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Opening extract from

Gormy Ruckles: Monster Mischief

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ONE

How to Throw Rocks and Influence People

Gormy sat at the breakfast table, eating his bowl of hamsters so quickly that he started to cough up hairballs.



"Gormy Ruckles, what have I told you about chewing your food? Do

you want to give yourself gut-ache?" asked Gormy's mother. Gormy decided it was one of those questions he didn't really have to answer. Why would anyone *want* to give themselves gut-ache? Apart from the Witch of Goggan Moor, who only ate angry wasps.

"Can I get down from the table?" asked Gormy, although with his mouth full it sounded like, "Cud I geddum bubba day-bull?". Gormy's mother understood him perfectly. After all, it's rude *not* to talk with your mouth full at a monster's table.

"You *may* not go anywhere until you've finished your breakfast," she said. Gormy's mother was a large, pink monster, and was at least forty-eight times more monstrous than any mother you've ever met. She was as big as two hippos glued together and had more hair than all three finalists in last



year's Hideously Hairy Monster contest.

Who cares about breakfast on a day like this? thought Gormy. Today was more monstrously exciting than the first Monstrously Exciting Day – the day when the first monster, Mon the Monstrous, scared his first woolly mammoth!

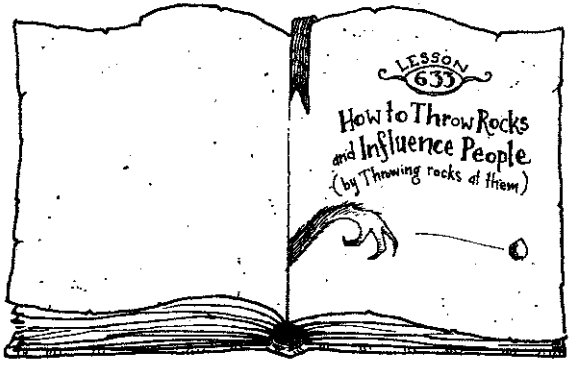
Today was ROCK THROWING DAY!

Gormy had never had a lesson in throwing before. The ability to throw a really big rock (or tree or horse or cow) was the measure of a truly monstrous monster. As Gormy's father, Grumbor, always said, "A hoomum will be twice as scared of a monster who can throw than one who can't." Grumbor was especially good at throwing things. He had won the silver medal at the Monster's Third National Throwing, Hurling and Lobbing



tournament, and had twice broken the world record for long-distance Sheep Tossing.

Gormy had already written the lesson number in his **How to be a Better Monster** book. He opened the book and stared gleefully at the page.

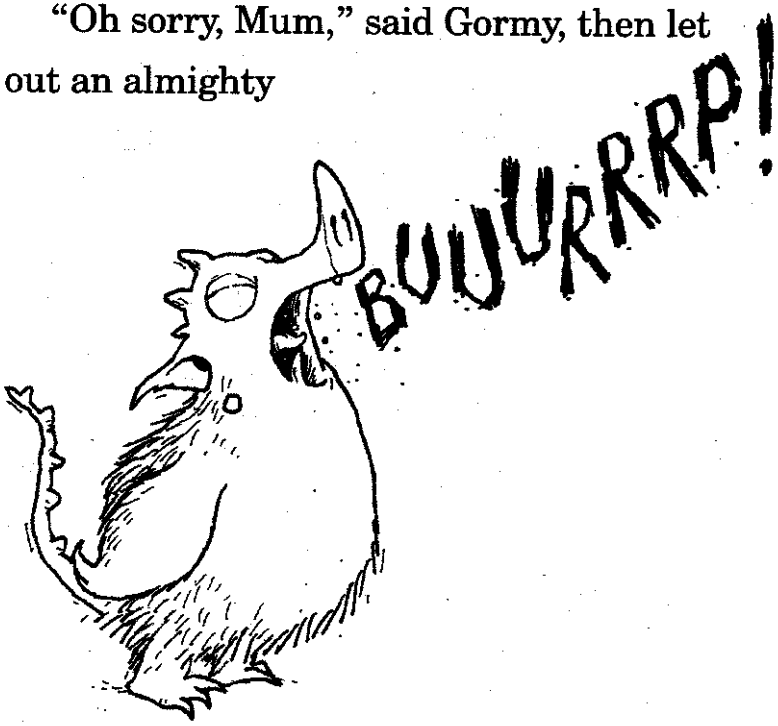


"*Please* may I please get down from the table?" he begged, before swallowing the last of his hamsters.

Gormy's mother looked at him sternly.

"Where are your manners today, Gormy?" she asked.

"Oh sorry, Mum," said Gormy, then let out an almighty



"That's better," said Gormy's mother. "Now run along."