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IT'S ALL TRUE!

My name is Sandy Brown.

Some people say that I make things up, but I don't . . . mostly.

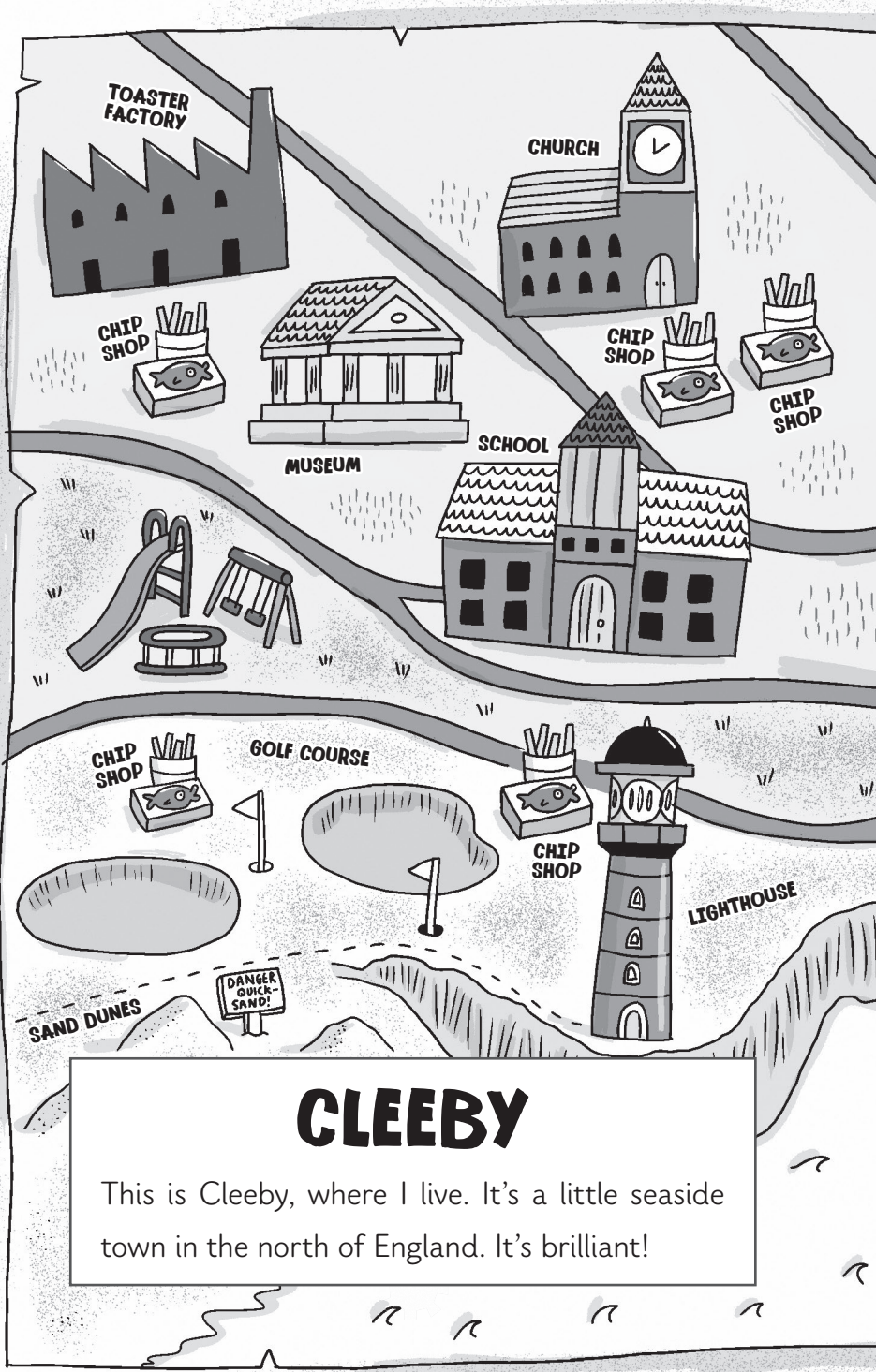
What happens in this story is **all true.**

It's so true that I've changed some of the names of those involved so they don't get cross.

Except for me and Arjan. I've used our real names.

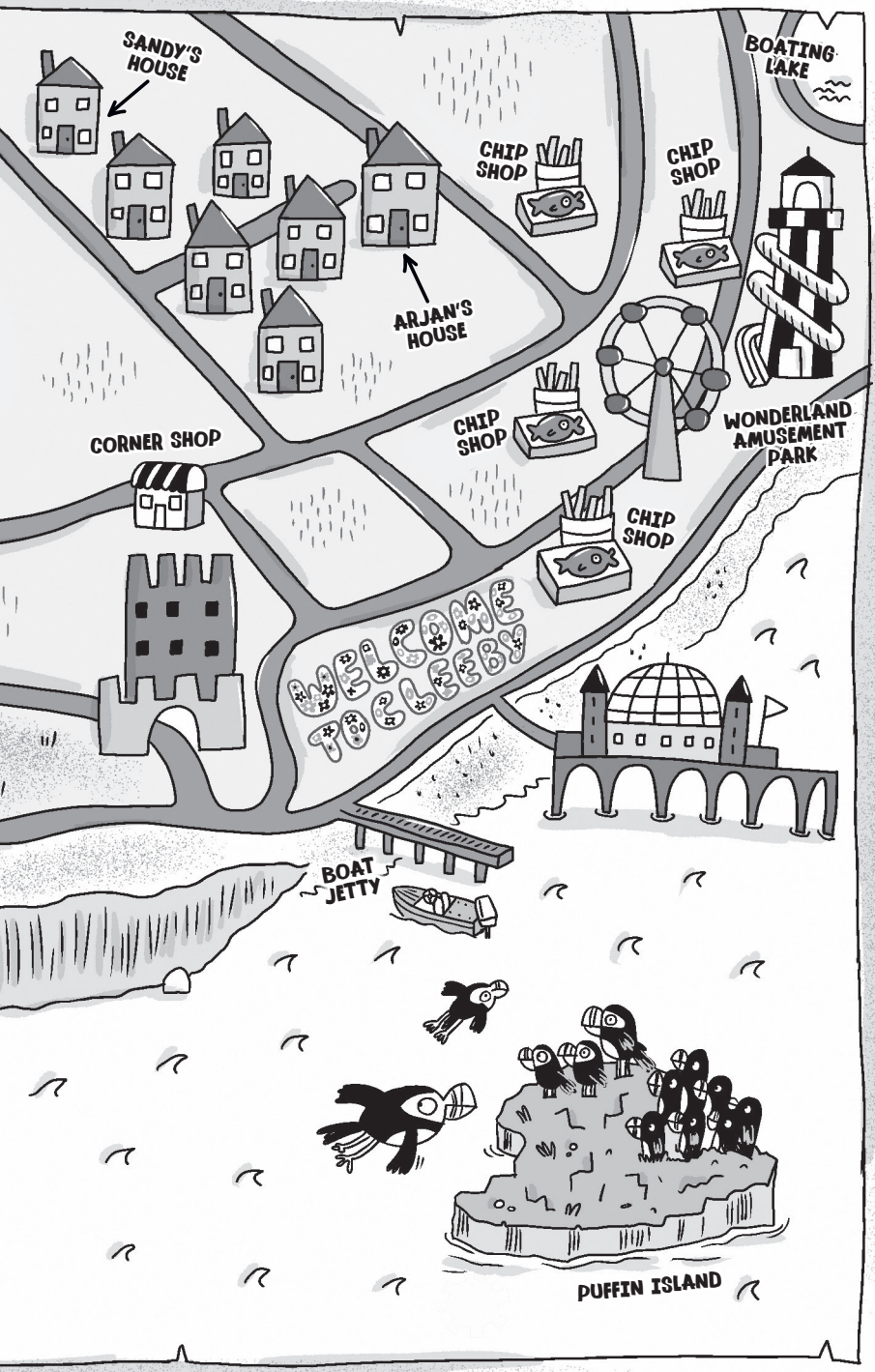
Because we're the **heroes.**

Oh. And **Colin** too. You'll meet him on page 72.



CLEEBY

This is Cleeby, where I live. It's a little seaside town in the north of England. It's brilliant!


SANDY'S HOUSE
ARJAN'S HOUSE
CHIP SHOP
CHIP SHOP
CHIP SHOP
CHIP SHOP
BOATING LAKE
WONDERLAND AMUSEMENT PARK
CORNER SHOP
WELCOME TO LEEBY
BOAT JETTY
PUFFIN ISLAND

I was in the corner shop buying a comic. Dad was waiting outside.

I'd just given my money to Mr Norman, the shop owner, when it happened.

Mr Norman's head exploded.

When I say 'exploded', what I actually mean is that it shot straight up in the air with a **BANG** and a **WHOOSH** like a rocket. It hit the ceiling and then bounced off the counter and rolled across the floor, where it bumped into the comic rack.

The body just stood there with loads of wires sticking out of its neck and a wisp of smoke snaking up into the air.

I watched, open-mouthed for a second, as my brain registered all this. Then, naturally, I screamed a little bit.

OK, a lot. I screamed **A LOT!** I mean, I'm only human, and it's not something you see every day, is it?

And then, as if that wasn't weird enough, Mrs Norman came out from the back room, smiled at me, picked up her husband's head, put it behind the counter and dragged the body away.

I ran out of the shop and shouted, **'Dad, Mr Norman's head's exploded and his wife's dragged his body away!'**

Dad jumped so much that he had to stop looking at his phone. 'Don't shout,' he said. 'What's the matter?'

'BOOM,' I screamed. 'Mr Norman's head! It rolled across the floor in front of the comics and there were wires sticking out and a burny electric

smell!' I even did all the actions, waving my hands about and adding more sound effects, like the head bouncing off the counter.

Dad looked at me. 'What are you on about now, Sandy?' he said.

'Come and see,' I said, dragging him by the hand.

We went back in the shop. Mrs Norman was behind the counter, still doing her really creepy smile. I guess she'd always had a creepy smile, but I'd only just realized it after seeing her drag her husband's robot body away.

At least, I thought that's what I'd seen. I mean, it all looked so normal now: the stack of newspapers on the counter, the rows of chocolate going all melty in the sun and the magazines and comics in the rack.

'Hello,' said Dad in his friendly, *sorry to bother you* voice. 'My son thinks he saw something odd or

strange . . . I don't know. Is your husband OK?'

'My husband?' said Mrs Norman pleasantly. 'He's down at the beach walking the dog.'

'Oh, right, yes, not to worry, then. Sandy's just got an overactive imagination,' said Dad.

I was still looking at where Mr Norman's head had rolled into the comic rack.

'Anyway, sorry to bother you,' said Dad, and went to leave.

I didn't move. There was something there on the floor. Something glinting in the sunlight. I stooped to pick it up and turned it over, before jumping up and holding it aloft in triumph.

'Ha! **Overactive imagination?** What's this, then?' I said.

'What've you got there, love?' said Mrs Norman, leaning across the counter to try to get a better look.

'It's clearly a computer chip from your husband's robot head,' I said. I took a step back in case she tried to snatch it from my hand.

Mrs Noman laughed. ‘Is it now? Well, I never. I hope he’s OK walking around without it.’

‘Maybe you’re a robot too,’ I said, and casually slipped the chip into my pocket.

‘Sandy!’ said Dad in his proper serious, *stop messing about* voice. ‘I’m sorry, Mrs Norman. He’s had too much sugar, I think.’

‘Mr Norman’s a robot, Dad! Isn’t it obvious?’ I shouted.

‘That’s enough!’ said Dad in his *you’re in big trouble when we get home* voice.

‘A robot?’ said Mrs Norman. ‘I reckon you’ve been watching too many films.’ And she continued laughing as Dad dragged me from the shop.

I could still hear Mrs Norman laughing as we crossed the high street, pausing for Dad to say a big fake happy ‘Hello’ to the Mayor of Cleeby, Alina Shireen, and then turning down our road for home.

‘That was embarrassing, Sandy,’ said Dad. ‘Mrs Norman will think we’re potty or something . . . Robots!’

And then it struck me.

Maybe ALL adults were robots.

They could have invaded from Mars or Neptune or one of the moons of Jupiter. Or maybe grown-ups had been turned into robots by some sort of robot ray.

Maybe my own father was an actual robot!

I looked up at him. He didn’t seem to have red eyes and I couldn’t see an antenna sticking out of his ear, but I guess I would have noticed those things years ago.

And then I had it. **METAL!** Robots are made of metal, right?

And metal is **hard.**

I reached up and took Dad’s hand. I didn’t normally do that. I was getting a bit old for

hand-holding. Dad seemed to like it. He looked down and smiled.

He didn't like what came next, though.

I leaned over and bit his finger as hard as I could.