



[Home](#) > [While You're Sleeping](#)

While You're Sleeping

Books Reviewed:

[While You're Sleeping](#) [1]

Issue:

[245](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Jill Bennett](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

This collaboration brings together **Booker Prize** shortlisted author Mick Jackson and John Broadley who is also well known for his adult books, in their first aimed at a young audience. The outcome is a terrific picture book telling and showing children what countless humans and animals are busy doing while they themselves are snuggled up fast asleep.

Think how horrid it would be to get on a morning train or bus and find it bestrewn with rubbish, or to walk along the street to school and then to come into a classroom or a shop and discover what it would be like had not the cleaners been hard at work. There are also lots of lorry drivers delivering food and other goods driving through the dark nights with fresh supplies of merchandise for the shops to sell, while post-office workers are hard at work sorting mail, fire-fighters and ambulance crews at the ready to answer emergency calls. Then there are bakers cooking and shops whose staff take over for a shift that allows them to provide a 24 hour service, dedicated teams of hospital doctors, nurses and others; as well as crews of ships and smaller craft out on long voyages.

There's a plethora of animal activity too, in the form of foraging foxes, owls, hares and bats.

Youngsters are also reminded that while they're a-bed, in other parts of the world there will be boys and girls in their classrooms or engaging in sports, whose days will end when the sleepers wake up.

The author's voice is direct and friendly, and the book reads aloud very well. John Broadley's artwork is incredible: scenes mesmerizingly alive with texture and detail and with soft echoes of Eric Ravilious, interspersed with comic-book style illustrations.

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Links:

[1] <http://ww.w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/while-you're-sleeping>

[2] <http://ww.w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/245>

[3] <http://ww.w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/jill-bennett>