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opening extract from

Spook School: Liar of the Mothman

written by

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This story is dedicated with love,
to my niece Zoe ~ PJ

For my mum, for being the best ~ TP



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SPOOK SCHOOL

LAIR OF THE MOTHMAN

PETE JOHNSON

Illustrated by Tom Percival



Stripes

Chapter One
The Floating Hand



I rubbed my eyes and stared. Something was floating towards me.

It was a hand.

"Whoah," I gasped.

I'd just woken up. I hadn't a clue where I was. It was too dark to see much. And now I'd been joined by a hand.

The hand started flying around me.

"Hi there, hand," I squeaked, ducking out of the way.

To my great surprise the hand answered. "Oops, sorry. Now whatever you do, don't be frightened," it said.

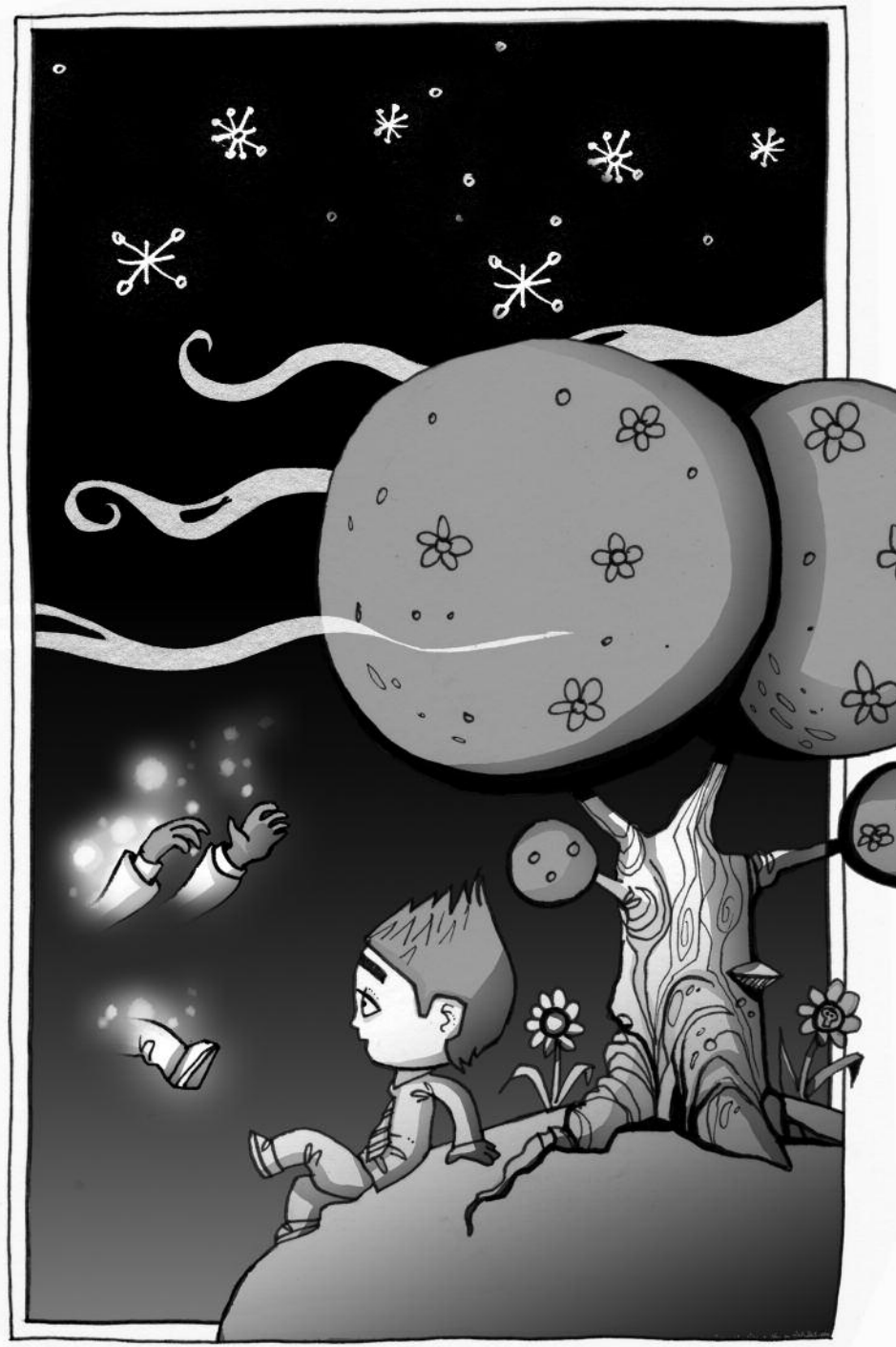
"Of course not," I said to myself. "I'm in a weird place, with a talking hand for company – no reason to be frightened whatsoever."

The voice went on. "Get ready for the rest of me." The next moment a second hand appeared, then some legs and a body.

"How's that?" said the voice. It sounded quite proud of itself.

"Very good," I gasped. "It's just you're missing a head."

"Oh, I'm always forgetting that." The voice laughed and I sort of laughed too.



Seconds later a face oozed up out of the darkness. A friendly face belonging to a boy who looked about my age. He had smiley brown eyes and a big grin.



"I thought it would be less scary if you saw me in stages," he explained.

"Er, seeing a floating hand was

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pretty scary actually," I said. And then I burped loudly. I always do that when I'm nervous.

"Sorry about that."

"No worries," he said cheerfully. "I'm Lewis."

"And are you…" I whispered the last word, "a ghost?"

He grinned. "That's what some people call us. But we prefer to be called spooks. It sounds much cooler, doesn't it?"

"I suppose it does," I said, grinning too. "Wow, I can't believe I'm really dreaming this – you seem so real. It's the best dream I've had for years. So tell me, Lewis, what it's like being a ghost, sorry, spook?"

"It's just brilliant," he began. "You get to float through doors and make things appear out of nowhere." But then he started shaking his head. "No, I'm doing this all wrong. This is my first time as a welcome spook and I totally forgot to tell you…"

"Tell me what?"

He looked right at me. "That you're a spook, too."

