

REVIEWS:

The Last Leaf

Author: Billy Baldwin

Illustrator: Liesl Bell



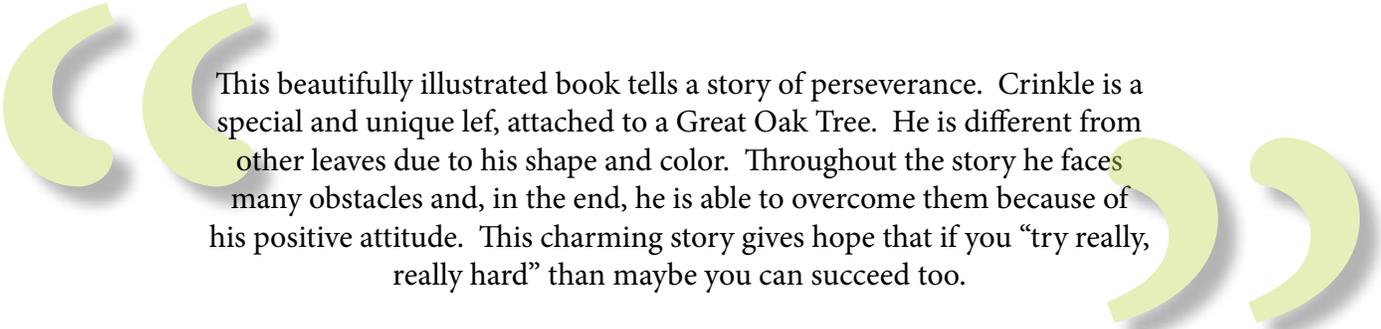
On the first day of spring each year, new buds and leaves sprout on the branches of the Great Oak Tree. As the buds blossom into shiny green leaves, one bud named Crinkle has problems sprouting. With gentle encouragement, Crinkle finally sprouts, but he is small and pink instead of being large and green like the other leaves. The other leaves laugh at Crinkle and make fun of him, except for Old Gus, who is the biggest leaf on the tree. Crinkle fears the upcoming autumn after hearing that all of the leaves will fall to the ground and die. Old Gus explains to Crinkle that the leaves do not die, but are re-absorbed by the tree's roots in the winter before sprouting once more in the spring. As he watches all of the other leaves fall, Crinkle hangs on tightly, refusing to let go of the branch which supports him. The Great Oak Tree is impressed by Crinkle's determination. Finally, unable to hold on any longer, Crinkle falls to the ground. The following spring, the leaves who had teased Crinkle were worried when they could not find him. Suddenly, a stunning new branch grows on the Great Oak Tree, as pink and as shiny as can be. Crinkle had evolved and was now a magnificent branch, sprouting leaves of his own. The Great Oak Tree and all of the other leaves are proud and in awe of Crinkle's amazing transformation, strength and durability.

My mind is blown by the strong and powerful messages contained within this book.

Not only does William Baldwin's tale about a leaf that is different teach empowerment against bullies, but also shows that regardless of your differences to those around you, all of us have inner strengths which can take us to great places. The Last Leaf's tale comes complete with stunning illustrations which are bright and bold, just like Crinkle, and carry a theme to show that in Nature, nothing ends if it is nurtured. The encouragement given to Crinkle from both the Great Oak Tree and Old Gus were all of the encouragement that Crinkle needed to hold on and find his inner strength. Although aimed at children, I found myself smiling throughout each and every page of The Last Leaf, and recommend this book be stocked in school, home and kindergarten libraries, in order to teach self-empowerment at an early age.

- Rosie Malezer for Readers' Favorite/GoodReads





This beautifully illustrated book tells a story of perseverance. Crinkle is a special and unique leaf, attached to a Great Oak Tree. He is different from other leaves due to his shape and color. Throughout the story he faces many obstacles and, in the end, he is able to overcome them because of his positive attitude. This charming story gives hope that if you “try really, really hard” than maybe you can succeed too.

- **Alexandra Giambruno, Head of Children’s Services, East Hampton Library, NY**

TESTIMONIALS:

Billy Baldwin is an author who has a whimsical imagination that serves the emotional needs of children.

- **Joyce Raimondo, Award winning author, educator & artist**

Such a great book. IU made my daughter led me read it to her, even though she’s 19 and at college. She loved it!

- **Kip Koenig**

What a wonderful book! My daughter loves it, almost as much as I do. Don’t we all identify with Crinkle? It is a book for all ages, supportive and inspiring. Go Crinkle!

- **Britta Dubbels**

When we are young, the gift of imagination is a mainstay - it is inherent in every part of our being. As we grow, this gift unfortunately fades. Billy, with heart and understanding, has managed to retain this gift and continues to dive in to the imagination by creating images and stories that mesmerize and enchant.

- **Linda Cirigliano**

The lovely, lyrical illustrations are worthy of this epic story of hope and struggle. We all strive to be the best we can be regardless of our physical struggles. This beautiful story is a timeless treasure to add to your library.

- **Shelby McChord**