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Maggie Sparks and the Truth Dragon

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MAGGIE SPARKS AND THE TRUTH DRAGON



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Sweet Cherry



MAGGIE
That's me!

BAT
The coolest chameleon EVER.





ALFIE
Stinky and annoying.

GRANDAD
My favourite wizard in the world!



MUM
Super smart.
Bakes great cookies.

DAD
Writes a lot.
Cannot bake cookies.



UNCLE ROGER
Always on his phone.



AUNT CELIA
Posh. Likes weird food.

ELLA
World's worst cousin!



ARTHUR
My best friend.

Chapter 1

Maggie Sparks was a witch. A small, curly-haired, freckle-faced witch, who was usually full of mischief and fizzing with

MAGIC.

But today she wasn't *just* a witch …



she was a fashion queen!

She was dressed to impress in stripy leggings, a rainbow T-shirt, a tutu, spotty wellies, a black leather jacket and her superstar sunglasses. Bat, her pet chameleon, was VERY impressed. He gave her a thumbs up with all four of his thumbs!



Maggie hurried downstairs to show her mum and dad how awesome she looked.

'Ta-da!' she said, as she struck a pose in the living room doorway.

Mum and Dad looked VERY surprised, and very smart.

'Why do you both look so posh?' asked Maggie.

'Because we're all going to Aunt Celia and Uncle Roger's for dinner,' said Mum. 'You can't go dressed like that. Wear this instead.'

Mum handed Maggie a boring navy-blue dress and the smart shiny shoes that pinched her toes.

Maggie's face fell into a frown. 'What?! This is SOOOO UNFAIR!' she shouted. Then she stomped back upstairs to get changed.

The journey to Aunt Celia's house was awful. The car was hot and stuffy, and Alfie wouldn't stop screaming until Mum gave him a biscuit. Then he covered himself and everyone else in crumbs and biscuity slobber.

By the time Maggie's family arrived at The Fanshaw Residence (that's what Aunt Celia called her house),



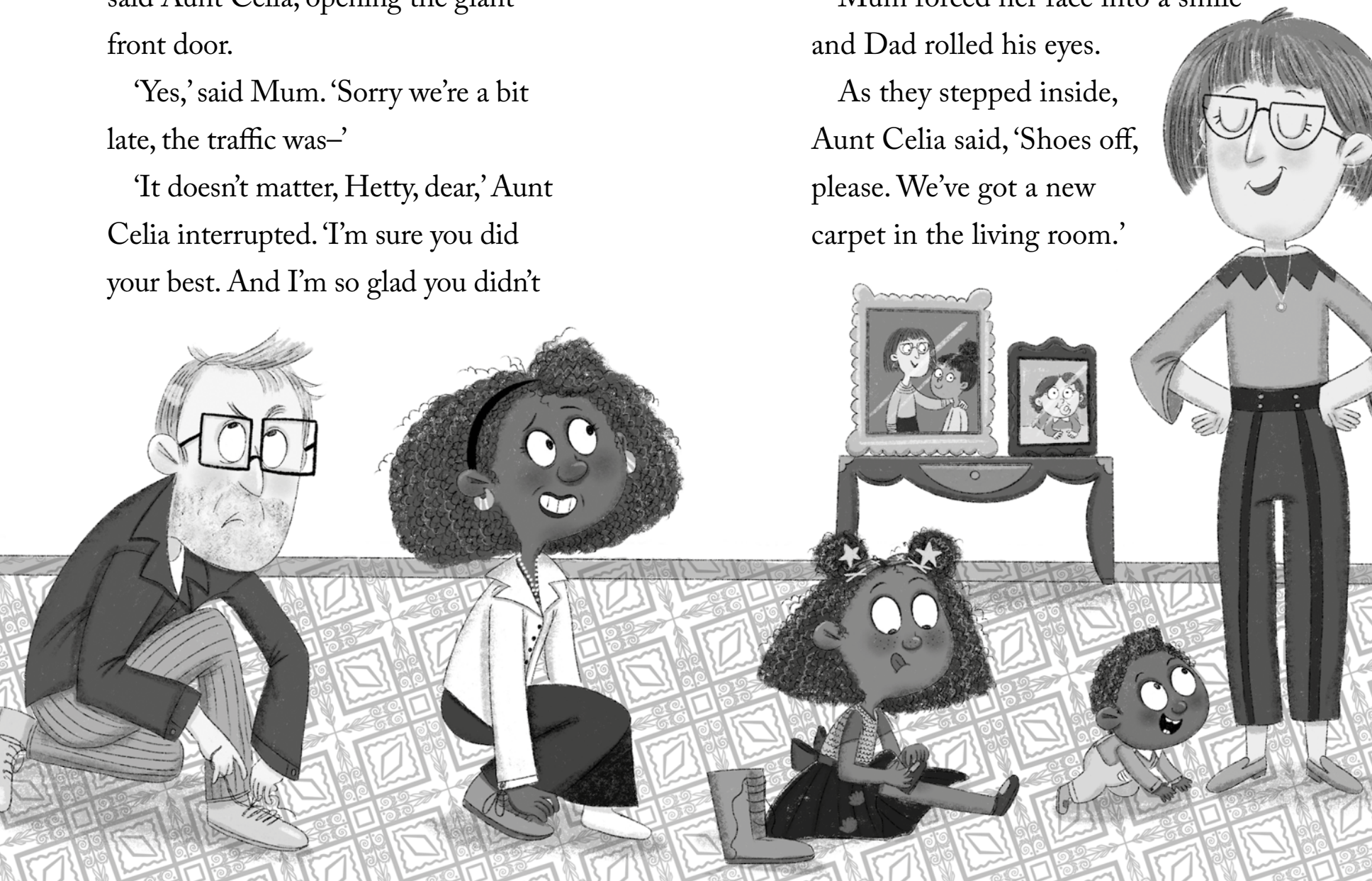
'Tom, Hetty, you made it ... at last!' said Aunt Celia, opening the giant front door.

'Yes,' said Mum. 'Sorry we're a bit late, the traffic was–'

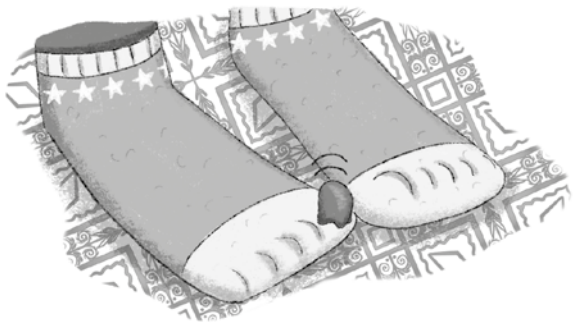
'It doesn't matter, Hetty, dear,' Aunt Celia interrupted. 'I'm sure you did your best. And I'm so glad you didn't bother to dress up. We're not fussy!'

Mum forced her face into a smile and Dad rolled his eyes.

As they stepped inside, Aunt Celia said, 'Shoes off, please. We've got a new carpet in the living room.'



Maggie happily kicked off her smart shoes, forgetting that the sock on her right foot had a big hole in it. One toe peeped out and wiggled like a worm.



Mum blushed as Aunt Celia tutted.

'Bring your shoes with you,' said Aunt Celia. 'I think it will be best if we eat outside, on the patio.' She looked at Alfie and added, 'Less mess!'

They walked through the hall, waded through the thick, new, living room carpet and stepped out onto the patio. Uncle Roger was lounging in a garden chair, talking into his mobile phone. He looked up and waved, then turned back and carried on with his call.

'He'll be with us soon,' said Aunt Celia. 'It's an important business call from America. He works so hard.'

Does he? thought Maggie. She didn't think talking on the phone counted as hard work. Maths homework, on the other hand – now THAT was hard work.

Just then, Maggie's cousin Ella came running towards them. She looked perfect, as usual. Ella had beautiful curly hair, brown eyes and white teeth. She was dressed in clothes that made her look cool and smart and sporty all at the same time. She was SOOOOOO annoying!

'Hello, Auntie Hetty and Uncle Tom,' said Ella. 'Wow, you both look lovely!'

Mum smiled. Dad blushed and said, 'Thanks, Ella.'

'And hello, Maggie,' Ella said, turning to face her.

'What an unusual pattern on your dress!'

Maggie looked down and saw two biscuity Alfie handprints.

Ella laughed.

Maggie didn't.

