

TRAIN TO SOMEWHERE



by Eve Bunting • Illustrated by Ronald Himler

“**T**his is our train, Marianne,” Miss Randolph says, and Nora clutches at my hand.

A conductor comes along the platform. “Are these the orphans, ma’am?” he asks.

Miss Randolph stands very straight. “Fourteen of them.”

“We put on a special coach for you at the back,” the conductor says.

The big boys carry the trunks and we take the rest of the bundles. Miss Randolph brings the emergency bag. This past week I watched her pack it with washcloths, medicine, and larkspur in case there are some stowaway fleas. None of us from St. Christopher's has any, of course. But those from the other homes and from the streets might.

“Going for a placing-out, are you?” the conductor asks Nora. “My, you look nice!”

“Thank you,” Nora says. She's only five, but at St. Christopher's they teach us manners early.

“Good luck!” he says to me. “I hear there are still a lot of people in the New West wanting children to adopt.”

“Yes, indeed,” Miss Randolph says.

“We're not seeing as many going this year as last, though,” the conductor adds. “1877 was a peak year for orphans.”

We go aboard.







AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, NOTABLE CHILDREN'S BOOK
ALA BOOKLIST EDITORS' CHOICE
JEFFERSON CUP AWARD HONOR BOOK

★ "This characteristically incisive collaboration from Bunting and Himler imagines a journey on one of the many 'Orphan Trains' that, between the mid-1850s and the late 1920s, brought children from New York City orphanages to adoptive families in the West. The narrator of this finely crafted, heart-wrenching story is Marianne, a plain girl secretly dreaming of being reunited with her own mother. . . . Himler's watercolor and gouache paintings offer polished portraits of the period as they convey the plot's considerable emotion. Like Bunting's text, his art is at once sobering and uplifting—and assuredly memorable."

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ "By making this slice of American history into an appealing tale, Bunting offers an opportunity to compare present-day social policies with those of times past. The book is timely yet universal in showing the desire of every child for a loving family."

—*School Library Journal*, starred review

★ "The words and pictures are understated; readers will fill in the spaces for themselves. . . . Even older students will find the history compelling and will want to find out more about what happened to those lonely children."

—*ALA Booklist*, starred review