An Alphabestiary

Author
Ciardi, John

Date

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Remark:
Ciardi's opening Author's Note starts Fablers have always known that every animal is a moral waiting to be identified. Watch any animal: before long it will let you know something about mankind. I also like his other comment in that note: fablers never really know which moral they are going to get to, but only that they will eventually get to one. Then, when it does come up, they think they knew it was there from the start. Though Ciardi's text on the fox makes no mention of the fable, the illustration shows the fox under some grapes. Use of fables or even reference to fables is rare here. Under N we find N is for NANNYGOAT--the silly/who finds her loved one in a Billy;/while he, poor fool,/finds all his dream of love in her./With this much said, my fable ends./Go look at your own married friends,/or look at your own wife at home,/and write your own end to my poem. One learns in this book that the ox was originally named from root words meaning to make wet the female, that is, to beget. What? Humor in the alphabet? Fable figures strongly again in Ciardi's play with the turtle. This book is fun to read!

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