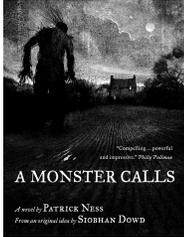


# Books by the Stack



## **A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness**

At seven minutes past midnight, thirteen-year-old Conor wakes to find a monster outside his bedroom window. But it isn't the monster Conor's been expecting-- he's been expecting the one from his nightmare, the nightmare he's had nearly every night since his mother started her treatments. The monster in his backyard is different. It's ancient. And wild. And it wants something from Conor. Something terrible and dangerous. It wants the truth.

**Why you'll like it:** Psychological fiction. Magical-Reality. Mind-numbing. Haunting.

**About the Author:** Patrick Ness is an American writer, journalist, and lecturer. Currently, he lives in London. His writings for adults include *The Crash of Hennington*, *Topics about Which I Know Nothing*, and *The Crane Wife*. His writings for children include *The Chaos Walking* trilogy: *The Knife of Never Letting Go*, *The Ask and the Answer*, and *Monsters of Men*, and *A Monster Calls* (from an idea by Siobhan Dowd). *A Monster Calls* has won the 2012 Carnegie Medal and its sister prize for illustration.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. "You're a good boy," Conor's mother tells him. "I wish you didn't have to be quite so good." What does she mean by that? Why does Conor have to be so good?
2. How does the monster describe itself to Conor? Where does the monster come from? What does it want?
3. Do you think that the monster is real, or is it a product of Conor's imagination? What does Conor think?
4. Lily was once Conor's closest friend, but now he can't forgive her. Why? Is he right to feel betrayed?
5. How do most people behave around Conor once they learn about his mother's illness? What would you have done in Lily's situation?
6. "Stories are wild creatures," the monster says. "When you let them loose, who knows what havoc they might wreak?." What does the monster mean by this? In what ways does the rest of novel prove the monster's point?
7. Discuss the role that humor plays in this novel. Where are the best comic moments?
8. Describe the monster's sense of humor. Would you enjoy the monster's company?
9. "Sometimes people need to lie to themselves most of all," the monster tells Conor. Is Conor lying to

himself about his mother's illness? Is his mother lying to herself?

**10.** What does each of them need to believe? Why?

*(Questions issued by candlewick.com)*

