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opening extract from

Horrid Henry's Dreadful Deeds

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Horrid Henry loved sleepovers. Midnight feasts! Pillow fights! Screaming and shouting! Rampaging till dawn!

The time he ate all the ice cream at Greedy Graham's and left the freezer door open! The time he jumped on all the beds at Dizzy Dave's and broke them all. And that time at Rude Ralph's when he – well, hmmn, perhaps better not mention that.

There was just one problem. No one would ever have Horrid Henry at their house for a sleepover more than once. Whenever Henry went to sleep at a friend's house, Mum and Dad were sure to get a call



at three a.m. from a demented parent screaming at them to pick up Henry immediately.



Horrid Henry couldn't understand it. Parents were so fussy. Even the parents of great kids like Rude Ralph and Greedy Graham. Who cares about a little noise? Or a broken bed? Big deal, thought Horrid Henry.

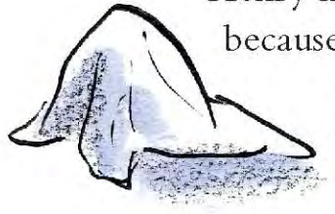
It was no fun having friends sleep over at his house. There was no rampaging and feasting at Henry's. It was lights out as usual at nine o'clock, no talking, no feasting, no fun.

So when New Nick, who had just joined Henry's class, invited Henry to stay the night, Horrid Henry couldn't believe his luck. New beds to bounce on. New biscuit tins to raid. New places to rampage. Bliss!

Henry packed his sleepover bag as fast as he could.

Mum came in. She looked grumpy.

'Got your pyjamas?' she asked.



Henry never needed pyjamas at sleepovers because he never went to bed.

'Got them,' said Henry. Just not with him, he thought.

'Don't forget your toothbrush,' said Mum.

'I won't,' said Horrid Henry. He never forgot his toothbrush – he just chose not to bring it.

Dad came in. He looked even grumpier.

'Don't forget your comb,' said Dad.

Horrid Henry looked at his bulging backpack stuffed with toys and comics. Sadly, there was no room for a comb.

'I won't,' lied Henry.

'I'm warning you, Henry,' said Mum. 'I want you to be on best behaviour tonight.'

'Of course,' said Horrid Henry.

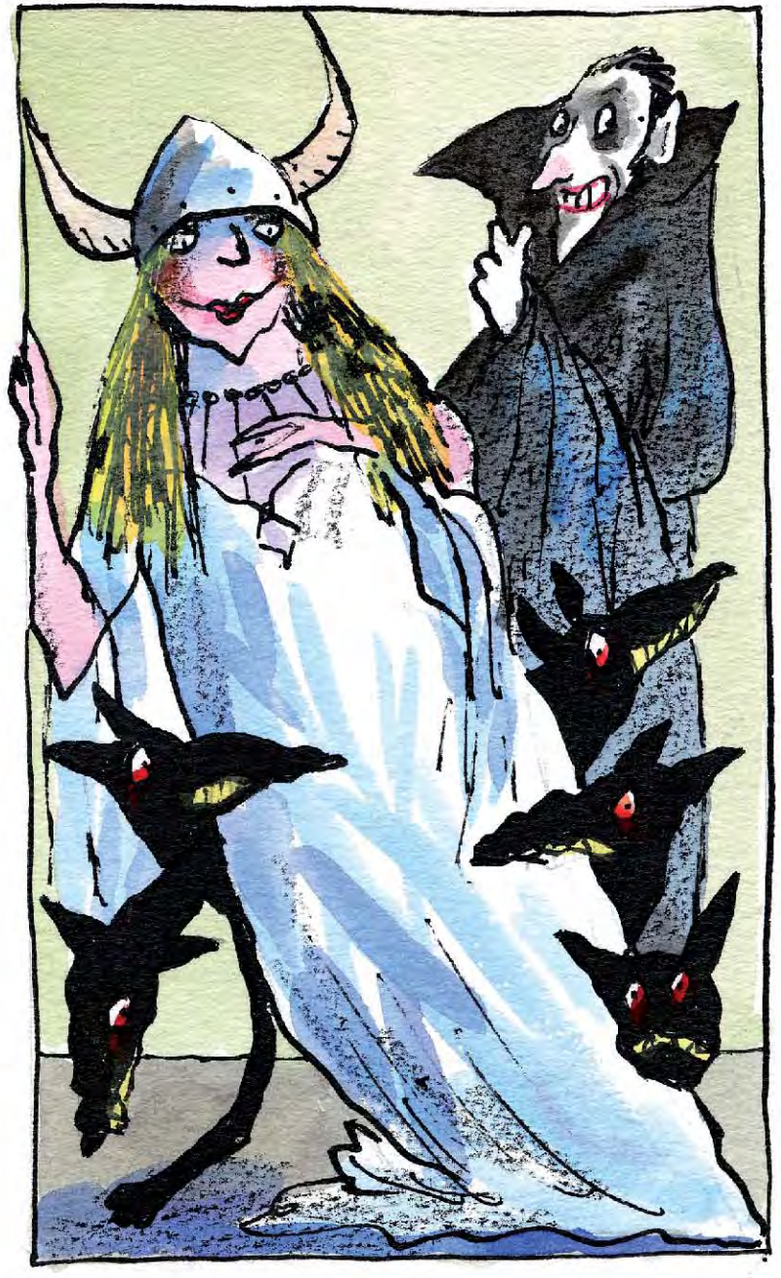
'I don't want any phone calls at three a.m. from Nick's parents,' said Dad. 'If I do, this will be your last sleepover ever. I mean it.'

NAG NAG NAG.

'All right,' said Horrid Henry.

Ding dong.

A woman opened the door. She was wearing a Viking helmet on her head and long flowing robes. Behind her stood a man in a velvet cloak holding back five enormous, snarling black dogs.



WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF

'TRA LA LA BOOM-DY AY,' boomed a dreadful, earsplitting voice.

'Bravo, bravo!' shouted a chorus from the sitting room.

GRRRRRRR! growled the dogs.

Horrid Henry hesitated. Did he have the right house? Was New Nick an alien?

'Oh don't mind us, dear, it's our opera club's karaoke night,' trilled the Viking helmet.

'Nick!' bellowed the Cloak. 'Your friend is here.'

Nick appeared. Henry was glad to see he was not wearing a Viking helmet or a velvet cloak.

'Hi Henry,' said New Nick.

'Hi Nick,' said Horrid Henry.

A little girl toddled over, sucking her thumb.

'Henry, this is my sister, Lily,' said Nick.



Lily gazed at Horrid Henry.

'I love you, Henwy,' said Lisping Lily. 'Will you marry with me?'

'NO!' said Horrid Henry. Uggh. What a revolting thought.

'Go away, Lily,' said Nick.

Lily did not move.



'Come on, Nick, let's get out of here,' said Henry. No toddler was going to spoil his fun. Now, what would he do first, raid the kitchen, or bounce on the beds?

'Let's raid the kitchen,' said Henry.

'Great,' said Nick.

'Got any good sweets?' asked Henry.

'Loads!' said New Nick.

Yeah! thought Horrid Henry. His sleepover fun was beginning!



They sneaked into the kitchen. The floor was covered with dog blankets, overturned food bowls, clumps of dog hair, and gnawed dog bones. There were a few suspicious looking puddles. Henry hoped they were water.

'Here are the biscuits,' said Nick.

Henry looked. Were those dog hairs all over the jar?

'Uh, no thanks,' said Henry. 'How about some sweets?'

'Sure,' said Nick. 'Help yourself.'

He handed Henry a bar of chocolate. Yummy! Henry was about to take a big bite when he stopped. Were those – teeth marks in the corner?

'Raaa!' A big black shape jumped on Henry, knocked him down, and snatched the chocolate.

Nick's dad burst in.



'Rigoletto! Give that back!' said Nick's dad, yanking the chocolate out of the dog's mouth.

'Sorry about that, Henry,' he said, offering it back to Henry.

'Uhh, maybe later,' said Henry.

'Okay,' said Nick's dad, putting the slobbery chocolate back in the cupboard.

Eeew, gross, thought Horrid Henry.

'I love you, Henwy,' came a lisping voice behind him.

'AH HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!'

warbled a high, piercing voice from the sitting room.

Henry held his ears. Would the windows shatter?

'Encore!' shrieked the opera karaoke club.

'Will you marry with me?' asked Lisping Lily.

'Let's get out of here,' said Horrid Henry.



Horrid Henry leapt on Nick's bed.

Yippee, thought Horrid Henry. Time to get bouncing.

Bounce-

CRASH!

The bed collapsed in a heap.

'What happened?' said Henry. 'I hardly did anything.'

'Oh, I broke the bed ages ago,' said Nick. 'Dad said he was tired of fixing it.'

Rats, thought Henry. What a lazy dad.

'How about a pillow fight?' said Henry.

'No pillows,' said Nick. 'The dogs chewed them.'

Hmmn.

They could sneak down and raid the freezer, but for some reason Henry didn't really want to go back into that kitchen.

'I know!' said Henry. 'Let's watch TV.'

'Sure,' said New Nick.

'Where is the TV?' said Henry.

'In the sitting room,' said Nick.

'But – the karaoke,' said Henry.

'Oh, they won't mind,' said Nick. 'They're used to noise in this house.'

'DUM DUM DE DUM DUMM DUM DE DUM DUMM DUM –'

Horrid Henry sat with his face pressed to the TV. He couldn't hear a word Mutant Max was shrieking with all that racket in the background.

'Maybe we should go to bed,' said Horrid Henry, sighing. Anything to get away from the noise.

'Okay,' said New Nick.

Phew, thought Horrid Henry. Peace at last.



SNORE! SNORE!

Horrid Henry turned over in his sleeping bag and tried to get comfortable. He hated sleeping on the floor. He hated sleeping with the window open.

He hated sleeping with the radio on. And he hated sleeping in the same room with someone who snored.

Awhooooooo! howled the winter wind through the open window.

SNORE!
SNORE!

'I'm just a lonesome cowboy, lookin' for a lonesome cowgirl,' blared the radio.

WOOF WOOF WOOF barked the dogs.

'Yeowwwww!' squealed Henry, as five wet, smelly dogs pounced on him.

'Awhoooo!' howled the wind.

SNORE!
SNORE!

