Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

Stitch Head

Written by

Guy Bass

Published by

Stripes Publishing

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

VISIT THE AUTHOR'S WEBSITE AT:

www.guybass.com

STRIPES PUBLISHING
An imprint of Magi Publications
1 The Coda Centre, 189 Munster Road,
London SW6 6AW

A paperback original
First published in Great Britain in 2011

Text copyright © Guy Bass, 2011
Illustrations copyright © Pete Williamson, 2011

ISBN: 978-1-84715-183-4

The right of Guy Bass and Pete Williamson to be identified as the author and illustrator of this work respectively has been asserted by them in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988.

All rights reserved.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition, including this condition, being imposed upon the subsequent purchaser.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in the UK.

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

Around eighteen minutes before *Fulbert Freakfinder's Travelling Carnival of Unnatural Wonders* trundled into Grubbers Nubbin, Mad Professor Erasmus was in his laboratory, toiling on his latest experiment.

According to popular opinion, Mad Professor Erasmus was the maddest mad professor of all. He spent day and night in his laboratory, breathing life (or something like it) into any number of brain-meltingly strange creatures: steam-powered skulls, dog-faced cats, headless horses, flesh-eating chairs, frog-children – that sort of thing.

"Live… Live! Ah-ha-HA-HA! You shall be my greatest creation ever! And I really mean it this time!"

The professor always thought that his newest creation was bound to be his greatest ever. That is, until the next one came along.

For no sooner had he brought almost-life to a new creature, than he immediately lost interest and moved on to his next peculiar project.

"More power! Live, I say!" he cried, pulling levers and administering potions.

High up in the rafters, hidden in the shadows, a tiny figure watched as the professor created almost-life for the umpteenth time.

His name was Stitch Head.



Stitch Head was the professor's very first creation. He was a strange-looking something or other – more or less human-shaped, but no bigger than a medium-sized monkey, and made up of bits, pieces and spare parts that the professor had managed to find. His bald, round head was a patchwork of stitches, and his eyes were a different colour. While the left was a small, black bead, the right was large, bright and ice blue. This eye was a sight to behold. It almost seemed to glow in the castle's dimly lit corners.

"Yes, yes! Now we're cooking! *More power! More!* Now a little less … now *more! More! MORE! Live!*" cried the professor again.

Over the years, Stitch Head had witnessed the "birth" of dozens of the professor's creations. And with each one, he was reminded how, once, he was the most important creation

in the professor's life … that he and the professor had promised to be friends for the rest of their days.

But that was an almost-lifetime ago. Now, Stitch Head was long forgotten. He sighed as he watched this new monster open its giant, single eye for the first time.

"I have done it! I have created almost-life! Again! You are my *GREATEST CREATION EVER! YAH-AHAHA-HAHAHA!*" cackled the professor.

Stitch Head had to admit, the Creature was an impressive sight – far bigger and more imposing than anything the professor had created before. What's more, it had a near perfect balance of disgustingness and monstrousness. It flexed its two huge arms, pullling at the thick leather straps that held it in place – and wiggled a third, small arm

protruding from its chest, as its master shrieked with victorious glee. Stitch Head looked down at his tiny, mismatched hands, and felt sadder and more forgotten than ever.

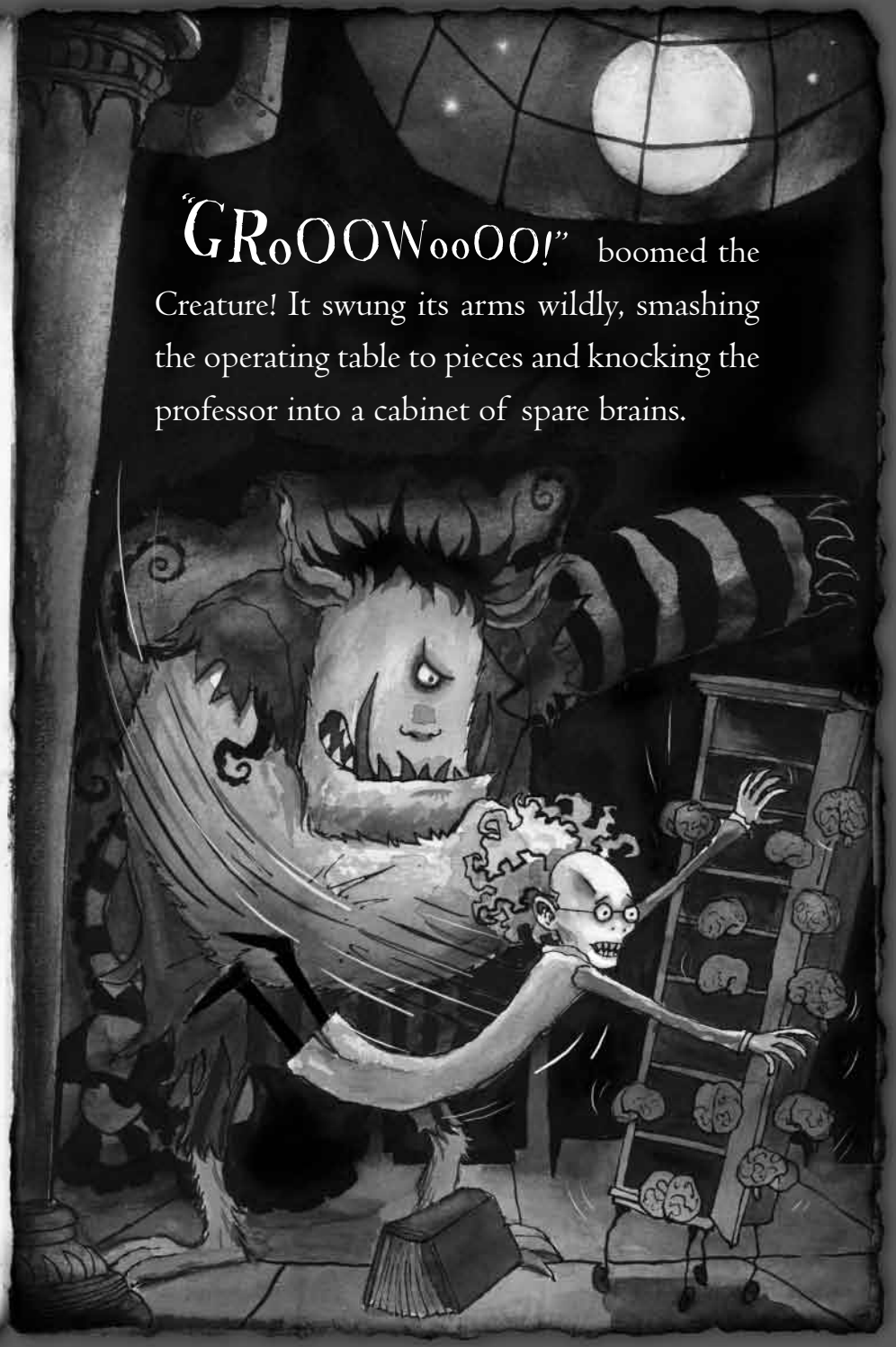
"GRoOOWooOO!"

Stitch Head watched as the Creature began thrashing about, its mighty arms straining against its bonds.

"What's happening…?" he whispered, staring in horror as the Creature began to *grow*. Within seconds, it had all but doubled in size. It sprouted thick fur and its huge body grew ever larger, until, with a roar, it tore itself free and leaped from the operating table.

"Oh *no*," gasped Stitch Head, tightening the straps on a small bag slung over his shoulder. He looked up to the laboratory's great domed skylight – the moon was shining full and round in the midnight sky. "No! The *moon*!"

"GRoOOWooOO!" boomed the Creature! It swung its arms wildly, smashing the operating table to pieces and knocking the professor into a cabinet of spare brains.



"Master!" whispered Stitch Head, as the cabinet collapsed on top of the professor. The Creature lumbered towards the laboratory's thick wooden door. With a single almighty lunge, it crashed through locks, bolts and four inches of solid oak. Then it roared again and disappeared into the labyrinth of corridors.

"What a creation! My best work ever! Ah-HAHAHA!" came a cry from underneath the cabinet of brains. Stitch Head breathed a sigh of relief as the professor emerged. He dusted himself off and picked a few bits of brain out of his hair.

"Creature? Creature! Return to your master, I command it!" called the professor.

It didn't.

"I have to stop it from leaving the castle," muttered Stitch Head, his eyes unblinking with fear. He clambered silently, nimbly along

the rafters, and then through a large wooden door and down a flight of winding stairs.

"Oh well – easy come, easy go!" said the professor, sifting through the brains on the floor. He held one up and gave it a good sniff. "Ah-HAHA! Perfect for my next experiment!"

