



Robobaby

Books Reviewed:

[Robobaby](#) [1]

Issue:

[246](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Ferelith Hordon](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

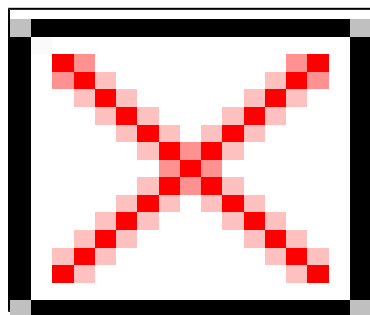
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5



[4]

There is going to be a new addition to the family; Cathy is going to have a baby brother. But this is not quite the family you might expect. This is the Robot family and when Robobaby arrives all neatly boxed up, he has to be assembled. This is, naturally, a task for the adults. Or is it? In fact, it is up to big sister Cathy, or rather Cathode, with a little help from Sprocket the dog, to get things right.

This book is great fun, but that's exactly what you expect from this author-illustrator. Here we have the delicious image of a family, quite recognisable, even though it's a robot family. What brilliant names too? Diode, Cathode, Sprocket? everything is consistent and appropriate, as is their world of nuts, bolts, cables and computer equipment. Their behaviour is far from alien too and their relationships are entirely believable. Young readers in particular will enjoy the subtle dig at the adult world, so often dismissive of the efforts and abilities of children, yet unable to accept that it might not know everything. This is Wiesner's skill? the masterly interplay between a minimal text, here all dialogue, with its own subtext, and the illustrations. These burst from the pages filling the double page spreads with the characters and clutter of the home. Within the spreads, vignettes create moments of action (sometimes explosive!) and the final spread springs a surprise... Readers might like to wonder what will happen next.

Wiesner's palette? metallic greys and blues - emphasises the robotic nature of his created world without detracting from the inherent humanity of his story, while the characteristic energy of his lines draw the eye across the visual narrative to explore details and turn the page. This is another brilliantly enjoyable picture book from an author-illustrator who has already delighted us with such creations as [Mr Wuffles](#) [5], [The Three Pigs](#) and [Tuesday](#); one not to miss.

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