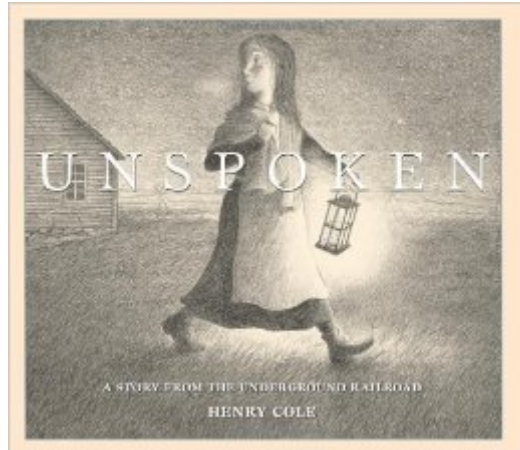


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# Unspoken: A Story From The Underground Railroad



## Synopsis

A young girl's courage is tested in this haunting, wordless story. When a farm girl discovers a runaway slave hiding in the barn, she is at once startled and frightened. But the stranger's fearful eyes weigh upon her conscience, and she must make a difficult choice. Will she have the courage to help him? Unspoken gifts of humanity unite the girl and the runaway as they each face a journey: one following the North Star, the other following her heart. Henry Cole's unusual and original rendering of the Underground Railroad speaks directly to our deepest sense of compassion.

## Book Information

Series: Unspoken

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Scholastic Press; 10.2.2012 edition (November 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0545399971

ISBN-13: 978-0545399975

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 11 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (49 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #36,419 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) [#57 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s](#) [#105 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > African-American](#) [#176 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Values](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Making a picture book that's wordless is usually more of a storytelling choice than a symbolic one, but here the wordlessness is both, as the title implies. This is a story about keeping quiet for all the right reasons, about keeping a secret to keep someone safe. It is also about not needing to speak to help someone out--which makes me think of quiet kindnesses in everyday life. As our story begins, a young farm girl bringing the cow home from the pasture watches five men pass on horseback. The first one is carrying a Confederate flag, so we understand that this story takes place in the South during the Civil War era. The girl goes to feed the chickens, and then her mother sends her to fetch the eggs from a small barn. As she does so, she is frightened to realize that someone is hiding in a

big stack of corn stalks laid in one corner of the barn, perhaps to dry for feed. The girl runs back to the house, but even before she goes inside, she starts to calm down and think about what this means. She does not say anything to her family, but after dinner she goes out to the barn with some food for the fugitive. Perhaps my favorite part about this story is a spread showing different hands holding different food items on the same checked cloth--showing that each member of the family separately slips out to the barn to feed the runaway slave hiding there. The next day two men come to the farm looking for a runaway slave, but the girl's family sends them away. That night the runaway is gone, but she has left a simple gift behind for the girl, something she has made from the checked napkin and the corn husks. A good picture book is like a poem. It is hard to tell a story well in just a few words or just a few pictures, but Cole succeeds beautifully.

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