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Opening extract from

Horrid Henry Robs the bank

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Francesca Simon

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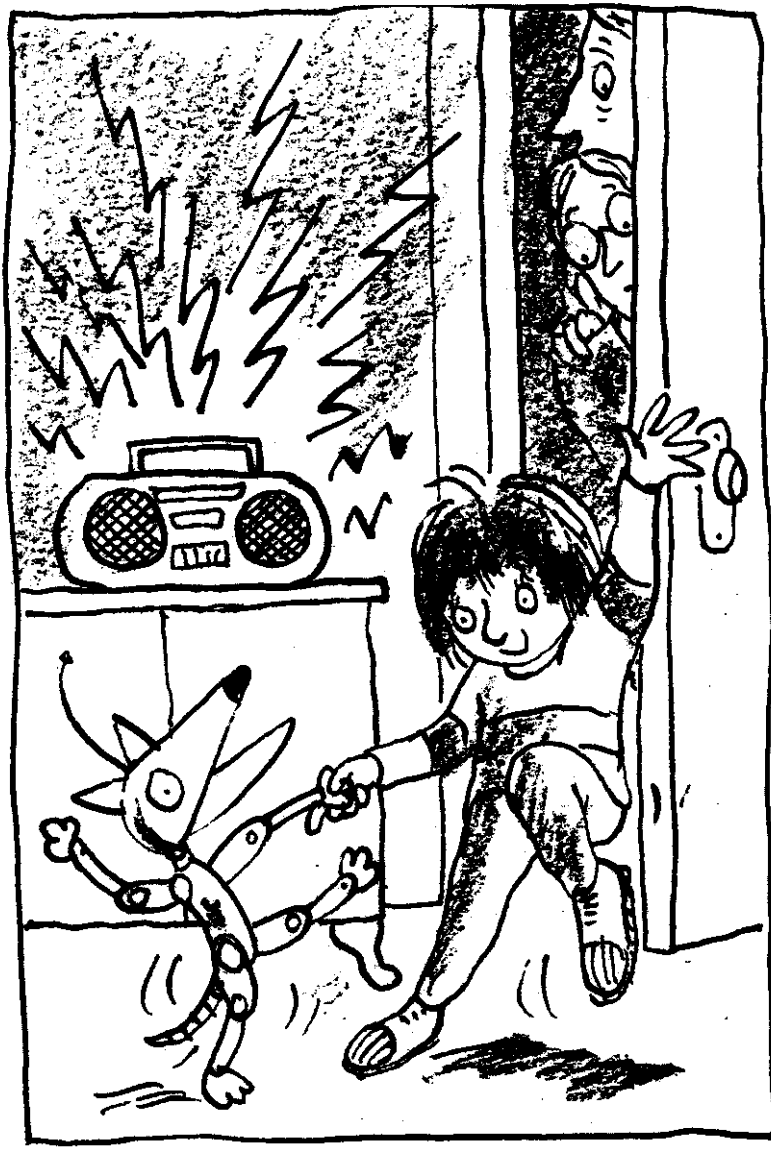
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1

HORRID HENRY'S NEWSPAPER

'It's not fair!' howled Horrid Henry. 'I want a Hip-Hop Robot dog!'

Horrid Henry needed money. Lots and lots and lots of money. His parents didn't need money, and yet they had loads more than he did. It was so unfair. Why was he so brilliant at *spending* money, and so bad at *getting* money?

And now Mum and Dad refused to buy him something he desperately needed.

'You have plenty of toys,' said Mum.

'Which you never play with,' said Dad.

'That's 'cause they're all so boring!' screeched Henry. 'I want a robot dog!'

'Too expensive,' said Mum.

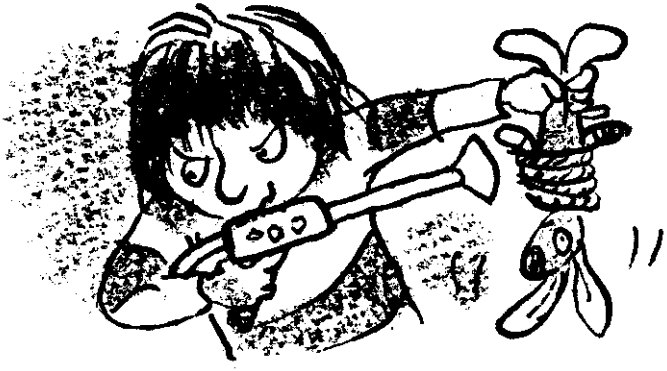
'Too noisy,' said Dad.

'But *everyone* has a Hip-Hop Robot Dog,' whined Henry. 'Everyone but *me*.'

Horrid Henry stomped out of the room. How could he get some money?

Wait. Maybe he could *persuade* Peter to give him some. Peter always had tons of cash because he never bought anything.

Yes! He could hold Peter's Bunnykins for ransom. He could tell Peter his room



was haunted and get Peter to pay him for ghostbusting. He could make Peter donate to Henry's favourite charity, Child in Need . . . Hip-Hop Robot Dog, here I come, thought Horrid Henry, bursting into Peter's bedroom.

Perfect Peter and Tidy Ted were whispering together on the floor. Papers were scattered all around them.

'You can't come in my room,' said Peter.



'Yes I can,' said Henry, ' 'cause I'm already in. Pooh, your room stinks.'

'That's 'cause you're in it,' said Peter.

Henry decided to ignore this insult.

'Whatcha doing?'

'Nothing,' said Peter.

'We're writing our own newspaper like Mrs Oddbod suggested in assembly,' said Ted. 'We've even got a *Tidy with Ted* column,' he added proudly.

'A snooze paper, you mean,' said Henry.

'It is not,' said Peter.

Henry snorted. 'What's it called?'

'The Best Boys' Busy Bee,' said Peter.

'What a stupid name,' said Henry.

'It's not a stupid name,' said Peter. 'Miss Lovely said it was perfect.'

'Peter, I have a great idea for your paper,' said Henry.

'What?' said Peter cautiously.

'You can use your newspaper for

Fluffy's cat litter tray.'

'MUUUM!' wailed Peter. 'Henry's being mean to me.'

'Don't be horrid, Henry!' shouted Mum.

'Peter is a poopsicle, Peter is a poopsicle,' chanted Henry.

But then Peter did something strange. Instead of screaming for Mum, Peter started writing.

'Now everyone who buys my newspaper will know how horrid you are,' said Peter, putting down his pencil.

Buy? *Buy?*

'We're selling it in school tomorrow,' said Ted. 'Miss Lovely said we could.'

Sell? *Sell?*

'Lemme see that,' said Henry, yanking the paper out of Peter's hands.

The *Busy Bee's* headline read:

PETER IN THE GOOD AS GOLD BOOK FOR THE FOURTH TIME THIS MONTH

Horrid Henry snorted. What a worm. Then his eye caught the second headline:

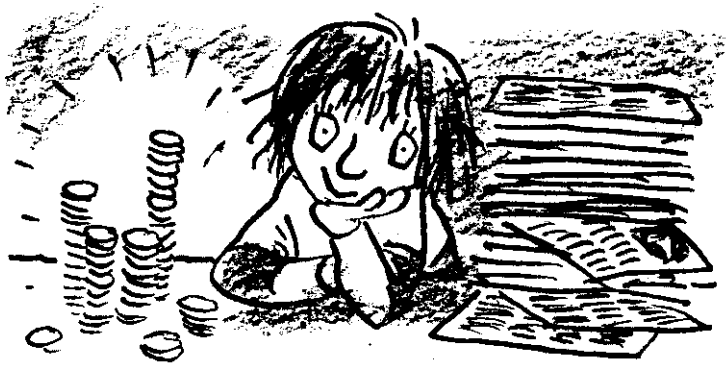
COMPUTER BAN FOR HORRID BOY

Henry was banned from playing games on the computer today because he was mean to his brother Peter and called him wibble pants and poopsicle. *The Busy Bee* hopes Henry has learned his lesson and will stop being such a big meanie.

'You're going to . . . *sell* this?' spluttered Henry. His name would be mud. Worse than mud. Everyone would know what a stupid toad brother he

had. Worse, some people might even *believe* Peter's lies.

And then suddenly Horrid Henry had a brilliant, spectacular idea. He'd write his *own* newspaper. Everyone would want to buy it. He'd be rich!



He could call his newspaper *The Hourly Howler* and charge 25p a copy. If he could write seven editions a day, and sell each copy to 500 people, he'd make . . . he'd make . . . well, multiplication was never his best subject, but he could make *tons* of money!!!!!!

On the other hand, writing seven newspapers a day, every day, seemed an awful lot of work. An awful, awful lot of work. Perhaps *The Daily Digger* was the way to go. He'd charge a lot more per copy, and do a lot less work. Yes!

Hmmn. Perhaps *The Weekly Warble* would be better. No, *The Monthly Moaner.*

Maybe just *The Purple Hand Basher.*

The Basher! What a great name for a great paper!

Now, what should his newspaper have? News of course. All about Henry's triumphs. And gossip and quizzes and sport.

First, I need a great headline, thought Horrid Henry.

What about: PETER IS A WORM. Tempting, thought Henry, but old news: everyone already knows that Peter is a worm. What could he tell his readers

that they *didn't* know?

After all, news didn't have to be true, did it? Just *new*. And boy did he have some brand-new news!



PETER SENT TO PRISON

The world's toadiest brother has been found guilty of being a worm and taken straight to prison. He was sentenced to live on bread and water for three years. *The Basher* says: 'It should have been ten years.'

SECRET CLUB COLLAPSES!!!

The Secret Club has collapsed. 'Margaret is such a moody old bossy-boots no one wants to be in her club any more,' said Susan.

'Goodbye, grump-face,' said Gurinder.



Right, that was the news section taken care of. Now, for some good gossip.

But what gossip? What scandal? Sadly, Horrid Henry didn't know any horrid rumours. But a gossip columnist needed to write something . . .

MRS ODDBOD BIKINI SHOCK

Mrs Oddbod was seen strolling down the High Street wearing a new yellow polka dot bikini. Is this any way for a head teacher to behave?



TEACHER IN TOILET TERROR

Terrible screams rang out from the boys' toilets yesterday. 'Help! Help! There's a monster in the loo!' screamed the crazed teacher Miss Boudicca Battle-Axe. 'It's got hairy scary claws and three heads!!'



GUESS WHO?

Which soggy swimming teacher was seen dancing the cha-cha-cha with which old battle-axe?

MISS LOVELY IN NOSE PICK HORROR

Oh dear, Miss Lydia Lovely picks her nose.

'I saw her do it in class,' says Prisoner Peter.

'But she said it was her nose and she would pick it if she wanted to.'



NIT NURSE HAS NITS!

Nitty Nora, Bug Explorer was sent home from school with nits last week. Whoopee! No more bug-busting!

That's enough great gossip for one issue, thought Horrid Henry. Now, what else, what else? A bit about sports and he was done. In tomorrow's edition, he'd add a comic strip: The adventures of Peter the Nappy. And a quiz:

Who has the smelliest pants in school?
A. Peter
B. Margaret
C. Susan
D. All of the above!

Yippee! thought Horrid Henry. I'm going to be rich, rich, rich, rich, rich.

The next morning Henry made sure he got to school bright and early. Hip-hop Robot, here I come, thought Horrid Henry, lugging a huge pile of *Bashers* into the playground. Then he stopped.

A terrible sight met his eyes.

Moody Margaret and Sour Susan were standing in the school playground waving big sheets of paper.

'Step right up, read all about it, Margaret made Captain of the school football team,' bellowed Moody Margaret. 'Get your *Daily Dagger* right here. Only 25p!'

What a copycat, thought Horrid Henry. He was outraged.

'Who'd want to read *that*?' sneered Horrid Henry.

'Everyone,' said Susan.

Horrid Henry snatched a copy.

'That'll be 25p, Henry,' said Margaret.

Henry ignored her. The headline read:

MARGARET TRIUMPHS

Margaret, the best footballer in school history, beat out her puny opposition to

become captain of the school football team! Well done Margaret! Everyone cheered for hours when Mrs Oddbod announced the glorious news.

Margaret gave an exclusive interview to the *Daily Dagger*:

'It's hard being as amazing as I am,' said Margaret. 'So many people are jealous, especially pongy pants pimples like Henry.'



'What a load of rubbish,' said Horrid Henry, scrunching up Margaret's newspaper.

'Our customers don't think so,' said Margaret. 'I'm making *loads* of loot. Before you know it *I'll* have the first Hip-Hop Robot Dog. And you-ooooo won't,' she chanted.

'We'll see about that,' said Horrid Henry. 'Teacher in toilet terror! Read all about it!' he hollered. 'All the news and gossip. Only 25p.'



'News! News!' screeched Margaret. 'Step right up, step right up! Only 24p.'

'Buy the *Busy Bee*!' piped Peter. 'Only 5p.'

Rude Ralph bought a *Basher*. So did Dizzy Dave and Jolly Josh.

Lazy Linda approached Margaret.

'Oy, Linda, don't buy that rubbish,' shouted Henry. '*I've* got the best news and gossip.' Henry whispered in Linda's ear. Her jaw dropped and she handed Henry 25p.

'Don't listen to him!' squealed Margaret.

'Buy the *Busy Bee*,' trilled Perfect Peter. 'Free vegetable chart.'

'Margaret, did you see what Henry wrote about you?' gasped Gorgeous Gurinder.

'What?' said Margaret, grabbing a *Basher*.

SPORTS

SHOCK FOOTBALL NEWS

There was shock all round when Henry wasn't made captain of the school football team.

'It's an outrage,' said Dave.

'Disgusting,' said Soraya.

The Basher was lucky enough to get an exclusive interview with Henry.

'Not making me captain just goes to show what an idiot that old carrot-nose Miss Battle-Axe is,' says Henry.

The Basher says: **Make Henry captain!**

'What!' screamed Margaret. 'Dave and Soraya never said *that*.'

'They thought it,' said Henry. He glared at Moody Margaret.

Moody Margaret glared at Horrid Henry.

Henry's hand reached out to pull Margaret's hair.