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A New Heartwarming Classic from *New York Times* Bestselling
Illustrator, **LOREN LONG**

OTIS

BY LOREN LONG

Illustrator of *New York Times* bestselling books,
The Little Engine That Could and *Toy Boat*



This fall, Penguin Young Readers Group is pleased to publish **OTIS**, (*Philomel; On-Sale: September 22, 2009; \$17.99/Ages 3-5, 978-0-399-25248-8, Picture Book, Hardcover Fiction*) a loveable and timeless tale written and illustrated by Loren Long, the American illustrator of the *New York Times* bestsellers, *The Little Engine That Could* and *Toy Boat*. Long's work has become a favorite among reviewers and booksellers and has been the recipient of

much critical acclaim. He is a two-time Golden Kite Award winner and the recipient of two gold medals from The Society of Illustrators. *The New York Times* boasted, "Loren Long's pictures make the wonder of the stars, of the imagination rather than the analytical intelligence, as visible to us as it was to Walt Witman." In a starred review of *Toy Boat*, *Booklist* praised, "Long's acrylic, hyperrealistic pictures, awash with many shades of blue, are so substantial they seem to be molded from clay." Dedicated fans and new readers will marvel at Long's latest unforgettable character and breathtaking depiction of the American landscape in a story that he has perfectly captured through written word and art.

Otis is an adorable red tractor who loves to live and work on the farm. One night, a baby calf joins him in the adjacent stall of the barn but whimpers the night away because she misses her mother. Otis' engine putt puff puttedy chuffs throughout the night and eventually puts the scared calf to sleep. This becomes the start of a wonderful friendship and the two spend each day leapfrogging bales of hay and playing ring-round-the-rosy in the fields. When the farmer decides to replace Otis with a sparkling new yellow tractor, Otis is cast away behind the barn. The little calf is forced to sleep next to the new, loud tractor whose purr is not calm and soothing but loud

and fierce. Otis soon becomes a distant memory for the rest of the farm, but not for the calf because she misses him terribly. But when the baby calf gets stuck in the mud pond and the farm hands and the fire engines can't dig her out, it is good old Otis who comes to rescue her and saves the day.

In the tradition of *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* and *The Story of Ferdinand*, **OTIS** is an endearing story about love, friendship and loyalty set in the beautiful heartland. With Long's perfect style and distinct story telling ability, it's no wonder he is quickly becoming a household name. With designs that are all his own but reminiscent of greats like Grant Wood and Robert Lawson, Long's illustrations are destined to stand the test of time. Like the characters in *The Little Engine That Could* and *Toy Boat*, **OTIS** represents the spirit of our country and truly is the next American hero.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:

LOREN LONG is a Midwesterner, having grown up in Missouri and attended school at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. He played baseball—loved baseball—and other sports, and adored art and story. He pursued graduate-level studies at the American Academy of Art in Chicago after graduating with a BA in Graphic Design/Art Studio from Kentucky. He is best known for his illustration of Madonna's *Mr. Peabody's Apples* and the *New York Times* bestsellers, *Toy Boat* and re-illustration of the classic, *The Little Engine That Could*. He is also the author/illustrator of critically acclaimed, *The Little Drummer Boy* (2008).

For more information about **OTIS**, please contact Samantha Dell'Olio at 212.414.3464 or Samantha.Dell'Olio@us.penguin.com or Casey McIntyre at 212.414.3467 or Casey.McIntyre@us.penguin.com

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