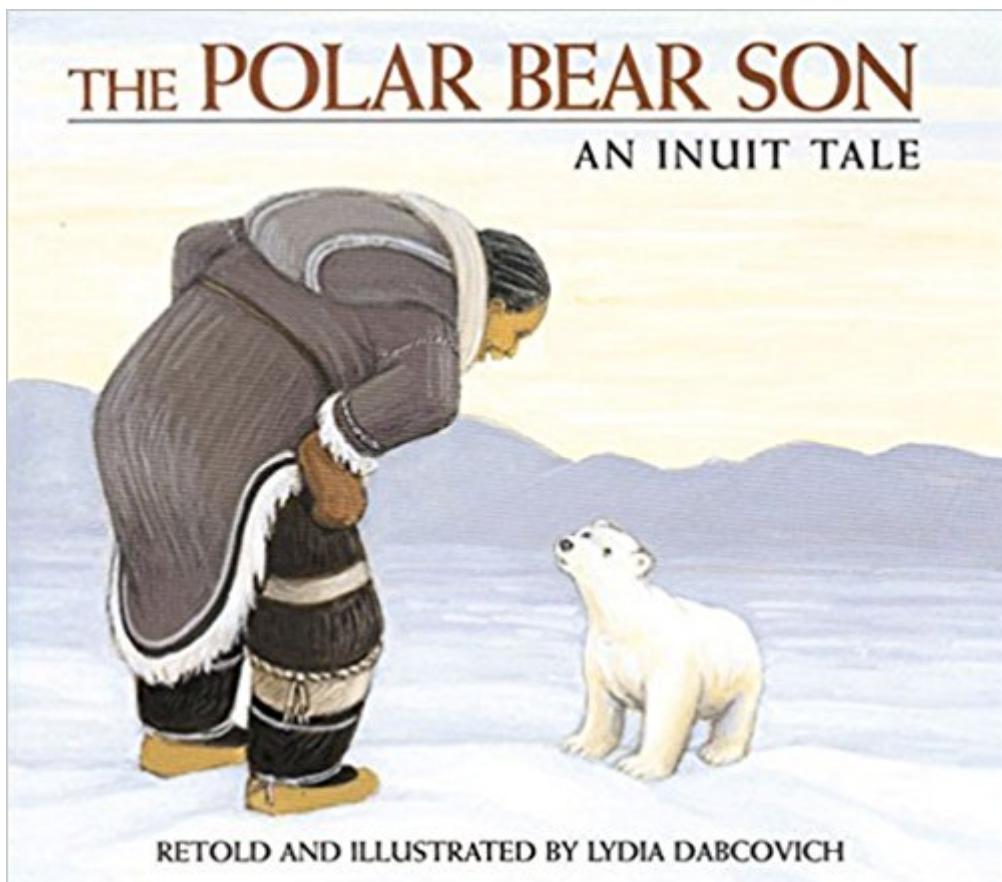


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# The Polar Bear Son: An Inuit Tale



## **Synopsis**

A lonely old woman adopts, cares for, and raises a polar bear as if he were her own son, until jealous villagers threaten the bear's life, forcing him to leave his home and his "mother," in a retelling of a traditional Inuit folktale.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 470L (What's this?)

Paperback: 40 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (March 29, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0395975670

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Product Dimensions: 10.3 x 0.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 26 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #119,593 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #17 in Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Multiculturalism #89 in Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans #1599 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## **Customer Reviews**

Kindergarten-Grade 2. A whimsical tale in which an old Eskimo-Inuit woman adopts an orphan polar bear cub that provides food for her as it grows up. When the men of the village grow jealous of the animal's superior hunting ability and decide to kill it, she sends it away. For years afterward, she walks far out on the ice and meets the bear, who brings her salmon and seal. The story gives a picture of motherly love toward an "adopted child," one the woman will love always. "Little Bear," a selection in *The Dancing Fox* (Morrow, 1997), edited by John Bierhorst, is a similar tale, but the villains in that retelling are neighboring villagers who threaten to kill the bear since it is catching their food sources, and the woman and bear are never reunited. Thus, *Polar Bear Son* has a more satisfying ending. Illustrated in muted pastel colors, the pictures capture this stark, yet beautiful, winter world. The clothing styles are of Greenland Inuit but the landscape could be anywhere in the Arctic. The author gives explanations about the background and her research into Inuit tales. A

heartwarming selection to fill requests for multicultural picture books and/or books on this region.?Mollie Bynum, formerly at Chester Valley Elementary School, Anchorage, AKCopyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

"A whimsical tale in which an old Eskimo-Inuit woman adopts an orphan polar bear cub that provides food for her as it grows up. When the men of the village grow jealous of the animal's superior hunting ability and decide to kill it, she sends it away. . . . Illustrated in muted pastel colors, the pictures capture this stark, yet beautiful, winter world. The clothing styles are of Greenland Inuit but the landscape could be anywhere in the Arctic. The author gives explanations about the background and her research into Inuit tales. A heartwarming selection to fill requests for multicultural picture books and/or books on this region." School Library Journal

I bought this for my 3-year-old grandson's birthday. I always read every book I send him very carefully, as I'm a poet and a visual artist, and also know his interests. If the book speaks to me, it often is one he enjoys. Inuit art and life ways are a specific area of my interests and studies, and when I learned that my grandson had enjoyed another book about Inuit life, I thought highly of this one when it arrived and I read it, several times, and have been told he likes it very much ;-). The illustrations are beautiful, and the content of the folktale and its telling are accurate and profound--a tale of reciprocity and compassion, of human jealousy and greed, and the wisdom that ultimately prevails by living in balance with all life.

I am not a child. I did not read this book to a child. I am a senior citizen who thoroughly enjoyed, even loved, this delicate wonder of an Inuit tale retold with great and simple skill by Lydia Dabcovich. I am even more impressed with this talented author when I note that she also is the book's illustrator. The fascinating illustrations of a world unknown to many of us who live in warmer climes are in muted pastels, most effective in capturing a world of sea and ice. The story is also very moving because it is about an old lady with no family who lives alone. Until she comes across a polar bear orphan, she struggles to survive and can only do so by at times having to accept food offerings from her fellow villagers. She herself lives on the village outskirts in a small hut. I do not want to give away the contents of the story, so spoiling the surprise element, but I will state that the denouement is a happy one. So when threatening events are described from time to time, don't fret! All goes well. I read this book on the heels of reading another wonderful tale for children and adult-children, "Lemon the Duck," also beautifully illustrated. When I finished that book, I felt that I

would never find an equal in quality and true enjoyment. But I certainly have in this delightful, lovely rendition of a timeless tale.

This book was remarkably captivating. I recommend it to all preschool teachers who want a diverse curriculum. The pictures, the words kept my group engaged through out the whole reading time, and the next day or so when I read it again, I noticed that some remembered it so well they recalled the events of the story. The story in its simplicity says much about the human heart of loving and caring for each other. Life problems in the story showed a positive outcome that leaves an opportunity for discussions and imagination. I read other books during the week, but this one was most received and understood by a mixed age group from 3-5 year. Plus, you cannot beat the price!

Very cute story. My 5 year old son, who happens to be inuit, loves it.

Beautiful story! I'm so grateful it was written so I can read it to my 3 year old daughter.

A heartwarming story that conveys real values. Excellent book for children to learn about far away lands and how children live with their families in their environment, and have confidence-building, growing up experiences.

This is a retelling of an Inuit story with beautiful illustrations. I work in the arctic and have really grown fond of the Inuit culture and I wanted to share that with my daughter. The story is simply told but very enjoyable for my daughter. This is a great resource for teaching children about other cultures and how they utilize stories in similar and different ways. This would make an excellent homeschooling resource or classroom book.

A big disappointment. I'm not sure what kind of message is here. The polar bear is generous to all the villagers, who, in my opinion, should have been helping the old woman. Initially, they accepted the bear's generosity, but they turned against him. I'm not sure if it was because the bear seemed to rob them of personal initiative in the search for food. Maybe I'm reading too much into it.

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