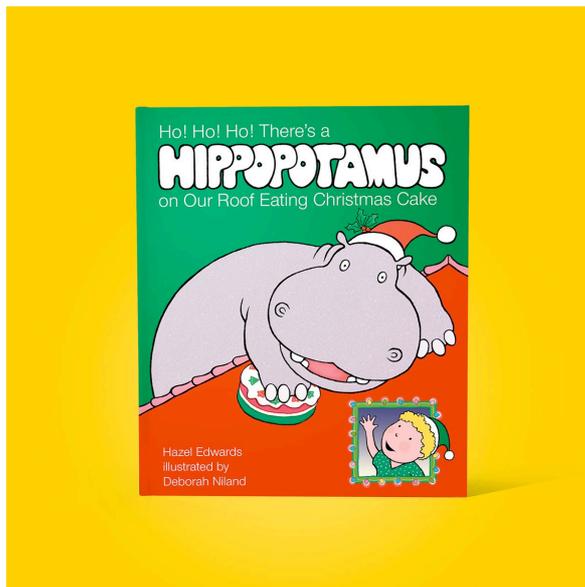


BUZZ Words review by Di Bates

Ho! Ho! Ho! There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Christmas Cake

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Ho! Ho! Ho! There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Christmas Cake by Hazel Edwards, illustrated by Deborah Niland (Puffin Books) HB RRP \$19.99
ISBN 978 0143790679

Reviewed by Dianne Bates

Australian author Hazel Edwards had a best-seller, *There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake*, in 2005 and since then she has produced various incantations of the book which is targeted at pre-schoolers. Now here's the latest with the oversized pink hippo complete with a Santa hat getting ready for

Christmas.

A curly blonde-haired boy is told by his father that there's a man fixing roof tiles, but the boy knows the truth – there's a hippopotamus up there getting ready – as is he – for Christmas. The hippo is making a cake and icing it, then he's making a list for Santa (just like the boy). Before long the hippo is dancing a cake dance.

At the same time that the boy and his family are decorating their Christmas tree, the hippo on the roof has a disaster – he accidentally sits on his Christmas tree 'with his big wobbly bottom'! However, hippo is clever, and fixes it so it looks as good as new.

Niland's full-page, colourful illustration on this page shows a tree resplendent with goodies such as carrots, apples, cherries and cakes (donuts and lamingtons, of course!)

The rest of the book has the boy and the hippo on the roof preparing for the big day (gingerbread, card-making, wrapping gifts, stringing fairy lights) until finally the boy's family all dress in Santa suits (as does the hippo). On Christmas eve there's Carols by Candlelight, and of course stockings and food for Santa and his reindeer. When Christmas Day arrives, there is happiness and discovery for everyone.

This is a joyous, even scrumptious book with page after page of bright illustrations that reward the reader

with multiple readings. It will especially appeal to any child who is super-excited as he or she anticipates all that Christmas Day will bring, and who is involved with family in preparing for the big day. The text is easy to read with large font and simple sentences. Certainly this is a great book for a small child's Christmas stocking!