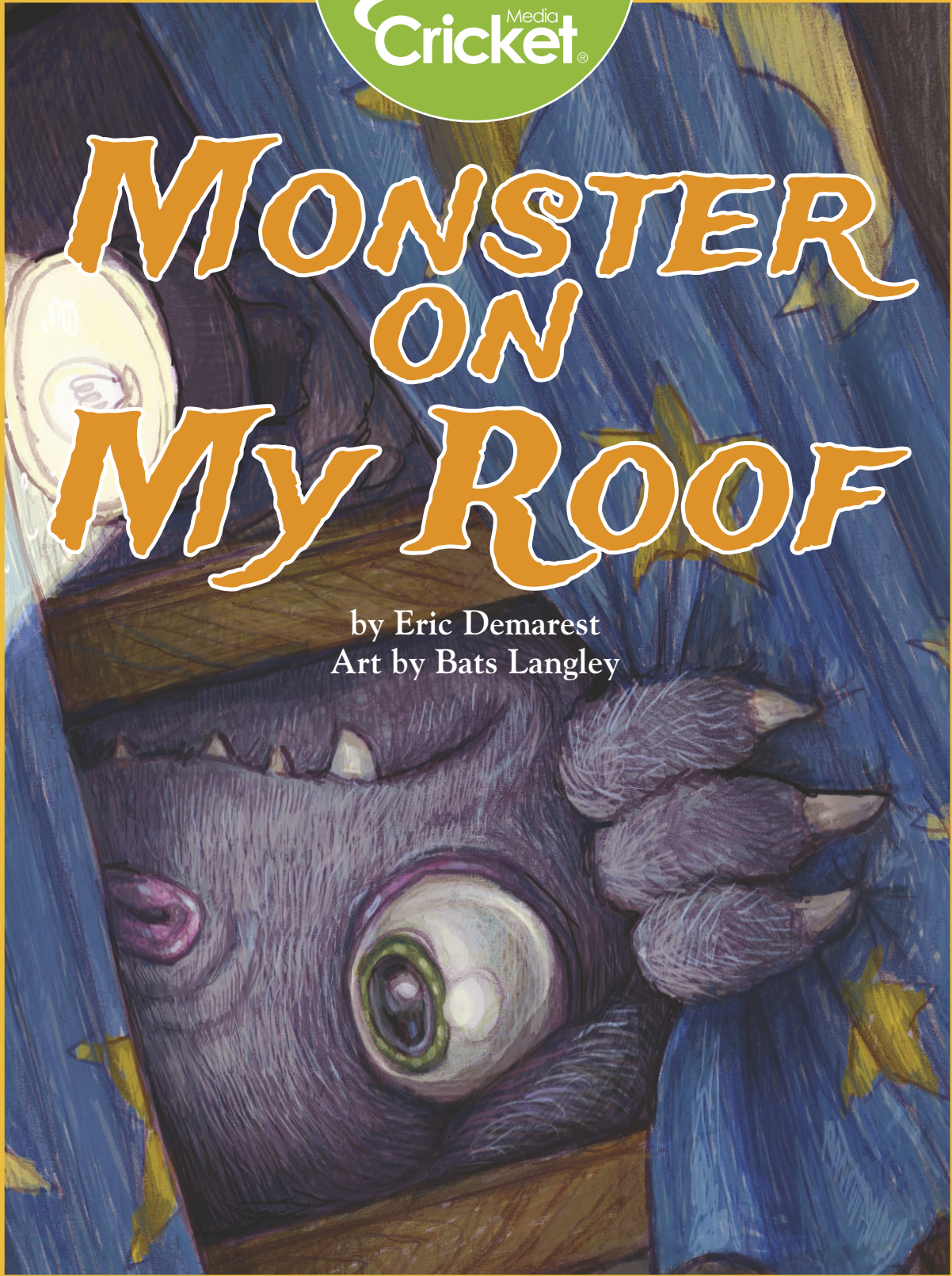


Media
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MONSTER ON MY ROOF

by Eric Demarest
Art by Bats Langley



On Level

BILLY BALDERSNOOK LIVED with his mother and sister in a very small house. It was so small, in fact, that after his mother picked her room and his sister picked her room, there weren't any rooms left for Billy—except for up, up in the attic. But Billy didn't mind, because it was almost like sleeping in a tree house. (Almost.)

One night, after Billy had put on his pj's and brushed his teeth and had a goodnight kiss from Mom, he clump-clump-clumped up the stairs and got under the covers as usual. Then, right before he fell asleep—

Thump.

He sat up. "Mom? Did you hear that?"

"Hear what?" said his mother, her voice muffled from downstairs.

"That thump!" he shouted. "Are you thumping down there?"





“No!” she yelled back. “Nobody’s thumping down here.”

“But . . . *something* is thumping. What if— what if it’s a *monster*?”

“There’s no thump and no monster.”

Billy was not reassured. And sure enough, just as he lay down again—

Thump.

“Mom!” he yelled. “There was a thump again!”

“Go to sleep, Billy,” came his mother’s muffle.

“But there were *thumps*! It must be a monster!”

Then he heard his mother clump-clump-clumping up the stairs, and the light flipped on.

“All right,” she said. “Let’s find that ‘monster.’”

She took Billy’s hand, and they looked under the bed. No monsters.

They looked in the closet. No monsters.

They searched in the toy chest, and the bookshelf, and the dresser drawers just to be sure. No monsters at all.

“See?” said his mother.

“Maybe he left,” said Billy.

His mother tucked him under the covers again. “Even if there is a monster, I’m sure he’s as scared of you as you are of him.”

“But . . . how could a monster be scared of me?”

“Trust me,” she said, turning out the light. “Now get some sleep.”

She clump-clump-clumped down the stairs. And just when Billy was starting to think she might be right—

Thump.

“Mom!” he yelled, bolting upright.

Thump.

Where was it coming from? He listened hard.

“Aha! I know where the monster is!” he said.

“There are no monsters,” called his mother.

“No, no,” he said. “We searched the whole room, but the thumping isn’t coming from here—it’s coming from the roof!”

“What?!”



“I said, *there’s a monster on my roof!*”

“Go to sleep, Billy. I’m not coming all the way up there again.”

Billy huffed. It’s hard to sleep when you have a monster thumping above your head.

“Nothing to be scared of,” he told himself. “The monster is as scared of you as you are of—”

Thump.

“Eeeek!” Billy squeaked.

He clapped his hand over his mouth. Did the monster hear him? He tensed up stiff as a fence rail. The thumping had stopped. Maybe the monster was—

“Eeeeeeeek!” Billy squeaked again, yanking the covers up to his nose.

A spotlight glared down from out of the sky somewhere! He could see it through the curtains, waving around—

“Mom! The monster’s got a spotlight now!”

“A *spotlight?*” his mother shouted.

“A *big one!*” he called. “The monster’s looking for *me!*”

“I don’t see any spotlight, and there’s no such thing as monsters,” repeated his mother.



“There are too, and he’s—*Eeeeeeeeeek!*”

“Be quiet, Billy, and go to sleep!”

Billy did quiet down then—because the spotlight was suddenly shining right through his window! Then a hand pulled the curtains back (a big hand), and an ugly face appeared in the window (a big and ugly face) and stared right at him. Billy stared back, trying very hard not to squeak.



Then the big ugly face disappeared, and the spotlight switched off.

“Whew . . . that was—”

WHUMP!

“MOM!” he screamed. “The monster is—”

WHUMP! “—jumping—” *WHUMP!* “—on—”

WHUMP! “—the—” *WHUMP!* “—roof!”

The ceiling shook, the bed shook, the whole room shook! And then there was a roar, or a growl, or—whatever it was, it was enormously loud.

Billy stuck his hands over his ears and jumped up. “That’s it! I’ll make my own noise and scare you away, monster!”

He grabbed his baseball bat and *THUMP-THUMP-THUMP*ed on the ceiling. For good measure, he let out an extra-loud “*Eeeeeeeeeek!*”

But the monster kept *WHUMP*ing, so Billy kept *THUMP*ing. And the monster kept *ROAR*ing, so Billy kept *EEEK*ing. And it all made such a ghastly racket that Billy didn’t even hear his mother clump-clump-clumping up the stairs until she threw the door open and—



Glug's mother roared from downstairs. "Glug Gladwillow, you little fluffball, stop jumping on the bed!"

Glug stopped in mid-bounce. "Mom, I told you!" he said. "It was the human in my dollhouse! I was yelling and jumping on the bed to scare him away!"

"There's no human in your dollhouse," said his mother, shaking her furry head.

"There is too!" said Glug. "I even shined my flashlight down there and saw him—he's little and ugly, and he keeps squeaking!"

"Not another word," said his mother. "There's no human. And even if there is, I'm sure he's as scared of you as you are of him." 





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