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opening extract from

It's Them Monkey Pirates Again!

written by

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published by

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A SHANTY TO START



What shall we do with dem Monkey Pirates?

What shall we do with dem Monkey Pirates?

What shall we do with dem Monkey Pirates?

Travelling to the future!

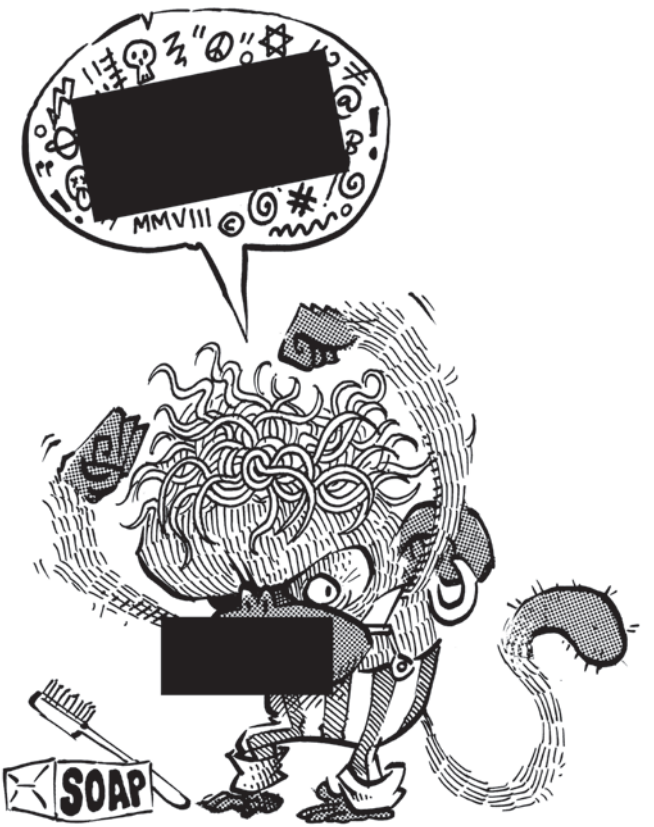
Way-hey, up they rises,

Way-hey, up they rises,

Way-hey, up they rises,

With bananas in their bellies!



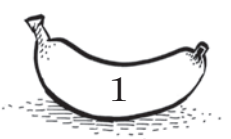

MMVIII
SOAP

SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS BOOK

Like all books, this one has a book fairy and this fairy is about the size of a lengthwise. That is to say, the size of the word 'lengthwise' when placed on the page, like this: →

LENGTHWISE

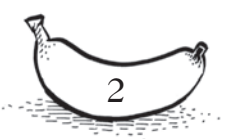
The fairy for this book goes by the name of Bernard Bumboil and she is a girl. She is invisible, which is just as well because she is particularly dirty.



However, if you want to see something very interesting, then try this. Say the fairy's name out loud three times, like this: 'Bernard Bumboil! Bernard Bumboil! Bernard Bumboil!'

If you have done this properly you will notice something. If you now look around at the other people in the room, they will all be giving you very strange looks. I suggest that you don't do that again.

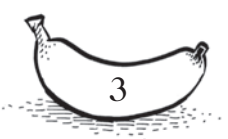
The other interesting thing about Bernard Bumboil the fairy is that she likes to rearrange



the words on the page when you close it to make rude ones. In the first book about the Monkey Pirates, for instance, she would make the words 'poo' and 'bum' when the book was closed. Then she would quickly rearrange them back into the story whenever you opened it again. (That's the reason nobody knew about her in the first book.)

Book fairies are impossible to catch out – it's a bit like trying to see if the light goes off when you close the fridge door. Although less cold.

In this book, Bernard Bumboil will be



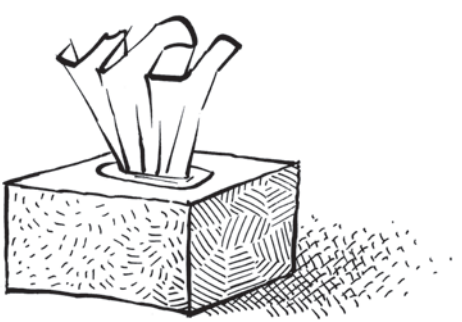


rearranging the words into even ruder words, words that I can't mention here. So be warned!

Another thing you need to be warned about is her rather nasty habit of leaving little presents and droppings that look like punctuation marks on the page.

So try not to get any question marks (?), asterisks (*), speech marks (‘ ’), commas (,) or indeed exclamation marks (!) on your hands!!!

(Always keep a tissue handy.)



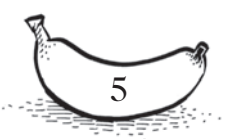
AARRGH!



IN WHICH BALDERDASH TRIES TO REMEMBER

'Bless my cotton socks!!' is the sort of thing you might say to yourself if you found twelve monkeys in your wardrobe one night.

'Stone the crows!!' is something else you might utter if you also discovered that these monkeys were dressed as pirates and were



using your wardrobe as their ship to travel through space and time. And 'Polish my old boots with a prize-winning cucumber and call me Susan' if you then discovered that these pirate-dressed monkeys held the clue to the mysterious disappearance of your beloved Uncle Bartholomew.



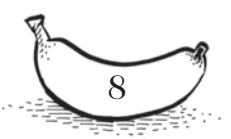
However, Emily Jane, who was a very unusual girl, said none of these things when she first met the Monkey Pirates.



They arrived in her bedroom in the village of Linoleum-on-the-Naze one windy September evening, saying ‘Aaarrgh!’ a lot. Emily Jane then simply said, ‘What are your names and can I join you?’ She felt sure that they could help her find her Uncle Bartholomew, who she hadn’t seen for ages. He vanished one day while varnishing a wardrobe. He was an

inventor and he said he'd invented the wardrobe, the banana, the shoe, vinegar-flavoured toothpaste and time travel. He had an enormous beard the size of a small English village and a humphilated laugh, and she missed him. Emily Jane had lost a few things in her time, such as a colourful marble (it was down the back of a sofa) and her sense of direction (it was at the back of a drawer) but she had never lost an entire relative before.

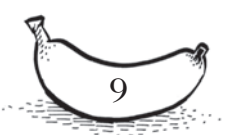
That first Monkey Pirates visit seemed like many moons ago but in fact it was three moons



and forty-five minutes ago.

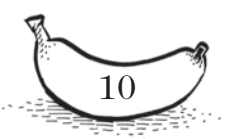


Emily Jane had learnt many new things – such as how much Monkey Pirates loved bananas (you can get a Monkey Pirate to do pretty much anything for half a banana) and how a man they called ‘the Professor’ (and apparently not her Uncle Bartholomew) had invented the wardrobe. She had also learnt how uncomfortable it was sharing any wardrobe with twelve monkeys.

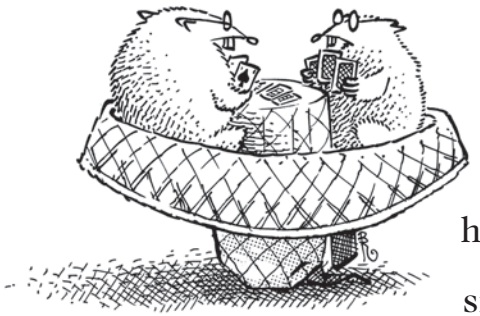


There were, of course, some things she still didn't know, like why isn't there mouse-flavoured cat food? Why does your nose run and your feet smell? What colour does a chameleon go if you put it on a mirror? And if you were travelling at the speed of light and switched on a torch, what would happen?

So, like most people, Emily Jane knew some things but not everything. Unlike most people though, she did have a fantastically active imagination. An imagination that could be active at the drop of a hat. But not just the







drop of any hat. It would have to be a huge Mexican hat the size of a dustbin lid with two moles sitting in it at a table playing a card game that they had invented called 'Don't Tweak My Pig, Clarence Spud'.

See, I told you.

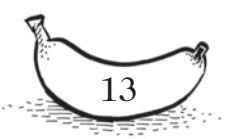
Another thing that Emily Jane had was a gift from one of the Monkey Pirates. She had been given something very special by Balderdash, and it was a time-telescope. The

time-telescope was a thing of ingenious cleverness and it allowed the viewer to see scenes from the past and the future (although Emily Jane wasn't always sure which one she was looking at).

Emily Jane's life had never been the same since the Monkey Pirates had visited her.

And from then on she was always prepared. (She always kept some bananas and her time-telescope close to hand.)

One afternoon, there had been strange noises

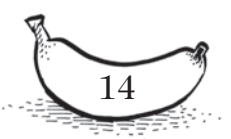


coming from Emily Jane's wardrobe, starting with a scratching noise like a mouse in a box, changing to a rattle and then finally a whooping sound. Emily Jane knew that the Monkey Pirates would soon make an appearance. She couldn't wait to see them again!

The door bulged before bursting open.

'Hello there! How have you all been?' asked Emily Jane eagerly as the monkeys tumbled out. (They still hadn't mastered a dignified entrance, she noted.)

The Captain and his crew of Banana

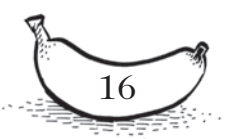



MMVIII

Buccaneers were not expecting to see Emily Jane, but then their destinations were a constant surprise to them. The Monkey Pirates didn't really understand wardrobes, time travel or bananas but they did enjoy them all immensely.

'Bananas and barnacles!' said the Captain, which Emily Jane took as meaning on this particular occasion, 'Fine and thank you for asking.'

And all the Monkey Pirates sat down quietly and thought about their adventures . . . NO,

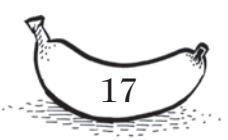


OF COURSE THEY DIDN'T!!! They picked their noses, scratched and farted, so don't go running off to Jamaica with the idea they didn't!!

In fact, Tosh found something interesting up his nose that he decided to put in his pocket for later.

Balderdash, the fattest of all the Monkey Pirates, looked slightly confused.

'You remember me, don't you?' asked Emily Jane. 'It's me – Emily Jane. You gave me the time-telescope. It is a thing of ingenious

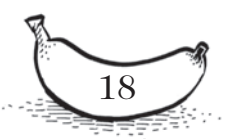


cleverness.' She waved it at him.

'Aaaargh! . . . Umm! . . . Aaaaargh!' Balderdash thought hard. He wasn't sure, but then his memory was terrible and did often play tricks on him.

Eventually, after much thinking, he remembered Emily Jane. She smiled at him and Balderdash smiled his very special smile back at her. A smile with many gaps and few teeth.

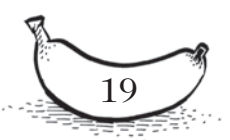
Emily Jane was excited to see her pirate friends again. She said hello to Poppycock,



and he smiled at her too. Now, Poppycock's teeth were false and made entirely out of wood. In fact, he had a wooden leg, a hook for a hand, false teeth and a tin ear. (So he should be regarded as a potential fire risk.) But he was also a great Monkey Pirate. He stood on his one good leg, blinked his one good eye in Emily Jane's direction and put one of his fingers from his one good hand in his one good ear and waggled it about.

'Ahoy there!' he said.

'You're looking, um, well, Poppycock,'



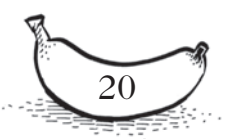
Emily Jane laughed.

Tripe coughed and spluttered a little and then hoisted up his trousers, which were forever slipping down. '*I've* not been too well of late, lass,' he commented.

'Oh, I'm sorry to hear that,' said Emily Jane.

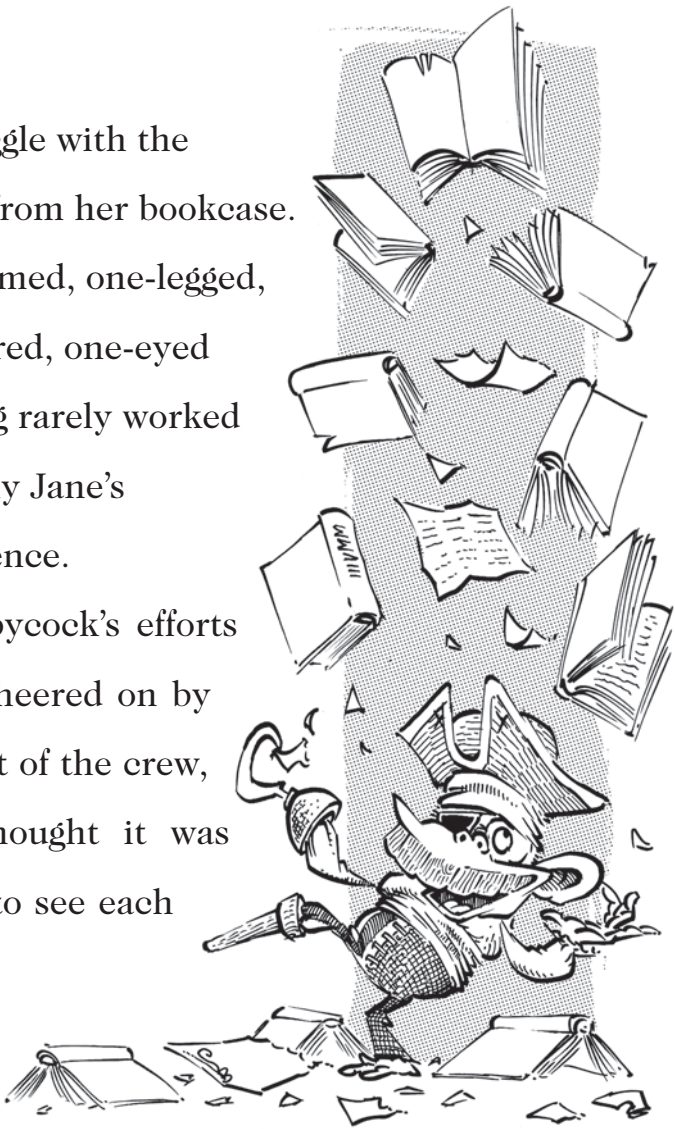
Dave then smiled politely at Emily Jane and shook her by the hand. Being a Monkey Pirate just didn't seem to come naturally to Dave, who was very neat and very quiet.

Emily Jane knew things were about to happen. Just then Poppycock began to try



and juggle with the books from her bookcase. One-armed, one-legged, one-eared, one-eyed juggling rarely worked in Emily Jane's experience.

Poppycock's efforts were cheered on by the rest of the crew, who thought it was funny to see each



book being thrown high into the air and landing all over the bedroom. Special cheers were given for books that bounced off other Monkey Pirates' heads.

Emily Jane didn't want to spoil anyone's fun, but she also knew that Monkey Pirates were excellent at adventures. If you saw adventures walking down the street, most of them would probably jump up and down a bit saying, 'Hello, I'm an adventure!'

Monkey Pirate adventures, on the other hand (especially when combined with Emily



Jane's imagination), would be the ones running down the street, doing cartwheels, bouncing off lampposts and shouting at the top of their voices, '**I'm an adventure, I'm an adventure!!!**' You just wait and see.

