



## Over at the Castle

*Boni Ashburn , Kelly Murphy (Illustrator)*

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### **Over at the Castle** Boni Ashburn , Kelly Murphy (Illustrator)

In this clever reworking of the classic folk song “Over in the Meadow,” readers meet villagers who spent their day spinning, cleaning, cooking, dancing, and more. The text counts up from one baby dragon to ten court jesters, and kids will enjoy counting along with each of the characters as they go about their daily work. At the end of the day, all the villagers look out their windows for a special surprise from their dragon neighbors. Readers will pore over illustrations filled with the same unexpected, warm humor of Boni Ashburn and Kelly Murphy’s first book, *Hush, Little Dragon*.

### **Over at the Castle Details**

Date : Published March 1st 2010 by Abrams Books for Young Readers

ISBN : 9780810984141

Author : Boni Ashburn , Kelly Murphy (Illustrator)

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## From Reader Review Over at the Castle for online ebook

### Suzanne says

This is a cute story about a mother dragon and her baby and what happens at a nearby castle. The two dragons are preparing for something, we know not what, and are waiting for the right moment. In the meantime, we see what goes on inside the castle.

The dragons can be seen in the background peeking over walls and the like while the townspeople go about their business. This cute and comical but also helps create an air of suspense. It was also the thing my son enjoyed most about the book. I will not mention what actually happens.

Cute story. Really nice illustrations. I would recommend this for young children, age 3-7.

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### Tori says

A rhyming book, a counting book, and there are dragons in it. There's a lot going on here.

When I used this for dragon storytime, we actually read it together twice so I could point out the dragon on every page, as well as the prisoner subtly escaping from the dungeon in the background. There's a great rhythm here, and the kids clapped along on the second round.

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### Vivian says

In the spirit of the traditional song "Over In the Meadow", the Ashburn & Murphy team offer up their Medieval version. Mother dragon admonishes her one baby to have "patience!", two guards "watch!", three little lords "romp", four servants "hustle", a prisoner and his five pet rats "plan", six chefs "saute`", seven weavers "spin", eight guests "eat and drink", nine knights are "ready!", ten jesters "juggle", and finally the dragon family "Whoooooshhhh"--producing a fireworks display in the night sky.

Use with story times on the theme of castles, dragons, royals, or fireworks.

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### Cheryl says

I'm so tired of using the word 'cute' in my reviews. But then, I'm tired of picture-books that are cute and not much more. I like the details in the pictures here, and I like the easy to read verse narrative, but there's not really much going on.

And, I have to admit, I'm a bit concerned about the prisoner. He even gets title page billing! Poor old guy... he looks like he should be a grandpa, not a prisoner....

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### Matthew says

We need more books by Boni Ashburn. She keeps knocking them out of the park with her medieval themes connected with children's songs. My son loves that there is a rhyming to the words that go along so well with the characters. And the subtle adult theme of what the dragons are really after and that castle life is not all sing-song makes it fun for the adult reader as well.

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### **Adena says**

3.5/5

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### **Stephanie says**

Everyone is busy at the castle, except for two dragons who are waiting for the right moment. Throughout the day, the younger dragon frequently asks if it is the right time and the older dragon continually says they must wait. Finally, night has fallen and it is the right time...for fireworks! This book is illustrated with acrylic, oil, and gel medium. I enjoyed reading this book because I wasn't sure what the dragons were up to. I feared they would become the villains of the book and I was pleasantly surprised when they did not fill that role. The book is written in verse and each page mentions a different number of characters. Due to this element, the book could work well in helping young children learn to count.

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### **Stacy says**

I love how on the very last page, the prisoner is running away in the background. The illustrations are nice but the flow of the text needs help.

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### **margothere says**

On one hand, the illustrations are fun to scan to see what the dragons are up to while the castle going ons are happening. On the other hand, they are inconsistent. On one hand, the rhyme shows a bit of what went on in a castle. On the other hand, the language is a little complex at times for a visiting library class with a range of vocab.... which leads to my conclusion. A good book for one on one, cozy, castle & dragon reading and character seeking.

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### **Patti Richards says**

I'm a little late getting my picture book pick out for today, but I want to give three big cheers to Michigan author Boni Ashburn for her book, "Over at the Castle." This rhyming picture book tells the story of a mother dragon and her baby, waiting for night to fall so they can "visit" the neighboring castle in the way only a dragon could! "Over at the Castle" uses a familiar story-telling format by taking the reader through the castle, adding one person at a time and telling about their special role in the castle. Parents will enjoy introducing their children to castle guards, castle lords, servants, dungeon prisoners and even knights in shining armor until night arrives and the dragons bring a not-to-be-forgotten finish to this fun read.

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## Miss Sarah says

A dragon and its mother wait patiently all day as members of the castle go through their daily routines. Each member of the castle grows in number from one to ten. Cute. length is a little long so right toddlers and up.

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## Sarah says

This follow up to Hush Little Dragon, is decidedly less carnivorous, and does lack some of the previous book's glee. It is still a lot of fun and will probably suit younger kids whose parent's might be put off by so many people getting eaten in the previous book. Still, an enjoyable, if somewhat uneven medieval themed variation on over in the meadow.

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## Jill says

We loved the illustrations and the counting story (1-10) in rhyme. I'd never heard "Over in the Meadow" but once I found the lyrics and melody, I could easily see the inspiration for this book. The illustrations, done in muted tones, still manage to capture a vibrant castle life complete with dragons. I love using this to talk about a subject matter that is mostly new to my daughter (it's a nice change from another book about farms, jungles or school) and she has plenty of questions! Another point worth mentioning, there's not a princess to be found in this book! It's more about the lives of the servants, cooks, knights, and other everyday folk.

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## Kelsey says

Age: Preschool - Kindergarten  
Gradually increasing numbers (Over in the Meadow)

A bit longer with some really great poetic metre (although it is forced twice). Although the description of castle life include cooks, jugglers, knights, servants, guards, and more, the listeners' interest is held by two dragons waiting patiently outside for a reason untold until the end.

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## Serena says

Over at the Castle is a story that follows the ordinary day of all the inhabitants at the palace. A mother dragon and her baby start the story, watching the people around them as they laze in the field. You are introduced to several other people along the way, each doing various tasks that would come into play in a regular day. The interesting way that the story is done is by telling this ordinary day in the way of a song that we all know. "Over in the Meadow".

I just recently finished reading the first book by this author called Hush, Little Dragon. The first book was done in a similar way that the story was told through a song. I didn't recognize the song that was used in this

book right away until I caught the rhythm and it jogged my memory. There were very similar aspects between the two books. Such as the dragon main characters that play a role in the stories. The first book was more focused and centered on them, whereas this one had them as main characters but not the sole focus. There were towns people that we got to interact with.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and would look up other books by this author.

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