



Title Arno and His Horse
Author Jane Godwin
Illustrator Felicity Sala
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Jane Godwin is an Australian children's book publisher, and also the highly acclaimed author of over twenty books for children, across all styles and ages. Her work is published internationally and she has received many commendations, including the Queensland Premier's Award (Children's Books), the Auralis Award and the Animal Welfare Award, and shortlistings in the CBC Book of the Year Awards, the Prime Minister's Literary Award, the New South Wales State Literary Award (Patricia Wrightson Prize), the YABBA Awards, the Speech Pathology Awards, The Family Award for Children's Books, and the Australian Book Industry Awards.

Felicita Sala is a self-taught illustrator and painter. She graduated in philosophy from the University of Western Australia. One of her books was included in *The New York Times*' Best Illustrated Picture Books of 2018, and in 2020 she won the Premio Andersen award in Italy for best illustrator. Felicity lives in Rome with her husband, Gianluca, and their daughter, Nina.

ARNO AND HIS HORSE

Story by
JANE GODWIN

pictures by
FELICITA SALA



Arno had a horse,
it was brown and it was black.
He took it with him everywhere,
but did he bring it back?

When Arno loses his precious toy horse,
all the kids in town help him to look for it.
They look everywhere, but will Arno ever
see his horse again?

A touching story about memory, dreams,
and the mysterious ways we feel
connected to those we love.



- Explores the relationship between a child and his late grandfather, and the role that objects play in memory and love.
- An enchanting visual introduction to the Australian outback landscape.
- Rhyming text reminiscent of Australian bush poetry accompanied by stunning artwork by internationally acclaimed, award-winning illustrator Felicity Sala.

NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

All children experience loss - sometimes it's loss that adults understand, like the death of a pet or a grandparent. Sometimes it's not understood as loss by adults, and it might be overlooked, for example when the family moves and the child must start at a new school. People say that children are resilient, they bounce back, and it's true, they do, but they don't feel loss any less keenly than adults do. They may not be able to articulate these feelings, but they are there. Adults sometimes belittle the loss of a toy, which to the child can feel as real as a living, breathing person, often even forming part of the child's sense of him/herself.

Arno's special toy isn't soft and cuddly, but a small wooden horse. This object forms a symbolic connection with Arno's beloved grandfather, who carved the horse for Arno. In some ways, the horse is an object of grief, but also of connection. The story explores the way we maintain a sense of the people we love when they're gone. I wrote this book shortly after the death of my father, and for the first few months after his death I dreamt about him often. They were happy, reassuring dreams, not of a man ruined by dementia, but of Dad when he was healthy, and happy and funny and strong. I found these dreams comforting; they felt like I was maintaining a connection with him. Whether this is a tangible connection or our imagination working to help us heal, I don't think it really matters. What's important is that the connection is felt. These ideas became part of Arno's story, too.

—Jane Godwin

