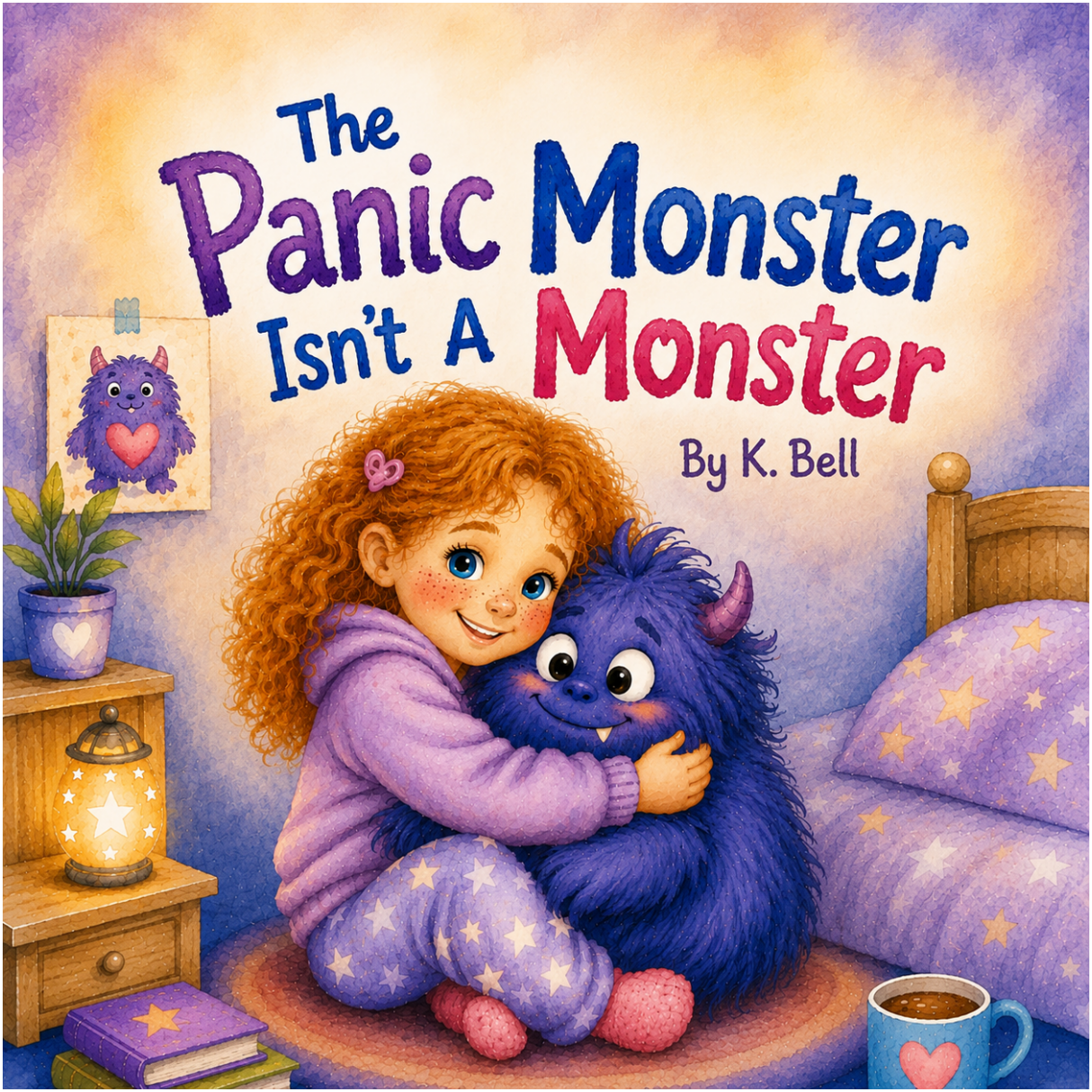

The Panic Monster Isn't A Monster
By K. Bell

The Panic Monster Isn't a Monster
By Karen Bell

The Panic Monster Isn't A Monster
Especially for children
Written by Karen Bell
Illustrations by Karen Bell
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Hello everyone! I'm Boo.



I'm the Panic Monster.

But I’m not really a monster at all.

Hello everyone! I'm Mia.



Sometimes I feel funny things in my body

and I don't always know why.



Sometimes children have wobbly legs, fluttery tummies and fast-beating hearts.

It can feel scary and confusing,

but nothing is wrong.

Sometimes children have tight chests
and very big feelings. Sometimes they seem to appear from nowhere.
But nothing is wrong. It's just Boo, running around inside your body.

Mia and Boo

Boo loves Mia very much. and Mia loves Boo very much.



Together, Mia and Boo discover something important.

Big feelings come and big feelings go.

Storms don't last forever.

Everybody thought Boo was a monster.

But Boo isn't a monster at all.

Boo loves Mia very much.

He just worries about everything.
Boo is soft.

Boo is warm.

And Boo tries very, very hard to keep Mia safe.

Sometimes Boo gets scared even when nothing scary is happening.

Poor Boo

Boo doesn't mean to make things difficult.

He thinks he is helping.



When Boo gets worried, Mia notices funny feelings in her body.

Sometimes her heart beats fast.

Sometimes her tummy feels swirly.

Sometimes her throat feels like there's a lump.

Sometimes her chest feels tight.

Sometimes her legs feel wobbly.
At first, Mia didn't understand.

She wondered,

"What's wrong with me?"

But nothing was wrong with Mia.

And nothing was wrong with Boo.
You see, Boo isn't wrong.

And he isn't silly.

Boo just gets frightened.

And Mia didn't know that Boo was frightened too.

One night, Mia sat quietly with Boo beside her.

She wrapped her arms around his soft fur.

And Boo looked up at her with his big worried eyes.

"It's okay, Boo," whispered Mia.

"You don't have to work so hard."

Boo blinked.

Nobody had ever said that to him before.

Nobody had ever explained that it was ok to rest.

Nobody had ever told him that Mia was safe.

And nobody had ever told Boo that he was loved.



Mia smiled.

And Mia gently stroked the top of Boo's soft head.

"We'll learn together," she said.

For the very first time, Boo felt a little bit safer.

And so did Mia.

The next morning, Mia felt strange.

Her legs felt wobbly like jelly.

Her tummy felt swirly like clothes in a washing machine.

Her chest felt tight and gave Mia a pain.

And there was a lump in her throat that made Mia want to cry.



Mia didn't understand what was happening.

She thought something bad must be wrong.

But deep inside her tummy, Boo was worried.

Very worried.

Boo wasn't trying to scare Mia. He was trying to save her.

He wasn't angry.

He wasn't scary.

Boo thought Mia was in danger.

So he ran around inside her body, shouting and making such a hullabaloo. Mia felt like she was on a fast ride at the fairground.

"Wake up Mia!"
"Something is wrong!"
"Something doesn't feel safe!"

The more worried Boo became, the faster he ran.

Mia's tummy was all swirly again like clothes in the washing machine.

Soon, Mia's heart started to beat really fast.

Her chest went tight. And her legs felt wobbly just like a big bowl of jelly.



Poor Boo.

Poor Mia.

Neither of them understood what was happening. They both thought they had to be scared.

But they didn't know something important.

It was just Boo all along.

Boo wasn't a monster. Boo was just being a big ball of love trying to be a big help to his Mia.

Boo Doesn't Stay Forever

Something puzzled Mia.

Sometimes Boo was very big.

Sometimes he was very small.
Sometimes he ran around inside her tummy and made her legs wobble just like jelly.

Sometimes he sat quietly and hardly made a sound.

Mia didn't understand.

"Where do you go?" she wondered.

Deep inside, Boo wondered too.
Boo thought it was his job to watch for danger.

But even Boo got tired.

After a while, Boo curled up into a big ball of fluff and rested.

When Boo rested, Mia rested too.

Mia’s breathing slowed down.

The lump in her throat disappeared.

Her tummy became calm and her legs became strong again.

Slowly, Mia began to notice something.

When Boo ran fast, Mia felt like she had a storm inside her body.



Everything felt noisy and busy.
Mia's heart beat fast.

Her chest felt tight.

And her tummy felt all swirly.

But storms don't last forever.
And neither did big Boo feelings.

Sometimes Boo was big.

Sometimes Boo was little.

Big feelings came.

Big feelings went.

Wobbly jelly legs came.

Wobbly jelly legs went.

Boo had been trying to keep Mia safe all along.

And when he realised she was safe, he rested.

And when Mia felt safe, she rested.

Together they were learning that feelings don't last forever.

Mia enjoyed feeling calm and so did Boo.

Tight chests came.

Tight chests went.

Fast beating hearts went.

Nothing stayed forever.
Not even Boo.

One day, Mia noticed Boo was asleep in her arms.

She smiled.

"Sweet dreams Boo," she whispered.



Boo opened one eye.

He gave a sleepy little smile.

For the first time, Mia wasn't frightened of Boo.

Because she was beginning to understand something important.

Teaching Boo About Safe

One day, Mia noticed something.

When she was asleep, Boo became quieter.
When she sat with a safe person, Boo relaxed.

When she hugged her teddy, Boo stopped running around so much.

And when she took slow breaths, Boo would stop and listen. This puzzled Mia.

"I thought you were a fluffy worry ball," Mia said. "No," whispered Boo. "I like feeling safe."

Mia thought Boo liked making her tummy swirl.

She thought Boo liked making her heart race.

And Mia thought Boo liked making her legs wobble.

But Boo didn't like those things at all.

Boo liked warm hugs.

Boo liked bedtime stories.



Boo liked kind voices.

Boo liked cosy blankets.

Boo liked feeling calm.

Just like Mia.

Boo is never trying to make Mia scared.

Boo is just trying to find his way back to safe.



And every time Mia sits still.

Or goes to sleep.

Or wraps herself in blanket.

Mia realises something very important. She is safe. Boo learned something new too. Boo learned that Mia can feel safe all by herself.

The more Boo learned about safe.

The more Mia learned about safe too.

Soon, they had a new favourite feeling.

Can you guess what that new feeling is?

It’s not worried. It’s not scared. It's not panic.

It’s a new feeling of safe and calm.

Mia smiled.

Boo smiled.

And they hugged each other.

"I like feeling safe and calm,"said Mia.

“Me too,” said Boo.

Boo Comes Too

The next morning, Boo noticed Mia getting up.



"School!" Boo squeaked. His tummy was all swirly.

Mia giggled. "Is your tummy all swirly too?"

Boo nodded. "Sometimes new things make me worry."

Mia smiled. "Me too."

Mia brushed her teeth. Boo was right with his Mia. Because Boo always wanted to come too.

Sometimes, Boo still felt a little worried.

Sometimes Mia did too.

But now they know something important.

Big feelings come.

Big feelings go.

Boo didn't need to work so hard anymore.

Wherever Boo goes, Mia goes too.

Mia is not alone because she always has Boo.

Together they could rest. Together they could be brave.
On the way to school, Mia felt her heart beating faster.



Boo felt it too.
This time was not the same.

They didn't run.
They didn't panic. They remembered they are safe.

"I've got you," whispered Mia.

"And I've got you," whispered Boo.

At school, Mia met her friends and they coloured pictures.
Mia noticed feeling safe and calm came back.



Because safe and calm is not a place.

Safe and calm is something Mia feels.

Mia and Boo always have each other.

She laughed. Mia liked school when Boo was resting and she liked learning new things.

THE END

We hope you enjoyed this book!



Look out for more books in the series of
Stories for Life's Big Feelings
with Mia and Boo
by Karen Bell
See you soon!



Meet Mia Boo

Through gentle words and beautiful illustrations, The Panic Monster Isn't a Monster, helps children understand anxiety, worries and the comfort of feeling safe, loved and understood.

Join Mia and Boo on their adventures and discover how courage, love and connection help children grow with confidence.



Karen Bell