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***Mango and Bambang Tapir All at Sea* by Polly Faber illustrated by Clara Vulliamy**

Publisher: Walker Books

RRP \$19.99

Mango Allsorts is a kind young girl who adopts a lost tapir and brings him home to live with her. They share her apartment with Mango's father, who is always busy in his study. This allows the two companions the freedom to get into all sorts of adventures.

The four chapters involve many challenges and characters. Mango and Bambang explore their talents and discover a tapir has some surprising attributes. Although he's not good at baking cakes or ballet, Bambang is an amazing flamenco dancer, a master at howling, and a strong swimmer.

Unfortunately, Bambang is not worldly-wise. When the sound of tapir music calls to him in the night and the smell of delicious food wafts under the door - he follows his trunk-like snout. This leads him into the clutches of Dr Cynthia Prickle-Posset, an unpleasant collector of the unusual. The ensuing drama and heroic antics lead to a triumphant finale.

Charming, retro-style illustrations may remind some older readers of the Milly Molly Mandy books. The plentiful black, white and red pictures are eye-catching. The artist develops the tapir from a shy animal into a talented and brave personality - he's adorable. Mango is shown as a girl who protects and cares for her friend in the face of various dangers. Remarkably, she remains tidy and clean throughout all their escapades.

An attractive hardback publication complete with a dust jacket, red page edges, and a stitched binding. This junior novel just begs to be picked up and shared with young readers.

Series website:

www.mangoandbambang.com

Author's website:

www.pollyfaber.com

Illustrator's website:

www.claras.me

Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett

