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Opening extract from

# Horrid Henry's Nightmare

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# 1

# HORRID HENRY'S NIGHTMARE

". . . and then the slime-covered, flesh-eating zombie, fangs dripping blood, lurched into school, wailing and gnashing and – pouncing!" screamed Rude Ralph, grabbing Horrid Henry.

Henry shrieked.

"Ha ha, gotcha," said Ralph.

Horrid Henry's heart pounded. How he loved being scared! What could be better than having a sleepover with Ralph, and both of them trying to scare the other? He reached into the Purple Hand Fort's top secret skull and bones

biscuit tin, and scoffed a big handful of chocolate gooey chewies. Scary stories and chocolate. Whoopie!

"Watch out, Ralph," said Henry. "I'm gonna tell you about the alien acid monster who creeps—"

"Smelly toads," piped a little voice outside the Purple Hand Fort.

Grrr.

"Hide," hissed Horrid Henry.

Rude Ralph belched.




"I know you're in there, Henry," said Peter.

"No I'm not," said Henry.

"And I said the password, so you have to let me in," said Peter. "It's my fort too. Mum said so."

Horrid Henry sighed loudly. Why on earth, of all the possible brothers in the world, did he have to get stuck with Peter? Why oh why, when younger brothers were being distributed, did he get landed with a tell-tale, smelly nappy baby?

"All right, come in," said Henry.

Perfect Peter crept through the branches.

"Why is it so dark in here?" said Peter.

"None of your business, baby," said Henry. "You've been in, now get out."

"Yeah, wriggle off, worm," said Ralph.

"No babies allowed in the Purple Hand Fort," said Henry.

Perfect Peter stuck out his lower lip. "I'm going to tell Mum you wouldn't let me stay in the fort. And that you called me a baby."

"Go ahead, baby boo boo," said Henry.

"MUM!" screamed Peter. "Henry called me baby boo boo."

"Stop being horrid, Henry, and be nice to your brother," shouted Mum. "Or I'll send Ralph home."

"I wasn't being horrid," bellowed Henry. Oh to be a wizard and turn Peter into a toadstool.



"Okay, Peter, you can stay," snarled Henry. "But you'll be sorry."

"No I won't," said Peter.

"We're telling scary stories," said Ralph.

"And you hate scary stories," said Henry.

Peter considered. It was true, he hated being scared. And almost everything scared him. But maybe that was last week. Maybe now that he was a week older he wouldn't be scared any more.

"I'm brave now," said Peter.

Horrid Henry shrugged. "Well, just don't blame me when you wake up screaming tonight," he shrieked.

Peter jumped. Should he stay and listen to these terrible tales? Then he squared his shoulders. He wasn't a baby, whatever Henry said. He was a big boy.

Horrid Henry told his scariest story about the child-eating vampire werewolf. Rude Ralph told his scariest story about the wailing graveyard ghost who slurped up babies. Then Henry told his most scary story ever in the history of the world: the alien acid monster and zombie mummy who—

"I know a scary story," interrupted Peter.



"We don't want to hear it," said Henry.

"It's really scary, I promise," said Peter. "Once upon a time there was a bunny . . ."

"SCARY stories!" shouted Rude Ralph.

"Once upon a time there was a really big bunny," said Peter. "And one day his little tail fell off."

Peter paused.

"Is that it?" said Henry.

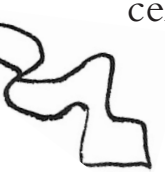
"Yes," said Peter.

"Blecccccchhhh," belched Rude Ralph.

"That's your idea of a scary story?" said Henry. "A bunny with no tail?"

"Wouldn't you be scared if you were a bunny and your tail fell off?" said Peter.

"Isn't it time for you to practise your cello?" said Henry.



Peter gasped.

He didn't ever like to miss a day's practice.

Perfect Peter trotted off.

Phew. Worm-free at last.

"Now, as I was telling you, Ralph," said Horrid Henry, "there was once a zombie mummy that roamed . . ."

NO!!!!!

Horrid Henry lay in bed in his dark bedroom, trembling. What a horrible, horrible nightmare. All about a ghost bunny with huge teeth and no tail, charging at him waving a gigantic needle. Ugggh. His heart was pounding so fast he thought it would pop out of his chest.

But what to do, what to do?

Henry was too scared to stay in bed. Henry was too scared to move. Don't



be an idiot, snarled Devil 1. There is no such thing as a ghost bunny. Yeah, you lummox, snarled Devil 2. What a wimp. Frankly, I'm disappointed.