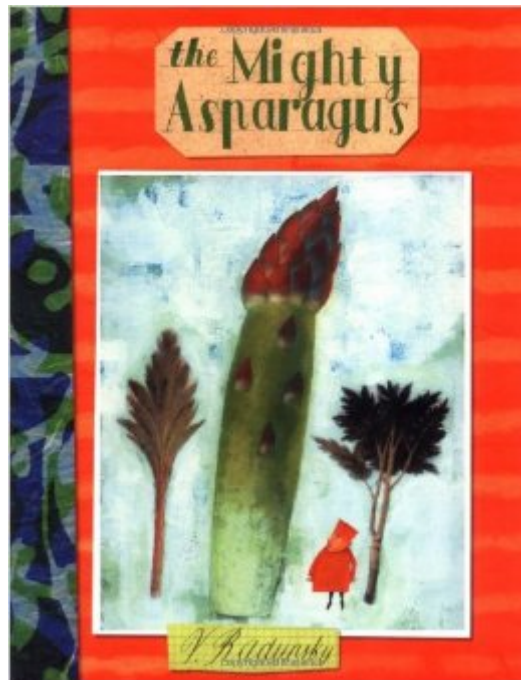


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# The Mighty Asparagus (New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Books (Awards))



## Synopsis

Long ago in Italy, a mighty asparagus grew smack-dab in front of the king's castle. Was the king happy about it? No. The asparagus had to go. But how does a king reason with an asparagus of such stature? With tongue planted firmly in cheek, Vladimir Radunsky tells the uproarious tale of an almost immovable vegetable. Drawing on Italian Renaissance art, the esteemed artist creates a breathtaking magical kingdom, where it's easy to imagine that such an asparagus existed. His artwork is as gorgeous as it is funny. Although the old masters may turn over in their graves, readers of all ages will clamor for more of *The Mighty Asparagus*.

## Book Information

Series: New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Books (Awards)

Hardcover: 34 pages

Publisher: Harcourt Children's Books; 1 edition (May 1, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0152167439

ISBN-13: 978-0152167431

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.4 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (3 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,325,529 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #37 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Collections](#) #84 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Renaissance](#) #1286 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Royalty](#)

Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Prior to this book, Radunsky was probably best known for his illustrated children's books (picture and otherwise) and his insipid, "What Does Peace Feel Like?" of 2003. Nothing, in short, that set him apart from the pack of children's illustrators everywhere. Then he got an idea. He decided to create a picture book much in the style of such ribald and witty artists as Jon Scieszka and former partner Chris Raschka. A picture book that strains at the edges of convention. In short, a crazy amalgamation of classic Italian portraiture, the old Giant Turnip turned asparagus tale, and some mixed media for spice. The result is a book that may not always work in the ways Radunsky may

have wanted it to, but at least it takes a gamble on being a little different. Other picture books should be so brave. If you know the story of the giant turnip, then this tale will come to you as little surprise. One day the king is walking around his backyard when he spies a gigantic asparagus, fully grown, standing in the middle of things. Everyone admits that it is amazing, but the king is determined to remove it forthwith. Says he, "It sticks out like a sore thumb". No amount of pulling or tugging so much as budes the vegetable, however. His wife, the queen, finds the asparagus to be a beautiful sight. Her wish is to place it in the center of the palace but both she and the king are unable to move it. Add on the princess, the bravest the knight in the kingdom, and a mighty rhinoceros, but for all these the asparagus remains. Finally the king consults his mother and she sends a single tiny bird, who brings the tasty green tall thing crashing down. The moral, hidden amongst a lot of jabbering by the king's subjects, boils down to, "Even the smallest effort counts". End of tale.

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