



# itty bitty Betty BLOB

Q&A with **Constance Lombardo** and **Micah Player**, creators of *Itty Bitty Betty Blob*

## Tell us about the story's blobby beginnings.

**Constance:** When my son was little, Picture Day was a time for rigorous hair brushing and fancy, stiff outfits. How fun was it to reimagine that national rite—Picture Day—at a Monster School?

From this original, humorous concept emerged a tiny blob with the soul of a dreamer. Itty Bitty Betty Blob is a blob who loves swaying more than stomping, who chooses rainbows over ruination, and who (at school) tries to be bad, like a good little monster, but simply cannot.

**Micah:** When I first read Constance's manuscript, I immediately recognized in Betty the push and pull of a loyal kid who feels the duty to come through for their family, step gracefully within the rhythms of their community, and fulfill the hopes of their parents.

But like most of us, it takes Betty a while to realize that finding your place in any culture doesn't come from imitation. The only way to have a "place" in anything is to bring your whole self to the endeavor.

## Let's talk about the book's adorable art!

**Constance:** Betty is a tiny pink blob living in a gray-toned world. Micah's incredible artwork has brought Betty and her world to life in ways I could not have imagined. I especially love his dramatic use of color. All his little monsters are a delight, and Betty is adorable! I truly believe kids will fall in love with Itty Bitty Betty Blob.



**Micah:** Visually, there is always a glow from Betty. She can't help but change the spaces she moves through. Everything gets a little "More" when she leans into, not away from, herself. The school becomes *more* expressive, *more* colorful, a little *weirder*, which is what any monster school should aspire to be, right? And, most importantly, her home becomes more *home*.

## Did your experience as parents inform the storytelling?

**Constance:** My son is transgender, and though I did not realize while working on Betty that I was inspired by his experience, I do now. Society tells us how to be. But some spirits are called in other directions. This book was born from a place of love for those who live outside the status quo.

**Micah:** Parenting is a complicated business, it's so easy to miss a cue, to make assumptions, to worry and talk our way right past the unspoken questions. In the end, it still really matters to Betty whether her school picture will have a place on the family portrait wall. And her mom gets to say the words that every parent reading a story aloud to their kid wants them to know through and through. *Of course she loves it.*

"It's so perfectly you."

