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Picture Book = 283 words

**Beware the Dread Not-a-Beast**

[Illustration Note: scenes switch between the father and child, the read story “Knight and Beast,” and the mother returning home.]

Time for bed. Wash your face, brush your teeth, and have you one last wee.

Where’s Mommy?

Working late, she’ll be home soon. It’s time to tuck you in.

Check under the bed.

Not a beast here. Hop on in.

Check the closet.

Not a beast there. It’s all clear.

Read me a story.

Which one?

This one! [illo note: Book is called “Knight and Beast”]

You sure? We couldn’t finish it last time.

I’m not scared!

Meanwhile…

The dread Not-a-Beast slipped quietly through the front door.

The knight approached the dark cave and even though it billowed with smoke and fire…

Keep reading?

Yes.

The Not-a-Beast stole through the kitchen.

the brave knight plunged into the darkness.

You good?

I’m good.

As soft as a whisper, the Not-a-Beast passed through the den.

The brave knight crept through the smoke-filled passageway.

Okay? You’re doing great.

Uh-huh.

Down the hall, the Not-a-Beast drew closer, closer.

The knight took a deep breath and approached the large, open cavern.

This is as far as we read last time. You want me to turn the page?

Um.

You can do it.

Past the bathroom, past the closet, the Not-a-Beast grew near.

A massive head turned one quizzical eye upon the knight.

No, no Daddy! Don’t turn the page!

But if we stop now, you won’t know what happens with Knight and the…

BEAST! [illo note: Boy points at Mommy silhouetted in the bedroom door.]

Look again, that’s not a beast.

Mommy, you’re home!

Oh, you’re reading *that* book. Are we going to finish it tonight? [illo note: Mom curls up beside Dad and boy.]

Yes, because I’m brave. Keep reading, Daddy.

Okay, here we go.

The knight pulled out his treasure, and shared it with the great Beast.

Until finally, with full bellies [illo note: roasted marshmallows], they fell fast asleep - the knight and the beast…

who was not a beast after all.

The End

Comparable titles: David Weisner’s 3 PIGS, David McCauley’s BLACK AND WHITE, Kevin O’Malley’s ONCE UPON A COOL MOTORCYCLE DUDE, David Ezra Stein’s INTERRUPTING CHICKEN, Anthony Browne’s PIGGIES

[illo notes: possible that child is making monster-shaped shadow puppets at the end. Could include a mirror or reflection in each Mom scene for parents to find. Mom creeping through the house – all we see is her shadow. Although, Mom taking off coat could look like a creepy blob.]

Child’s arc – he’s growing courage