



No Such Thing

By Jackie French Koller

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There is no such thing as a monster, and certainly no such thing as a monster under the bed. That's what Howard's mother tells him. There is no such thing as a boy, and certainly no such thing as a boy on top of a bed. That's what Monster's mother tells him. But no matter what their mothers say, Howard and Monster remain afraid of the dark . . . until one spooky night when both face their deepest fears. Jackie French Koller and Betsy Lewin have created a "monster-under-the-bed" story that offers the perfect cure for fear of the dark--laughter!

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Monsters, according to popular opinion, live under beds. Koller (the *Mole and Shrew* books), rather than deny these beasts' existence, questions their frightful intentions. In this mildly suspenseful tale, a boy named Howard tells his mother, "I heard [a monster] snurkling under my bed." Meanwhile, a young monster informs his mother that he hears a boy "sneezing on top of my bed." Left alone by their disbelieving parents, human and monster peek at each other and shriek in fear; only when their terror turns to tears do they dare a second, curious look. On the closing page, they trade places for a practical joke that's left to the reader's imagination: " 'Oh, Mommy,' they both called together. 'Mommy, come quick!'" Lewin (*Somebody Catch My Homework*) draws in loose, Quentin Blake-style gestures of pen and ink, and fills the negative space with watercolor washes of dusky blue and brown. She envisions Monster (who reads a scary comic titled *Boy*) as a warty green gargoyle with clawed toes, a boar's snout and tusks. Koller invents a monster vocabulary: Monster "whimples" when Howard whimpers, and "sniggles" when his friend giggles. The plot is predictable and even a bit shopworn, yet the energetic telling and agreeable illustrations could put some fears temporarily to rest. Ages 4-8.

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From School Library Journal

PreSchool-Grade 2. When Howard tells his mother about the monster under his bed, she says there's no such thing. Young Monster's mother says the same thing when he describes the boy on top of the bed. When the two at last meet, however, with an eye-popping mutual "Aagh!" it's clear that they have much in common, including parents long since fed up with their offspring's imaginations. The bonds of friendship forge, and the final page shows the two hatching a plan to scare their disbelieving moms. Like Mercer Mayer's *There's a Nightmare in My Closet* (Dial, 1968), this is a satisfying version of the familiar tale of child/monster coexistence. It runs a gamut of emotions from apprehension to frustration (both child and parent), terror, empathy, to, finally, the friendly sharing of a good joke. Lewin's ink-and-wash cartoon scrawls lend just the right exaggerated and humorous touch to put Koller's all-too-likely scenario over the top. Children will recognize themselves in this tale and will enjoy conjuring up denouements limited only by their imaginations. Meg Stackpole, Rye Free Reading Room, NY

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From [Booklist](#)

Ages 5^8. Koller takes a familiar story and adds a humorous twist: from under the bed, a monster mother tells her frightened son, "There are no such things as boys." The story cuts back and forth, alternating typical night fright scenes between the boy and his mother with the monster version of the same scene taking place under the bed. In a clever final scene, boy and monster, having discovered each other, team up to trick the moms by switching places and giving one last call for help. Koller's timing is right on, and Lewin's illustrations, expressive watercolors accented with thick, loose black line, have the same fast, humorous pace as the story. Librarians who think they don't need another monster-under-the-bed story might want to reconsider. Lauren Peterson

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Tiara Arnold:

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