MONSTER MAX

AND THE BOBBLE HAT OF FORGETTING

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First published in 2021
by Firefly Press
25 Gabalfa Road, Llandaff North, Cardiff, CF14 2JJ
www.fireflypress.co.uk

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A CIP catalogue record of this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 9781913102333
ebook ISBN 9781913102340

This book has been published with the support of the Welsh Books Council.

Typeset and designed by

Printed and bound by:

Dedication

For our three monsters: Jude, Victor and Hortense

1

Meet Max

This is Max.

Everything normal here.
Nothing weird about Max.

Max lives with his parents: David and Sally Forbes, who own a normal terraced house, on an ordinary street in a quiet (and very respectable) town.

This is Max's cat, Frankenstein.

And here's another picture, taken of Max and Frankenstein just last week,

OK, so there's something going on here.

You see, Max is sometimes a boy, who does all the boy things: like go to

school, occasionally remember to do his homework, pretend to brush his teeth … **BUT** sometimes he is a monster who does all the monster things: like jump out of unlikely places, roar loudly, eat whole dustbins.

When he is a monster, Max sometimes forgets that Frankenstein is his best friend and wonders instead what cat tastes like…

Horrible – luckily.

'You have to stop turning yourself into a big hairy monster,' said Max's dad, one morning at breakfast. 'There's a report in the paper. People are saying things.'

'I can't help it,' said Max pouring himself some cereal.

Important Note: This is not completely true. Max is very special: he can turn himself into a scary monster by **BURPING**. And he can turn himself back into a boy again by **SNEEZING.** Sometimes he burps by mistake, which can be a nasty surprise if you are standing next to him in the supermarket. And flowers make Max sneeze, so he often finds himself far from home in just his underpants.

‘Then you’ll have to work something out,’ his dad continued. ‘It says here that last night something that may have been a bloodcurdling monster:

- scared several old ladies at bus stops all over Oxford
- and climbed a tall statue in the park and shouted ‘Bum!’

Luckily, the paper says it was probably someone in a costume … although a Mrs Mudford-Sock of Mamble Drive is sure it was next door’s poodle. But you can’t keep becoming a monster and scaring people.’

‘I read a book, too.’

‘Well, reading books is good,’ Max’s dad admitted. ‘Well done.’

‘See? You should look on the bright side more often, Dad,’ said Max.

‘Hmm. Anyway,’ said his dad, ‘you need an M.O.…’

‘Half a Moo? Like if your cow’s in a hurry?’

‘No: a modus operandi. It’s a purpose. Whenever you turn into a monster you think of something good to do…’ Max’s dad held up a picture in the paper. It showed a picture of the local chip van upside down in a duck pond. ‘Instead of this.’

‘I think that was Frankenstein...’

‘No, it wasn’t,’ said Max’s dad.

That evening, while he was watching TV, Max did think about things. It was fun turning himself into a Hairy

Beast. He could run like the wind, he was super strong, he could climb up buildings and eat anything … except Frankenstein. Best of all, no one could tell him what to do.

He went to the kitchen via the hidden staircase in his room and picked up the newspaper that was lying on the table. Broken lampposts, smashed windows, metal statues of important people bent to look like they were picking their nose…

It was strange. Max couldn't remember doing any of it, but he was he was the only invincible monster in his town, so it must have been him, surely?

His dad was right, he needed to be more responsible. Besides anything else, he did not want to get his parents

into trouble. Max was smart enough to know that being different made stuff harder sometimes.

He would go out tonight, he decided, and try not to break anything or gobble anyone up. Perhaps he might get an idea for an M.O.…