

Bedtime for Buzzy

T.J. Hackworth

Sean Baptist, Illustrator

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This is an appealing and amusing story of Buzzy's attempts to delay bedtime, animated by a surprising cast of characters.

A little boy with a big imagination is reluctant to put down his toys in favor of heading off to sleep in T. J. Hackworth's lighthearted adventure *Bedtime for Buzzy*. Colorful, comically expressive illustrations from Sean Baptist follow Buzzy as he consults toy after toy, eventually coming to a delightfully surprising conclusion about the benefits of drifting off to dreamland.

Having entirely too much fun to stop playing when bedtime rolls around, Buzzy attempts to cajole four of his favorite playthings into staying up late, conversing with each as he finds them mid-venture, from intrepid Moon Man on his Moon Base to Giant Dinosaur, roaring in her prehistoric jungle.

Buzzy's story unfolds using a unique combination of a third-person narration with a first-person visual perspective, allowing the toys to take center stage in their own fanciful scenarios. Notably, Captain Pirate's search for treasure in the tropics boasts a ship, deserted island, and a crew that, humorously, appears to be made up of two construction workers, a teddy bear, and one silver robot. Buzzy himself is heard but never seen, allowing audiences to relate more personally as they draw their own conclusions regarding his age and appearance.

While some figures are easily recognizable as staples in every child's toy box, such as the teddy and plastic dinosaur, others, like Captain Courageous, a mustachioed gentleman in khaki astride a startled-looking mule and wielding a riding crop, are a bit more rare. No fairy princesses or ballerinas in pink are anywhere to be found, but Giant Dinosaur represents the female population in a strong role, and the imagery and creative play is on target for girls as well as boys.

As toys switch back and forth from walking, talking, and traversing drawbridges over crocodile-infested waters to being frozen in place atop Buzzy's bed or gathered on a nearby rug, the animation is more *Calvin and Hobbes* than *Toy Story*. Interactions and conversations are brought to life through Buzzy's presence and imagination, but each character has a distinct voice and message to share as Buzzy's energy slowly winds down at the end of the day.

The language is straightforward and fun, as in, "Well I'll be!" exclaimed Courageous Explorer, quite courageously," and the smaller size makes the book ideal for cuddling under the covers with or sharing as a late-night read aloud.

Parents and children alike will appreciate Buzzy's appealing and amusing attempts to delay bedtime, and his eventual capitulation, in T. J. Hackworth's *Bedtime for Buzzy*.

PALLAS GATES MCCORQUODALE (November 21, 2016)

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