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Opening extract from

The Monster Snowman

Written by

Gillian Cross

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The Monster Snowman

by

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Illustrated by Ross Collins

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Chapter 1
Snow!

When Jack woke up on his birthday, he looked out of the window – and it was snowing! There was thick snow all over the road. Snow on the trees, snow on the walls, snow **everywhere**.

Jack jumped out of bed and ran downstairs. "Look outside!" he shouted. "I'm going to make a fantastic snowman!"

His mum grinned. "It's an extra birthday present!" she said.

"I hope you like this present too," his dad said. And he gave Jack a parcel.

Jack pulled the paper off. "Brilliant!" he shouted.

It was just what he wanted – a new phone. His old one hadn't worked properly for ages.

"I'm going to text Sam," he said. "And get him to come and help make the snowman."

"Not till you're dressed!" Mum said. "And you'd better wait till it stops snowing."

Jack went upstairs to get dressed. But he sent the text first.

Hi Sam, it said. Want 2 make a snowman l8ter?

Sam texted back right away.

YES!!! As soon as the snow stops. OK?

Jack thought it would *never* stop. But at two pm the last snowflake fell – and at ten past two Sam rang the bell.

Sam had a great idea.

"Let's go to the empty house on the corner," he said. "No one else goes there, and there'll be lots of snow. We can make a really big snowman there."

Jack pulled on his boots. "The biggest snowman in the world!" he said.

"The biggest, scariest snowman in the world!" said Sam.

As they walked down the street, they planned how to do it. But when they reached the corner, Ryan Stone was there, standing outside the empty house. He was looking up at the high wall that ran all round the garden.

"I bet there's good snow in there," he said.

Jack looked at Sam.

Sam looked at Jack.

Ryan was a wimp. He was scared of everything. If he saw them go into the garden, he would come too. They would have to let him. Or wait for him to go away. And they wanted to make a start on the snowman.

Ryan looked at the top of the wall again. "It's too high to climb," he said.

"Sam knows a way in," said Jack.

Sam sighed. "We're going to make a snowman in there," he told Ryan. "Want to help?" He went over to the big gate in the wall. It was made of long, solid planks of wood, running from top to bottom.

"I've already tried that," said Ryan. "It's locked."

"We don't need to unlock it," Sam said. "Look."

He bent down and pulled at the two planks in the middle. They were loose at the bottom and they swung to the side. The gap was just big enough to squeeze through.

"See!" said Jack. "Let's get going."

Ryan looked at the gap. "Is it OK to go in there? I mean – suppose someone catches us?"

"Stay outside if you're scared," said Sam. "We're going in!"

Sam and Jack scrambled through the hole in the gate. They hoped Ryan would go away, but he didn't. He dithered for a moment and then he climbed through after them.