

# KIRKUS

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# REVIEWS

## TITLE INFORMATION

### **SOPHIA'S RED HAT**

Patricia Nichvolodoff

Illus. by Shannen Marie Paradero

Trafford (32 pp.)

\$14.51 paperback, \$3.99 e-book

ISBN: 978-1-4907-6560-0; November 5, 2015

## BOOK REVIEW

When a little girl pays an act of kindness forward, love multiplies and an entire town dances for joy in Nichvolodoff's (*Cleo's Treasure Hunt*, 2016, etc.) children's book, with illustrations by Paradero.

Young fans of spontaneous dancing will enjoy reading this wiggle-inducing story of a twirling girl named Sophia. One day, she sees a red, knit cap caught in the branches of a tree, so she uses a long stick to knock it down. Unable to locate the cap's owner, Sophia wears it proudly until a strong wind blows it away. She's sad to have lost her newfound treasure, so the inventive girl asks Grandmother to help her learn how to knit another one. Grandmother complies, and Sophia is thrilled to get another beautiful red hat. She wants to spread the joy, so she makes a second cap for her grandmother. When Sophia's mother sees them both wearing their new headgear, she requests—and receives—one of her own. Pretty soon, Sophia, Grandmother, and Mother knit more caps to share with neighbors, and they, in turn, make them for other townspeople. As the process goes on, more people—and even some dogs and cats—dance, twirl, and play musical instruments in Sophia's ever-increasing red hat parade. Paradero's brightly colored illustrations complement this pleasant tale. The images feature old-fashioned characters wearing 19th-century-style clothing (such as long dresses and high collars), but there's minimal diversity of skin tone. Although the narrative isn't exceptionally imaginative, it flows easily and offers effective repetition: "Everyone was so thrilled with their new red hats they twirled right and twirled left. They twirled down the road into town and twirled with their drums and their horns and their tambourines." The moralistic story ends with a declaration that "kindness begets kindness." Additionally, it poses a thought-provoking math question: "How many hats were knit for people?" It's a bit tricky to figure out the exact number who received hats, so adults will probably need to offer guidance to help kids answer the question. Some parents may cringe at the idea of a child putting a stranger's unwashed cap on his or her head, but many others will like the book's emphasis on thoughtfulness.

A fun, simple tale with a memorable theme.