



# A Dark, Dark Tale

*Ruth Brown*

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## A Dark, Dark Tale Ruth Brown

Children will delight in following the black cat's progress through the dark wood, into the dark house, and eventually to the surprise discovery at the back of the toy cupboard, in this mysterious, beautifully illustrated picture book.

## A Dark, Dark Tale Details

Date : Published July 16th 1992 by Red Fox (first published 1981)

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Author : Ruth Brown

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## **From Reader Review A Dark, Dark Tale for online ebook**

### **Lisa Fanelli says**

I love this book! This book was my first favorite book as a child. I had issues with my eyesight that went misdiagnosed until the third grade. I was a third grader that could not read. I could not track the print on the page. I had to go to vision therapy to strengthen my eye muscles to track print. The reason I loved this book because of the wonderful pictures. My parents would read me this story. Then I would "read" the story based on the pictures. This was the first book that I could "read". I memorized the book to say I could read.

I read this story every year to my students. I tell them this was the book that made me love reading. In first grade, we are all struggling to read because we are still learning. Even my highest readers are still learning. This sparks a year long discussion of our favorite books. They read books and say "O, this is my new favorite book".

I also use this book to teach my students to look at the pictures to further their understanding of reading the text. Standard RL.1.3 states "Describe characters, setting, and major events in a story using key details". I use this book as a mini lesson to show my class that some of the information listed might come from the picture. This is also a great book to teach students to ask and answer questions about key details in a text: RL.1.1. When reading this book, the reader is not sure what is behind the dark, dark door or down the dark, dark hall until the end of the book. The whole time we are reading as a class, we are making predictions about what is in the dark, dark house. This is a great picture book for younger students.

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### **alexa (travelingreads) says**

LMAO what a funny, slightly dark but totally expected read.

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### **Lisa Vegan says**

Well, I thought the dark cat was cute, until the very end at least. And, I liked this throughout, until maybe the end. The end was a surprise, and it was welcomed as it added a bit of zing to the story. But, it made the cat seem less adorable to me, and when I got to the end, I found myself thinking well what was the point of that, even though I saw the point. For very young children the repetition and the telling of the tale with very few words really works, and older children can enjoy this story as well. The illustrations are wonderful, and just a little unusual for a picture book, especially one that might be enjoyed by the very young.

I ended up really liking this book. The illustrations are beautiful and interesting. It's a very simple story told in a very simple way that manages to have a surprise ending.

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### **Calista says**

This Dark Dark Tale is a study in setting a mood and a tone. This is a beginning reader for any youngster.

There are few words. Each page takes you further in or forward to more and more details to focus on. It adds to the suspense. This is brilliant and so much fun. Really.

I love the artwork of this book. Everything is dilapidated and in ruin. It feels spooky when it's so empty besides a cat. A feeling of quiet oozes from the book. I read this in a hushed tone and the kids were completely engrossed in each page. The tension mounted. This was fun to read. They both loved it and they gave it 5 stars. The nephew could almost read this book, but not quite. It is such a simple story that works because of the simplicity. It's like Jaws, it's that unknowing of what is really around. The niece was concerned after the story. It did have an effect on her so I had to tickle her to help reset the mood and she could sleep. It worked a little.

I opened a page with a sweeping curtain and it was like a memory stirred. As children, we didn't go to the library a lot, but we did go and get books. That picture stirred a memory of this book and I think I read this as a child. It got to the states in 1984 so it's totally possible this was a school read or something. I don't remember many of the books I read from the library as a kid as I didn't write them down, but that picture felt like a leaf rustling in the back of my mind and I do think I read this as a child. I wish I didn't lose the memory of all the books I read. There are several that I keep trying to figure out the title of that I remember reading the story. In particular, there is one about a forest and a witch that was a read-a-long that I read over and over and I can't find it. I think this is another one I found. Why wasn't there Goodreads back then? Le Sigh.

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### **Mel Jennings says**

In the wood there was a dark, dark house, at the front of the house there was a dark, dark door. This book will encourage children to join in if being used as a read aloud story book. With its use of repetition on every page, children can become the story tellers. Follow the pages all the way to the end to discover what is hiding in the dark, dark box. Encourage the children to use their imaginations as you make your way through this story, there are lots of opportunities for the children to engage with this story. And what was hiding in that dark, dark box? It is only a little mouse! This book has some truly lovely illustrations that cover all of the pages, it can be used as a great tool for getting children to use their imaginations and to encourage discussion. Nursery children through to key stage one will enjoy this exciting, unpredictable story. And for those of you that are worried that it could be too scary, I tested it out on my 4 year old who was amazed and engaged throughout the whole story.

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### **Cheryl says**

Gorgeous pictures and effectively suspenseful text. Ambiguous ending - I'd ask the children what they think happened next. I believe this is popular in the schools; I seem to recall the title from when I was in teacher-training at the university. Excellent for those of us who can't handle a steady diet of pretty, charming, and sweet.

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## Angela says

This is a tale which begins out on a 'dark dark moor' and follows a sequence moving from the moor, to a wood, to a house, to a door, to the inside of the house etc. The story leads us through the house to a box within which lies a surprise for the reader. The surprise is not all that exciting and doesn't really relate to the rest of the story. The story ends once the box is opened and we see what is inside.

The words 'dark dark' are repeated throughout the story as all of the items are described like this. Some children may enjoy this repetition. What's interesting or unusual about this story is that there are no people mentioned in it. This adds to the eeriness of it. The book's illustrations are well drawn but again quite eerie using dark muted tones. I think these may not appeal to younger children who may find them a bit drab and unappealing.

There are so many great kids books available that overall I didn't really like this book. I felt the story was weak and not enough happened in it. It might be a nice story to read to a Year 1 class around Halloween time because of its dark eerie theme. There is also scope for some class discussion on guessing what is inside the box, but apart from that I think the book is a bit limited in its uses. There is not much to discuss or many questions to ask from it. Suitable for children in Year 1 and younger.

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## Abigail says

I loved, loved, loved this book as a child - spooky, but with a humorous ending.

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## midnightfaerie says

Absolutely love this book. Not enough words to be a level 1 reader, but a cute, creepy, story that's just in time for the Halloween season coming up. I'm so looking forward to autumn! The pictures are dark and creepy and fun, and my 5 yr old got to learn some new words like "moor" and "passage". For some reason, I seem to remember Ruth Brown as writing some other books I enjoyed as a child, I'll have to look her up and see if I can't get some more from the library! Great addition to our library!

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## Abigail says

The suspense slowly builds, in this dark, dark tale, as the simple, repetitive text, and intensely involving acrylic illustrations work together to draw the reader in. "*Once upon a time there was a dark, dark moor,*" the tale begins, and each two-page spread that follows narrows the focus - there is a dark, dark wood on the dark, dark moor; then a dark, dark house in the dark, dark wood; and so on - until finally, we discover what is waiting for us, at the end of all this dark darkness...

Ruth Brown is a well-known British picture-book creator - her recent [Gracie, The Lighthouse Cat](#), published earlier this year, is the only other one of her titles I have read, thus far - and [A Dark, Dark Tale](#), originally released in 1981, looks to be one of her most popular. I can certainly understand why! I really liked the way the text and images worked together, in this one, and the way that Brown sets up her readers'

expectations, only to pull the rug out from under them! I don't know if every child will really like the ending, but they will be surprised by it. All in all, this is a title I would recommend giving a try, particularly at Halloween time!

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### **Michelle says**

Preschool and primary students will love this atmospheric picture book. It's great for a experiencing print: have your child spot the black cat in every page and guess where he's going next. Talk about how the setting (night in an old, abandoned house) and inky, gothic pictures contribute to the scary mood.(Well, don't use those exact words...) Repeat the "dark, dark" part. This is an ever-so-slightly scary tale that most 4 and 5 year olds will enjoy without fear. Recommended for any home or school library.

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### **Karen says**

Very fun picture book for little halloweenies with just enough autumnal chill. From one page to the next dark, dark things lead to dark dark, discoveries which lead to an ending with a squeak and a squeal! Follow the dark, dark cat if you dare!

Excellent detailed illustrations in dark, dark colors add just enough creep factor for very young readers/listeners to enjoy without becoming spooked. The text is so simple that even non-readers will soon have the story memorized and will scare everyone with how often they pull this excellent book off the shelf!

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### **Tasha says**

Do you think that if monsters really exist that there might be a monster out there licking his lips and thinking about YOU? And what if that monster is coming to find you? Riding his bicycle through a dark forest on his way? What if he is thinking about what you might taste like with ketchup as he wades through the gloopy swamp? What if he thinks about you on toast while tiptoeing through thorns? He's getting closer and closer... you aren't scared are you? Are you?

Filled with great noises and ways to get little hearts pitter-patting, this book is an impressive read aloud. Vere paces the book just like a traditional campfire tale, it's the build up that makes the entire thing work along with the fact that this monster is headed for you!

Vere's silly artwork provides a lightening effect that will get kids giggling despite the tension of the story. There are also softening hints throughout like the teddy bear, the bicycle with a bell, and even the pink toenails that make this monster more friendly than frightening.

Pair this one with A Dark, Dark Tale by Ruth Brown for some sinister stories that end well. Appropriate for ages 4-6.

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## **Sylvia says**

Keren banget! :D Baru tahu kalau di library ada buku ini. Simpen ah buat storytelling :)

Kisahanya di awali begini:

Once upon a time there was a dark, dark moor...

Lalu dilanjutkan di dalam moor (atau tegalan) itu ada hutan, di dalam hutan ada rumah, dan seterusnya. Yang membuat menarik adalah, buku ini ilustrasinya kelam, gelap seperti cerita hantu. Dan kalimat yang digunakan juga membuat imajinasi melayang ke arah hantu terutama saat menggambarkan isi rumah.

Saya membayangkan saat bercerita pada anak-anak kelas 1 dan 2, menggunakan suara rendah, dan menyeramkan, pasti mereka akan berpikir kalau itu adalah cerita hantu. Endingnya sangat pas, berhenti di saat pembaca sudah mulai merasakan ketegangan maksimal. Dan saya juga sempat ketakutan sendiri. Padahal cerita anak gitu loh, kayaknya nggak mungkin banget ada hantu yang menyeramkan nongol. But who knows, kan? :D

Anyway, I really like it, and enjoy it very much! Even though it's an old book :D

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## **Andy Verschoyle says**

seductive tale with a warm hearted twist. I was surprised and delighted when my co-reader told me the cat was probably the mouse's pet.

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