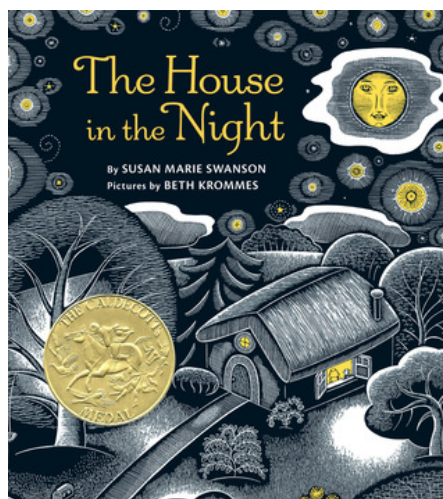




The House in the Night

Susan Marie Swanson , Beth Krommes

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The House in the Night Susan Marie Swanson , Beth Krommes
2009 Caldecott Medal Winner

A spare, patterned text and glowing pictures explore the origins of light that make a house a home in this Caldecott Medal-winning bedtime book for young children. Naming nighttime things that are both comforting and intriguing to preschoolers—a key, a bed, the moon—this timeless book illuminates a reassuring order to the universe.

The House in the Night Details

Date : Published October 4th 2011 by HMH Books for Young Readers (first published May 5th 2008)
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Author : Susan Marie Swanson , Beth Krommes
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Genre : Childrens, Picture Books

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From Reader Review The House in the Night for online ebook

Greg says

This book has a stoner logic behind it that is kind of annoying. "like what if the bed wasn't being lit up by the light, but" inhale, hold in smoke, "but the bed was really *inside* the light?" exhale. And go on with a bunch more of these oh so poetic platitudes a freshman in college with a bong might spout out. Plus add some trippy pictures that have a schizophrenic feel to them, and you have a comforting story for kids too afraid to have the lights turned off on them. Or something like that. If I had kids and they understood this book I'd send them to rehab.

Jackie "the Librarian" says

This gorgeous Caldecott winner deserved the medal for the scratchboard illustrations in black, white, and yellow. Beautiful in their simplicity, they take the reader on a nighttime fantasy flight on the back of a bird, a bird from the book on the bed, in the house unlocked by the key, under the light of the moon. It's the sort of book you want to look at again and again. Just lovely!

Darcy says

If this book and I had met under better circumstances, maybe four stars. But I am getting a tooth and I DO NOT like it. So I yelled pretty much the whole time. Stunning illustrations, though. Would like to revisit once my baby Tylenol kicks in. -M

Roxanne Hsu Feldman says

This one has a classic look and a classic feel -- from its scratch board, 3-colored (black, white, yellow) illustrations to its minimalistic and poetic text -- a great addition to bedtime lullaby stories. This one doesn't make me say, "Who needs another bedtime story? Don't we have ENOUGH?" Obviously, we don't since talented writers and artists like Swanson and Krommes still have new things to offer for new generations of children and their parents. The pictures are worthy of looking closely over and over again (thanks to the artistically and strategically placed yellow ink and the cosmic scope of the "story".) This repeatability is definitely one reason why parents and children can enjoy the book night after night.

Lisa Vegan says

At first I wasn't sure I appreciated the drawings, all in black & white & yellow and in an unusual style, but I ended up loving this book: both the patterned text and the amazing pictures, my favorite picture probably being the dog curled up in its bed with its stuffed teddy bear. On every page the pictures contain many lovely little touches.

GoldGato says

Sun in the moon, moon in the dark

It wasn't until I did some volunteer work in a local library that I discovered how popular the board books are for children. Perhaps because they are difficult to destroy, the section of the library with these special books are always covered with eager kids, pulling their parents (or nannies) to the titles they covet.

Dark in the song, song in the bird

So, I gave it a shot and got the one that looked different than the others, with a black-and-white etching-ish outlay. A Caldecott winner, it is a simple but inventive story of a house and the objects within.

Bird in the book, book on the bed

As children, we fear the dark and yet are amazed by it. When the lights go out, what hides beneath? And yet, what glows in the sky? We rely on others to provide security and our home, be it a hut or a condo or an apartment or a house, is our moonstone.

Bed in the light, light in the house

This book reminded me of that safety blanket we clutched as mere mites. The night can be full of enchantment, lit by the friendly moon. For children who don't want the lights to be turned off, this boardie helps them to not only welcome but to eagerly anticipate the darkness.

The house in the night, a home full of light

The scratchboard artwork by Beth Krommes crept into my dreams and I can understand why children clutch this book as much as they clutch a teddy. There's no place like home.

Book Season = Autumn (moon is alive)

Kathryn says

An enchanting story, full of beautiful simplicity and the type of circular storytelling that I loved as a child. The Caldecott-winning, scratchboard art illustrations are what really won me over, though. They are exquisite, intricate, unique and breathtaking! Amazing how such "dark" illustrations can radiate warmth and light--you'll feel the bright yellows glow right into your heart!

Jess says

I'm a sucker for this style of illustrations - it feels cozy and old-timey and perfect for a bedtime story, and it works well with the patterned structure of the story. I like the use of limited colors, so that the yellowy-orange really glows in the pictures and the text.

Laima says

This is a Caldecott Medal winning children's book. Basically, it is a bedtime story for young children filled with black and white pictures with a sprinkling of golden coloured objects. It was designed to comfort and lull a child to sleep with pictures of familiar and calming nighttime things. A book, a bed, a light, a bird, the moon, a song - young children know all these familiar objects.

I have read countless storybooks to young children, including my own sons, and what I always find is that children notice all the small details in a picture. The cat by the door, the kitten in the dresser drawer, the lighthouse, the whale in the ocean. There are so many details in these drawings to captivate a child's attention.

I highly recommend this exquisitely drawn storybook. It is a great nighttime read; the kind of story children will ask to read over and over again, each time discovering new and wondrous details.

Jessica says

The Caldecott Medal Winner from 2009, *The House in the Night*; the illustrations not only support the limited text but the pictures are so detailed you can spot other areas of interest. For example, in the child's room a storybook is waiting for her on the bed, but depicted in the photo the child is going through her dresser. You can only imagine, is she getting out pajamas? letting her kittens out of the dresser? etc. Overall allowing for readers to fill in and find out from illustrated clues what is happening from scene to scene creates visual interest and repetition in finding those objects. The books focus scales all the way up to the moon, sun and stars and back down to that same book waiting to be read on the child's bed.

Just by taking a picture walk through this book, it is not hard to imagine what is happening from page to page. The text is already very minimal so it simply supports the images just slightly. For example, here is the key to the house is a short sentence that offers insight into the house and the key. However the illustrations depict additional imagery, such as a dog and a garden of flowers that are not described in the text but from looking at them you can make your own logical conclusions about these additional details. You don't know if this is the child's house but from logically associating a home with a bed, and a place for this child to sleep, you imagine it is. You can imagine anything with these illustrations and minimal text which adds to the richness of this picture book.

Keeping the colors black, white and yellow, the illustrations depict a unique color scheme. I Once inside the house, and into the book, fantasies await and when the adventure is over the key to the house still hangs

where it was hanging before. This depicts that in the real world nothing changed but the little girl's imagination let herself imagine endless possibilities all while daydreaming. Illustrations depicting imagination and adventure out of this world, in a style that is very simplistic in nature. *The House in the Night*, is a fun and engaging text for young readers and throughout Swanson's beautifully illustrated works, they leave me feeling inspired.

Betsy says

Sometimes, just sometimes, you want to read a beautiful picture book. Not a pretty picture book or a mildly lovely one or a picture book that will please you the first ten times you read it to a child and then hardly anymore after that. No, I'm talking about a jaw-dropping, kick-you-in-the-pants, douse your cigar hussy of a beautiful picture book. The kind that works against your book-loving instincts, tempting you to rip out the pages and frame them on your wall. That kind of book. The first time I saw an ad for *The House in the Night* by Susan Marie Swanson and Beth Krommes I wanted it. Generally scratchboard art doesn't appeal to me, but there's something different about this title. Gentle bedtime reading, consider this a book that is designed to illuminate a child's dreams.

Inspired by a cumulative poem found in *The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book*, Swanson's words are short simple. "Here is the key to the house / In the house burns a light / In that light rests a bed." As we read, a small child places the key on a hook as a dog, a cat, and some kittens mill about. She walks into the room and spots a book on the bed. "In that book flies a bird." As the text grows expansive, discussing the bird's song, the girl imagines taking a trip on its back above the land, "Through the dark", past the moon, and the sun, and the sky. In the end she goes to bed, not far from the key in, "the house in the night, a home full of light." The shape of the story allows it to go from a small intimate story to an exciting flight around the world, and then back to bed where the little girl curls up cozily and falls asleep. It's a tribute to bedtime stories themselves, without ever being blunt about its potential applications.

Last year I fell in love with a different cumulative poem called *The Apple Pie That Papa Baked* by Lauren Thompson with illustrations by Jonathan Bean. Like this book, *Apple Pie* used the cumulative format to draw back farther and farther, to the point where the story becomes positively cosmic. Here, Swanson's text has a comforting feel to it, helped in no small part by its universal images. She's as good a picture book author as she is partly because her words give an illustrator room to get a little creative.

The first name to pop to mind, even before you open the book, is Wanda Gag. The illustrator of such storytime classics as *Millions of Cats* appears to have had a direct influence on Krommes' style. I first discovered Ms. Krommes when she lent her considerable talents to Joyce Sidman's, *Butterfly Eyes and Other Secrets of the Meadow*. She is recognizably the same person who has worked on *The House in the Night* but this particular book feels like someone took a photograph of her earlier work and made it into a negative image. Krommes uses a scratchboard style with watercolor. In fact the only color in this book is the singular yellow of the sun, the moon, the stars, and other key points in the pictures. Individual creatures bear the mark of Gag, particularly Krommes' cats which appear to be a direct ode. But for all her charms, Gag never illustrated a book with as much depth and scope as found in this story. This is a bedtime tale that takes into account the vastness of space and the curve of the landscapes below. And her use of yellow at meticulous moments lends loveliness to images that might have appeared too harsh.

Oddly enough, while Wanda Gag was certainly the first illustrator to come to mind when I read this, the feel of the book reminded me particularly of that wonderful Ann Jonas book *Round Trip*. There's something about seeing a nightscape in black and white, particularly from a distance, which conjures up similar

sensations. *Round Trip* is one of those books that stick with you the rest of your life. *The House in the Night* will go the same route.

The real question: Will the kids dig it? As I've mentioned before, this is a bedtime book. The kind of story you pick up and read when the child wants something to put them to sleep. That isn't to say that they won't also find the pictures engrossing. What *The House in the Night* has in its favor is the ability to stick with a person. Fifty years from now libraries and websites will be filled with queries from people asking, "There's this book I've been trying to find from years. It took place at night and there was yellow . . . it was really gorgeous. Does anyone remember it?" And I have faith that children's librarians will be able to answer these questions readily, keeping the beloved book close at hand. A title that doesn't leave your heart or mind any too soon.

Ages 4-8.

karen says

big time yawn. this is what i am talking about - this book is seventeen dollars. that is a lot of money for a book with 103 words and mediocre illustrations. i am very glad i can borrow these from work and not have to shell out for them for school because i am no millionaire. the color scheme of the book is nice - i would love to have a dress in these colors, but as a book, i am unmoved.

Alison says

"The House in the Night" immediately reminded me of the book "Goodnight Moon". This Caldecott award winner is full of black and white illustrations that include pops of yellow. It begins with a girl having a key to the house, and "In the house burns a light. In that light rests a bed. On that bed waits a book." This story walks through a girl discovery a bird full of song and life inside of a book in her house that is lit up in the night. This is a quick, easy read with not much detail involved in the story. I would view this as a perfect bedtime story for younger children, or as a great book to show in an art class to show how meaningful black and white illustrations can be when there are pops of color, however I really don't see how this book can be used to focus on literary elements for reading in elementary schools. This would be a good book for beginning readers when they are practicing reading to a parent or when they are choosing "read to self" during daily five. There are a lot of sight words in this book that could help with identifying sight words. Although the words are not extremely deep to dissect with older students, I can definitely see how this book would be useful with beginning readers.

Miriam says

This seems like it would be perfect for lulling small children to sleep.

Manybooks says

As an adult (and as someone who has always much appreciated scratchboard type illustrations), I love love love Beth Krommes' detailed and brilliantly exquisite black and white images. They absolutely and brilliantly make Susan Marie Swanson's The House in the Night into a visual masterpiece, a true feast for the eyes (and I thus also and absolutely cheer that The House in the Night won the 2009 Caldecott Medal).

And these illustration are truly and in every way enchanting, intriguing, with the interplay of light and dark, of black and white, providing a wondrous and magical sense of especially time of day, of the fact that nighttime is not only a period of darkness, but also one of magical light and brightness, due to candles, desk lamps, as well as the magical lights of the heavenly spheres, of the stars, the moon and that the sun's rays are reflected on the moon's surface, that we see the sun's light even at night when we look up and see the moon. Combined with author Susan Marie Swanson's simple, lullingly gentle poetic narrative, a circular text about a child reading a book (in the house, at night) and a bird in said book basically and beautifully singing a song of eternity, of the magic of the universe, the stars above (of both darkness and light, engaged and forever intertwined in an everlasting dance), The House in the Night presents and gloriously demonstrates that nighttime, that darkness are poetic, are enchanting, are due to the intermingling of light and dark not to be feared, and that while a house at nighttime with its walls and artificial lights might indeed provide warmth and protection from the elements, that even these elements, the outside, the universe, the night skies above, are forever infused with light and brightness and thus to be embraced and not feared. Five stars (and even though I have read that many children seemingly do not all that much enjoy Beth Krommes' illustrations, I absolutely adore them, and consider The House in the Night a truly magical and esoteric, marvelous marriage of text and image).
