

Night-night, Body

Ted Scheu

Pete Gergely, Illustrator

Beaver's Pond Press (Apr 19, 2022)

Hardcover \$19.95 (32pp)

978-1-64343-748-4

*Mesmerizing and sweet, the picture book *Night-night, Body* sends each body part off to sleep in rhyming and communal form.*

Ted Scheu's bright and inviting picture book *Night-night, Body* depicts the bedtime routines of families across the world.

Each page concentrates on a different family as they snuggle down for the evening. In brief, rhyming language, the text pairs these illustrations with "goodnight!"s wished to parts of the body—a steady pattern that becomes hypnotic. Easy humor is interjected in farewell moments such as "Night-night, hair, / as you can guess / tomorrow you will be a mess," which is joined to a picture of a yawning girl with wild hair who is sitting on her bed.

The bright, detailed watercolor images feature backdrops and details from across the globe, including onion domes, yurts, the Great Pyramid of Giza, the Alps, and the Christ Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro. The depicted parents dress in many splendid ways as well, wearing kimonos, lederhosen, fur hats, hijabs, and kilts. Some beds have only one child; others have many. Still, though the families are configured in multiple ways, all are shown to be happy, easing into the evening together.

There are a few surreal turns in the images: a mouth is shown with doors that close for the night; a neck elongates like a willow. These whimsical touches invoke dreams to come—also depicted in the image of one person rocketing through space. And a series of questions close the book, designed to open tradition-establishing (or recognizing) conversations with children, such as "What do you and your family always do at bedtime?" Questions about travel, and opportunities to play counting games, further expand the content.

Mesmerizing and sweet, the picture book *Night-night, Body* sends each body part off to sleep in rhyming and communal form.

CAMILLE-YVETTE WELSCH (March 21, 2022)

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