

## The adequate bear.

Bear took off his coat and entered the depths of the dark cave.

'Hello bear' said the monster, cloaked in shadow.

'Good afternoon Monster' replied the bear with a smile, and gave a nervous cough. 'OK,' he continued, 'Close your eyes.'

'Close my eyes?' replied the monster, 'Why?'

'Just... close them.'

'I don't want to.'

The bear looked at the jet black creature with mock impatience.

The monster closed seven eyes.

'And the other one' sighed Bear.

'I won't be able to see anything.'

'Jesus christ' exhaled the bear. 'That's the point.'

The monster opened all eight of its eyes. 'What's that you're carrying?'

'I'm not carrying anything.' said the bear unconvincingly.

'Yes you are - under your coat.'

'Can't you just close your eyes?'

'No.' insisted the monster.

The bear looked around the dimly lit cave. This was hopeless.

'Ok, well if you don't close your eyes then you won't get a surprise.'

'You got me a present?' a glimmer of a smile cracked across Monster's wide face.

'No I didn't say that, I said.. that.. look - for god's sake - can't you just close your eyes so I can give you this bloody book?'

'You got me a book?'

'Damn it.' swore the bear to himself.

'I don't like books'

'What do you mean you don't li-' The bear trailed off. 'Oh forget it.'

'No come on, I want to see it'

Bear looked at monster . 'Are you sure you won't close your eyes? Just for a minute?'

'A whole minute?!'

'A moment. A few seconds.'

'And then you'll give me the surprise?'

'Yes. Which you already know is a book, which you have already decided you don't want'.

'I never said I didn't want it'.

'You said you didn't like books'

'I like some books.'

'Will you just close your fucking eyes?'

'Ok, ok - no need to start roaring like that.' The monster closed all eight of its yellow eyes, and if you listened very carefully you could hear she started to purr.

'Ta da!' said Bear.

'What?'

'You can open your eyes now.'

'Maybe later' said Monster. 'I like it in the dark.'

Bear shook his head in disbelief. 'Well, whenever you're ready, open your eyes, and - '

But Monster had already opened her eyes 'Oh wow! Bear! Thank you!' and purred loudly.

'It's an appropriate title, don't you think?' said Bear, vaguely wondering why he had started to cry.

'Yes' she said, 'Very'.

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Bear smiled at the enigmatic beast reading her book, 'At Home With Monsters'.

'Would you like a coffee, Monster?'

'Tea.'

'Uh... We don't have any tea.'

'It's OK Bear, I don't need anything else if I have you.'

'Thanks Monster.' said the Bear, feeling adequate, and gave the monster big hug.