



Monster in the Hood

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5

A huge poster warns of the Monster in the Hood, but to believe it, Squirrel, Hedgehog and Mouse all want to see it for themselves. They become an intrepid trio, not to be threatened by news of the fearful monster from hundreds of fleeing rats; 'Come out, come out, wherever you are! You won't scare us!' shouts Squirrel. The town sprawls across each right hand page, with a moving 'BLOB' approaching, with a huge orange eye. Next a cloud of bats screech past, warning the trio 'to run before it grabs you with its huge shaggy hands. The monster is grumbly and rumbly, and will eat you up for dinner.' Readers will love this page, spotting the different headgear of the bats. one child made a count of over eighty bats, wearing neckscarves, beanies, baseball caps, even medals. Although a clutter of cats are scared stiff of the Monster, squealing across the page, still the intrepid trio advance. But when the Monster approaches them face to face, they are rooted to the spot. Would he eat them? For he is hungry and needs his dinner. But more than that, he needs friends with whom to play. A careful reader of the illustrations will at this point realise the packs of creatures wearing headgear are in fact sporting variations of Squirrel's neckscarf, Hedgehog's baseball cap and Mouse's medal! An unusual cautionary tale about friendship, with the creatures drawn with few penstrokes and a limited colour palette. It is imaginative, and follows well from Antony's Betty goes Bananas.

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