

Under the Sea with Jan Brett

By Debora Recca

Jan Brett has put a little spin on the favorite age-old tale: Goldilocks. Jan Brett's new book *The Mermaid* replaces the bears with an octopus family and takes place underwater. Brett's beautiful illustrations depict that "underwater look" so amazingly that you feel like you are beneath the sea with the characters.

On Sunday, November 26, 2017 I was very fortunate to meet Jan Brett in Sykesville, Maryland. This event was sponsored by A Likely Story Bookstore and co-hosted by the Carroll Reading Council. Jan Brett was on her 23 cities bus tour. I was able to get my book autographed and I had a few minutes to speak with her. She was as delightful as her characters in her books.

During the author visit Jan Brett explained how she comes up with her ideas for her books. *The Mermaid* was conceived while she was visiting her daughter in Japan. She went to an aquarium and there she was introduced to an octopus. When Jan put her arms in the tank, the octopus gave her a hug. There was a baby octopus in the tank as well and her interaction with the octopus "family" inspired the idea of the underwater Goldilocks.

This book will be a wonderful addition to an author study, an exploration of different versions of Goldilocks, or preparation for a field trip to an aquarium. It is definitely a worthwhile read and enjoyable for all ages.

Happy "underwater" reading!