



Me and my Fear

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NewsChoice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Fear is something we all feel, and children in particular can be affected, often hiding what they feel through shame or a feeling of isolation. But how can one address this? Often an author will tackle the subject taking a particular situation which may be overcome. It is less usual for an author to recognise for many people fear is normal and an ever-present facet of the self. It can, in fact, seem quite beneficial. Here Francesca Sanna imagines what such a fear might look like, a small slightly shapeless character who helps keep you safe ? fear does help one avoid danger. What happens when a situation arrives that is just too overwhelming? Fear responds, growing until it becomes a suffocating ever-present monster that literally takes over every aspect of life.

Sanna's bold retro style illustrations make this complex situation into something that can be understood by her young audience. Her personification of fear makes it seem a small cuddly creature, something familiar and manageable. But something small and cuddly can become an almost shapeless monster. She identifies the most frightening aspect of fear ? a sense of loneliness. Fear stifles. There way Sanna's creature dominates the pages effectively portray this. However, this is not the end. The realisation that you are not the only one who experiences fear, that others have this little companion, brings the possibility of control.

The unfussy design of this picture book allows the author to convey her message with a real immediacy. Strong simple colours and bold shapes illustrate a very straightforward text that is beautifully placed on each page presented in a clear sans serif font. The result is far from bland, rather it is a powerful depiction of a feeling that many will recognise. This is a picture book to encourage discussion among the youngest, fostering empathy and sympathy.

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