



LOVE, AGNES: POSTCARDS FROM AN OCTOPUS

by Irene Latham, Illustrations by Thea Baker

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8 Things To Know About LOVE, AGNES:

1. Agnes may not be the smartest octopus in the sea, but she *is* funny.
2. It's no coincidence that there's an Andrew in this book, AND the author has a son named Andrew. Both have big feelings about their siblings.
3. This book is a transformer, just like Agnes: it started as a poem... then morphed into a collection of poems... then became a postcard exchange.
4. Writing this book was, in part, a way for the author to work through grief as her father experienced the final stages of cancer. (Agnes taught her that death doesn't have to be a dark topic.)
5. Just like Agnes, the author loves sending – and receiving – postcards.
6. The author fell in love with octopuses when she read *THE SOUL OF AN OCTOPUS* by Sy Montgomery. She believes the octopus is her patronus.
7. Agnes and the author are looking forward to meeting readers (and octopuses!) during The Great *Southeastern* Octopus tour of museums/aquariums during October/November.
8. The author is inspired by the way Agnes loves the world fiercely, with all three of her hearts.

Advance Praise for LOVE, AGNES:

*Toward the end of her short life, an octopus exchanges a series of postcards with others around her, including a boy on a pier and her newly hatched eggs. Spread by spread, a simple narrative accompanied by postcard messages provides clever introduction to the life of a giant Pacific octopus. **Though Latham's story is thoroughly fantastic, both author and illustrator have been respectful to this amazing creature, describing realistic behaviors and depicting her relatively accurately, right down to the rectangular pupils of her eyes and her senescent color change.** Agnes the octopus squeezes herself into a jar and later into a crevice in the rocks. As "Crabby Crab" requests, she stops eating crabs, but only because she's ready to lay her eggs. She evades a predator by ejecting a cloud of ink. She quietly tends her eggs until they hatch, and then she bids the world goodbye. She has final advice for her pen pal Andrew, too: "You can't be mad or sad when you're swimming. Try it." Backmatter offers further information about octopuses (including the correct plural) as well as solid suggestions for further reading. Baker's appealing collage, acrylic paint, and digital illustrations are full of deep-sea color and abound with interesting patterns and textures. They include other thoroughly recognizable sea dwellers. **Certainly the most engaging of the recent wave of octopus stories, for reading aloud or reading alone.** (Informational picture book. 4-7)*

– Kirkus Reviews