CARRIE SELLON

Pizza Pete and the Missing Magic

ILLUSTRATED BY SARAH HORNE



GUPPY BOOKS

Praise for *Pizza Pete and the Perilous Potions*:

'It has all the reckless fun of *George's Marvellous Medicine* . . . a lively upbeat story that is as enjoyable as a Sloppy Giuseppe with all the toppings.' *The Times* Children's Book of the Week

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PIZZA PETE AND THE MISSING MAGIC
is a GUPPY BOOK

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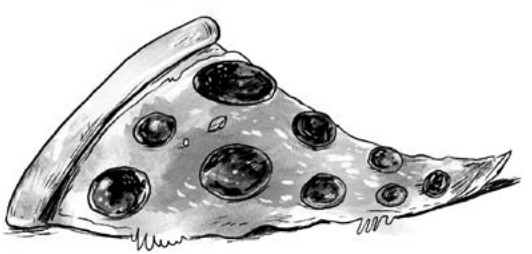
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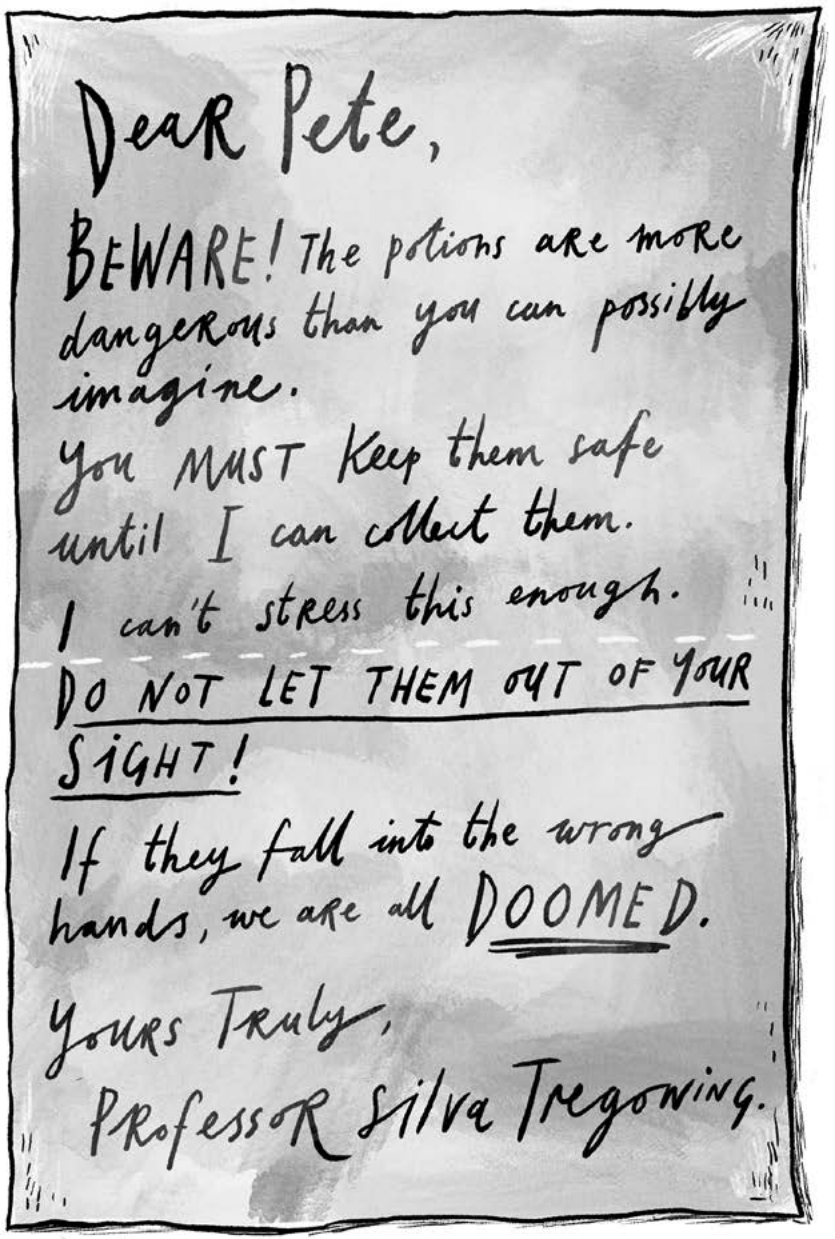
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For Jamie
CS

For Iris
SH




Dear Pete,
BEWARE! The potions are more dangerous than you can possibly imagine.
You MUST keep them safe until I can collect them.
I can't stress this enough.
DO NOT LET THEM OUT OF YOUR SIGHT!
If they fall into the wrong hands, we are all DOOMED.
Yours Truly,
Professor Silva Tregoning.





Chapter One

'Three miles to go!' Dad glanced over at me, one hand on the steering wheel. 'Time check?'

'5.14 p.m. Sixteen minutes until Anna's gig.'

'Not bad, eh?' He put his hand out for a high five. 'Glasgow to Accringham in seven hours.'

'DAD! Look at the road!'

He swore as a car swerved around us, beeping. I looked back for the millionth time to check the pizza van was still attached to our car. 'Pizza van' makes it sound rather grand – it was actually a huge beast of a caravan with a hatch in the side, and the shiny silver paint was starting to peel off – but it had been our home for the past few weeks, and we'd fallen in love with it.

'Why don't you bring everyone back for pizza after the gig?' asked Dad, adjusting his bandana in the rearview mirror.



'Sure. Maybe.' I paused. 'Dunno.'

He put his hand on my knee, which was jiggling up and down as if it had a life of its own. 'You OK, love?'

'Yup.'

But I wasn't OK, not really. This morning, when we'd set off on our journey back to Accringham, I'd been so excited about seeing my friends and telling them all about our road trip. But as we'd driven further south, my stomach had got churnier than a washing machine on a cross-channel ferry. I stared

out of the window as we crawled over the bridge into Accringham. It felt oddly familiar and completely alien at the same time.

Dad stopped to let an old couple cross the road. 'It's normal to feel anxious, seeing friends after a bit of a break.'

I rubbed the back of my neck. 'Who's anxious?'

'At least you've kept in touch with them. Thank goodness for SupaChat, eh? Wish we'd had that in my day.'

He started banging on about the olden days when everyone had to write letters with ink and feathers, so I subtly checked my phone. There were a few messages from Team Useless, the group Anna had set up for us, named after her dog.

Anna: *Where r u fartface???*
Archie: *Bring ear plugs. Anna's singing tonight*
Anna: *Rude*
Jeremy: *Want me to wait on a slide for you?*
Anna: *?*
Jeremy: *Soz, autocorrect. Outside.*

I was about to reply when Dad glanced at me. 'Shall we go down Harwood Road? See what they've done to the old place?'

My heart stopped for a second. We were coming up to our old street. There was the post box on the corner. 'Um …'

'We don't have to.' He paused. 'Bit weird someone else living there, eh?'

I squirmed, my legs sticky against the fake leather seat. The thought of seeing our pizza shop, where I'd lived my entire life until a month ago, tied my stomach up in knots, like I'd just eaten a mountain of stringy mozzarella. Especially because I blamed myself for us having to move out. Anna and I had found a briefcase full of strange potions in the attic, and I'd had the crazy idea of making magical pizzas in a desperate attempt to save our home.

At first it was a huge success – we had a queue of customers around the block, desperate to try a pizza that made them fly or turned them invisible. But Archie Boyle – former enemy, newfound friend – had mixed up some of the potions, and it had all gone spectacularly wrong. We had no choice but to sell

the shop and now here we were, dragging our home around with us, like giant pizza-selling snails.

'Look!' Dad peered out of the window as we passed the school. 'They've painted the gates for your arrival.'

I shrank down in my seat, even though it was the end of the summer holidays and school was all closed up. In a few days I'd be walking back through those big, iron gates for the first time in months. I shuddered. My desperate prayers for the school to fall into a giant sinkhole clearly hadn't been answered.

Dad reached over and messed up my hair as we left the school behind us. 'You can tell everyone about our adventures – how you nearly slid the caravan into that loch.'

'That was *your* fault for not putting the handbrake on!'

His eyes twinkled. 'Well, if you hadn't chosen to park on a slope …'

We'd had the best time, me and Dad, selling pizzas by day, sleeping side by side in the caravan by night. Sometimes, when it was hot enough, we'd drag our mattresses outside. We'd roast marshmallows and talk long into the night, staring up at the stars. We'd

marvel about what we'd seen, how far we'd come.

Dad told me losing our home was a blessing in disguise – an opportunity to get out of Accringham and see the world. We'd travelled all over Scotland – visiting the tiny cottage where Mum grew up, climbing huge Munros, freezing our feet off in the icy North Sea, sightseeing in Edinburgh. Not bad for a twelve-year-old boy who used to be too scared to leave the house.

People were already streaming into St Mary's Hall as we pulled up outside. My stomach flipped when a group of boys in my year walked past, laughing.

I looked at Dad. 'Let's keep driving. Just the two of us.'

He turned off the engine, wincing as he shifted in his seat to face me. 'We can't, love. I need this new hip – I can't cope with the pain any longer. And you need to be with your friends.'

'But—'

'Friends are important. It's like pizza.'

I frowned. 'What?'

'Imagine you're the dough.'

'I'm the dough?'



'Or the pepperoni. Imagine you're the pepperoni. You can't make pizza with pepperoni alone. You need the dough, mozzarella, tomato. Bit of oregano.'

My face must have looked blank because he continued. 'You need your friends. And they need you.'

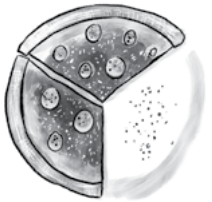
'All right, loser!' called a voice outside. It was Archie, grinning at me, in his usual shiny red football shirt.

Dad nudged me. 'Go. Have fun.'

I swallowed my nerves and got out of the car.

'Remember,' Dad called out of the window, 'be the pepperoni!'





Chapter Two

When Anna had messaged me about her gig and told me I *had* to be back for it or else, I'd imagined it would be mainly the band members' families coming to watch. But as Archie pushed open the heavy wooden doors at the back of the hall, my chest tightened. It was full of kids from school.

I looked around, heart pounding. The last time I'd seen them all was in the shop, when everyone had gone wild for our magical pizzas. But they'd come in one at a time. Seeing them together like this was *a lot*. It didn't help that the hall was as hot as a pizza oven. I pulled off my hoodie and wrapped it around my waist, hoping no one would notice my I LOVE NESSIE T-shirt.

Prisha waved at me from across the hall. Her family owned the Indian takeaway down the road. My initial