



## The Adventures of Miss Petitfour

By Anne Michaels

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### The Adventures of Miss Petitfour By Anne Michaels

Miss Petitfour enjoys having adventures that are "just the right size - fitting into a single, magical day." She is an expert at baking and eating fancy iced cakes, and her favorite mode of travel is *par avion*. On windy days, she takes her sixteen cats out for an airing: Minky, Misty, Taffy, Purrsia, Pirate, Mustard, Moutarde, Hemdela, Earring, Grigorovitch, Clasby, Captain Captain, Captain Catkin, Captain Cothespin, Your Shyness and Sizzles. With the aid of her favorite tea party tablecloth as a makeshift balloon, Miss Petitfour and her charges fly over her village, having many little adventures along the way. Join Miss Petitfour and her equally eccentric felines on five magical outings -- a search for marmalade, to a spring jumble sale, on a quest for "birthday cheddar", the retrieval of a lost rare stamp and as they compete in the village's annual Festooning Festival. A whimsical, beautifully illustrated collection of tales that celebrates language, storytelling and small pleasures, especially the edible kind!

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## The Adventures of Miss Petitfour By Anne Michaels Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 1–4—Meet Miss Petitfour—baker, adventurer, cat-lover, reader, stamp-collector, and storyteller—and her multitudinous cats in this episodic, begging-to-be-read-aloud illustrated chapter book. Its comedic irreverence and spirited play with words, names, and pirate lore will remind readers of *Mary Poppins* and *Pippi Longstocking*. Children will savor the whimsical language and conversational tone as well as the nameless village with its wordless wooden signs ("[T]his village was friendly to all even the youngest who didn't yet know how to read and to a stranger who spoke a foreign language."). The bookstore has two sections: the "hum" section, where adventure is king, and the "ho-hum" section, where nothing much happens. There is plenty of hum in this tale, such as the stormy day when Miss Petitfour and her cats get stuck on the bell tower while traveling by a transparent plastic tablecloth "as invisible as the rain itself." A subplot concerns what makes a good story, explicitly highlighting (in font and tone) words that govern pacing: "Some words are like rays of light, white knights or a safety pin at the right moment...like 'unbelievably' or 'by great fortune.'" Then the author proceeds to use those words herself, ostensibly instructing young ones how to write digressive adventure stories. VERDICT Highly recommended for story lovers of all shapes and sizes.—Sara Lissa Paulson, City-As-School High School, New York City

## Review

"Block's charming, full-color illustrations complement the tales in a decidedly mid-20th-century modern style .... An homage to classic fantasies for an audience willing to suspend all disbelief and just go along for the ride." - *Kirkus Reviews*

"In her first children's book, adult author Michaels presents five stories driven equally by whimsy and self-aware humor .... Michaels is fond of digressions, one of many vocabulary words she highlights as the narrative comments on the peculiarities of storytelling .... Block's delicate color illustrations are ideally suited to Miss Petitfour's subdued and decidedly eccentric adventures, which involve everything from an empty marmalade jar to a lost stamp." - *Publisher's Weekly*

".... It's comedic irreverence and spirited play with words, names, and pirate lore will remind readers of *Mary Poppins* and *Pippi Longstocking*. Children will savor the whimsical language and conversational tone as well as the nameless village with its wordless wooden signs ...." - **Starred Review**, *School Library Journal*

"Toronto's new poet laureate is known for her moody adult poetry and fiction, so it came as a surprise when her kidlit debut turned out to be a fun and whimsical confection of sweet stories about a young woman and her 16 cats who take to the sky using a tablecloth as a sort of non-hot air balloon. Full of delightful language that skips and lilts off the page and the tongue, Michael's first book for kids might even be better than the stuff she writes for adults." - *Quill & Quire*

About the Author

Anne Michaels is the author of several books of poetry, of the multi-award-winning novel *Fugitive Pieces*, which was made into a feature film and won the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Guardian Fiction Prize and *The Winter Vault*, her celebrated second novel. Her most recent book, *Correspondences*, was shortlisted for the Griffin Poetry Prize. Anne's work has appeared in translation around the world. She lives in Toronto.

Emma Block is the author and illustrator of *Tea and Cake* and has illustrated several books for children. She has worked for clients including Blue Apple, Harper Collins, Orla Kiely, UNIQULO, Anthropologie, Time Out and Hallmark. She likes charity shops, tea and very sharp pencils. Her art is inspired by the people she meets in her everyday life, old photos, vintage clothes, travel, 1950s illustration and 1930s jazz. Visit her online at [emmablock.co.uk](http://emmablock.co.uk).

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#### **Sharon Bufkin:**

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