

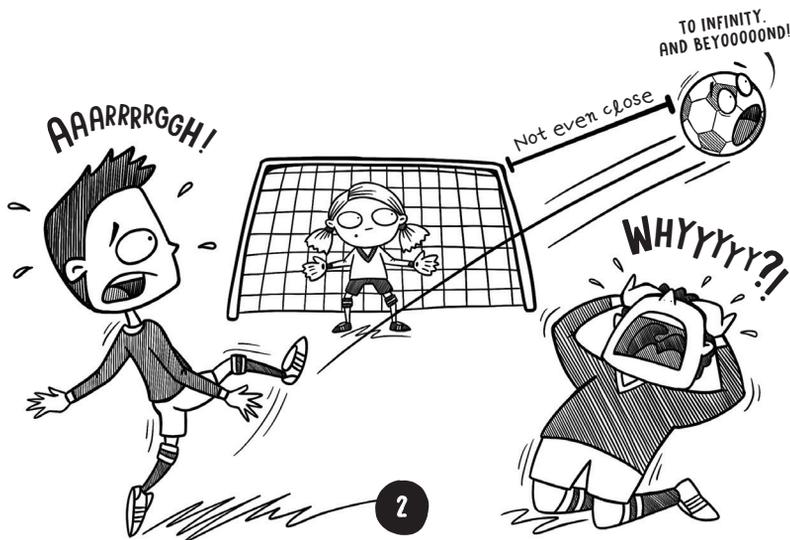
Have you
ever had a
bad week?



Maybe you accidentally called your teacher,
'Mum' in front of the **whole** class.



Maybe you missed the **tie-breaking** goal
in your end-of-year soccer **grand** final.



Maybe your internet cut out just **milliseconds** before you were about to **obliterate** your arch enemy during a marathon online gaming match.



Well, can I just tell you something?

THAT wasn't a bad week!
THIS IS A BAD WEEK!!

IN FACT IT'S THE ...

WORST WEEK EVER

I'm at a new school
with the meanest
bully in the universe.



Don't be fooled
by the prefect
badge!

My mum has just
married a **vampire**.
Seriously!



Step-Dracula.
Yikes!

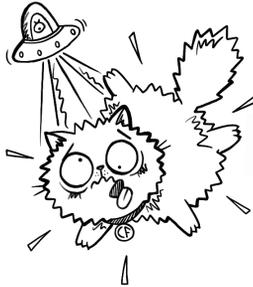
Fruit cake.
Double yikes!

My dad is driving
a giant **toilet** on
wheels. Literally!



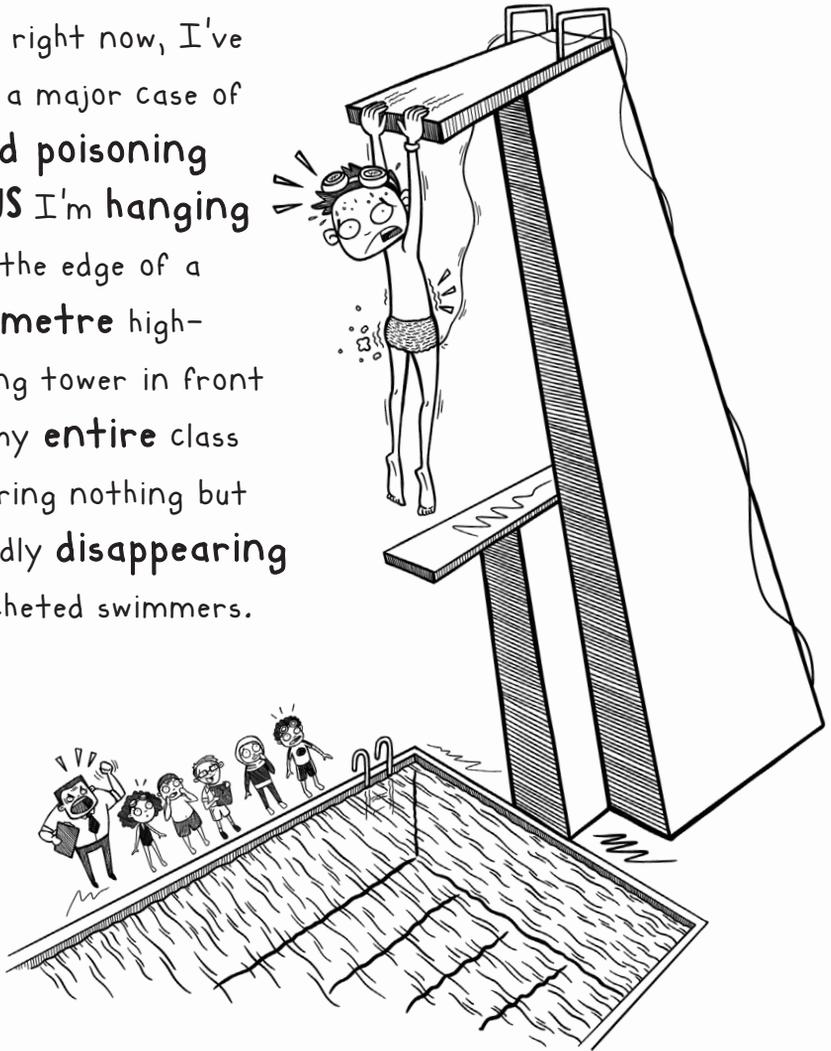
Harry Plopper
& the Porcelain
Throne or the
Whizz Wizard.
He can't decide.

I'm pretty sure
my cat has been
kidnapped by
ALIENS.

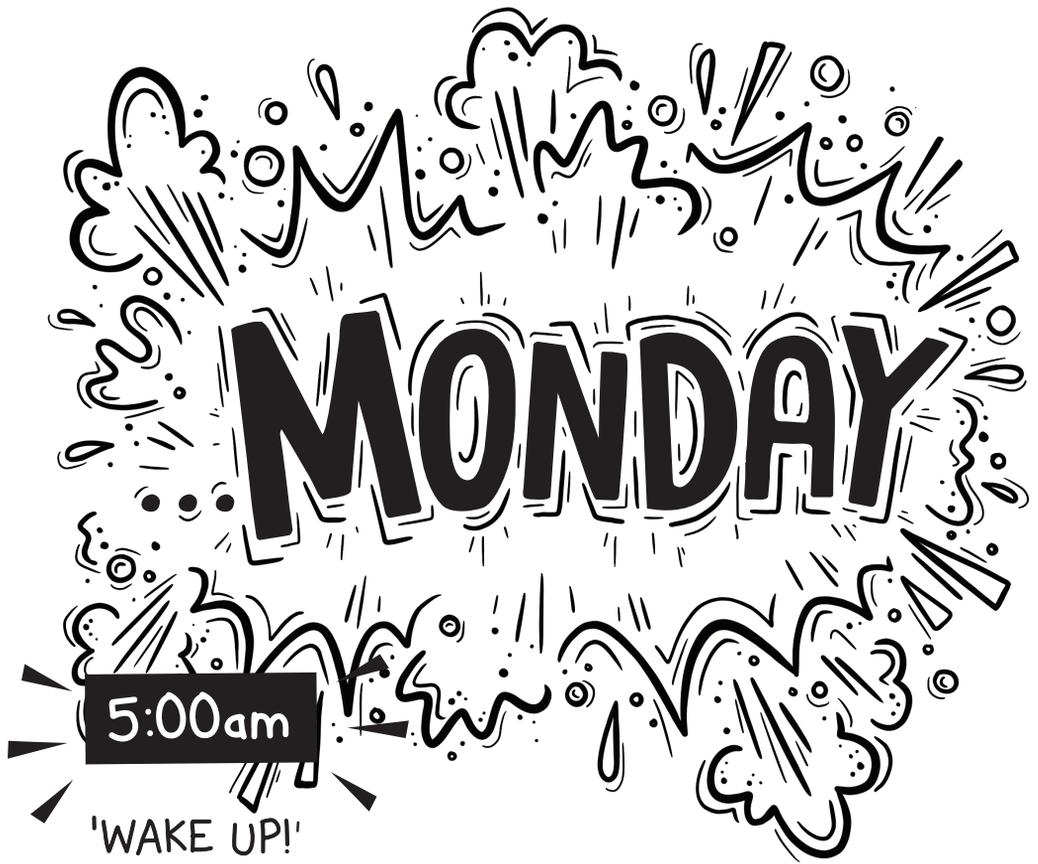


Captain
Fluffykins!
Where
are you?!

And right now, I've got a major case of food poisoning **PLUS** I'm hanging off the edge of a 10 metre high-diving tower in front of my **entire** class wearing nothing but rapidly **disappearing** crocheted swimmers.



AND IT'S ONLY ...

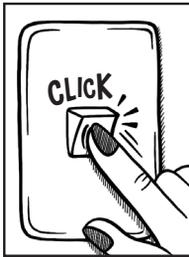
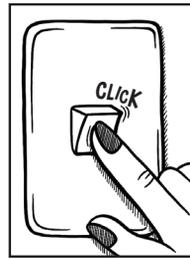
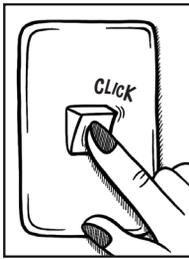


TV mums wake up their kids with a loving kiss on the forehead. A delicate, gentle shake. A soft sing-song whisper of, 'Time to rise and shine'.

My mum is **NOT** a TV mum.

'WAKE UP!'

She is standing in my bedroom doorway, flicking the light switch on and off. Like this ...



CLICK!

Each burst of light stabs at my eyes. I try to pull my doona over my face but it is whipped off my body.

'Up. **Now!** We're leaving in twenty minutes, Justin Chase.'

That's me. Justin Chase. Not the international popstar, Justin Chase. Just plain Justin Chase.

CAN YOU SPOT THE

JUSTIN CHASE

Me, regular kid

0 followers
(Not allowed
social media)

\$5 haircut from
Mr Snipzy

12 years old
—could pass for 10.

My mum says
I'm handsome (but
she just married
a vampire so her
taste is questionable)

Awesome elbow
scab from when
I tripped over
the other day

Allergy alert
bracelet
(gold plated)

Crickets

Scar from
Mr Snipzy
cutting my ear

Mosquito
bite

Unlimited
supply of belly
button lint

Hand-me-down jeans
from my cousin Barry
(hole in the knee by
me—not on purpose)

Shoes from that weird
middle aisle in Aldi



Totally
empty

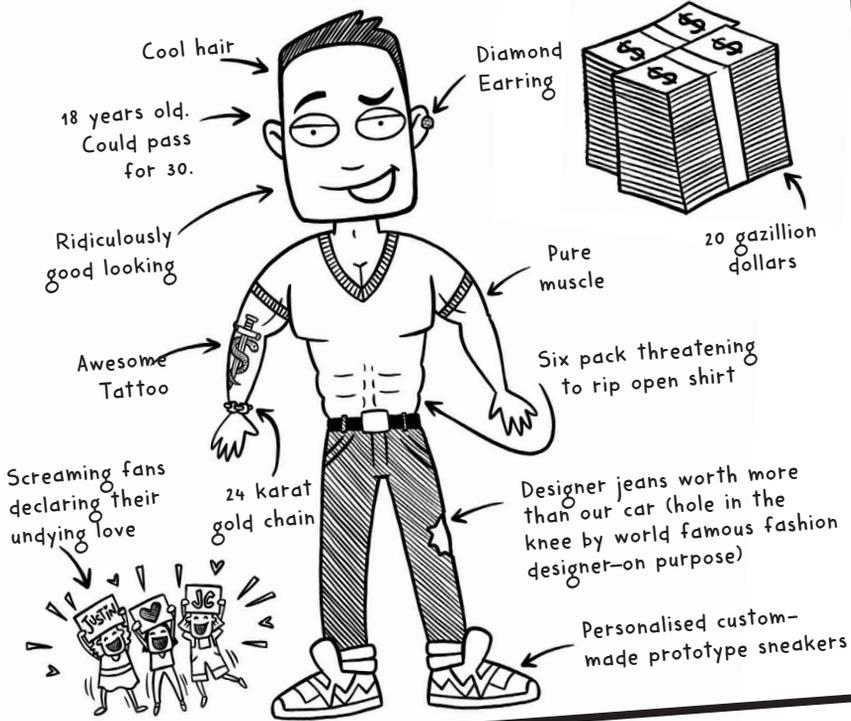


DIFFERENCE?

JUSTIN CHASE

International recording superstar
+ teen heart throb

27 million
followers
on social media



Um, yeah. So basically all we have in common is our name. And for me, it's a **CURSE!**

5:10am

'Hurry up! We're leaving in ten minutes!'

That's my Mum. She's tiny but don't be fooled. **DO NOT MESS WITH THIS LADY!**

Her name is Angelica Mary-Grace Joy Manalo Dela-Cruz, but everyone calls her **Angel**. Except me. I call her **'YES, MUM!'** She speaks three languages. She's a registered nurse. She runs marathons. She knows martial arts. She's **never** late.

Also, she gives **great hugs!**

Just not right at this exact moment in time.

'MOVE IT, MISTER!'



Other important Mum info:

LIKES

- Rules
- Cat videos

DISLIKES

- Rule breaking
- Rule breakers
- Rule bending
- Rule ignoring
- Rule forgetting
- Rule flouting
- Rule questioning
- Frogs

5:19:50 am

Then IT begins.

'TEN SECONDS! TEN, NINE ...'

My mum **loves** a countdown.

She should work at **NASA!** I congratulate myself for already being fully dressed. Sleeping in my clothes was a stroke of genius!

'EIGHT, SEVEN ...'

I grab my pre-packed overnight bag. This is the **new** me. Organised. Efficient. Responsible.

'SIX, FIVE ...'

Ready to rule my new life. New home. New school. Ready for my new life. New me. It's going to be **the best week ever!** I can feel it in my guts.

'FOUR, THREE, TWO ...'

Everything I own is crammed into cardboard boxes, ready to be moved across to my dad's place later today. Goodbye, old room. Old life.

Before she can say **'One'** I race past Mum, down the hallway and out the front door.



I don't know what happens if she ever gets to 'ONE'. I've never let it happen and I don't plan on finding out.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF MUM REACHING 'ONE'

Her head explodes



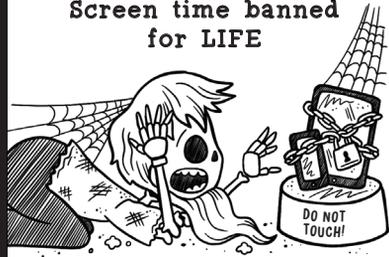
MY head explodes



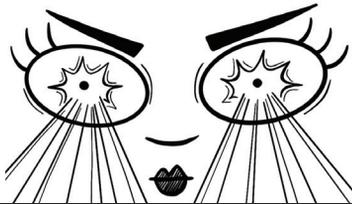
Screen time banned for a week



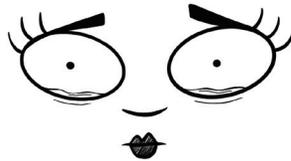
Screen time banned for LIFE



The look. You know the one. LASER EYES!



The OTHER look. You know the one. Disappointment!



5:20am

HOOOOO OOOO NNNNK!

That's the car horn in case you didn't hear it, though I'm pretty sure they heard it on the moon!



Oi!
Keep it
down!

HOOOOO OOOO NNNNK!

Dogs are **HOWLING**. Lights in the neighbouring houses are flicking on.

The guy holding his hand down on the horn, sitting bolt upright in the front seat while **glaring** coldly at me out the window with his lifeless beady eyes is my brand new **stepdad**.



And I mean **BRAND NEW**. My mum just married him last night.

Here are the highlights from the wedding.



Aunt Beryl doing the Funky Chicken
(and then giving me ten bucks
for fetching her asthma puffer)



Uncle Ray attempting The Worm
(and then giving me ten bucks
to help him up off the dance floor)

Also good: The all-you-can-eat buffet. I did my best!

Here are the lowlights.



Having to wear this stupid suit and
then smile for 10 million photos



The cake

How can cake be a lowlight?
Because it was FRUIT CAKE! Fruit
does not belong in cake!! What a
SCAM! At least the icing was OK.

Photograph Number
9,876,432!

I throw my bag into the boot,
SLAM it shut and then jump in the
back seat. My cat is already buckled
up in the seat next to me in his
'Pawtable Kitty Kat Karrier'
giving me the **EVIL EYE**.



He is **THE** most miserable cat
on the planet, but he's **my** cat and I love him. This
love is **NOT** returned in anyway **whatsoever**. I
suspect it's because of his name. **CAPTAIN FLUFFYKINS**.

I honestly don't know what I was thinking. In my
defense, I was five when I named him and he
USED to be **CUTE**.

THEN:



&

NOW:

Other Captain Fluffykins facts:

LIKES

- . Sleeping
- . Scratching the couch
- . Scratching the curtains
- . Death-staring
- . Scratching the doors
- . Scratching me

DISLIKES

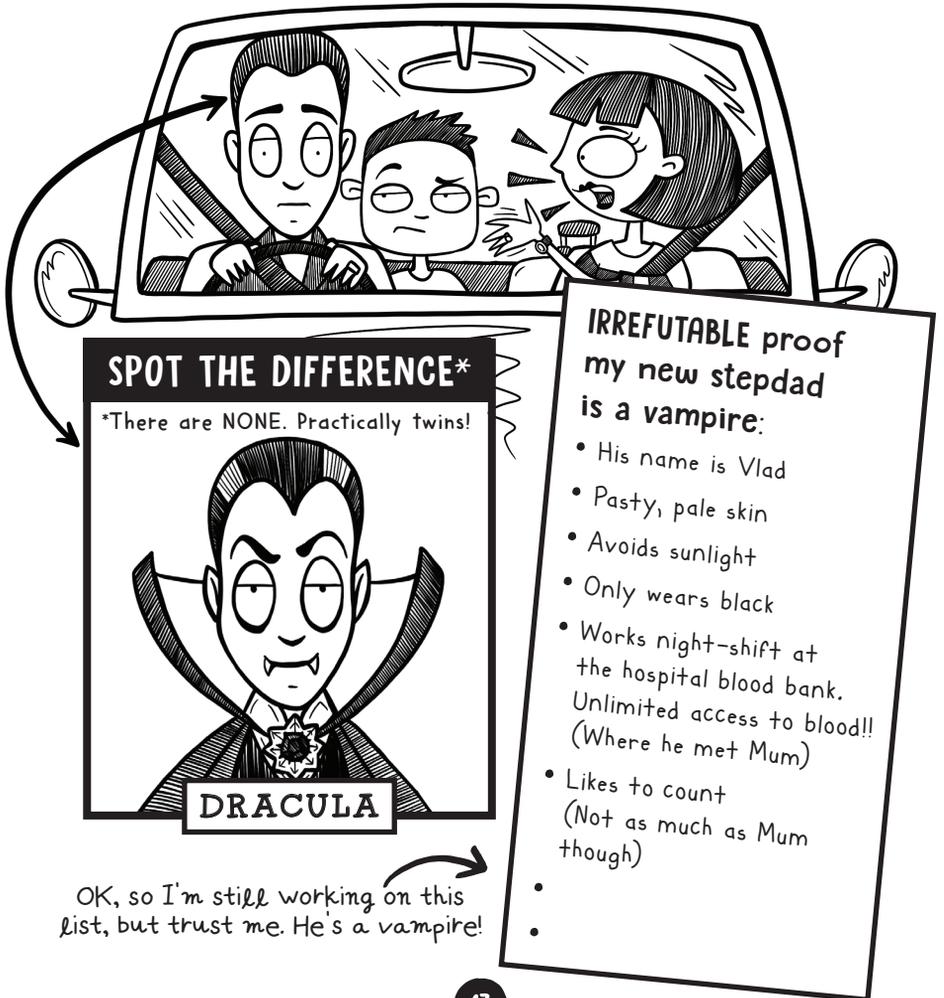
- . Everybody
- . Everything
- . Scratching his
scratching post



5:50am

We've been driving for half an hour now and for half an hour my mum has been twisted around in the front passenger seat looking back at me, rattling off a **NEVER ENDING** list of rules. 'Do your homework as soon as you get home. Check your answers **twice**. Do **ALL** of the extension tasks. Be polite to all of the teachers. Make eye contact. Speak **clearly**. Use your manners. Say '**good morning**' to the Principal. Always say '**please**' and '**thank you**'. Smile. Make good friends. Stay away from **TROUBLEMAKERS**. Don't talk in class. Pay attention. Put up your hand. Answer questions. Comb your hair. Stand up **straight**. Polish your shoes. Make sure your shirt is tucked in. Make sure you pack everything you need in your school bag. Bring your epipen with you **everywhere**. **ALWAYS** check the ingredients label before you eat anything. Wear a hat if you go outside. Bring a jacket in case it gets cold. Write neatly. Take pride in all of your work. Do not even think about picking your nose. Not even touching the edge of your nostril. Hands stay entirely away from your nose. Sneeze into your elbow. **Always** have an extra handkerchief in your pocket. Wash your hands. For twenty seconds. After you blow your nose. Wash your hands. After you go to the toilet. Wash your hands. Before you eat. Wash your hands. After you eat. Wash your hands. If you touch anything. Wash your hands. If you haven't washed your hands in a while. **Wash your hands**. Eat your greens. No junk food. Brush your teeth for two minutes. Use the timer! No video games on a weeknight. Only one hour of video games on Saturday and Sunday. I **WILL** find out if you play for longer. Do some form of exercise. **Every day**. Be good to your sweet Nan. You're lucky to have her. Help with the housework. Make your bed. **Properly**. Take out the rubbish. Wash your hands. Don't forget to feed Captain Fluffykins. Listen to your father, unless what he is saying contradicts what I have told you. Then listen to **ME**. I will be the voice in your head. Wash your hands. Always do the right thing. Pull up your socks. I will call you everyday. You **WILL** pick up. Message me if anything bad happens. Message me if anything good happens. Just message me. **Anytime**. But no games on the phone. It is for emergencies only. In bed by 8 o'clock every night. Lights out by 8:30. You need your rest. No watching YouTube. No watching anything that is rated over PG. You are only allowed online for homework assignments. Do not talk to any strangers on the internet. Do not talk to any strangers on the street. Only cross the road at dedicated pedestrian crossings. Look both ways **TWICE** before crossing the road even if you have the flashing green man. Remember what happened to your poor cousin Rico! Tie your shoe laces properly. Don't pee on the toilet seat. Clean up after yourself. Wash behind your ears. Make sure your fingernails are clean. Don't forget to floss. Do not let your room get too messy. Do not let the dog sleep in your room. Do not whinge. Be happy. Be a good boy!'

'Yes, Mum', I repeat each time she pauses for breath, although I stopped listening a while ago. I'm staring straight ahead at the back of my stepdad's head. Did I mention he's a **VAMPIRE?** Well, he is.

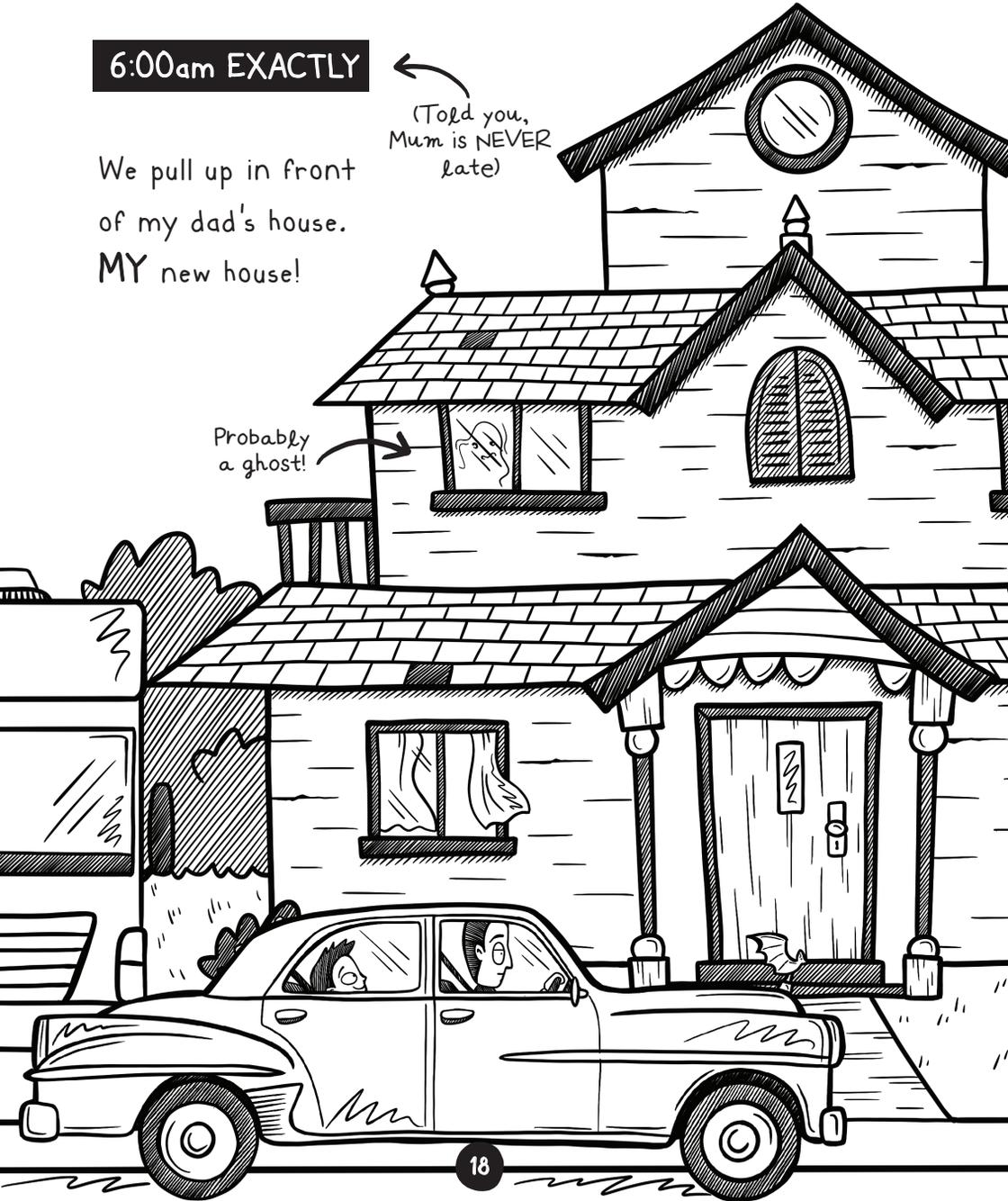


6:00am EXACTLY

(Told you,
Mum is NEVER
late)

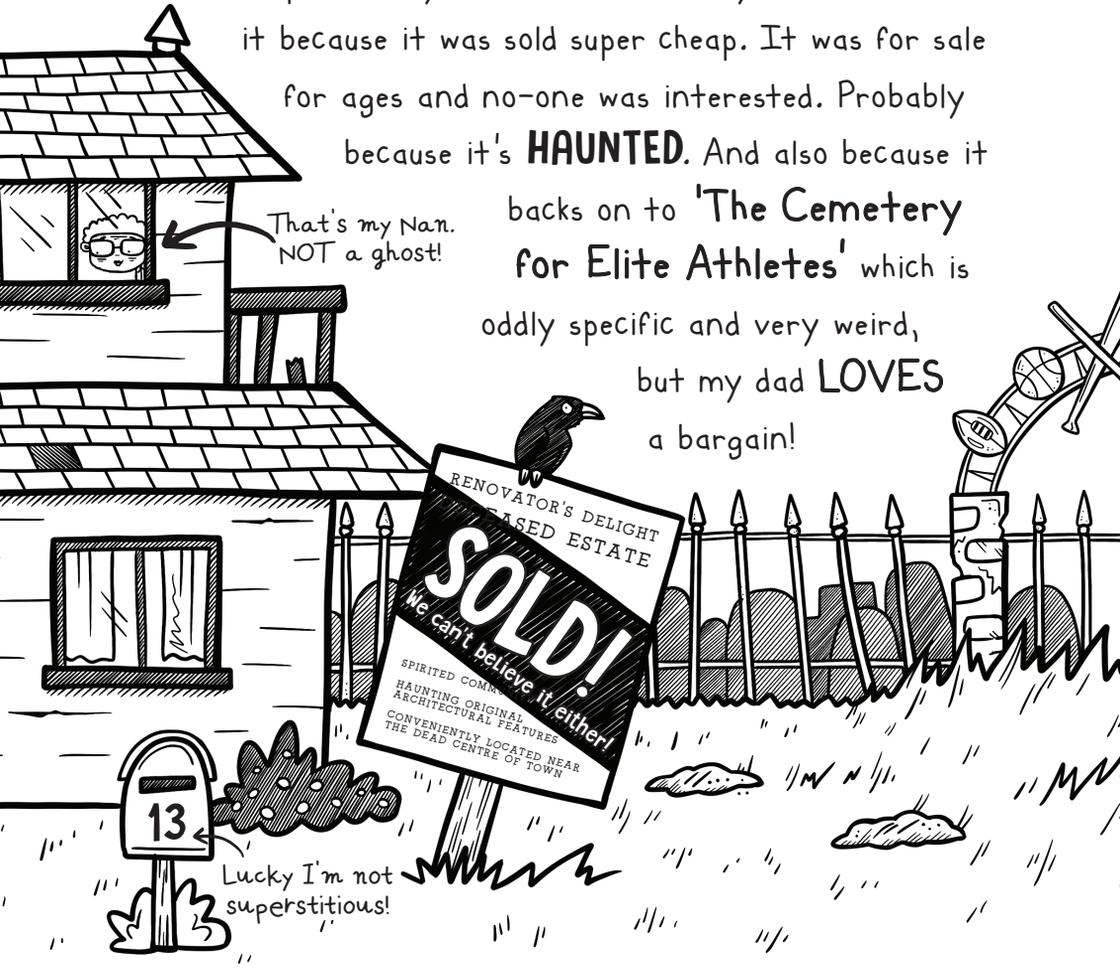
We pull up in front
of my dad's house.
MY new house!

Probably
a ghost!



It looks **spooky** and it is most likely, definitely **haunted** but it is massive and I get the entire upstairs attic as my bedroom. **SWEET!**

It's practically a **mansion** but my dad could afford it because it was sold super cheap. It was for sale for ages and no-one was interested. Probably because it's **HAUNTED**. And also because it backs on to 'The Cemetery for Elite Athletes' which is oddly specific and very weird, but my dad **LOVES** a bargain!



That's my Nan.
NOT a ghost!

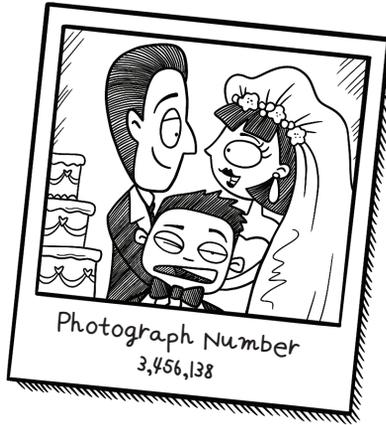
RENOVATOR'S DELIGHT
RESERVED ESTATE
SOLD!
We can't believe it either!
SPIRITED COMMUNAL
HAUNTING ORIGINAL
ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES
CONVENIENTLY LOCATED NEAR
THE DEAD CENTRE OF TOWN

13

Lucky I'm not
superstitious!

SO HERE'S THE DEAL. I'm going to be based at dad's house from now on.

Since Mum married Step Dracula (last night) ...



she is moving in to his place (fancy apartment in the city) ...

'we' (i.e. Mum and Dad) all decided at a Family Meeting (boring) ...

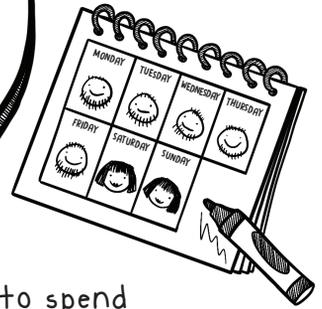
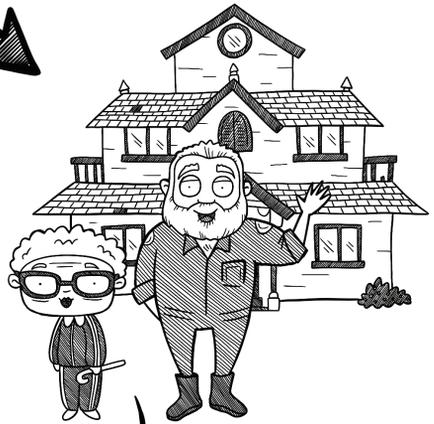


and since they both mostly work night shifts (because she's a nurse and he's a vampire) ...





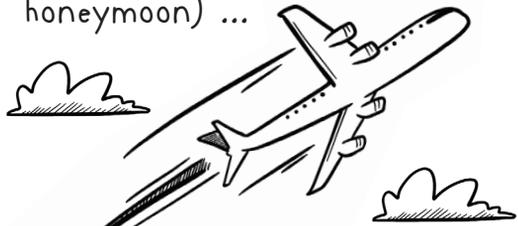
that I would move
in with Dad (and Nan)
during the week
(because he's awake
during daylight
hours—**mostly**)
PLUS his new place
is massive ...



and get to spend
weekends with Mum
(after she gets back
from her tropical island
honeymoon) ...



Which is why they are
rushing to get me out of
the car because they need
to get to the airport and
Mum is **NEVER** late.



DO YOU FOLLOW?

Dad has sauntered out of the house and down the driveway to greet us. He always looks like he's moving in slow motion, as though he's wading through mud. He is **NEVER** in a hurry. It drives Mum 'up the wall!'

He's casually scratching his armpit. Some part of Dad's body is always itching so it could be worse! **MUCH WORSE.**

And he's just wearing his boxer shorts and fleece boots. That's almost **over dressed** by Dad standards. ↘



Dad at the beach



Dad mowing the lawn



Dad watching TV



I leap out of the car and Dad grins. 'The big guy is here—**The Juz Man!**' Despite being the man that named me 'Justin', Dad never uses my **actual** name.

Names my Dad calls me INSTEAD of Justin:

- . Juzmeister
- . JuJu ChooChoo
- . Sir Jousting Chasealot
- . Justin Time For Dinner
- . The Justinator
- . Judge Choozy
- . Justin Case I forget
- . Dustin Justin
- . J-Dawg
- . Juzzo
- . Juzza
- . Justo
- . Super J
- . JuzJuz
- . Juicy C
- . Emperor Justinus
- . Big J
- . Little J
- . Justifizzle
- . Jay Cee
- . Dr Jay

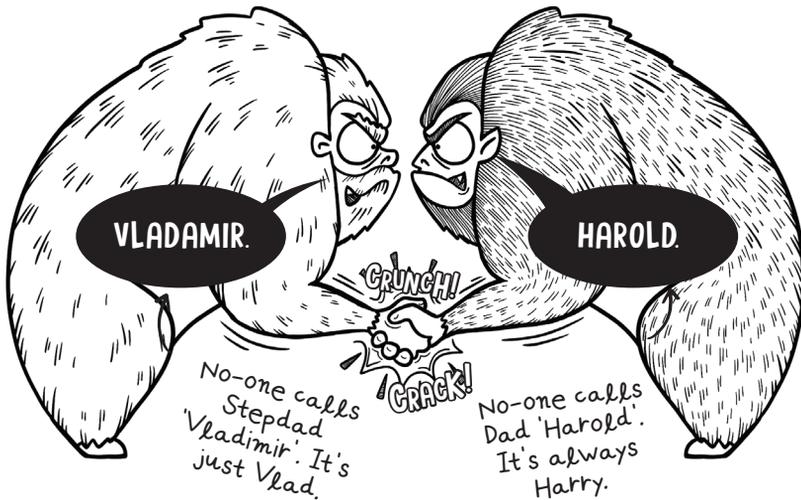
continues ...

'Give me five—J to the C!'



Gets me **EVERY TIME!**

Stepdad rises out of the front car seat like a vampire out of a coffin. He stands and faces Dad and it is basically every **wildlife documentary** you've ever seen where the two big male animals in the group face-off against each other.



Mum breaks the **AWKWARD** handshake. 'You'll catch a cold out here in your **underwear**, Harry! Here's the cat. Here's the leftover wedding cake. **ENJOY!** Justin's boxes should be delivered later this afternoon. We need to get going or we'll be **LATE**. Call me if **anything** happens!'

Then Mum turns to me and a gentle smile lifts the corners of her mouth. Her eyes are **glistening** as she envelopes me in one of her full body hugs that transfer warmth, **LOVE**, peace, tenderness and also **restrict breathing**.

'I love you more than anything,' she says softly.

'**More** than cat videos?' I check (it's our thing)—
'**More** than cat videos,' she confirms and kisses me repeatedly on each cheek, my forehead and the top of my head, before I **wriggle** out of her arms.

And then the smile evaporates. 'Follow the **RULES!** Be **good**. Have fun, but **not** too much fun. Message me. Call me. I'll be back soon.'

Then she's in the car with Stepdad driving off to the airport. Their tropical island awaits. I wave goodbye and blow kisses. (To Mum, not Stepdad.)

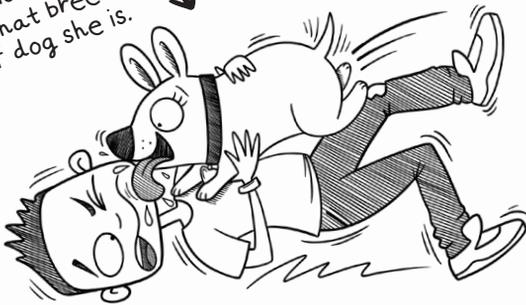


6:10am

I walk in through the front door and I'm **KNOCKED** over. Flat on my back. Standing on my chest, licking my face like it's a melting ice cream cone in Summer is **Nickers**, Dad's dog.

'**ERRRRRRGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!** Get off me, **Nickers!**' I cry, unsuccessfully trying to push the dog away from my face. Her tail is wagging like full speed windscreen wipers and her barks of happiness echo through the house.

Not sure
what breed
of dog she is.

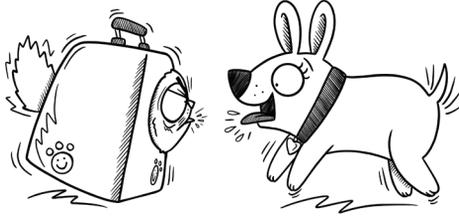


Dad laughs his roaring belly laugh, his tummy actually **JIGGLING** as he enters the foyer. **Captain Fluffykins** hisses

angrily through his little window. **Nickers** is **Captain Fluffykins'** lifelong sworn **ENEMY!** I'm not sure how it is going to work with them together under the same roof again.

Hissss*

* So we meet again! You slobbering, butt-sniffing buffoon.



**WOOF WOOF
WOOFWOOF****

** Woof Woof
Woof Woof.

'Settle down, Nickers!' Dad commands and Nickers obeys. She **mostly** does whatever Dad says, ever since the day he brought her home from the **Dog Rescue Centre**. She really is a good dog, except for one small character flaw. She does have a tendency to **STEAL** things. Anything. Anytime. She's basically a raging **KLEPTOMANIAC**. That's why she's called **Nickers**. Because she **nicks** everything!

SOME THINGS NICKERS HAS STOLEN THROUGHOUT HISTORY

**My
homework**
(and of course
no-one
believed me)



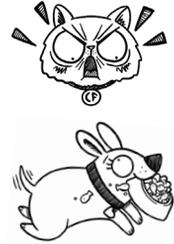
**Dad's car
keys AND
sunglasses**



**Nan's
knickers**
(they're so big!)



**Captain
Fluffykins'
lunch**



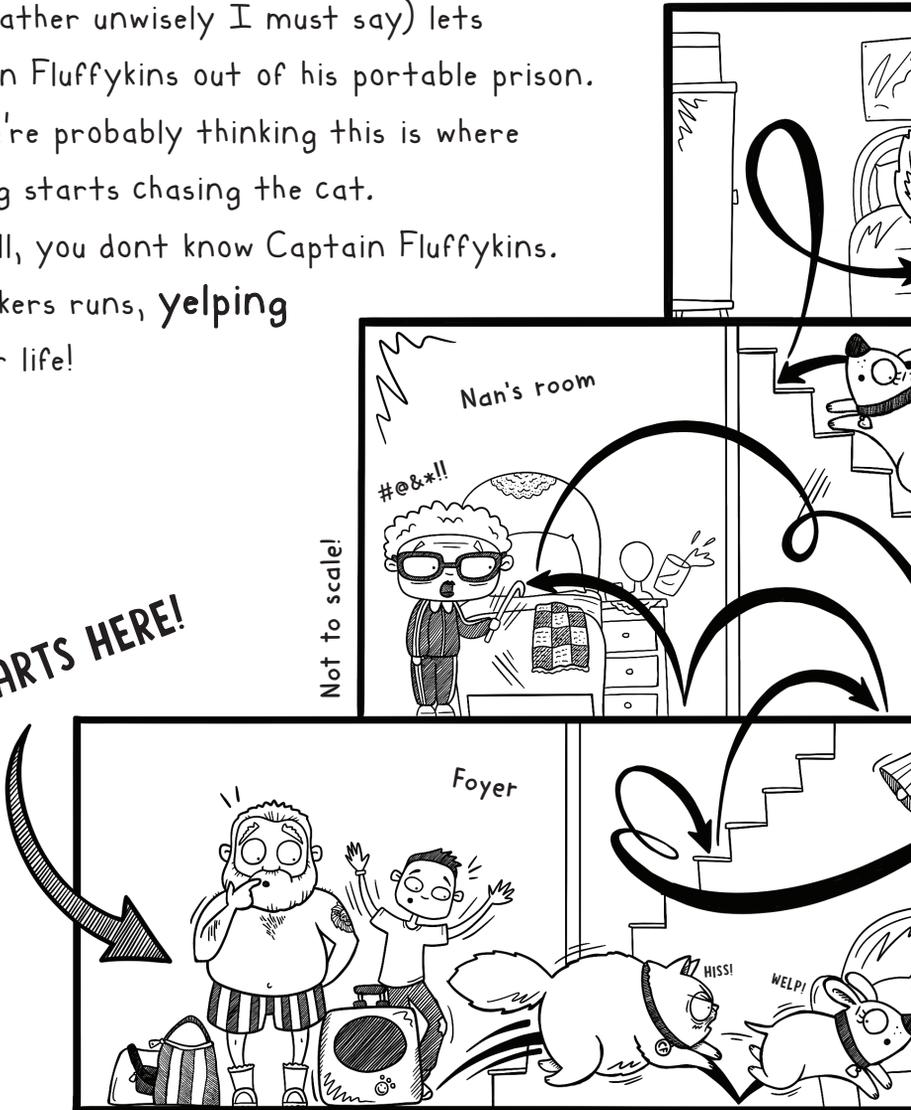
'Best friends, reunited!' Dad proclaims and (rather unwisely I must say) lets Captain Fluffykins out of his portable prison.

You're probably thinking this is where the dog starts chasing the cat.

Well, you dont know Captain Fluffykins.

Nickers runs, **yelping** for her life!

IT STARTS HERE!



IT ENDS HERE.

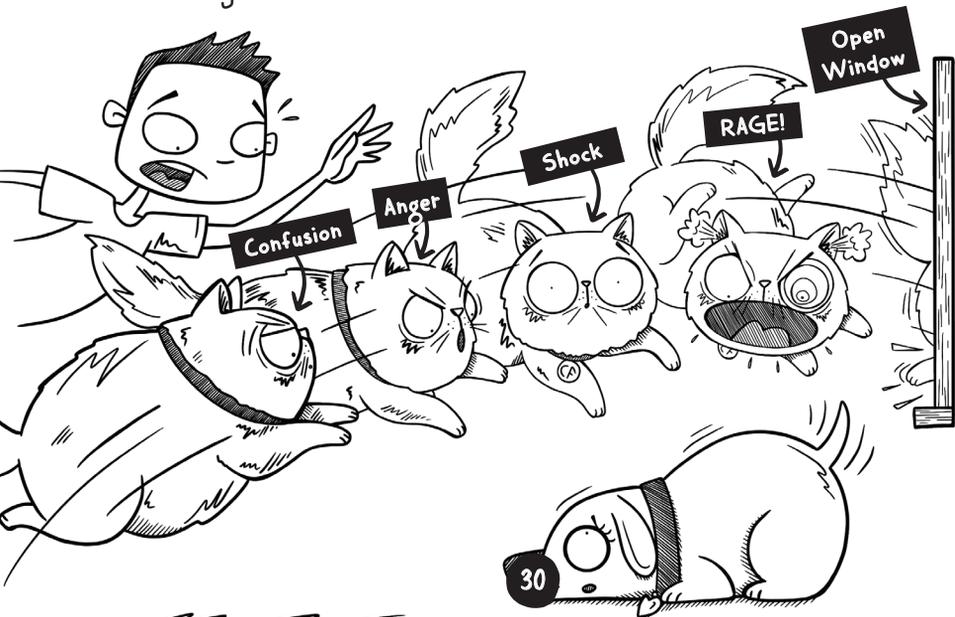
A stand-off between dog and cat. Nickers is **cornered**. Captain Fluffykins is ready to **pounce** on his pooch prey.



6:20am

'Captain Fluffykins! **STOP!**' I shout, panting, out of breath. But that cat has **never** listened to me and clearly isn't about to start listening now.

He launches himself in a **flying leap** towards Nickers. In a move no-one (especially Captain Fluffykins!) sees coming, Nickers ducks down flat on her belly. And my cat, trapped by the laws of physics in his ill-advised **TRAJECTORY**, sails **over** the top of his nemesis and flies straight out the back window, **disappearing** into the murky darkness of the breaking dawn.



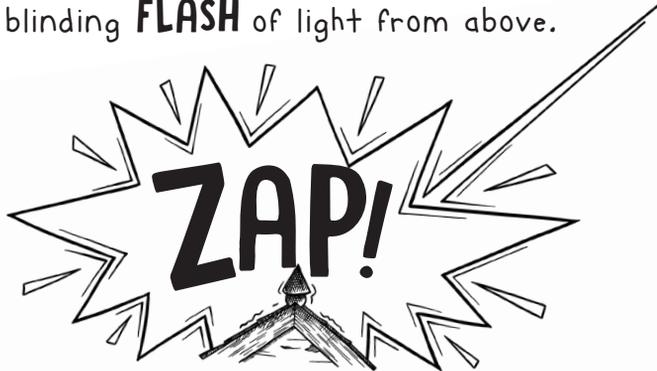
In disbelief I run to the window and scan outside for Captain Fluffykins. I heave a sigh of **relief** when I spot him. He's perched on the ridge of the roof below, like a surly, furry **GARGOYLE**.

GARGOYLE
Moderately
scary



**CAPTAIN
FLUFFYKINS**
Absolutely
terrifying

'Captain Fluffykins! **Don't move!**' I yell out. He looks directly at me and gives me his most withering, contempt-filled **death stare**. Suddenly there's a blinding **FLASH** of light from above.



Captain Fluffykins is **GONE!** Completely **vanished** into thin air.

GRAB A COPY
OF THE BOOK TO
KEEP READING.



STILL TO COME:

- School Uniform Malfunction
 - Grossest Breakfast Ever
 - A School Drop Off Debacle
 - Mistaken Identity Fiasco
 - Shoutiest Teacher in the world
 - Explosive Diarrhea Disaster
 - Toilet Paper Emergency
- AND SO MUCH MORE!



The 1st book in the
hilarious 7 part series

EVA AMORES is a designer/photographer who has worked for the Sydney Opera House and the ABC. She was born in The Philippines and moved to Australia in high school. She likes shoes, travelling and more shoes.

MATT COSGROVE is the best-selling author/illustrator of *Macca the Alpaca* and the *Epic Fail Tales* series. He was born and raised in Western Sydney. He likes chocolate, avoiding social interactions and more chocolate.

Eva and Matt met when they were randomly placed together for a group assignment at University twenty-five years ago and they've been collaborating ever since. They've made dinner, cakes, a mess, the bed, mistakes, memories, poor fashion decisions and two actual humans, but this is their first book together.

