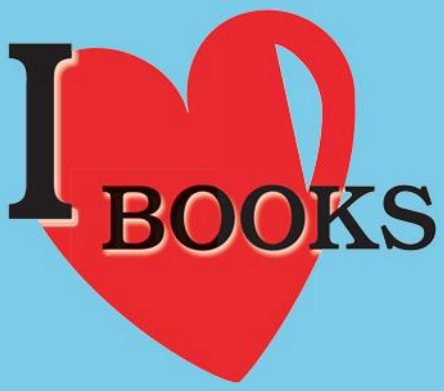


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Opening extract from

Super Creepy Camp

Written by

Barry Hutchison

Illustrated by

Katie Abey

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To future me. Your glasses are on your head, and the car keys are in the fridge ~ Barry Hutchison



For James George, I hope you enjoy this book as much as you love your favourite spoon ~ Katie Abey

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CHAPTER 1

THE DRAW

"So," said my best mate, Theo, hiking up the steps beside me, "I've been thinking."

"Congratulations," I said, stepping aside to let a group of more enthusiastic pupils pass us on the way to class. "Did it hurt?"

"Hilarious," said Theo. "But listen, you know how you can only tell the truth now?"

"I had noticed," I said. I'd been unable to tell a lie since a weird woman called Madame Shirley stuck me in an even weirder truth-telling machine in the back of her shop a few weeks ago.





"Well, I've thought of all the things you've told me over the years that I reckon might not be true."

"All the things?" I said doubtfully.

"Well, OK, not all of them, but some of them," said Theo. We rounded a corner on to the science floor, then headed up the next set of stairs. "And I think this is the perfect time to find out if they're actually true."

"I'll save you the bother," I said. "They probably aren't."

"Number one," said Theo, ignoring me. "Do you really have monkey DNA?"

"No."

"Are your parents spies?"

"Which one?" I asked.

"Either," said Theo.

"No."





"Did you really break your nose training for the Olympics?"

"Yes!"

Theo stopped. "What? No way!"

"Yeah. I decided I was going to be an Olympic gymnast and tried to do a backflip," I said. "It didn't end well."

We carried on up the stairs. "I mean, if you're asking was I hand-picked by Team GB to represent the country at the Olympic Games like I told you I'd been? No. Did I knee myself in the face while attempting acrobatics in my living room? Yes. Yes, I did."

"Smooth," said Theo. "I'd have loved to have been there to see that."

"Yeah," I said. "You could have called the ambulance."

We arrived on the English corridor and stepped up the pace. We had spent months perfecting our technique for getting between classes, figuring out

the exact speed we could walk so we arrived late enough to miss a little bit of each lesson but not late enough to get into trouble.

"What do you think Doddsy has got in store for us today, then?" Theo said.

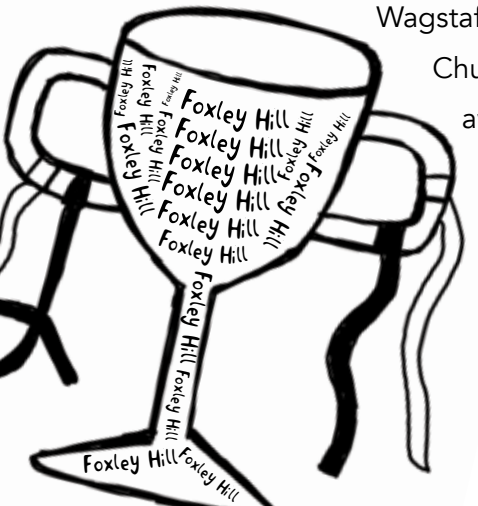
I puffed out my cheeks and shrugged. "An English lesson, probably," I said.

"Yeah, that sounds about right," said Theo, then his eyes widened. "Wait! No! It's today, isn't it?"

"Yes," I confirmed. "Of course it's today. Technically, I suppose, it's always today..."

"No, I mean today's the day!" Theo said. "Today's the day they draw the names for the Wagstaffe Cup!"

The Wagstaffe Cup – or, to give it its full, completely idiotic title, the Winston and Watson Wagstaffe Cup of Competitive Chummery – was a cup awarded to the winner of an inter-school contest between our school



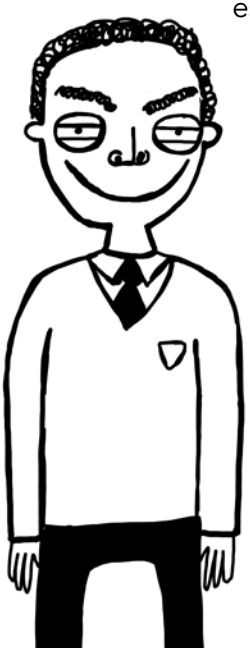
and nearby Foxley Hill School. Every year, a Year Seven class was chosen – this year it was ours – then five pupils were randomly selected to take part. Today was the day the draw for the team was being made.

"I wouldn't worry about it," I said. "It's a pretty big class. What are the chances of us being picked?"

"Tiny," Theo agreed. He smiled. "Let's go find out who's unlucky enough to make the team."



Wayne Lawson was looking at me. This was *not* good. Wayne looking at you is never positive news, especially if he's looking at you the way he was looking at me – eyes narrowed, nostrils flared, mouth curved into a nasty-looking smirk. It had only been a couple of weeks since I'd been partnered with Wayne on the school trip to Learning Land, after the



teachers had somehow got it into their heads that I was bullying him and that spending time together would help us become friends. In fact, Wayne was the one bullying me and over the next few hours I'd only narrowly avoided being pummelled into a lumpy paste by his massive fists.



Luckily I'd managed to expose him as the two-faced sneaky bully he is, while also showing everyone on the trip video footage of him being frightened almost to the point of crying by a man dressed as a clown. To say he was looking for an opportunity to get his own back was a bit of an understatement.

Unbelievably, Wayne had managed to avoid getting into trouble by giving his dad – who happened to be our head teacher – some sob story about feeling like he wasn't getting enough parental attention. He'd told him that his behaviour at Learning Land had been a cry for help, which probably sent his dad into panic mode.

Mr Lawson already had one son in prison and the last thing he would've wanted was for Wayne to end up there, too. Although, to be fair, it's probably where he belongs.

So, ever since Learning Land, all the teachers had been sucking up to Wayne even more than usual and basically letting him get away with murder.

Not *literally*, of course, although I wouldn't put it past him.

This meant Wayne was getting all kinds of special treatment – like right now, when he was being allowed to draw out the names of the pupils taking part in the Wagstaffe Cup. Mrs Dodds had wanted to be the one to do the draw but Mr Lawson had told her not to be so selfish.



While Mrs Dodds sat behind her desk, trying not to look annoyed, Mr Lawson took a small rectangle of paper from Wayne's hand and unfolded it. A flicker of irritation flitted across his face as he read the name aloud.

"Dylan Malone."

I glanced around the class, looking for the poor, unfortunate soul who'd just had his name drawn. It was only when I saw everyone staring at me that the words filtered through into my brain.



"Wait. That's me," I said. "I'm Dylan Malone."

A ripple of laughter passed around the class.

Mr Lawson tutted his annoyance. "Well, that doesn't exactly bode well for the contest, does it?" he said. "If our first team member isn't even sure of his own name."

"It's just that everyone usually calls me 'Beaky', sir," I pointed out.

"Yes, well…"

"Because of my massive nose."

"Yes, thank you, Beaky," said Mr Lawson. He shook his head and quickly corrected himself. "*Dylan*. Thank you, Dylan. I think we get the picture."

Another rumble of laughter went around the class. Mr Lawson twisted his face into the boggle-eyed stare he does when he's trying to look scary. He calls it the "hawk-eye" but it makes him look more like a constipated pigeon, if anything.



"Right, that's enough!" he yelled. "I'm sure I don't need to remind you just how important the Wagstaffe Cup is to the school. It is not a laughing matter. What is it not?"

"A laughing matter," mumbled the class in unison.