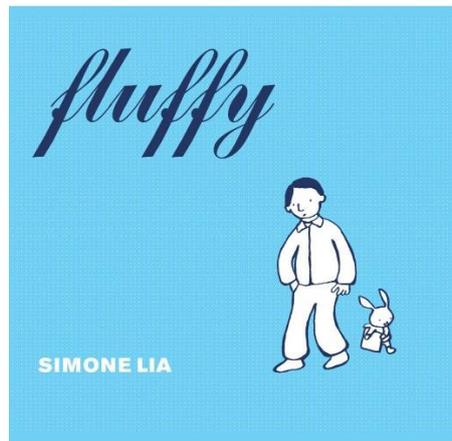




Fluffy by Simone Lia

[Comedy]



Possibly the most beautiful book in the world, if want to buy something for someone who's down in the dumps then this will bring them right round. Plus it would be their perfect introduction to comics. Simone Lia's marshmallow forms and faces are amongst the most expressive in the business.

Fluffy is a bunny. He is young, exuberant, oh so chatty, slightly destructive and lost in his own little world, as all children are. Fluffy likes to sing, if only absent-mindedly to himself:

"Oh... Someone's praying, me lord... Kumbuyar...

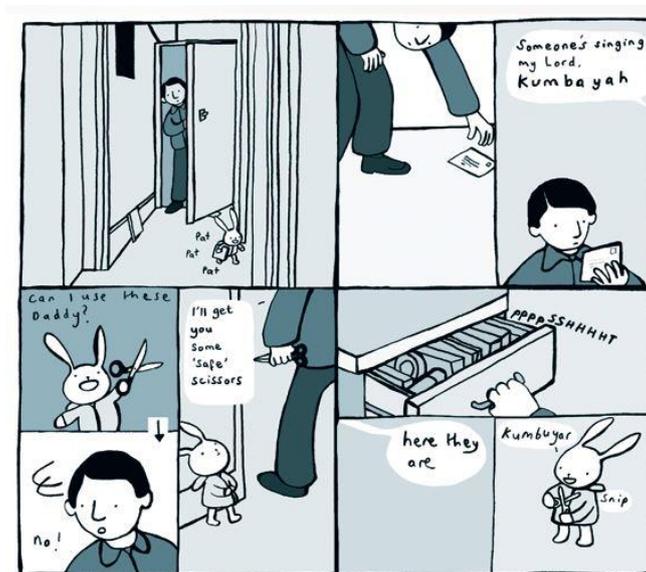
"Someone's praying, me lord. Kumbuyar.

"Someone's praying, my Lord..... Kumbuyar.

"Oh Lord... Boob y loob y loob."

Which is precisely how that verse ends – I'm pretty sure of it.

Fluffy has to sing to himself because I'm afraid that adoptive human dad, Michael, instead of paying attention to Fluffy and so seeing the unequivocal, unconditional love literally being played out in front of him, is obsessing over all the day-to-day-minutiae that *figuratively* grind him into the ground. This Simone Lia presents to us in a series of cranial cross-sections, revealing Michael's many and varied neuroses in a scientifically revealing, illustrated cause-and-effect. What a numbskull!



Meanwhile Fluffy experiences all the joys of life, and proclaims them *loudly*. Not only does Lia possess the most superb ear for dialogue (including a child's easily distracted leaps of mental association) but she's also a great observer of interaction... and indeed lack of it when people manage no more than an inattentive, default "very good".

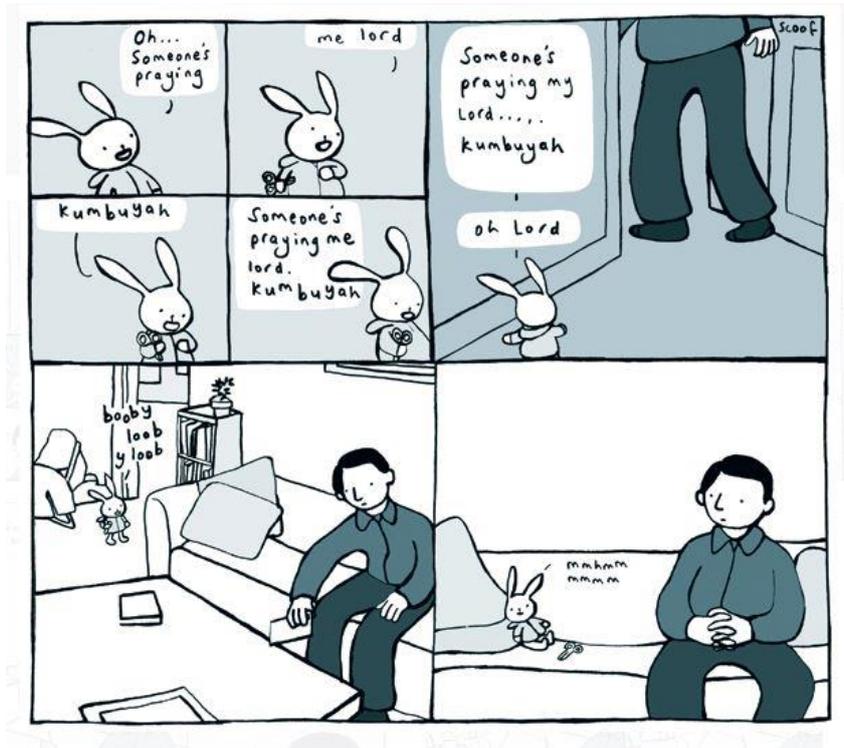
"Farmers drive tractors and they drive them all day. I'm going to be a farmer one day. I'll drive across my fields... and to the library. I'll be like the farmer in my library book. He's good. I'll cut him out when we get home.

"Can I keep this book Daddy? Can I? Can I keep the book? Daddy you never listen to me."

Well, that's one library book not going back in one piece...

Later they venture from London to Sicily to see Nanna and Nannu.

"Did you bring a clock with numbers in English? We might forget to come back and I've got nursery. Daddy, it's very important that you listen. Did you bring a clock with English numbers?"



Occasionally, however, Michael remembers that Fluffy exists long enough to sit him down for a serious heart-to-heart. Nothing I can type will render this as poignantly as a nuanced shop-floor show-and-tell with the pictures in front of you, so please ask me for one next time I see you:

"Fluffy. I'm not your real Daddy."

"Yes you are, Daddy."

"No, I'm a man and you're a bunny." [Fluffy looks askew and askance, lost for words]

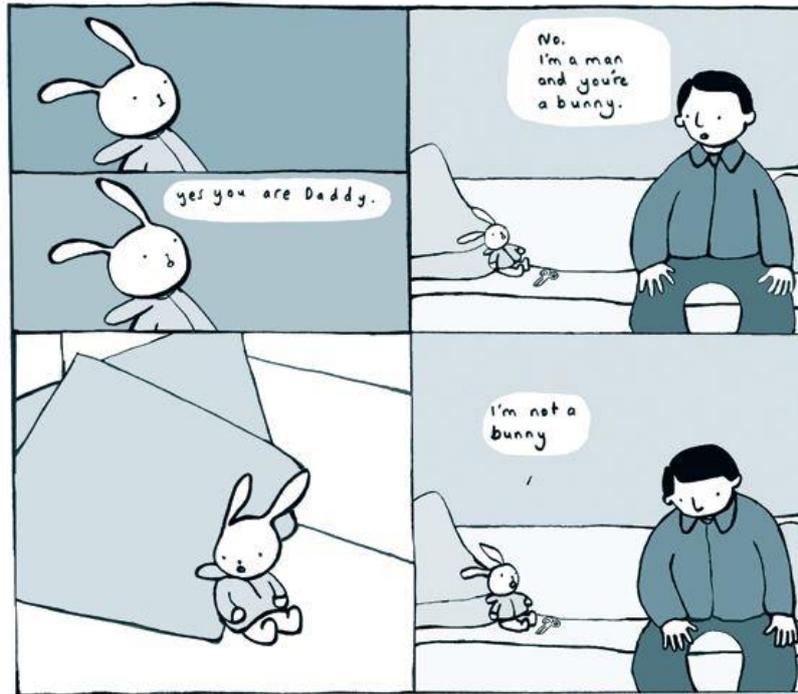
"I'm not a bunny."

"You are a bunny. You're a bunny rabbit." [Fluff's mouth is now fully agape]

"Why do you keep saying that?"

"Because it's true."

"I'M NOT A BUNNY. YOU'RE A BAD DADDY FOR SAYING THAT."



But Fluffy has already clip-clopped off, leaving Michael on the couch with a bunch of bunny droppings.

