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Vanilla Ice Cream by Bob Graham

Publisher: Walker Books

RRP \$29.99

In the early scenes, readers are given a bird's eye view of a sparrow looking down on two children play hopscotch in a dusty village in India. The bird flies to a nearby food stall to search for crumbs. He is shooed away and lands on a truck loaded with sacks where he pecks at grains of rice spilling from a torn bag.

But what connection does a sparrow, India, and rice, have with vanilla ice cream? To find out, readers must go on an intriguing journey with the little sparrow. The inquisitive bird encounters many experiences along the way to the surprise ending.

A variety of illustration frames and sizes, vertical and linear, increase the visual interest. The different viewpoints follow the sparrow as it flies up, down, and away into the distance. Changing perspectives, zoom lens, aerial views, a diminishing horizon, all give a sense of constant movement and time passing. Subtle shading and delicate hues complement the natural landscapes with the occasional bright splashes of colour catching the eye. Bob Graham's human characters have a kindly quality with their sloping chins and slightly bemused expressions.

This large-sized, hardback picture book is a delightful exploration of how the smallest creatures can create a chain reaction that makes a lasting impact.

Reviewed by children's book author,
Jean Bennett

Author / Illustrator's profile:

<http://tinyurl.com/k44scy5>



