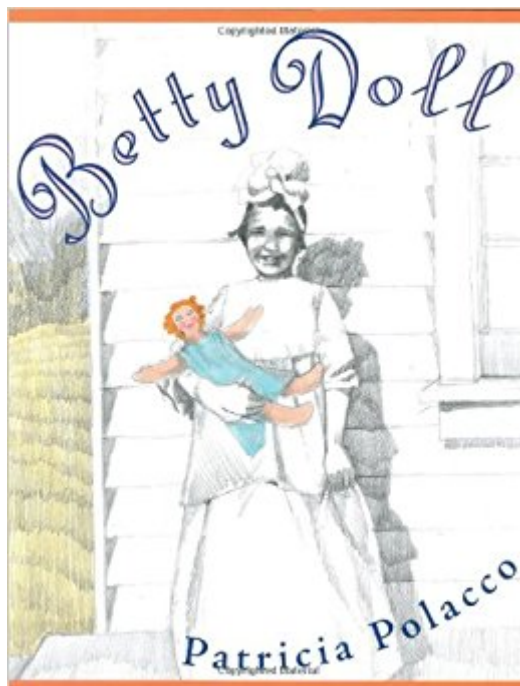


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# Betty Doll



## Synopsis

Patricia Polacco shares a never-before-told story about her mother's favorite doll. "My Darlin Trisha, my mother wrote..." So begins the story of Patricia Polacco's mother's favorite doll. Whenever Mary Ellen needed Betty Doll, she was there. She survived blizzards and thunderstorms, attended parties and weddings, and helped mourn the deaths of old friends. From the day Trisha's mother first sewed Betty Doll together stitch by stitch, to the day, many years later, when she discovered she had cancer, her soft, sweet Betty Doll was there. Now Betty Doll lives on in Patricia Polacco's soft, beautiful artwork as Trisha shares the warm and poignant moments of her mother's favorite doll with readers of all ages.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD540L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: Philomel Books; First Edition edition (April 2, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0399236384

ISBN-13: 978-0399236389

Product Dimensions: 8.8 x 0.4 x 11.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #922,222 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #28 in [Books > Children's Books > Activities, Crafts & Games > Crafts & Hobbies > Antiques & Collectibles](#) #1652 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Multigenerational](#) #4973 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Young Mary Ellen is heartbroken when her family's farmhouse burns to the ground, taking all five of her dolls with it. So when her mother announces that they are going to make her a new doll, she is overjoyed. But little does she know that Betty Doll will travel with her as her closest confidant through her whole life, watching as first Mary Ellen grows up, then her children, and her grandchildren. Along the way, Betty is privy to family events big and small: a devastating blizzard, tea parties, weddings, floods, illness, births, deaths, and war. When a much older Mary Ellen

discovers she has cancer, she writes a letter to her grown daughter, Tricia, telling her the story of Betty Doll, and passing on her own abiding love for Tricia. Tricia, or Patricia Polacco, has shared the words of the letter in this touching tribute to her mother, with black and white (with splashes of color) sketches that reflect the time span from the early 1900s to the present. Polacco often plumbs the depths of her family history for picture book ideas. She is the author of *Chicken Sunday*, *The Butterfly*, and many other warm tales. (Ages 5 to 9) --Emilie Coulter

Polacco (*Thank You, Mr. Falker*) again elegantly embroiders a patch from the fabric of her own life in a moving tale that demonstrates the importance of family legacies. "I know that someday you'll read this when your heart is aching," reads the note that the author finds attached to Betty Doll after her mother's [Mary Ellen's] death. Mary Ellen's letter goes on to explain how, as a girl, she and her mother made the doll from scraps of cloth after her other dolls perished in the fire that destroyed their home. Readers will happily tumble back in time as the fluid, conversational narrative reveals anecdotes underscoring Betty Doll's importance in Mary Ellen's life. For instance, the sight of Betty Doll who had fallen out of her owner's book bag alerts the child's father to her whereabouts during a blizzard; and when the girl is bedridden with a fever, Betty keeps her company. Over the years, the author and then her own children find solace in the beloved doll, who "kissed away tears, soothed hurt knees and was a guest at hundreds of tea parties and slumber nights." In an effective graphic manipulation, the doll alone appears in color against Polacco's finely detailed black-and-white art, which smoothly incorporates framed family photos arranged on tabletops. Together, text and illustrations credibly and poignantly capture the powerful bond among four generations of a loving family. All ages. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

beautiful story. It made me cry. Was undecided if I should buy this for myself because I love patricia polacco but i am really glad i did.

This is the most wonderful story! The service by the Seller was terrific. Great experience. Thanks so much!

I am a huge fan of Patricia Polacco. I love this story as my mom died of breast cancer and this story really hit home. The illustrations were spot on and it is a story I can read over and over. Keep the great stories coming, Patricia.

I've always loved how Patricia Polacco writes. Her books are perfect for Author's Craft, vivid descriptions, feelings... This is a new book added to my collection. I read her to my 5th grade students all year long.

Patricia Polacco has, once again, gone to her family for a story around which to hang her usual marvelous illustrations. "Betty Doll" doesn't disappoint. Polacco opens the book by telling the reader about her mother dying and about packing up her belongings and then finally going through them a year later. In some of the boxes Polacco packed up, she finds her mother's old, handmade cloth doll. Wrapped around it is the letter her mother wrote while dying of cancer. Now before you decide that this is NOT a book for children, you should know that the book overall has a joyous, shimmering quality. The story concentrates on Betty Doll's travels and adventures, with Polacco deftly portraying Betty Doll in color while all else is in handsome but quiet black-and-white tones. This brings Betty's story to the fore visually, but as far as the story itself goes, she serves as a backdrop for different generations of Polacco's family. The story is true, and it rings true. A little girl's love of her doll and the happiness she finds while playing with the doll come to the fore, as does the stability of Betty Doll throughout the changes of the little girl's life as she grows up, marries, and so on. This is a fine way to gently ease into discussing the cancer of a family member with any young child, but it is also an absorbing tale in its own right and stands ably on its own, aided by Polacco's usual impeccable illustrations.

I like Betty Doll because it is a true story and it has pictures of real people on stands. It is also good because Betty Doll stands out in color because she is the main character and also the people are black with some color for the clothes. This book is about this little girl who makes a doll with her grandmother. The little girl named her Betty Doll. The little girl grew up and had children she gave her little girl Betty Doll. When her little girl was about 10 her great grandmother got cancer and the little girl who grew up and had Betty Doll was really sad. They remembered all there memories about Betty Doll and also how they made her and what they did with her. I recommend that you read Betty Doll because it is a true story and it is also very good

As with many of Patricia's books, her stories touch the hearts of adults as well as children. I believe that this book, along with Pink and Say and others, is more of an intermediate to adult level book but is often marketed for young children because it is a picture book. Children could certainly grow up hearing this story and having it develop new meaning as they have their own life experiences. Betty

Doll would make a wonderful gift to celebrate the love between mothers and daughters. I gave this book to my nine year old and she understood and enjoyed it very much. I think it will gain new meaning for her as she grows up. Remember, we are never too old for picture books, especially Patrica Polacco stories.

My class listened to Patricia Polacco read Betty Doll during an author study last month. This story was written from the heart and it was evident by the number of tears I saw rolling down the cheeks of my fourth graders and my own. Polacco out did herself on this one. This story makes a mother feel truly special. Polacco shares not only a story but a family treasure that has been cherished. We recomend this book to anyone with a heart. It will pull at your heart strings. What a beautiful way for Patricia to share her mother's memory with the world and say goodbye.

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