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Winnie Takes the Plunge

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Laura Owen

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For Anna – K.P.
For Winnie Goodhart, with love – xx

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Laura Owen and Korky Paul

Winnie takes the Plunge



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Winnie's Giant Party

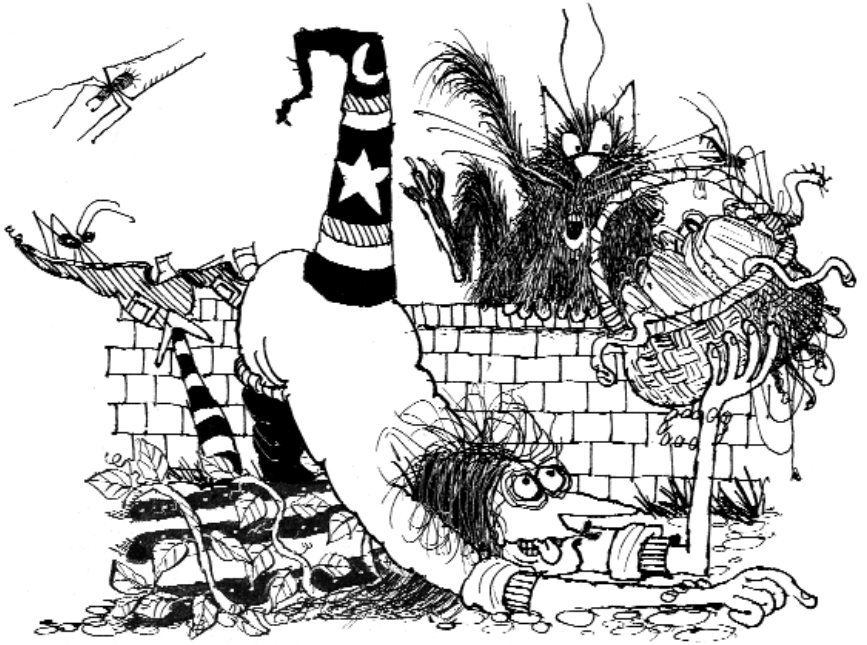


'Hoo-bloomingray!' sang Winnie. 'It's the fancy dress party today!'

Winnie and Wilbur were taking a basket of food to the school ready for the party. They had pickle buns and sandwiches with real sand in them.

'We've all got to dress up,' said Winnie. 'You can be Puss in Boots, Wilbur, and I'll be . . .' But Winnie wasn't looking where she was going.

Trip-crash!



'Oi!' said Winnie. 'What's that blooming log . . . er . . . leg . . . doing across the path?'

A muffled sound of deep sobbing came from the bushes beside the path.

Sob!

'Jerry?' said Winnie. 'Is that you?'

Sniff! 'Yes, missus,' said Jerry.

Winnie pushed through the bush.

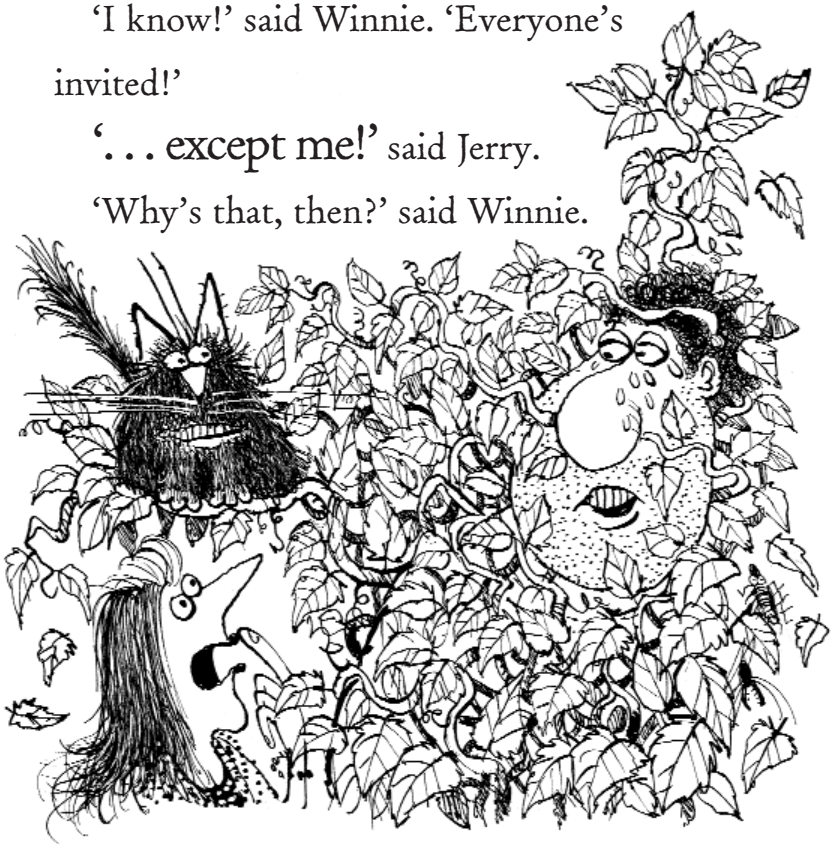
'What in the whoopsy-world is up with you?' said Winnie.

'It's just—sniff—that there's a party . . . !'

'I know!' said Winnie. 'Everyone's invited!'

'. . . except me!' said Jerry.

'Why's that, then?' said Winnie.



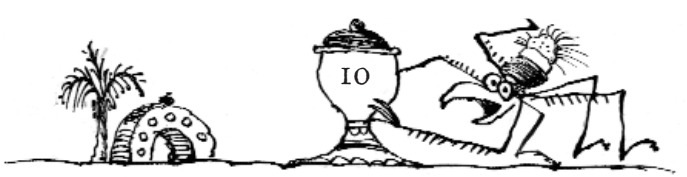




'Cos I is a giant!' said Jerry. 'Everybody's read giant stories in books, and now they think all giants is 'orrible. That's why I'm not invited!'

'Rubbish bins!' said Winnie. 'There are some lovely stories about giants. There's that nice one about Jack climbing up the beansprout where he meets a giant who . . . ooer. Well, there's that one about the Shellfish Giant who doesn't let the children . . . oh. I do see what you mean, Jerry!' said Winnie. 'But that's just blooming stories, not real life and people like us!'

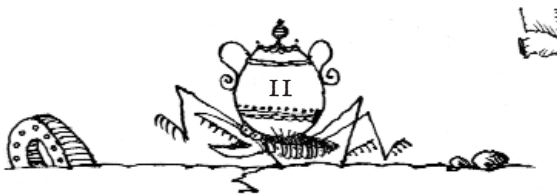
'Then how come nobody ever wants to play with me?' said Jerry.





'Wilbur and I will!' said Winnie. 'Come on, let's play hide and sneak. Go and hide, Jerry. I'll count to a hundred, then I'll come and find you.'





'Goody!' smiled Jerry, and off he went—thump, thump, thump!

Winnie began to count.

'One nitty-gnat, two nitty-gnat, three nitty-gnat . . .'

Thump, thump, thump!

'Go quietly!' shouted Winnie. 'I can hear where you are! Twenty-two nitty-gnat, twenty- . . .'

Tiptoe-crash! Tiptoe-crack!

'Ninety-eight nitty-gnat, ninety-nine nitty gnat, *one hundred!*' shouted Winnie. 'Coming, ready-steady or not!'





Winnie opened her eyes . . . and saw Jerry's bottom sticking right out of the smelly-berry bush . . . just at the same moment as a little girl saw it, and . . .

Shriek! 'Where'th my Mumumummy?' shouted the little girl.

'Er, found you, Jerry!' said Winnie.

'See, missus!' said Jerry. 'See? I ain't no good at playing! And I frighten people!'

'You've turned hide and sneak into hide and shriek!' said Winnie. 'Let's try leapfrog instead!'

Thump-bump! went Winnie as she tried to leap over Jerry but leapt into him instead. **Splat!** went Wilbur. Jerry was just too big for them to get over.



'Oo, I'm as puffed as popcorn and as bruised as a boomerang banana!' said Winnie. 'I give up!'

'See?' said Jerry. 'See?'

'Yes, I do see,' said Winnie. 'But don't you worry, Jerry! You *shall* go to the party!'

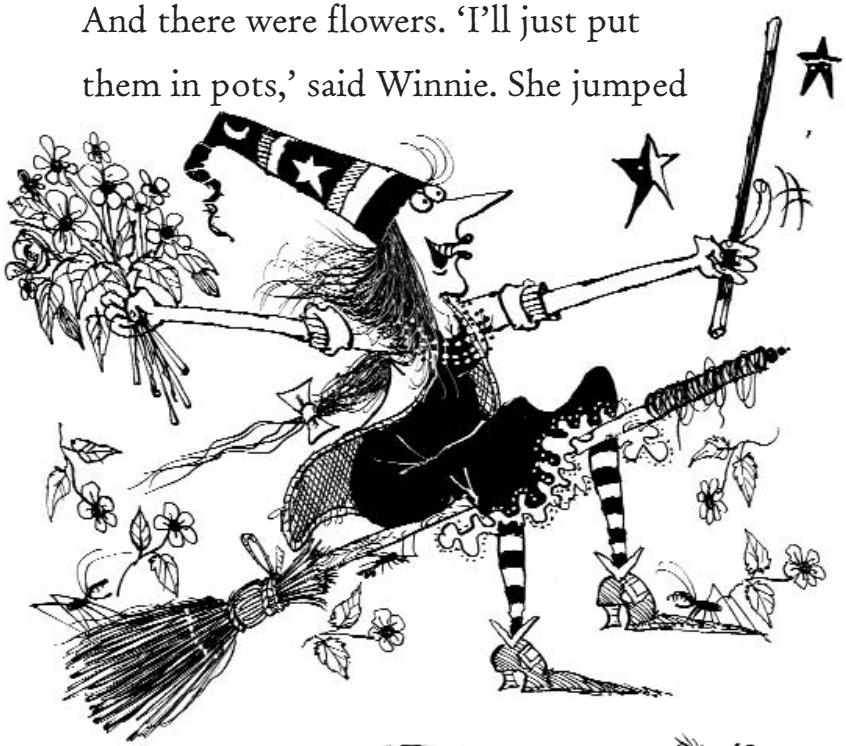
Wilbur found an idea in a book of photos. It showed a street party from the olden days.

'Perfect!' said Winnie. 'Quick! I must phone Mrs Parmar!'



Down on the High Street, Winnie waved her wand. 'Abracadabra!'

Instantly there was a ring road to take all the cars away from the village. 'We need party decorations,' said Winnie. She waved her wand. 'Abracadabra!' And there were flowers. 'I'll just put them in pots,' said Winnie. She jumped



onto her broom and flew up onto the roof tops, stopping to poke flowers into all the chimney pots. 'As pretty as a pink cockroach!' she said. Then Winnie flew around, scooping up washing lines from back gardens to drape them from the lamp posts. 'Big bloomers bunting!' she said.



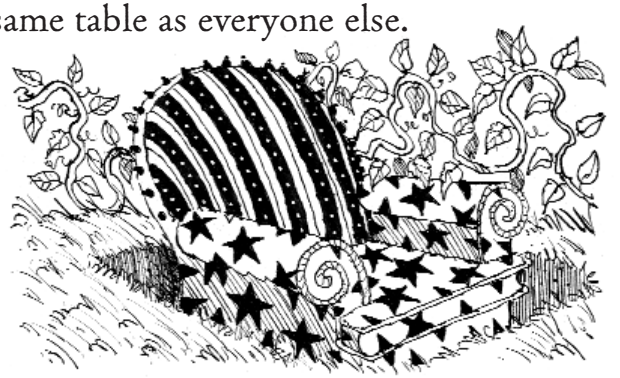
Down below, Mrs Parmar was sorting the tables and chairs and food and drink.

'Where can we put Jerry?' said Mrs Parmar. 'He'd break any of these ordinary chairs!'

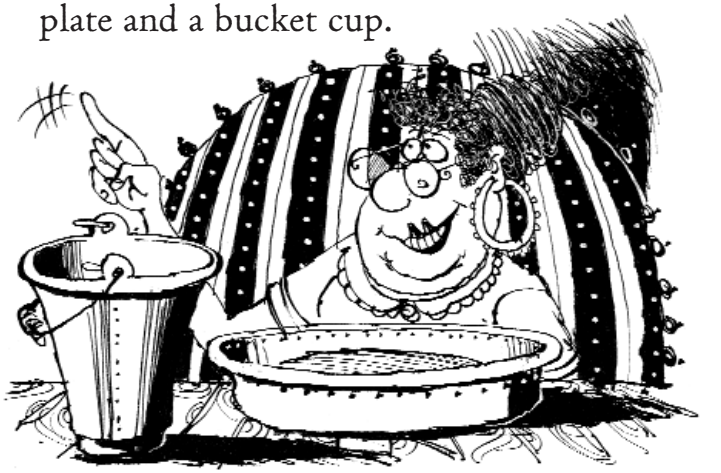
'Leave it to me, Mrs P!' said Winnie.

'Abracadabra!'

Instantly there was a giant throne of a chair. And there was a hole in the road so that Jerry's chair could be sunk down and be at the right height for him to use the same table as everyone else.



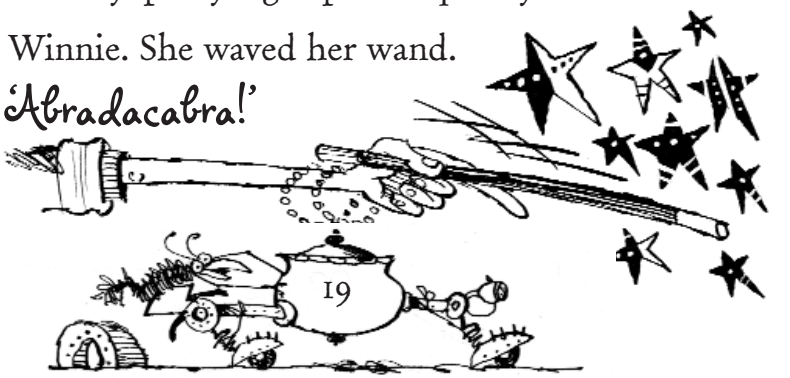
'Well done, Winnie!' said Mrs Parmar. She laid Jerry a place with a dustbin lid plate and a bucket cup.



'Here they all come!' said Mrs Parmar. 'We'll have party games first, then tea. Oh, but we're not dressed-up, Winnie!'

'Easy-peasy tight pants squeezy!' said Winnie. She waved her wand.

'Abradacabra!'





Don't Winnie and Mrs Parmar look lovely?

Mrs Parmar announced the first party game.

'Hide and Seek!'

'Dear, oh dear, Wilbur!' said Winnie. 'How's Jerry going to get on? Where is he, anyway?'

Wilbur shrugged.

The children hid here and there, and just about everywhere. Some of them chose to hide in a tree. They climbed up into its branches, then they sat and waited to be found.

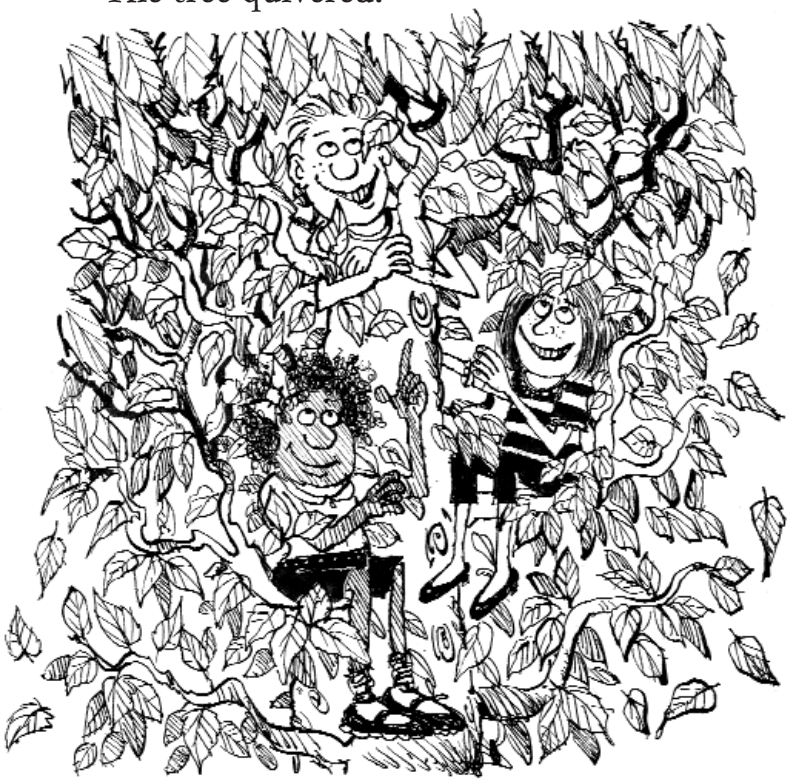


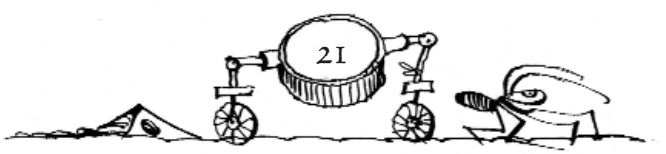
'I like it up here!' said one child.

'So do I,' said another, 'Did you know that Jerry the giant is coming to the party?'



The tree quivered.





'Is he?' said a third child. 'Oh, good! I like Jerry.'

'So do I!' said both the other children. Then—**splash!**—'What's that?' said the first one. 'It's raining inside this tree!'

But it wasn't rain. It was Jerry.

'Sniff!' went the tree.

'Jerry?' said Winnie. 'Is that you?'

'It is, missus!' said Jerry. 'I is crying because I is so happy!'



'Jerry's costume wins the fancy dress competition!' said Mrs Parmar. 'He's a wonderful tree! He gets a book for his prize.'

'Oo, just a moment, Mrs P,' said Winnie when she saw the book in Mrs Parmar's hand. She waved her wand. 'Abracadabra!'



Instantly the book changed.

'Is it a book about giants?' asked Jerry, looking worried.

'Yes, but NICE giants!' said Winnie.

'Ooo,' said Jerry, and he hugged the book hard.

Jerry let the children climb all over him, and he swung them round.



Then, 'Shall we play leapfrog?' said Winnie.

'But . . . !' began Jerry.

'Don't worry!' said Winnie. She waved her wand. 'Abracadabra!'



And instantly all the children had froggy legs and froggy feet. They could leap over Jerry with no trouble at all.

Leap! Leap! Leap!

But when it was Jerry's turn to leap over the children, they all collapsed!





'Time for tea!' said Mrs Parmar.

They ate and they talked. Then they filled the hole in the road with water, and the children went swimming with their froggy legs which made them swim extra fast!



And guess what? When Jerry got home he found an invitation stuck in his letter box. He'd been invited to the party all along, but just didn't know it!

'You silly great lummox!' said Winnie.



