

## BRIEFLY NOTED

BY FRED BOER

**FOGHORN PASSAGE** (Irwin Young Adult). Alison Lohans; \$9.95 paper 0-7737-5496-2, 215 pp., 5 x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, Stoddart, Jan. (ages 18+)

**STEVEN'S BASEBALL MITT: A Book About Being Adopted**, Kathy Stinson, Robin Baird Lewis, illus.; \$14.95 cloth 1-55037-233-5, \$4.95 paper 1-55037-232-7, 32 pp., 8 x 8, Annick, March (ages 4-8)

★ **WHO SHRANK MY GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE?: Poems of Discovery**, Barbara Juster Esbensen, Eric Beddows, illus.; \$14.95 cloth 1-55054-211-7, 48 pp., 8 x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, Groundwood, March (ages 4+)

*Foghorn Passage* is a well written novel for young adults that deals with a tragic situation in a realistic manner without becoming maudlin or predictable. Matt Bruckner, a talented young violinist, is left paraplegic after a car accident in which his sister is killed. Samantha Franklin, who plays the French horn in the orchestra with Matt,

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recently lost her father to cancer. This experience makes Samantha particularly sensitive to Matt's situation, and she tries to help him overcome his anger and despair. Eventually both Matt and Samantha begin to come to terms with their grief, and move on with their separate lives. This is an involving and moving story that features strong characterization, natural dialogue, and a believable plot.

Kathy Stinson has a long list of notable children's books to her credit, but her most successful are those dealing with emotions and feelings. *Big or Little, Red is Best* and *Mom and Dad Don't Live Together Anymore*

sensitively convey deep-felt emotions in simple and effective prose. *Steven's Baseball Mitt* continues in this tradition, describing the thoughts and feelings of a young adopted boy. Steven has many questions about being adopted. He wonders why his birth mother gave him up, what she might be like, and whether he will ever meet her. These questions have no easy answers, and in the end, Steven realizes that his adoptive family loves and needs him, and that he belongs with them. The illustrations that mirror the text, showing Steven looking for a lost baseball mitt, are attractive and colourful.

Glorious illustrations highlight a new book of poetry which will appeal to both young and old. *Who Shrank My Grandmother's House?* is a collection of poems in picture book format, illustrated by award-winning artist Eric Beddows. These excellent poems are rich and evocative in their images and use of language. The illustrations are glowing, colourful, and perfectly suited to the poetry. Quietly and without comment, Beddows illustrates children of all ages, nationalities, and abilities – including a child with Down's Syndrome. This is a wonderful and subtle touch in a book of the highest quality.