



# When Otis Courted Mama

By Kathi Appelt

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Apart from sticker burrs and sand fleas, Cardell's life is mostly wonderful. He knows he's loved through and through by his perfectly good mama and his perfectly good daddy. They live in different parts of the desert, but that's okay—Cardell is mostly used to it. Then Otis comes calling, and Cardell feels a *grrr* form in his throat. Otis can't make jalapeño flapjacks or play Zig-the-Zag anything like Cardell's daddy. And so Cardell waits for Mama to say "*Adiós*, Otis." But what will happen if she doesn't?

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## When Otis Courted Mama By Kathi Appelt Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

PreS-Gr 3—Set in the southwestern desert, this adorable, humble tale of how a young coyote copes with divorced parents will win children's hearts. The cadence of the story, with its soothing repetition, balances the new dual-home reality of so many children today with the old comfort of Home where a child feels "loved through and through." The beautifully toned gouache brushwork and large swatches of color are reminiscent of Rothko's work on one page while evoking classic Golden Book aesthetics on the next. White stands out like the stars in the desert night, and the eyelashes of these coyotes are long and lush or their cheeks blush. Cardell loves his daddy who can sing and play and cook jalapeño flapjacks like no other, but he has to share his "perfectly good daddy" with a stepmother and a baby stepbrother. He loves his "perfectly good mama," but not the series of suitors that come a-courtin' but are soon sent away. Then Otis arrives, and he makes Cardell feel "a grrr form in his throat." He expects his mother to say, "We can do without Otis...but "Adiós, Otis" never came." The complicated feelings of a child who must accept a new stepparent are woefully underrepresented in children's literature. Turns out that Otis can spin a pretty good yarn that "settled on Cardell's fur like a warm blanket. Even the moon seemed to smile." Well, like Otis, this exquisitely told tale is a welcome addition to any collection.—Sara Lissa Paulson, The American Sign Language and English Lower School, New York City

Review

\* "This excellent take on modern, blended families melds a believable, resonant story arc and winsome, child-appealing illustrations."

—**Kirkus, starred review**

"McElmurry's...gouache illustrations revel in the desert setting, her homey paintings evoking the look of weather-beaten folk art while contributing to the story's overall humor and sweetness."

—**Publishers Weekly**

"Like Otis, Appelt is a gifted storyteller, and families whose circumstances echo Cardell's will welcome this gentle story, which is nicely augmented by illustrator McElmurry's gouache pictures, with their vivid desert colors."

—**Booklist**

\* "Well, like Otis, this exquisitely told tale is a welcome addition to any collection."

—**School Library Journal, starred review**

"Author and illustrator deliver on both substance and humor, capturing childlike emotions and conveying them in witty, comforting prose and in accompanying pictures of coyotes in bandanas and ten-gallon hats...With a sympathetic and charming main character, this story will be particularly relevant for a child with a blended family."

—**Bulletin**

About the Author

**Kathi Appelt** is the author of many books for children and young adults, including *When Otis Courted Mama*, illustrated by Jill McElmurry; *Oh My Baby*, *Little One*, illustrated by Jane Dyer; and the story collection *Kissing Tennessee*. Her novel *The Underneath* was a Newbery Honor book and a National Book Award finalist. She lives in Texas. [www.kathiappelt.com](http://www.kathiappelt.com)

**Jill McElmurry** is the illustrator of many picture books, including *When Otis Courted Mama* by Kathi Appelt and the best-selling *Little Blue Truck* series, written by Alice Schertle. She divides her time between the wide landscape of New Mexico and a green island in Minnesota. Visit her at [www.jillmcelmurry.com](http://www.jillmcelmurry.com)

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### Lisa Jennings:

Within other case, little people like to read book *When Otis Courted Mama*. You can choose the best book if you want reading a book. Given that we know about how is important a new book *When Otis Courted Mama*. You can add knowledge and of course you can around the world with a book. Absolutely right, due to the fact from book you can learn everything! From your country right up until foreign or abroad you will be known. About simple factor until wonderful thing it is possible to know that. In this era, we are able to open a book as well as searching by internet unit. It is called e-book. You should use it when you feel bored to go to the library. Let's examine.

#### Charles Wright:

Reading a publication tends to be new life style within this era globalization. With examining you can get a lot of information that can give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world may share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their own reader with their story as well as their experience. Not only situation that share in the ebooks. But also they write about advantage about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your kids, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors on earth always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some research before they write with their book. One of them is this *When Otis Courted Mama*.

#### Loyd Tyler:

Many people spending their time by playing outside with friends, fun activity along with family or just watching TV the whole day. You can have new activity to shell out your whole day by reading through a book. Ugh, you think reading a book can definitely hard because you have to accept the book everywhere? It fine you can have the e-book, getting everywhere you want in your Cell phone. Like *When Otis Courted Mama* which is obtaining the e-book version. So , try out this book? Let's view.

**Edgar Curtis:**

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