



Monster Mama

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Even though she's a real monster, Patrick Edward loves his mom -- especially when she uses her powers to tame a trio of young bullies -- in this exuberantly illustrated picture book about the universal love between a mother and child."One person's monster is another's mom. Young readers know that already, but they have just been reminded in a hilarious way". -- Horn Book

-- " (Gammell's) illustrations crackle with childlike energy". -- Publishers Weekly, starred review

"Has humor, suspense, and just a hint of magic to beguile readers". -- School Library journal

Monster Mama Details

Date : Published February 24th 1997 by Puffin (first published 1993)

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Author : *Liz Rosenberg , Stephen Gammell*

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From Reader Review Monster Mama for online ebook

Nicole says

This is one of the best picture books that I have ever read. Ever. It's one of the few picture books that honestly addresses what it's like to have a parent who isn't perfect. And maybe way less than perfect. I've given it to adults and read it with kids, and everyone likes it. I appreciate picture books with a bit of reality -- even if it's fantastical reality. The art is dark and messy and lovely.

Mischa says

I will never stop reading or buying childrens books. Now that I have a Niece I have an "excuse", but it really just means I have to buy TWO :-) This book has amazing illustrations and the proclamation "Death to all Tyrants!"... really... couldn't be better!

Miriam says

Odd and interesting picture book about a small boy whose mother appears to be a monster. How or why this is the case (is she a mutant? something supernatural? is it a metaphor?) is not addressed, nor do we know how the community feels about this semi-reclusive* monster in their midst other than that "her bad moods terrified the neighborhood." What is important is that her son loves her, and she loves and protects (in a non-stifling, independence-encouraging way) him. And that you should not steal other people's special fancy desserts.

*The son appears to do the shopping etc and the mother doesn't meet people, but she does drive him to school on rainy days, in a concealing hooded cape.

Mir says

Magical, suspenseful. I picked this book up for the love of Stephen Gammel's illustrations and was not at all disappointed by them. Enjoyed seeing his work in full, abstracted color as opposed to the black and white of the Scary Stories illustrations. I felt they matched the writing style well. The mystery surrounding Monster Mama was fascinating- I found her conflict resolution surprising but fun. I appreciate that she is a delightful, opinionated, loving and caring introverted "monster," with unconventional appearances-- a strong and alluring female character.

Cheryl says

The blurb implies that any mother could be a monster to other children, but I do think it's very clear that this

mother is challenged by some sort of mental illness. And look, it's illustrated by Stephen Gammell again - he of the multiple Caldecott winners, he of many different styles of art....

Ronyell says

Imagine that your mother was actually a terrifying monster that scares anyone who comes across her, but you still love your mother anyway because, she is your mother! That is what happens in this story called "Monster Mama" which was written by Liz Rosenberg along with illustrations by Stephen Gammell and children everywhere will definitely enjoy reading this book about loving your parents for who they are.

Patrick Edward was a young boy who was extremely wonderful, but his mother is a monster and she lived in a cave at the back of their house. Even though his mother was a monster, she truly cared for her son Patrick Edward as she tended to him when he was sick and taught him magic spells that could put anyone to sleep. One day, Monster Mama, whom Patrick Edward affectionately calls her, wanted Patrick Edward to pick up some strawberries for a dessert she wants to make. So, Patrick Edward decides to go to the new market across town and buy some strawberry tarts. Unfortunately, Patrick Edward meets up with some bullies who start torturing him.

"Monster Mama" is one children's book that I hold dearly to my heart ever since I was a child and not only did it have some really awesome illustrations and a really creative story, but the message about loving your parents for who they are is one that stayed with me for a long time. Liz Rosenberg has done an excellent job at writing this story as I loved the main character Patrick Edward as he is shown to be a tough yet friendly little boy who dearly loves his mother, even though she is a monster. I loved the message that Liz Rosenberg was sending out to the audience about the importance of loving your parents no matter what they look like or act like and it was great seeing Patrick Edward show so much love for his mother and I really loved the way that Monster Mama loved Patrick Edward so much. Stephen Gammell's illustrations are perfectly suited for this story as there are splatters of paint littered all over the pages, giving the story a chaotic feel. I also loved the appearance of Monster Mama herself as she is always wearing a white dress, but her hair is so messy, she has sharp claws and she has sharp teeth that makes her look so menacing.

The only problem that young children might have with this book is that the illustrations do look a bit scary. Since Stephen Gammell's illustrations have splatters of paint all over the pages and the characters having wild looking hair and faces, they might scare smaller children. The appearance of Monster Mama herself might scare younger children since she does look menacing, especially whenever she is angry as her eyes glow red and her sharp teeth really shows.

Overall, "Monster Mama" is a truly brilliant story for children who love monster stories and who love reading stories about the importance of loving your parents no matter what they look like. I would recommend this book to children's ages five and up since the illustrations might scare smaller children.

Review is also on: Rabbit Ears Book Blog

Kelly H. (Maybedog) says

Odd.

Samantha Penrose says

Awesome illustrations!

Touching and Strange.

There are no notes in the book, but when I began reading it I immediately wondered if it had been written by someone who has been affected in some way by a bipolar disorder, manic depression, or some other up down and all around mental illness.

I don't think that the reviews on the back cover are very accurate. Words like "hilarious", "cozy", and "tender" (from three different blurbs) don't really seem to fit in my eyes.....words that come to my mind are...unfortunate, difficult, wild, cope, compromise, dedicated, disturbed....

I think that this might be a little much for my sweet, smart, sensitive, inquisitive five year old....maybe in another year or two I'll try reading this to him. The illustrations are like a bad trip, and the image/idea of a boy being bound to a tree by bullies may be a touch too disturbing for/to him.

I would definitely recommend this to others, but I would suggest reading it yourself before sharing it with your child...

Claire says

Glorious illustrations. Warm story of maternal love and what a wonderful support that is for a child and how it colors the child's interactions in the world. Kids love the surprising twists in this story as much as the adult who reads it to them.

Hira says

making connections

Michele says

One of my favorite illustrators. Beautiful, colorful, wild book about a mother and son's love.

Dolly says

This is a strange story about a little boy with a monster mama. She literally is a monster in this tale, although perhaps it could stand as a metaphor for a woman with a disfigurement, a terrible disease, a phobia, mental illness or even an addiction that keeps her homebound.

The two obviously care greatly for one another and defend each other from taunts and bullies. The story is pretty good, but I wasn't a big fan of the illustrations. We enjoyed reading this story together and I had fun

pretending to be a monster, too.

Greta is Erikasbuddy says

A beautiful children's book about a little boy who has a special kind of mama.

A Monster Mama!!

Monster Mama is indeed that... A monster! She lives in a cave at the back of the house and teaches her little boy how to do magic and roar.

But Patrick Edward isn't a monster. He just has a one as his Mama.

One day Mama tells Patrick Edward to go pick up some desert from the market. On the way he gets bullied by three mean kids. Monster Mama hears this from her cave and runs down there to make things right.

In the end they all become friends and Monster Mama saves the day even if she doesn't like people to see her.

This is a fantastic book for your older little one. If you child is into monsters and ghosts then this book is for them!

The artwork is also beautiful and very well done.

A must have!

Would be great to read around Halloween, too :)

Karen says

The art is unique and the story is captivating. Great quotable dialogue from the protagonist.

Randie D. Camp, M.S. says

Patrick Edward's mother has bad moods, unpredictable behavior, and lives at the back of the house in a cave...she is a "monster mama". But even with her bad moods, she has the sweetest touch, great advice, and she loves Patrick Edward very much. One day, Patrick Edward goes into town to buy supplies for a sweet dessert but he is stopped by three horrible bullies. Will his mother's advice help him? Can his monster mama protect him?

This book has a great message and can be used to simply tell a story or as a tool to open discussion about parental mental health. The illustrations express the wild and unpredictable emotions/feelings that can arise from having a parent that is "moody" or from having a parent that struggles with a mental health condition.

