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Graphic

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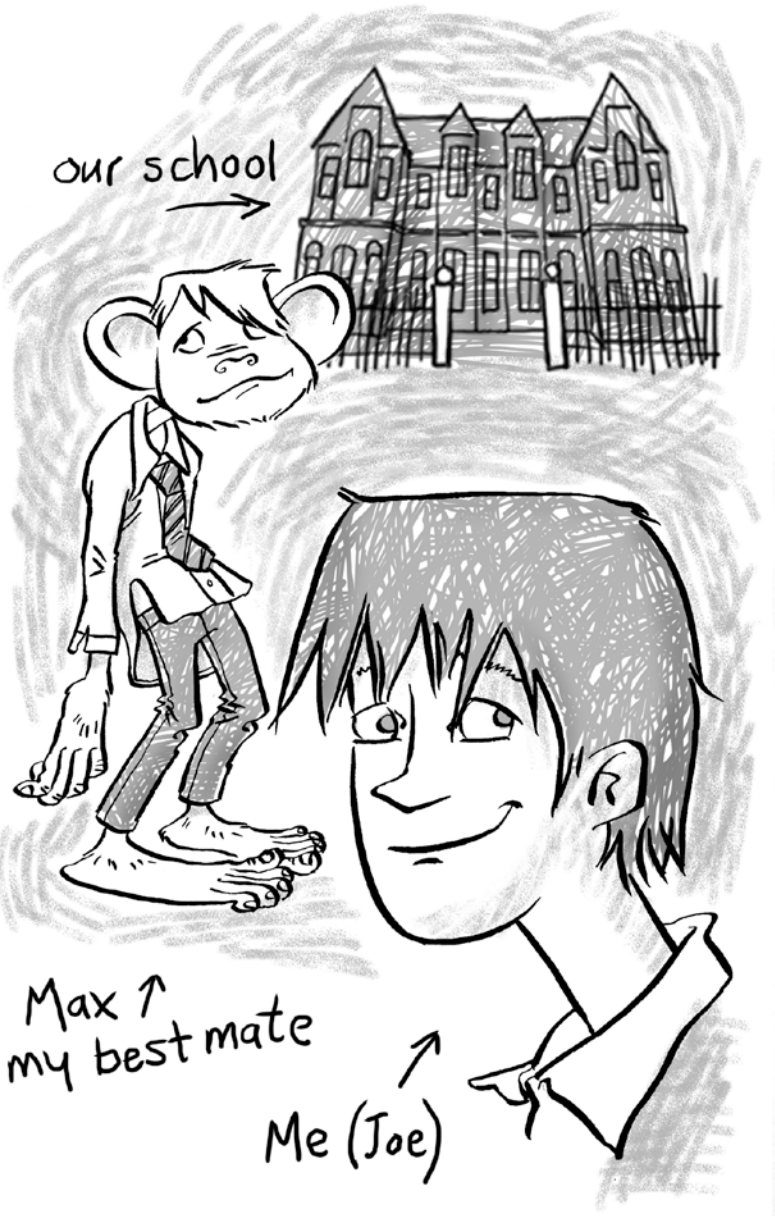
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For Doodles and Moo-moo

Contents

Chapter 1	1
Chapter 2	7
Chapter 3	13
Chapter 4	21
Chapter 5	27
Chapter 6	35
Chapter 7	42
Chapter 8	47
Chapter 9	54
Chapter 10	62



Chapter 1

I draw as fast as I can.

I do circles for eyes, two wavy lines for eyebrows and a pointy nose.

My best mate Max is sitting beside me and I feel his arm shake. He's watching me draw instead of doing his work, and he's trying not to laugh. I dash my pen across the paper to make a wide mouth and Max snorts. My hand twitches up and down to add wild hair and this is too much for Max. The desk judders. I look up at him and he's doing that silent laugh thing, when your face goes red and snot comes out of your nose and you jiggle in your seat. It's like he's a bottle of cola with a whole packet of mints stuffed in, ready to explode. Have you ever done that? It's really cool, but kind of messy when it goes off.

I hope Max doesn't explode yet. It would spoil everything. I don't want to get caught before I've finished my portrait of the teacher, so I give Max a look that says, 'Cut it out' and roll my eyes to the front of the classroom. Mr Parks has his head down. He's marking our homework and he hasn't noticed anything wrong. But he will in a minute, because a girl has turned around to see why Max is making a strange noise. A grin breaks across her face and she grabs her friend's arm. Now they are both turning to look back and giggling. I know I don't have much time before Max can't control himself any more, so I scribble a tie with a ketchup stain and a jacket that is too tight to cover a bulging belly. I draw the last few squiggles to show buttons straining over the stomach.

"Joe!" Mr Parks shouts.

It makes me jump and my pen leaps out of my hand. I've been caught. I stop the pen before it rolls off the desk, but I don't look up.

The girls snap around to face the front again. They hunch over their books and I



can see they're still giggling by the way their backs wobble. I look sideways at Max. His face is scrunched up like he's in pain.

Mr Parks gets up from his chair and pulls his jacket over his bulging belly. It's too tight to do up the buttons. "Joe?" he says again. "Are you drawing?"

"No, Sir," I lie. I turn over the page in my folder and pretend to write. I'm not much good at pretending, so Parks isn't fooled.

"Save those cartoons of yours for Art lessons, OK, Joe?" he says.

"Yes, Sir," I say.

"Then you can draw as many freaks and weirdos as you like," Parks tells me.

Max explodes.

"PAAA HA HA HA!" His laugh is so loud they can hear it right across the other side of the school.

I almost gave up drawing last term. I nearly stopped doing cartoons forever. It would be pretty serious for me to give up

Art, because Art is my best subject. In fact, it's the only subject I'm any good at. I love to draw. I draw people, my mates and girls and teachers. And sometimes I draw aliens, zombies, freaks and weirdos. I draw all the time, even when I'm not supposed to. But there are some things I won't draw any more, because of what happened last term. Last term my drawings got me into big trouble. Really big trouble. You might not believe my story, but here's what happened.