



Monster and Boy (Jul 2020)

Author: [Barnaby, Hannah Rodgers](#)

Illustrator: Syed, Anoosha - ill.

Ages 0-8 **Fiction**

Series: [Monster and Boy, 1](#)

Description: A debut entry in a whimsical chapter-book series follows the riotous misadventures of a **Boy** and a **Monster**, who forge a remarkable friendship when the surprised **Boy** encounters the **Monster** under his bed **and** is promptly swallowed up.

Book Appeal Terms: [Definition of Appeal Terms](#)

Genre: Fantasy fiction; Illustrated books; Metafiction

Tone: Sweet

Writing Style: Attention-grabbing

Illustration: Cartoonish

Min/Max Grade level: 1 - 3

Lexile: 570 **Accelerated Reader:** [IL: LG, BL: 3.9, AR Pts: 1](#)

Booklist:

Grades 1-3 /* Starred Review */ A beautiful friendship gets off to a rocky start when a boy is accidentally swallowed by the mild-mannered monster beneath his bed. Taking a seat with her audience, the author invites readers to supply names for the characters themselves and admits that she, too, has no idea what's coming. A later comment that "stories have a way of getting carried away, don't they?" well and truly sums up what happens next, as by the time the boy is coughed up a few hours later, he's shrunk to the size of a hamster. Among other adventures, he runs into what his frazzled companion dubs his little "sister-monster" on a wee-hours expedition down to the kitchen for snacks, is chucked into the toilet, and delightedly gets to munch on a cookie that is, to him, the size of a sled. Turquoise highlights both illuminate and visually bind the well-leaded text and Syed's frequent line drawings. The monster resembles an

unfrightening blend of Wild Thing and plush teddy, and though the tale takes a shivery twist with the revelation that reality is actually based on the dreams of monsters, all ends in happy giggles. By morning, he's back to original size and, it turns out, that toilet had just been cleaned. Which is still gross, but not so much, right? -- John Peters (Reviewed 6/1/2020) (Booklist, vol 116, number 19, p91)

School Library Journal:

Gr 1–3—One night, as a young boy goes to bed, he tells his mother that he is not afraid of monsters. The monster who lives under the bed hears the boy and decides to show him the error of his ways, but things go awry when the boy starts to scream and the monster accidentally swallows him. Together, the monster and the boy solve problems, journey through the house, and meet up with the boy's precocious little sister before finally falling asleep. Young readers will find friends in monster and boy. On most of the pages, Syed's silly and inviting illustrations are rendered in black, white, and teal and perfectly complement the duo's amusing antics. The first line of each chapter is in teal and a different font, which may be challenging for early readers, but the rest of the text is easy to read with plenty of white space. Barnaby directly addresses the reader a few times throughout the story, as well as changes tenses. Newly emergent readers may find this style choice challenging, but it could work well as a teaching tool for slightly older readers or in a read-aloud setting. Otherwise, the language is straightforward and the illustrations work in tandem to support the text. VERDICT This whimsical pair will be a hit with those looking for a playful, adventurous story for early independent chapter book readers. Most collections serving this age range will benefit from this addition.—Ellen Conlin, Naperville P.L., IL --Ellen Conlin (Reviewed 06/01/2020) (School Library Journal, vol 66, issue 6, p55)

Publishers Weekly:

"There's no such thing as monsters," a bespectacled boy's mother tells him before bed. But the antlered creature who has lived under the bed for years knows that's not true: "he knew the sound of the boy's voice, and he loved that sound. He knew the smell of the boy's dirty socks, and he loved that smell." Emerging from beneath the bed for the first time, the monster panics when the boy opens his mouth to

scream—doing “the only thing he could think of,” he swallows the child. At first distressed, the monster manages to cough up the now diminutive boy, and shenanigans ensue: the child is dropped into the toilet, the monster carries him around, and another monsterlike creature is discovered. Barnaby’s (Garcia & Colette Go Exploring) entertaining narration breaks the fourth wall—indicated by teal pages—encouraging readers to take an active part in the story, while Syed’s (I Am Perfectly Designed) bubbly monochromatic illustrations with teal embellishments add whimsy to this amusing story about an unlikely friendship. Ages 6–9. Author’s agent: Linda Pratt, Wernick & Pratt. Illustrator’s agent: Taylor Martindale Kean, Full Circle Literary. (July) --Staff (Reviewed 06/01/2020) (Publishers Weekly, vol 267, issue 22, p)

Kirkus:

/ Starred Review */* A boy discovers that monsters are real—and that one lives under his bed. The monster and the boy—no names given—share a bedroom, but they have never met. The monster is nocturnal and has lived under the boy’s bed for many years; he knows the sound of the boy’s voice and loves the smell of his dirty socks. One night the boy’s mother reads her son a book about monsters, and she tells him that there is no such thing as monsters. Knowing this is untrue, the monster decides to introduce himself. Predictably, this doesn’t go as well as the monster expects, and when the boy screams, the monster swallows him in a panic. This is distressing for both the monster (who just lost his only friend) and the boy (who now finds himself trapped inside a stomach). Eventually the monster coughs the boy out—only to discover the boy is now grasshopper-sized. Humor ensues. In archly amusing fashion, the author breaks the fourth wall—this is marked by teal-colored page backgrounds—reassuring readers during potentially scary parts of the book, filling in background details, or collegially including them in aspects of the storytelling. Teal-flecked grayscale cartoons appear on almost every page, making this a solid choice for new independent readers. As depicted on the cover, the boy has tightly coiled brown curls and pink skin. No need to be afraid of monsters after reading this sweet and unusual friendship story. (Fantasy. 6-9) (Kirkus Reviews, May 1, 2020)