



The Boy and the Gorilla

Jackie Azúa Kramer, Cindy Derby

Summary

This profoundly moving tale about a grieving boy and an imaginary gorilla makes real the power of talking about loss.

On the day of his mother's funeral, a young boy conjures the very visitor he needs to see: a gorilla. Wise and gentle, the gorilla stays on to answer the heart-heavy questions the boy hesitates to ask his father: Where did his mother go? Will she come back home? Will we all die? Yet with the gorilla's friendship, the boy slowly begins to discover moments of comfort in tending flowers, playing catch, and climbing trees. Most of all, the gorilla knows that it helps to simply talk about the loss—especially with those who share your grief and who may feel alone, too. Author Jackie Azúa Kramer's quietly thoughtful text and illustrator Cindy Derby's beautiful impressionistic artwork depict how this tender relationship leads the boy to open up to his father and find a path forward. Told entirely in dialogue, this direct and deeply affecting picture book will inspire conversations about grief, empathy, and healing beyond the final hope-filled scene.

Contributor Bio

Jackie Azúa Kramer is the author of *The Green Umbrella* and *If You Want to Fall Asleep*. She was previously an actress, singer, and school counselor. Jackie Azúa Kramer lives with her family in Long Island, New York.

Cindy Derby is the author-illustrator of *How to Walk an Ant* and the illustrator of the poetry collection *Climbing Shadows* by Shannon Bramer. Before she was an illustrator, she went to theater school and performed all over the world as a puppeteer. Cindy Derby lives in San Francisco.



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