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opening extract from

Attack of the Zombie Nits (Too Ghoul for School)

written by

B. Strange

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ATTACK OF THE ZOMBIE NITS



Alexander peered through the microscope at the teeming micro-organisms that filled the Petri dish.

'It's like nothing I've ever seen before!' he said, concerned. Raising his head, he gestured for James to take his place. 'Have a look.'

James hesitated. 'What's the point in me having a look?' he asked. 'I'm so good at chemistry I set fire to my tie with a Bunsen burner in the last exam!'

'I think you'll be interested in this,' said Alexander, stepping aside.

James peered through the eyepiece of the microscope for a second before looking up, his face pale.

'They look like little ghosts,' he said.

'*Exactly*,' replied Alexander. 'And there's only one place bacteria like that could come from.'

'The plague pit,' said James, smugly.

St Sebastian's School in Grimesford is the pits. No, really – it is.

Every year, the high school sinks a bit further into the boggy plague pit beneath it and, every year, the ghosts of the plague victims buried underneath it become a bit more cranky.

Egged on by their spooky ringleader, Edith Codd, they decide to get their own back – and they're willing to play dirty. *Really* dirty.

They kick up a stink by causing as much mischief as in inhumanly possible so as to get St Sebastian's closed down once and for all.

But what they haven't reckoned on is year-seven new boy, James Simpson and his friends Alexander and Lenny.

The question is, are the gang up to the challenge of laying St Sebastian's paranormal problem to rest, or will their school remain forever frightful?

There's only one way to find out . . .

www.too-ghoul.com



B. STRANGE

EGMONT

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Tommy Donbavand, St John's Walworth Church of England Primary School and Belmont Primary School



EGMONT

We bring stories to life

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‘I really love *Too Ghoul for School* – I hope more books come out soon! My favourite character is Lenny cos he’s hilarious!’

Jack, age 8

‘Horribly disgusting five-star books. Don’t stop making them!’

Owen, age 9

‘Disgusting and good at the same time . . .’

Daniel, age 10

‘I like the way the really horrible parts are in really good detail’

Charlie, age 10

‘The books are great. I thought Edith Codd was REALLY funny. Ha, ha!’

Anthony, age 9

We want to hear what *you* think about *Too Ghoul for School*! Visit:

www.too-ghoul.com

for loads of cool stuff to do and a whole lotta grot!

School versus . . .



James Simpson

Year-seven new boy
and chief spook-hunter



Alexander Tick

Headmaster's son
and official brainiac



Lenny Maxwell

Strong as an ox,
gentle as an
unusually tall lamb

. . . Ghoul!

Loud-mouthed ringleader of the plague-pit ghosts



Edith Codd



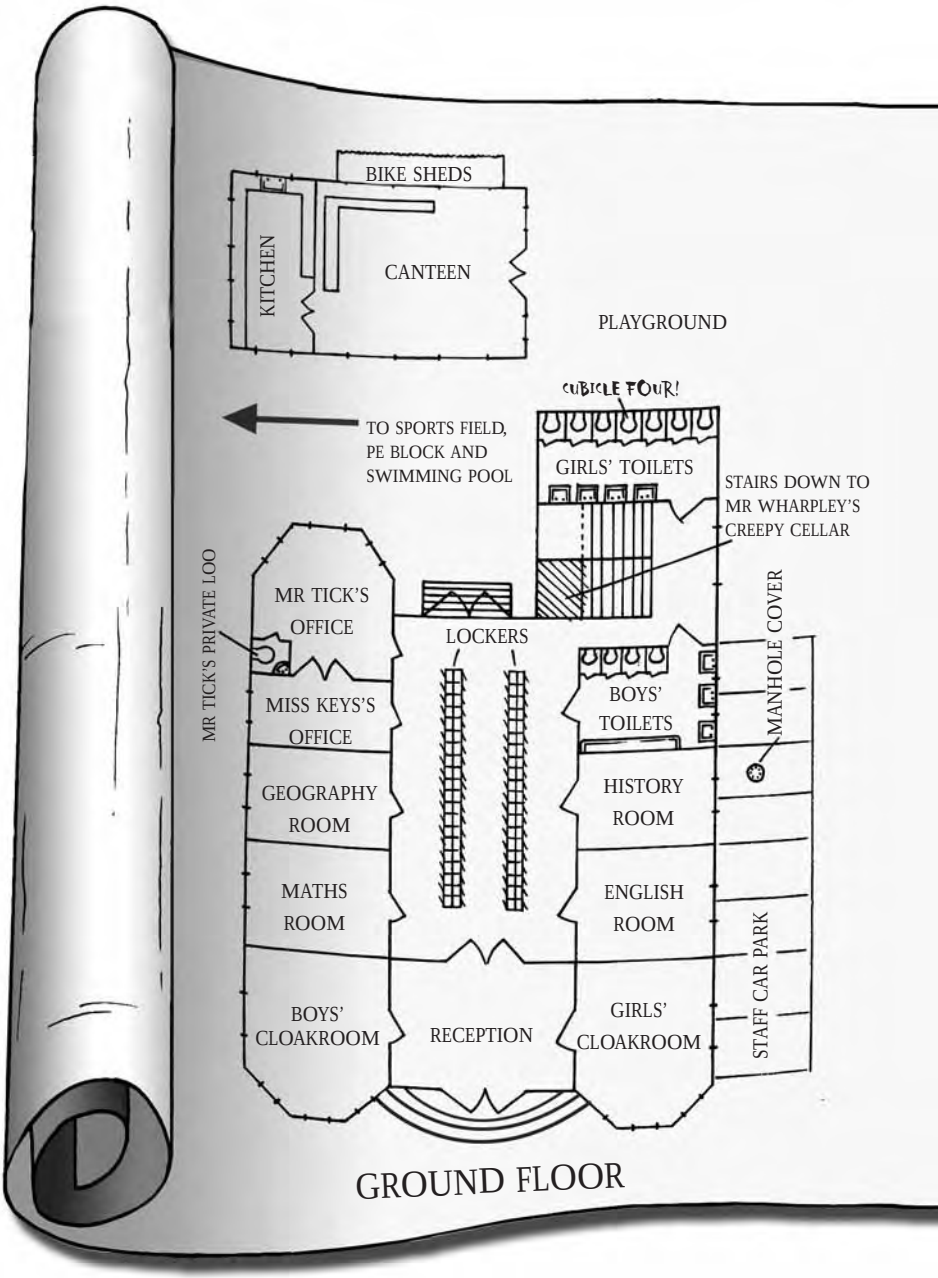
William Scroggins

Young ghost and a secret wannabe St Sebastian's pupil

Bone idle ex-leech merchant with a taste for all things gross



Ambrose Harbottle


BIKE SHEDS
KITCHEN
CANTEEN
PLAYGROUND
CUBICLE FOUR!
TO SPORTS FIELD, PE BLOCK AND SWIMMING POOL
GIRLS' TOILETS
STAIRS DOWN TO MR WHARPLEY'S CREEPY CELLAR
MR TICK'S PRIVATE LOO
MR TICK'S OFFICE
LOCKERS
MANHOLE COVER
MISS KEYS'S OFFICE
BOYS' TOILETS
GEOGRAPHY ROOM
HISTORY ROOM
MATHS ROOM
ENGLISH ROOM
STAFF CAR PARK
BOYS' CLOAKROOM
RECEPTION
GIRLS' CLOAKROOM
GROUND FLOOR

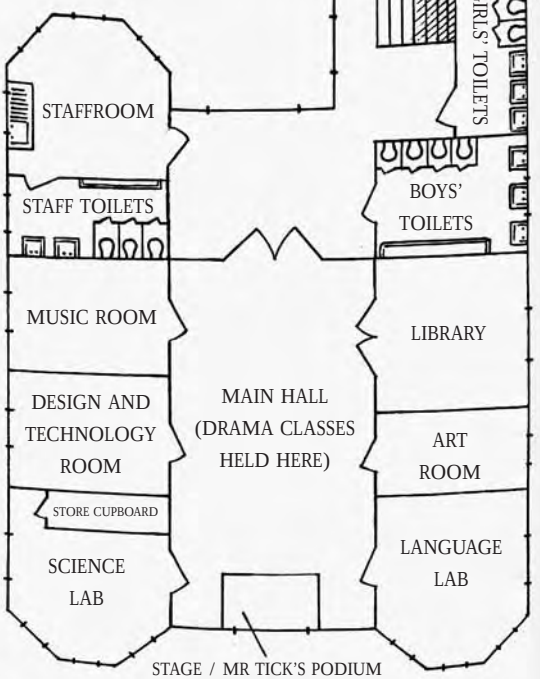
ST SEBASTIAN'S SCHOOL, ~~1899~~

(BUILT ON THE SITE OF A MEDIEVEL PLAGUE PIT)

in the twenty-first century



* over my dead body



FIRST FLOOR

About the Black Death

The Black Death was a terrible plague that is believed to have been spread by fleas on rats. It swept through Europe in the fourteenth century, arriving in England in 1348, where it killed over one third of the population.



One of the Black Death's main symptoms was **foul-smelling boils all over the body called 'buboes'**. The plague was so infectious that its victims and their families were locked in their houses until they died. Many villages were abandoned as the disease wiped out their populations.

So many people died that graveyards overflowed and bodies lay in the street, so special **'plague pits'** were dug to bury the bodies. Almost every town and village in England has a plague pit somewhere underneath it, so watch out when you're digging in the garden . . .



Dear Reader

As you may have already guessed, B. Strange is not a real name.

The author of this series is an ex-teacher who is currently employed by a little-known body called the Organisation For Spook Termination (Excluding Demons), or O.F.S.T.(E.D.). 'B. Strange' is the pen name chosen to protect his identity.

Together, we felt it was our duty to publish these books, in an attempt to save innocent lives. The stories are based on the author's experiences as an O.F.S.T.(E.D.) inspector in various schools over the past two decades.

Please read them carefully - you may regret it if you don't . . .

Yours sincerely
The Publisher.

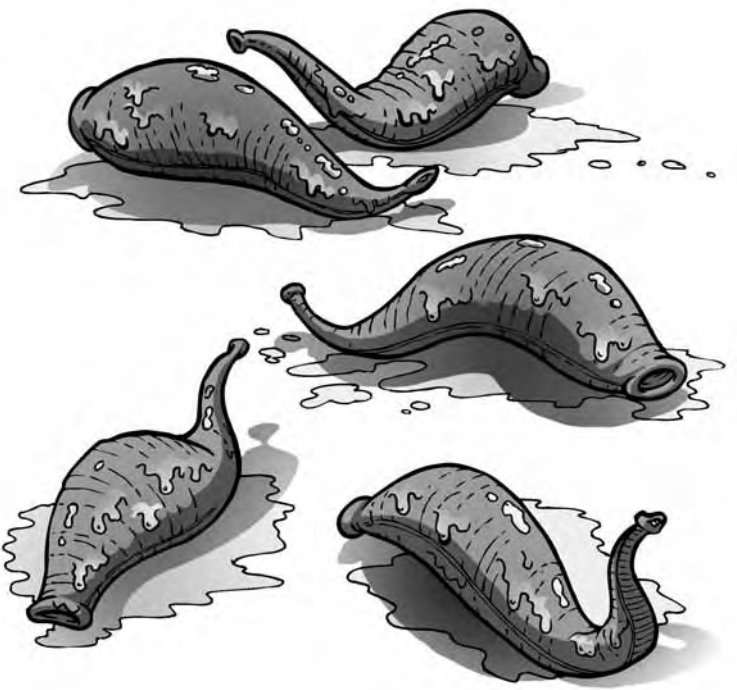
PS - Should you wish to file a report on any suspicious supernatural occurrences at your school, visit **www.too-ghoul.com** and fill out the relevant form. We'll pass it on to O.F.S.T.(E.D.) for you.

PPS - All characters' names have been changed to protect the identity of the individuals. Any similarity to actual persons, living or undead, is purely coincidental.



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CHAPTER 1
RIGHT ON QUEUE

'Where's the best place for a sickroom at school?' asked Alexander Tick in the lunchtime queue. Without pausing for a reply, he delivered the punchline: 'Right next to the canteen!'

Pupils around him groaned and turned away. His friends, James Simpson and Lenny Maxwell, shared a glance.

'It's bad enough that we have to queue up for twenty minutes every day,' moaned James. 'Don't feel you have to entertain us as well.'

'Oh, it's no problem!' beamed Alexander, missing

James's point entirely. 'I've got dozens of school-dinner jokes in my humour database, and I memorised them all this morning.'

A cry of despair echoed out along the lunch queue at the news.

'Did you hear about the cruel dinner lady?' he asked, glancing up and down the line for a willing victim to aim the rest of the joke at. 'She beat the eggs and whipped the cream!'

Lenny sighed. 'If it wasn't for the fact that my stomach thinks my mouth's on strike, I'd be racing in terror across the sports field right now,' he said.

'If you decide to head out that way, do us all a favour and take Stick with you,' said James. 'You could bury him in the sand pit at the long jump.'

'Oh, here's a good one . . .' began Alexander.

Once again, the queue let out a collective moan. James spun round and glared at him.

'You're not winning us any friends here, you know,' he hissed.



Alexander shrugged. ‘Who needs friends when you’ve got an audience?’ James shook his head and turned away. ‘What kind of food do maths teachers eat?’ continued Alexander.

Suddenly, the very large and very angry figure of Gordon ‘The Gorilla’ Carver forced his way back through the queue and grabbed Alexander’s collar, shoving him hard against the wall. ‘You finish that joke and I’ll push your teeth so far down your throat you’ll have to sit on your chips to chew them!’ he threatened.

‘G-Gordon!’ stammered Alexander. ‘You’re not a comedy fan then?’

The Gorilla scratched his head and snarled. ‘Oh, I like comedy,’ he spat. ‘I just don’t like the rubbish you spout!’

‘Well, it is a very s-subjective medium,’ smiled Alexander as the bully pressed him harder against the wall. ‘Th-the word “subjective” means some people like it, and others don’t,’ he explained.





James turned away, unable to watch. ‘Does he actually *want* to spend the rest of term in hospital?’ he asked Lenny.

‘Why, thank you,’ leered Gordon sarcastically, scratching at his scalp again and pressing his face into Alexander’s. ‘The question is, do you know what the word “pain” means?’

‘Well, the dictionary describes “pain” as –’ began the reply.

‘*Alexander!*’ yelled James and Lenny together.

‘Oh,’ said their friend, realising that he was just seconds away from yet another beating at the hands of The Gorilla.

‘Look, Carver,’ said James, stepping into the bully’s line of sight. ‘I’ll make sure he doesn’t tell any more jokes. Just let him go and I’ll buy you an extra dessert, OK?’

Gordon’s eyes drifted out of focus briefly as he considered the offer then, with a grunt, he released Alexander’s collar and began to push his way back to his place at the head of the queue, scratching at his head once more.

James spun round to face Alexander. ‘*Now* will

you keep quiet?' he demanded. 'Not only have you just cost me the price of a rhubarb crumble, you've even managed to annoy Gordon's nits!'

The entire canteen fell silent as Gordon stopped, mid-scratch, and slowly turned around. 'What did you say?' he roared.

James became aware that other pupils were stepping away from him, clearing a path for The Gorilla to advance. 'I-I didn't . . .' he stuttered.

Gordon lurched forwards, grabbing a scoop of ice cream from a bowl on a nearby table and hurling it at James. The dessert's original owner opened her mouth to complain, then saw The Gorilla's face and thought better of it.

The ice cream landed with a 'splat' on James's shoulder, and the lunch queue erupted in laughter; laughter which stopped short when a blob of custard hit Gordon square in the face. Everyone turned to see Lenny looking sheepish.

'What did you do that for?' whispered James.

‘Seemed like a good idea at the time,’ Lenny replied.

With a howl, Gordon raced forwards, snatching a handful of mashed potato from the plate of a year-nine girl. He jumped on Lenny, rubbing it into the boy’s face. Alexander and James leapt into action, pulling food from other tables and hurling it at the back of Gordon’s head.

Within seconds, the entire canteen had erupted into a massive food fight. Cold chips, blackened sausages and tasteless peas flew everywhere as the pupils finally had the courage to treat the school menu with the respect it deserved.

The door to the kitchen burst open, and two dinner ladies raced out, ducking to avoid being covered with lumpy gravy.

‘Stop this *right now*!’ roared Mrs Cooper.

‘We *slaved* over this food!’ bellowed Mrs Meadows.





At this, the attack switched to the original source of the foul food – the dinner ladies. The two women scuttled across the canteen, hands over their heads, as they were pelted with soggy vegetables and slices of tough beef.

Reaching the centre of the battle, the dinner ladies pulled Lenny and Gordon apart.

'You're going straight to the headmaster's office!' shouted Mrs Cooper, as a glob of custard hit the back of her neck.

'You two as well!' added Mrs Meadows, grabbing James and Alexander before they could hurry away.

'What have *I* done?' moaned Alexander.

Mrs Meadows spat out a mouthful of limp carrot. 'We have to stand behind that counter every day listening to your so-called jokes!' she cried. 'It's payback time!'

Braving a fresh rain of school food, the two dinner ladies dragged the boys towards the

canteen doors. As he was marched away, Alexander wiped cold gravy from his eyes and smiled.

'You know, this reminds me of the teacher who ordered a different school dinner every day of the year . . .' he began.

James pulled a handful of mashed turnip from his hair and forced it into Alexander's mouth, silencing him.

'I knew this stuff was good for something,' he muttered.