For vampires, fairies, and humans everywhere!

And for my sparkly Celestine.

Illustrated by Mike Garton,
based on original artwork by Harriet Muncaster

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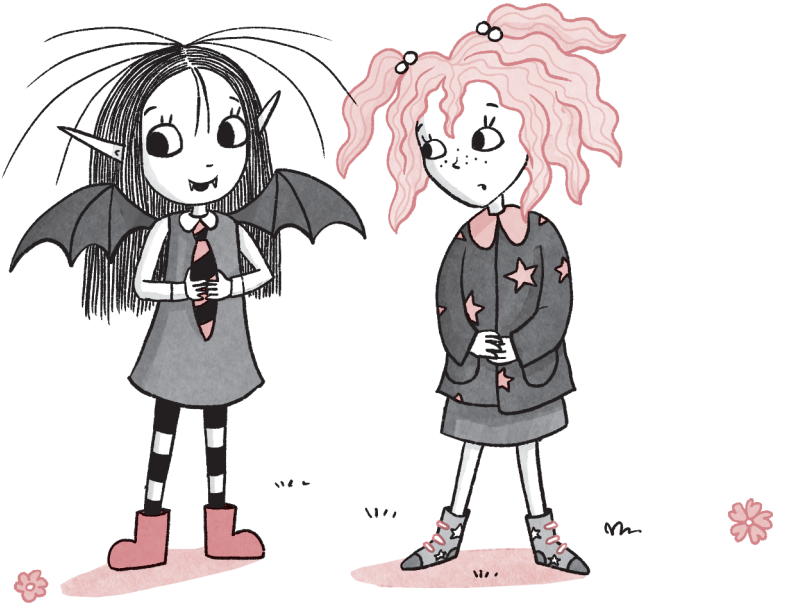
ISADORA MOON

and the New Girl



Harriet Muncaster

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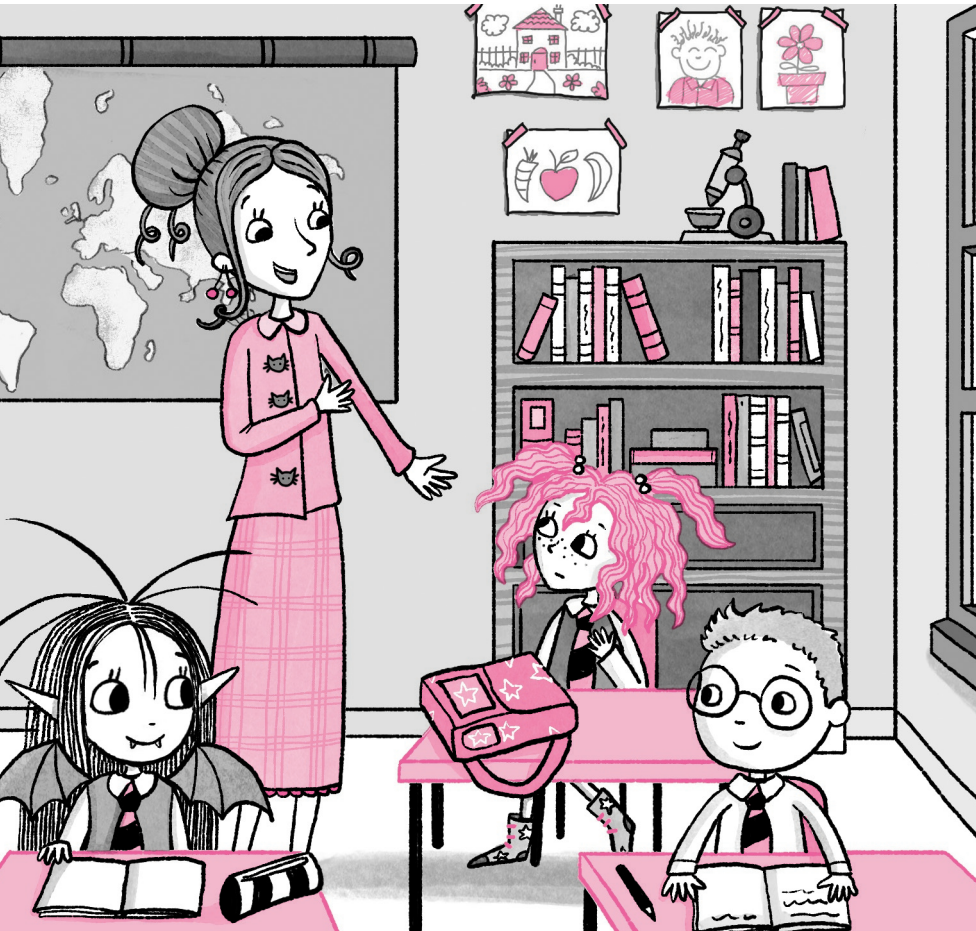
Chapter ONE

It was the first day of a new term and when I arrived at school I was surprised to see a new girl standing at the front of the classroom.

'This is Ava,' said Miss Cherry. 'She's new in town and she'll be joining our class from today. Let's all welcome her!'

'Welcome, Ava!' chanted the class.

I watched as Miss Cherry led Ava to an empty desk at the back of the room and remembered how it had felt to be new in the class myself. It had been a bit scary!



I wondered if Ava felt scared too. She wasn't smiling and she kept reaching her hand up to her dress pocket.

At break time everyone in the class swarmed over to Ava in the playground. We were all interested in getting to know her.

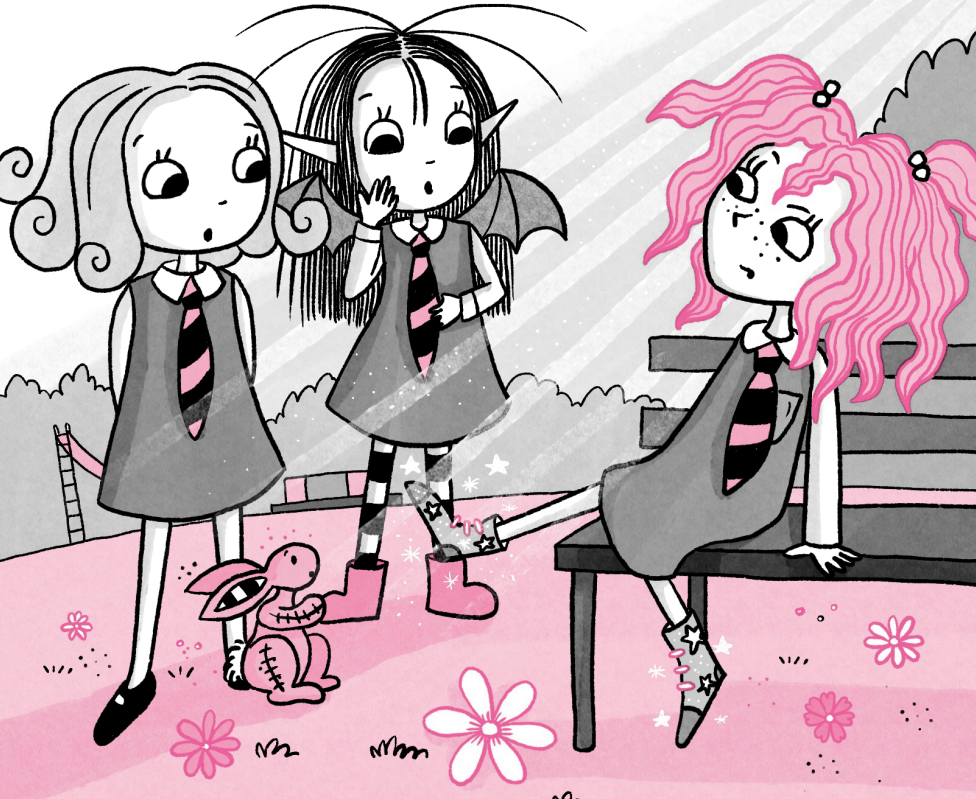
'I *really* like your shoes, Ava!' I said, pointing at them.

'Me too!' said my best friend Zoe.

Ava was wearing a pair of super sparkly lace-up boots with silver stars. I wasn't sure if she was really supposed to be wearing them at school, but I wondered if Miss Cherry hadn't said anything because she was new.

Ava looked at me and Zoe, but she didn't smile or say thank you.

'They're nice, aren't they,' she said, sticking out her foot so that the glitter dazzled in the sunlight. 'Much better than any of your boring old school shoes!'



I heard Zoe gasp next to me and I stared in shock at Ava, but Bruno laughed. He didn't care that Ava thought his shoes were boring.

'Where have you moved from?' he asked. 'Was it from far away?'

'Far enough away to have to move schools,' said Ava and she sounded a bit cross. 'I was at a *much* better school before this. It had a *swimming pool*! And my friends there were *fabulous*!' She glared round at us all and I suddenly felt completely small and very *un*-fabulous.

'Oh, right,' said Bruno. He shrugged and then went off to play football with Jasper and Sashi.

Zoe and I stayed where we were but I wasn't sure what else to say to Ava.

'Do you want to come and play with us?' asked Zoe after a moment. 'We're going to make a crown for Pink Rabbit from daisies!'

Pink Rabbit bounced up and down beside me with excitement. He used to be my favourite stuffed toy, but my mum magicked him alive with her wand. She can do things like that because she's a fairy.

Ava frowned. Then she glanced scornfully at Pink Rabbit and said, 'Aren't

you a bit old to be bringing a cuddly toy to school?'

I stared at Ava, speechless. Tears started to prick at the corners of my eyes. Pink Rabbit stopped bouncing and glared indignantly at the new girl. Zoe took my hand.

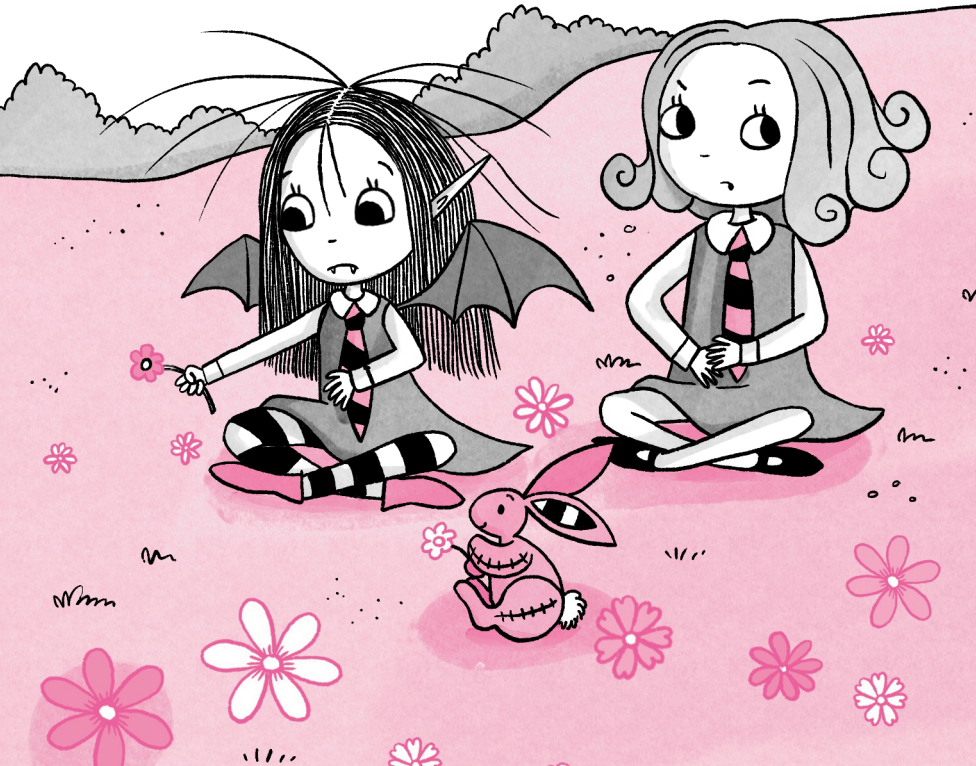
'Well!' she blustered. 'That's fine. We'll go and play on our own then!'

'Good,' said Ava, defiantly. 'I have better things to do.' Then she marched across to the other side of the playground, sat down on a bench and opened a notebook.

Zoe pulled me by the hand over to the school playing field. It was dotted all

over with daisies, but neither of us could concentrate on making a crown for Pink Rabbit.

'I can't believe how horrible Ava is!' Zoe huffed. 'I've never met such a mean girl before!'



‘Me neither!’ I said. And it was true. Ava was *mean*. None of my friends from school had ever spoken to me like that before. I picked up Pink Rabbit and gave him a big squeeze, trying to stop any tears from falling from my eyes.

‘Just ignore her, Isadora,’ said Zoe. ‘She’s probably just jealous that she doesn’t have a Pink Rabbit. I’ll bring in my toy monkey tomorrow!’

‘OK,’ I sniffed. Then I looked at Zoe and smiled. I felt so glad to have a best friend like her!

★ ★ ★

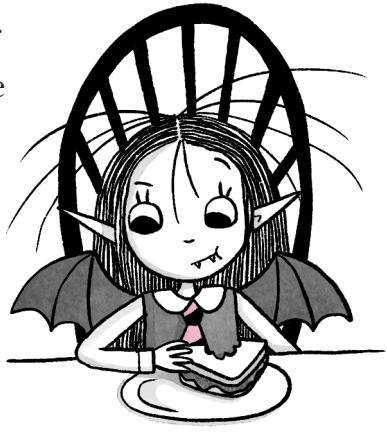
‘How was school?’ asked Mum when I got home that afternoon.

'It was all right,' I shrugged. 'There's a new girl called Ava. But she wasn't very nice.'

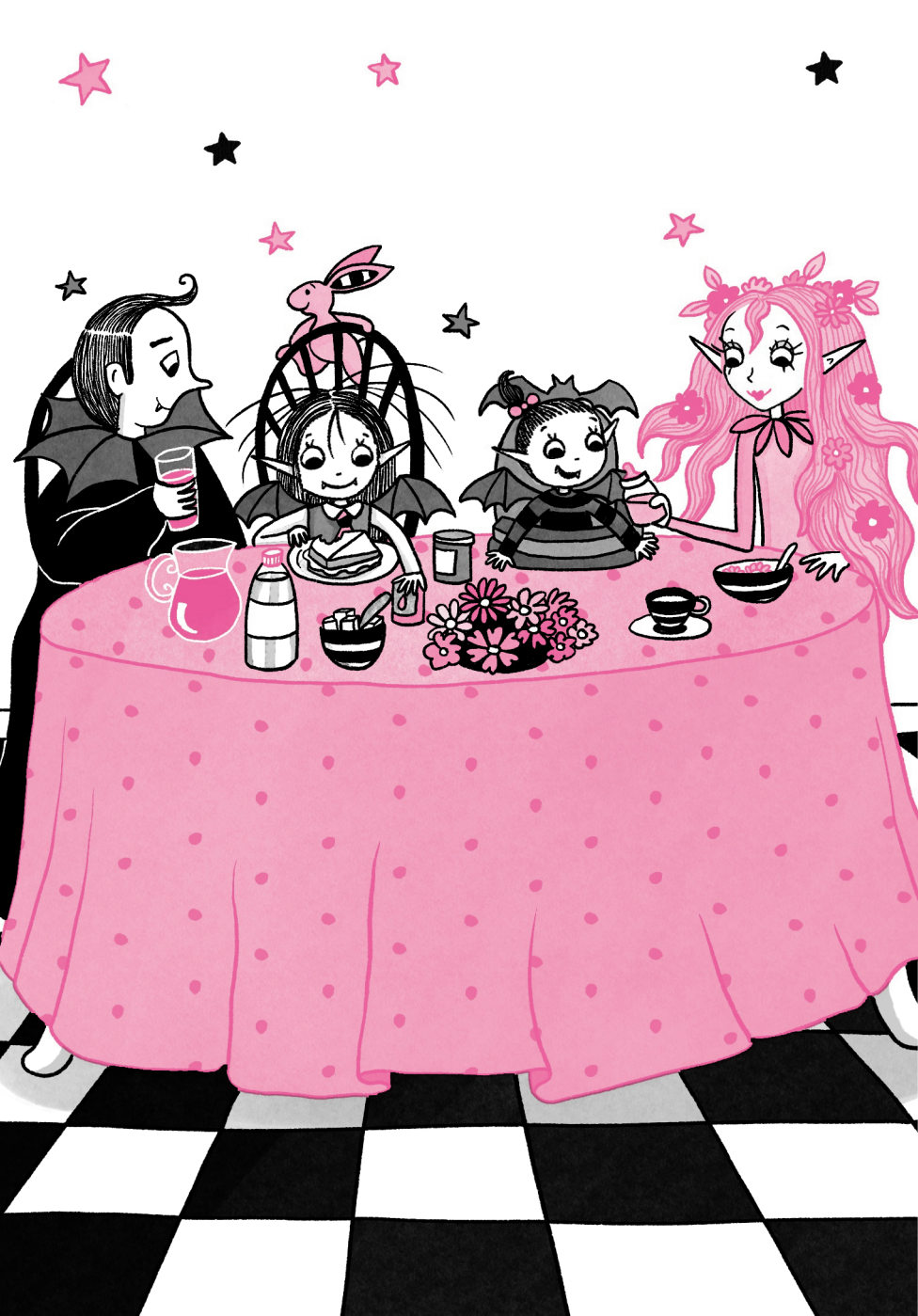
'Oh?' said Mum. 'Why not?'

'She just wasn't,' I said.

'OK . . .' said Mum. She set a plate down in front of me. On it was a peanut butter sandwich, which is my favourite snack, but today it didn't taste quite as good as usual.



'I'm sure Ava will warm up,' said Mum as she sat down opposite me and started to feed my baby sister Honeyblossom some pink milk. 'It's



probably just because she's new.'

'Maybe,' I said, but inside I was sure that Ava would never warm up. I wished that she had never joined our class!

'Shall we talk about something more cheering?' suggested Dad as he slurped his red juice. My dad is a vampire and he only likes food if it's red. 'Why don't we discuss Pink Rabbit's party!'

'Oh yes!' I said, immediately feeling a lot better. I had been begging Mum and Dad to let me hold a party for Pink Rabbit for ages. He's never had one!

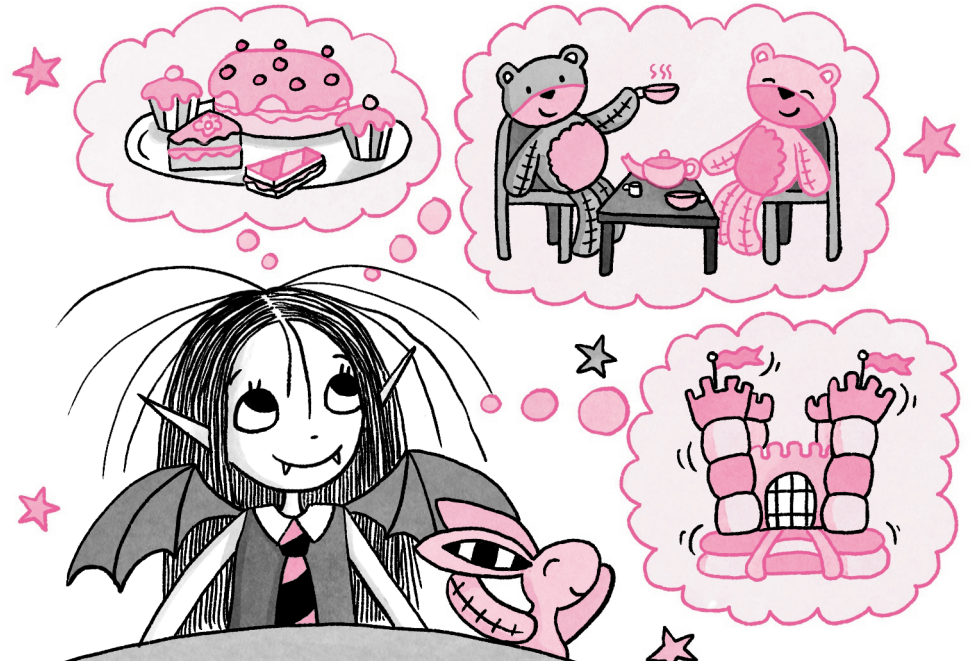
'I want to invite all my friends over with their favourite toys for a picnic in the garden!' I said.

'That sounds lovely,' said Mum. 'I'll make a cake!'

'A teddy bears' picnic!' said Dad. 'Pink Rabbit will love it!'

Pink Rabbit wiggled his ears in agreement.

'*Maybe* we could have a bouncy castle too?' I said hopefully.



‘We’ll see,’ replied Mum. ‘Are you going to invite the new girl?’

I felt all my excitement about the party suddenly drain right out of me.

‘No,’ I replied. ‘She’ll only ruin it.’

Mum frowned.

‘I really think you should,’ she said.

‘But . . .’ I mumbled. ‘I don’t want to. And anyway, I’m sure she wouldn’t *want* to come. She’d think a teddy bears’ picnic was babyish.’

‘I’m sure she wouldn’t!’ said Dad. ‘And besides, you’ll be busy hosting so you won’t have to spend that much time with her at the party if you don’t want to. It would be very unkind to leave her out.’

'Yes,' agreed Mum. 'Think about how you felt when you were new at school.'

'*I* was nice when I was new!' I said indignantly. 'I didn't tell people they had boring shoes or that they were babyish for having a cuddly toy!'

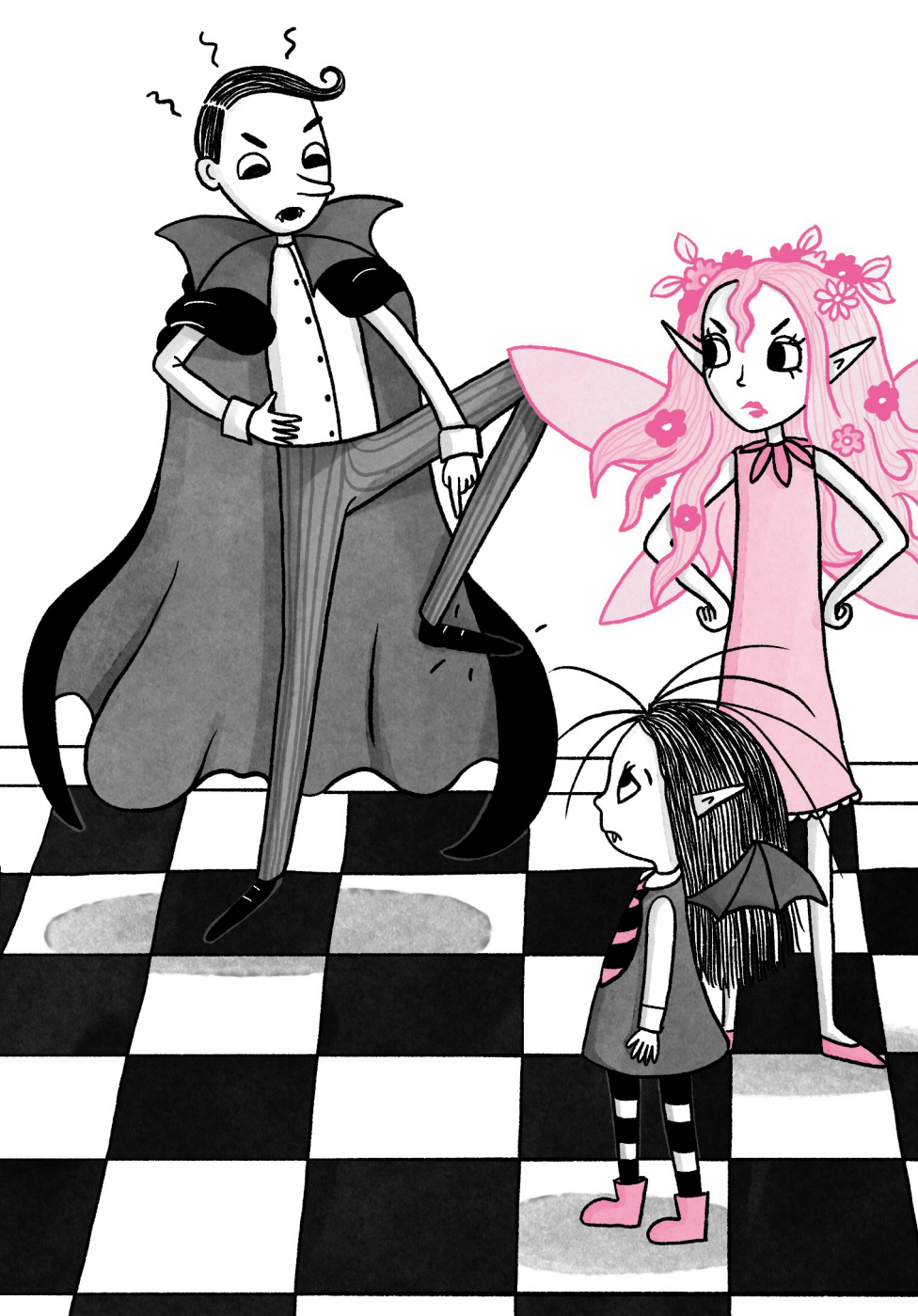
'Is that what she said?' Dad gasped. He stuck out his foot in its shiny, polished vampire shoe. 'Well! If someone ever dared to insult *my* footwear—'

Mum gave him a sharp look.

'*Ahem*,' said Dad. 'I'm sure the new girl didn't mean it.'

'She did!' I insisted.

'Even if she did,' said Mum, 'and *even* if she isn't very nice, you really can't leave



her out if you're inviting everyone else in your class. I'm sorry, Isadora.'

I gave a long sigh, but deep down I knew Mum was right.

'*Ohh . . . kaay*,' I said. 'I'll invite Ava.'

'Good,' smiled Mum. 'It's the right thing to do.'

'Just give her a chance,' said Dad.

I went upstairs to my bedroom with Pink Rabbit hopping along behind me and got out all my craft things for making the party invitations. I only had two more to make. Well, three if I was going to make one for Ava. I got busy with the scissors, cutting out cardboard rabbit shapes and

sticking white pompoms on them to be the fluffy tails. Then I wrote the names of all my friends on the invitations along with the place and time of the party. I felt very pleased with how they all looked.

‘Marvellous!’ said Dad when I came downstairs a couple of hours later to show him.

‘They’re lovely!’ said Mum. ‘Do you want me to enchant them to bounce along like real rabbits with my wand?’

‘Er . . . I don’t think so,’ I said. ‘Last time I took enchanted invitations to school Miss Cherry wasn’t very happy.’ Instead, I gathered all the pink cardboard rabbits into a neat pile and slipped them into my satchel to take to school the following day.