

A large, stylized illustration of a water splash or puddle, rendered in a dotted, stippled style. The splash is irregular in shape, with several smaller droplets scattered around it. The background is white, and the splash itself is a light gray color with a textured, dotted appearance. The splash is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the page, with other smaller splashes visible in the corners.

MONSTER STINK

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For Pascal





Dear _____

(I don't know your name yet, so insert it here),

To read on you need to do three very important things.

FIRST: Promise you'll never ever show a grown-up this book. Grown-ups hate bogeys and smelly things (and this book is full of 'em), so they're bound to barf.

SECOND: You need to say 'hi' to our heroes, the Snozzlers, which is their stage name. Their real names are:



Frank Bear Horace Pickerty-Boop, recognizable by his ginger curls, and for having an index finger always ready for a root around his honker.

Tiffany, Frank's best friend, who never goes anywhere without her



Frank



Tiffany



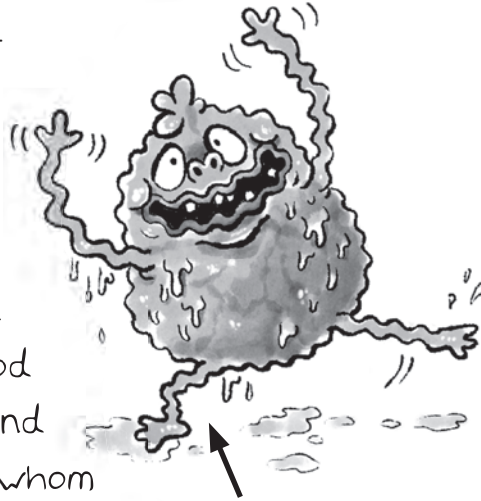
acrobatic slugs, Sammy, Violet, Peach and Slim.

Frank's mum, who never misses a high note.

Frank's dad, who makes horror movies.

Bogey, the Star of the

Show. He looks a right slimer of a monster, but don't be fooled. He's kind and friendly and very good with animals, like Binky and her performing bats, with whom he communicates using only his mind.



Bogey




THIRD: And this is VERY IMPORTANT, OK? You ABSOLUTELY MUST read the book warning below. Your life may depend on it, so PLEASE, PLEASE don't skip it.






BOOK WARNING



Please handle this book with care! Don't shake it, drop it or turn it upside down.

For inside is something very VERY dangerous - something known as the Stinkus-Dinkus-Inus-Mozzleus-Horribilis.






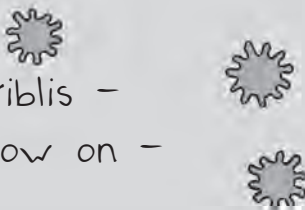
And it's whiffing and whirling about these pages like an invisible, nightmarish cloud.

Which pages?

I don't know, yet. Not this one. But definitely some others, so you must be VERY VERY careful.

One clumsy page turn and you could - POOOFF - find yourself breathing it in, which'd make you . . . Hmmm, I'd better not tell that bit. It might put you off reading. Let's just say that the





Stinkus-Dinkus-Inus-Nozzleus-Horriblis -
we'll just call it the Stink from now on -
has a very dangerous side effect.

And so, to read on, you will need:

- ✿ a nose peg
 - ✿ something that smells nice - a chocolate bar, a marshmallow, peanut butter, boiled sprouts . . . (What? I love that smell!)
 - ✿ a pack of tissues
- and
- ✿ possibly a spare pair of underpants

Got it? Good.

Now, dearest stinkers - yes, that's you -
please turn to Chapter 1.

Oh, and listen . . .

There's music in Chapter 1 so you'll
probably be all right. Probably. Oh, I
don't know . . . just follow the notes . . .







CHAPTER 1

FORGET THE REST, YOU'RE THE BEST

‘**G**OO LIEMALOO LIE!’ They’re good,’ whispered Frank, peering around the backstage curtain at the entertainers before them.

They were four musicians in leather trousers and sequined science coats, a band called **LOBBO’S LAB RATS**. And what they were good at was singing showy, science-themed rock ballads, like ‘I’ve Got My Ion You’ and ‘Love Knows No Cell-By Date’, while balancing on moving motorcycles.



Frank's index finger crept up his nostril, as it always did when he felt nervous. 'Wow! How did they do that?' he whispered, as coloured smoke suddenly shot out of the Lab Rats' bikes' exhaust pipes and morphed into moving shapes like little dancers, before disappearing in a puff of glitter.

'Soaring slugs! That's gonna be a hard act to follow,' said Tiffany, Frank's best friend, as she stroked her performing circus slugs, Sammy, Violet, Peach and Slim, for reassurance.

'Goo,' agreed their monster friend Bogey, before slurping the glob-nugget Frank had just extracted from his nose. Eating bogeys soothed his pre-show jitters.

'Don't worry, our show's good *toooooooooo*,' sang Frank's mum operatically, clutching Dad's arm and trying to stay positive, but when Lobbo's deep, gravelly rock voice rose into an expertly controlled high-pitched falsetto, she gasped. 'Whoa! A top B!'

Tiffany recorded it on her phone. 'His group's definitely the best so far,' she whispered to Frank (who wasn't allowed





a phone yet), ‘so this way, we’ll remember what we’re up against if we happen to get through.’

‘Oh, good idea,’ said Dad, getting his phone out too. ‘Why didn’t I think of that?’

‘Right,’ Frank said, looking at his wristwatch, then up at the ceiling to check Binky and the other bats were in place. (They were.) ‘Prepare yourselves, everybody. We’re next.’

There was a lot riding on this performance.

For they were in none other than the famous Blob-Warble Theatre in the city of Warble-Blob, competing in the semi-finals of the most prestigious TV entertainment prize in the world: ***FORGET THE REST, YOU’RE THE BEST!*** If they made it through this round, they’d be in the FINAL. And if they won that, they’d get to perform all around the world this summer. And the idea of winning and travelling the globe with his best friends and family made Frank positively shiver with excitement. Maybe they’d even visit Paris, where his mum and dad had once lived - they’d told him so much about it.

After Lobbo had sounded his last high note, and his





band had done more daredevil motorcycle stunts, while singing 'We Love Heavy Metals' and juggling test tubes, **LOBBO'S LAB RATS** bowed to the TV cameras then left the stage to wild cheers and applause.



Frank wanted to say 'well done' as they passed (he thought it was the nice thing to do). But when he saw Lobbo up close, he suddenly lost his voice.

There was something about his glittery lab coat, blond quiff, platform shoes and gold hoop earring that gave Frank the willy-willy-woo-woos. (Or was it just his snarling face? Erm, yes, it was that.)

And Lobbo's show partners were scary too . . .

Lil Hunk, the muscly lead guitarist, did a nasty two-fingered prong movement, pointing at his own bloodshot eyes then aiming at Frank, as if to say, *I'm watching you*.

Daphne, the black-lipsticked second guitarist (and Lobbo's big sister) growled at Tiffany, before pointing at the words 'make 'em bleed', written in red sequins on her T-shirt.

Bendy Babs, the leggy red-headed lead dancer, rolled up





the sleeves of her silver lab coat to show off long, bright-pink nails like knives.

They were the most menacing-looking lot Frank had ever clapped eyes on.

‘Soaring slugs! I’ve got the heebie-jeebies,’ whispered Tiffany once they’d all gone past.

‘MEEP,’ agreed Sammy, Violet, Peach and Slim.




‘Oh, I’m sure they’re nice, really,’ said Dad. ‘They just want to win, so they’re trying to unnerve us. It’s classic competition behaviour.’

But Frank wasn’t so sure. Bogey was shedding squidgepeas (squishy bogeys shaped like peas), which meant he was frightened, which meant he’d sensed nastiness.

But there was no time to say any more, ’cause suddenly a loud voice boomed across the stage.

‘LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS, PUT YOUR HANDS TOGETHER FOR THE LAST ACT OF THE SEMI-FINALS. THE FABULOUS, THE FANTASTICAL, THE MYSTERIOUS . . . SNOZZLERS!’





Frank's heart beat faster at the sound of their name. He was the one who'd invented it and he was very proud. The crowd roared.

The Snozzlers huddled together below the bats and chanted 'JUST PICK IT!' three times for luck (which sounded like 'MEEP MIP MIP' for the slugs), then ran out into their positions in front of the TV cameras: Bogey on a podium; Tiffany up front with the slugs; Mum at the back in front of a giant movie screen; Dad in the projection area and Frank backstage, making sure their show ran smoothly.

It was time to wow the judges.

