

# My Brother is a Zombie!

by  
Kirsty Holmes

Illustrated by  
Richard Bayley



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Level 11 – Lime



# Helpful Hints for Reading at Home

The focus phonemes (units of sound) used throughout this series are in line with the order in which your child is taught at school. This offers a consistent approach to learning whether reading at home or in the classroom.

**HERE ARE SOME COMMON WORDS THAT YOUR CHILD MIGHT FIND TRICKY:**

water	where	would	know	thought	through	couldn't
laughed	eyes	once	we're	school	can't	our

## TOP TIPS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD TO READ:

- Encourage your child to read aloud as well as silently to themselves.
- Allow your child time to absorb the text and make comments.
- Ask simple questions about the text to assess understanding.
- Encourage your child to clarify the meaning of new vocabulary.

This book focuses on developing independence, fluency and comprehension. It is a lime level 11 book band.

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# Chapter One

## My Brother Ollie

I'm Paige Crossley. This is my Secret Stakeout Den. I made it myself from a bed sheet and some books. I had to build it here to get a good view of Ollie's room. You might be wondering why an eight-year-old girl would be on a stakeout. You'd be right to ask!

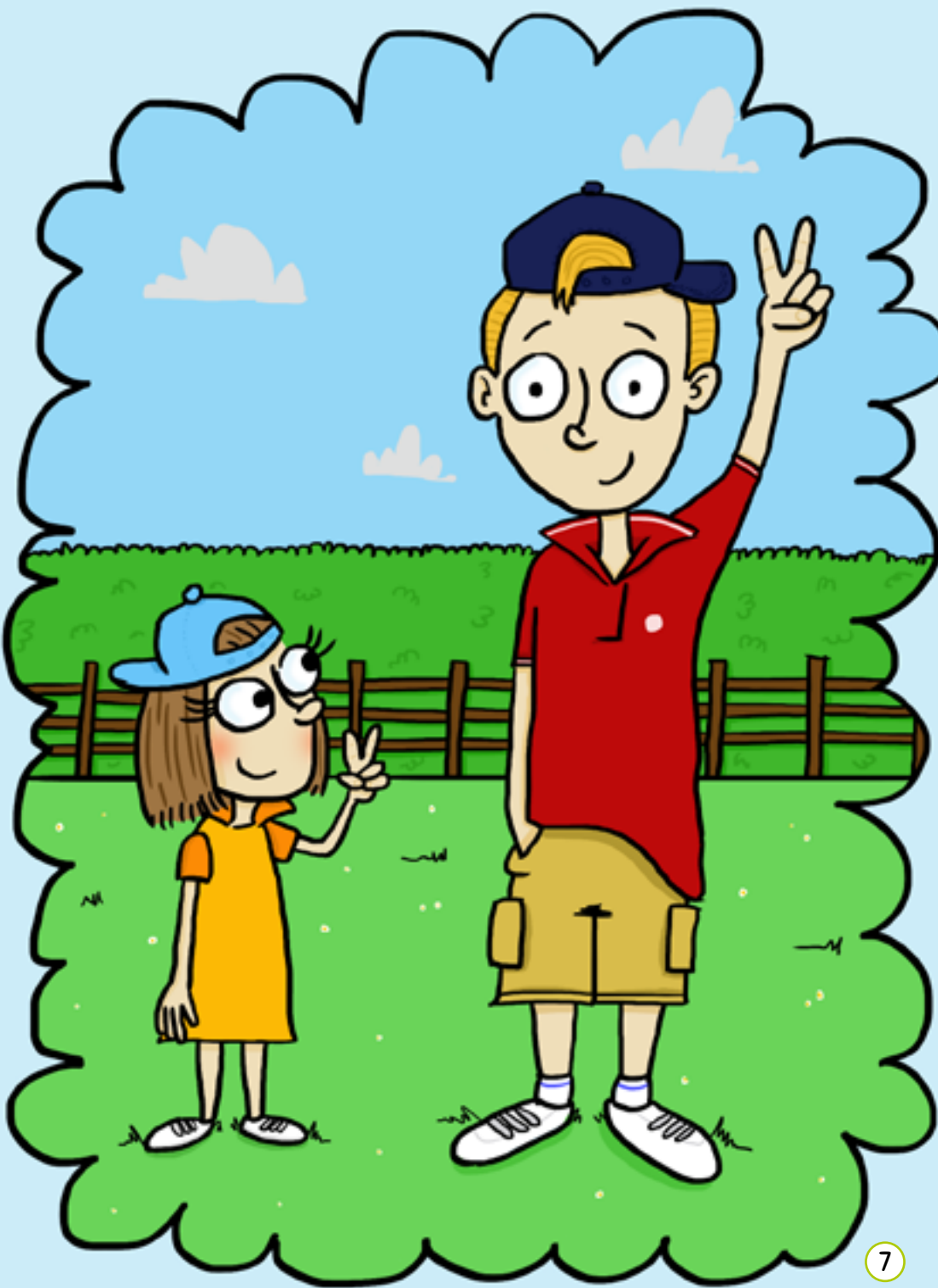
It's not the usual way to spend a Saturday evening in the summer holidays, I agree. So let me tell you what's been going on. My brother Ollie and I live with our dads, Papa Tom and Papa Chris, and our cat Pickles.



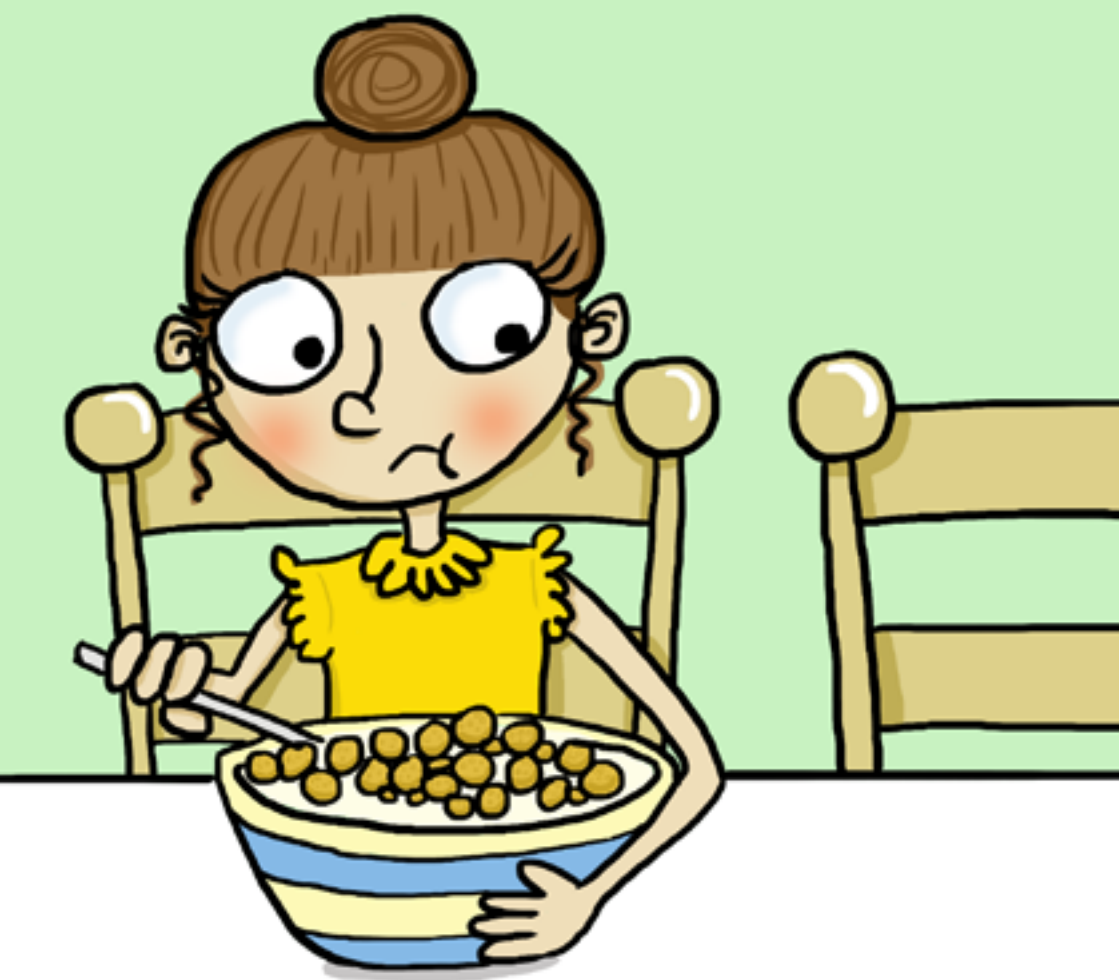
I've always loved having an older brother. He is so cool! He can do all sorts of awesome things. He can do a wheelie, kick a football right into the goal, and climb trees way higher than me! I have always wanted to grow up to be just like him.

But a few weeks ago, things started to get strange. Ollie stopped wanting to go on bike rides with me. He left his bike in the garden and Papa Chris's climbing roses grew all over it. I started to suspect something VERY SERIOUS might be wrong...

On the night of his birthday, Ollie went to hang out with his friends. Papa Tom said that he was a teenager now, so he was allowed to stay out very, very late. Sometimes even past nine o'clock! When he went out he seemed normal, but the next day he was different...

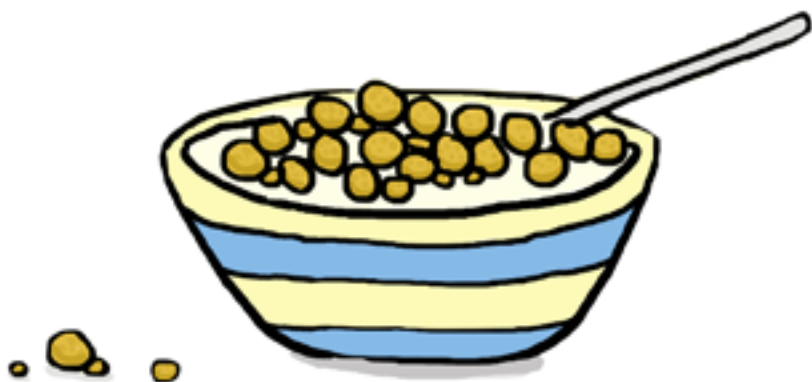






I waited for Ollie, but he didn't come down for cartoons and breakfast with me like he usually does on a Saturday morning. Pickles was padding round and round in circles on the carpet. We both knew this was strange. Ollie didn't get out of his bed until 11 o'clock! Something was very definitely up.

After his birthday, Ollie got stranger and stranger. I had been watching him closely and started to think that there was only one way to explain it. "I think that my brother, Oliver James Crossley, is A ZOMBIE!"



# Chapter Two

## How to Spot a Zombie

As soon as I worked it out, I did what any sensible little sister would do. I went straight to the library. The library always has books about everything, and I knew I would need to read all about zombies if I was going to prove that Ollie had become one.

I found this brilliant book on the Spooky Books shelf in the library. It was called 'How to Spot a Zombie'. It was ace. It had all these great pictures of zombies, and lists of what to look for, and how to be sure.

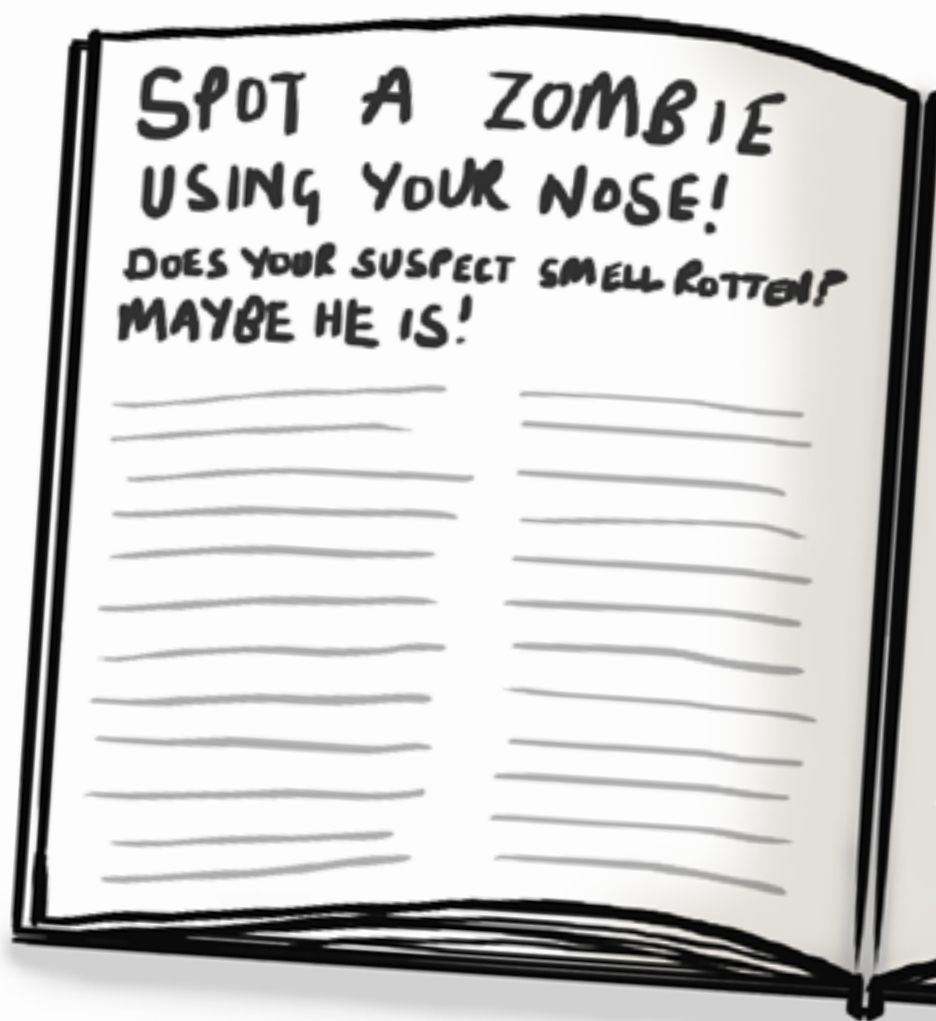
I hoped this book would prove me wrong.

But still, I wondered...

I took the book home and began reading it right away.



The book was filled with tip-top zombie-spotting facts. I knew I had to keep a close eye on Ollie...



It all made perfect sense.

Ollie really did stink. One day, he walked past me while I was spying on him under the dining table. His feet smelt of rotten, stinky cheese! Pee-YOO!

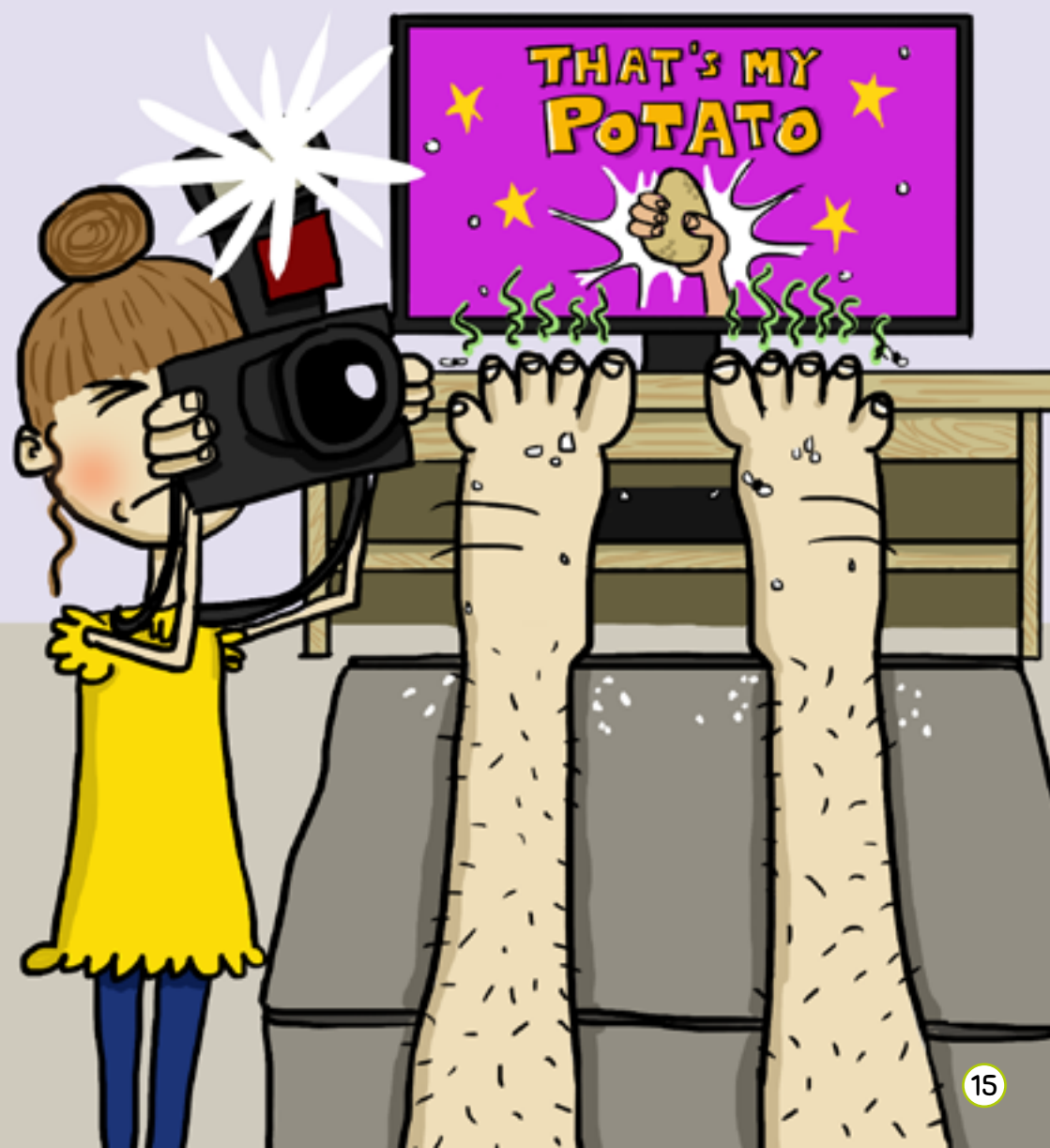


Later that night, we were all watching Papa Tom's favourite programme, 'That's My Potato'. Ollie had his horrible feet out in the open, and I could get a good look at last. I tried to take a photo and he growled at me. Could this be more proof?

I knew I had to be very brave for my next task. I got a peg, some rubber gloves, and a torch. Pickles stood guard at the door. If I was to be sure about the smell, I would need to go where no little sister should ever have to go...

MY BROTHER'S  
ROOM!







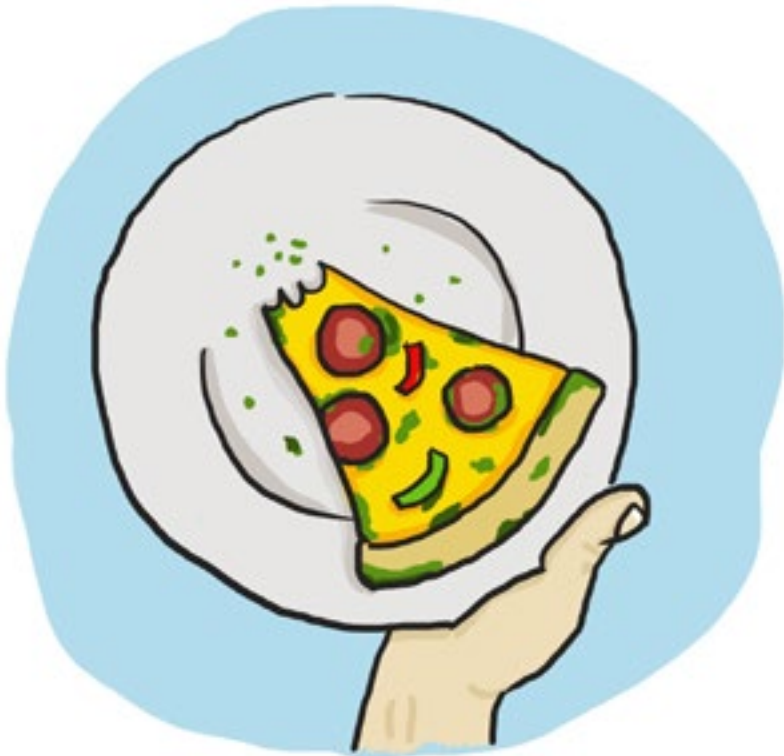
Ollie's room was a clear sign that he must be a zombie. Only a stinky, crusty zombie could live in such a mess.

Just then, Papa Chris came out of Ollie's room, carrying a plate at arm's length.

"What's that?" I asked.

"You don't want to know!" he said.

It certainly LOOKED like just an old slice of pizza, but Ollie wasn't fooling me.



# Chapter Three

## Beside the Seaside

One day, we went to the seaside. Papa Tom, Papa Chris and I built a sandcastle. Then we ran on the sand. Ollie used to love to play with us, but he didn't want to do anything that day. He just wanted to lay around all day.



The book said that zombies don't talk properly. They can only grunt. So I tried to talk to Ollie.

I couldn't believe it when Ollie grunted at me.  
I sat all the way across the seat in the car on  
the way home. Just in case.



Even the way he looked had changed. Now he wore a woolly hat pulled low over his eyes. And his clothes were always torn. Papa Chris told me Ollie liked them like that! How silly. Who would wear jeans covered with rips on purpose?



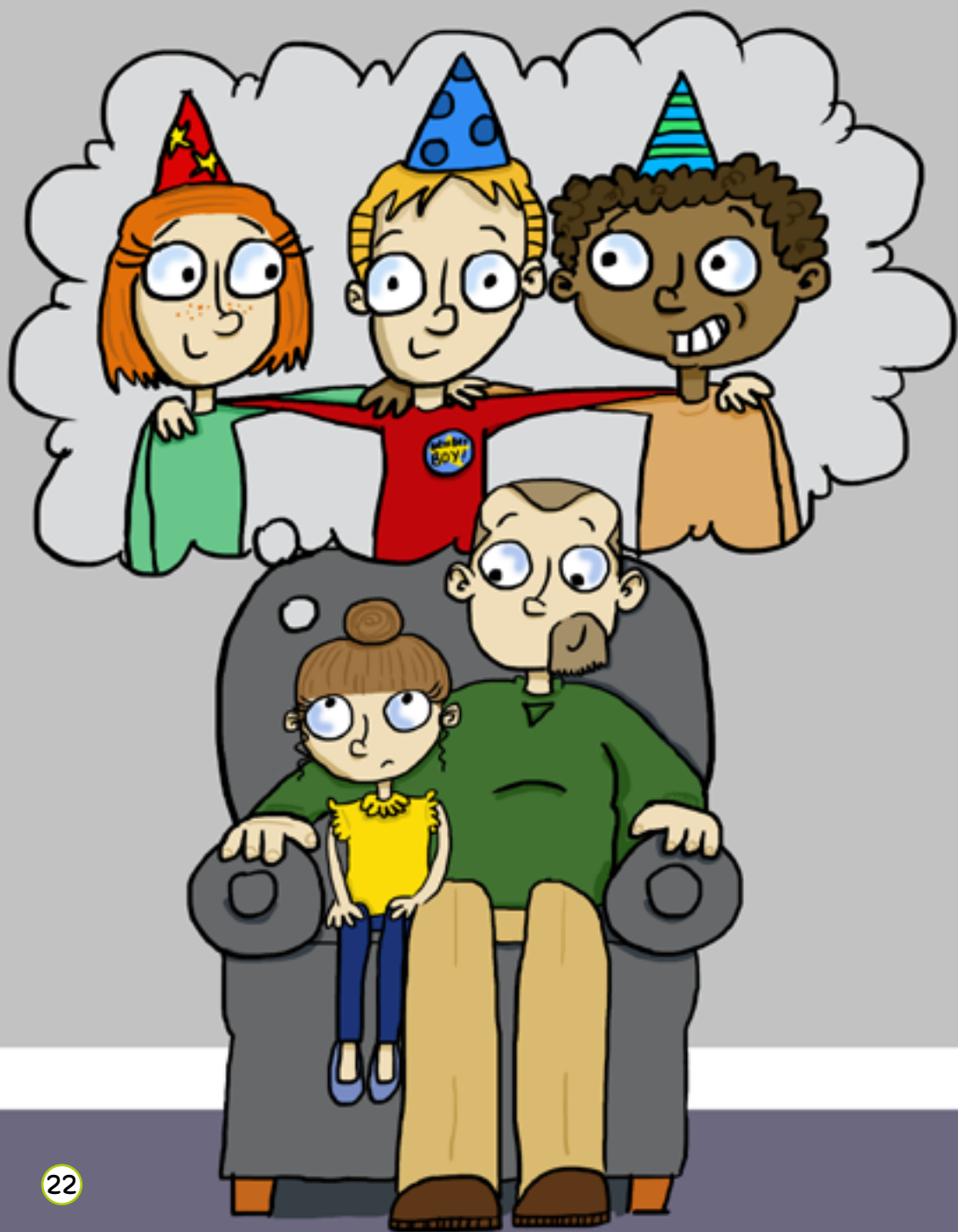
He would not outsmart me. I used to like wearing Ollie's cool t-shirts to bed, but now I didn't dare. What if I caught it from the t-shirt? I did NOT want to become a zombie myself. Who would keep an eye on Ollie? I had to be very careful.

Next, I looked up 'zombies' on the internet. I got Papa Chris to help me, because I didn't want to see anything too scary. We found a quiz. It was called 'Are You a Zombie?'. Papa Chris looked serious. "I think we should take the quiz," he said. I nodded.

As Papa Chris read out the quiz, I pretended to answer for myself. But in my head, I was really answering for Ollie. He almost got full marks, but I didn't know about question four.

# ARE YOU A ZOMBIE?

- |    |   | YES                   | NO                    |
|----|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | DO YOU SMELL LIKE ROTTEN SOCKS?         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. | ARE BITS OF YOU FALLING OR PEELING OFF? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. | DO YOU GRUNT INSTEAD OF TALKING?        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. | DO YOU HANG AROUND WITH OTHER ZOMBIES?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



I had no idea if his friends were zombies too. It was clear that I needed to spy on Ollie with his friends so I could find out. It made sense. They were there on his birthday, the night he changed. Time to set up a stakeout...

## Chapter Four

### Are Zombies Real?

For a few weeks, I watched Ollie closely. I made a list in my book of the things I spotted. His skin was pale, because he never went outside. He also had awful spots all over his face. And he hardly talked to me anymore.

One night, I decided to see if I could tell if his friends were zombies too. Two of his friends, Jacob and Sarah, were coming over for tea.







Jacob had been Ollie's friend for a long time.  
But his other friend, Sarah, was new.

I was glad I set up the Secret Stakeout Den.  
I could sit there with my book and when they  
came out, I could see if they were the same as  
Ollie. Maybe they were all zombies too!  
"Ollie!" shouted Papa Tom. "It's time for your  
friends to go home now!"

They came out of the bedroom and I took a  
quick photo. All three had the same ripped  
clothes, spotty skin and slow, shuffling walk.  
I sniffed, hard.



Evidence

The air coming from Ollie's open door was DEFINITELY smellier than usual.

Just then, I sneezed. Achoo!

Oh no... Slowly, they all turned around and looked at me. Was it a trick of the light? Or did Ollie's eyes glow, just for a moment?





I had to tell someone. I went to find Papa Chris.

"Papa Chris? Are zombies real?" I asked.

Papa Chris looked up from his book.

"Of course not," he said. "They are only in that book of yours."

I still wasn't sure.

"Why do you ask?" said Papa Chris.

"How would you know if there was one in your family?" I asked.

Papa Chris gave me a hug.

"There are certainly no zombies in this family." He smiled at me.

"That's what you think!" I thought to myself.



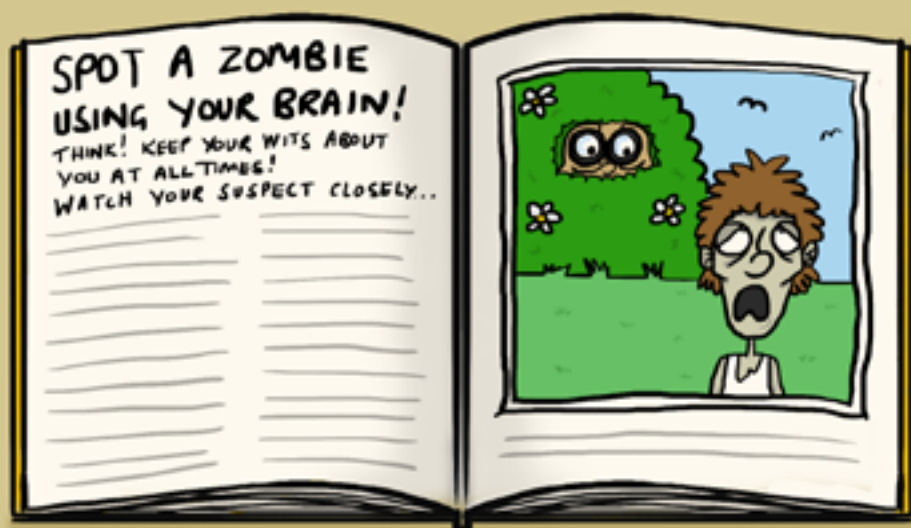
# Chapter Five

## The Bridesmaid

The next Saturday, Ollie didn't get out of bed until the afternoon, which was later than ever. Maybe he was getting worse...

I looked in my book.

I knew I had to get closer...



I tried to get closer to Ollie by sitting on the sofa near him. He was playing on his phone and didn't notice me. I moved closer... and closer...

"Urgh," he grunted at me. "Get off, Paige." But he wasn't too fast for me! I got a good sniff.



Pee-yoo! It was definitely getting worse.

At dinner that night, I read the next chapter of 'How to Spot a Zombie'. I took a look over at Ollie's plate. He had eaten most of his burger, but had taken the pickles out. He wasn't eating any vegetables!



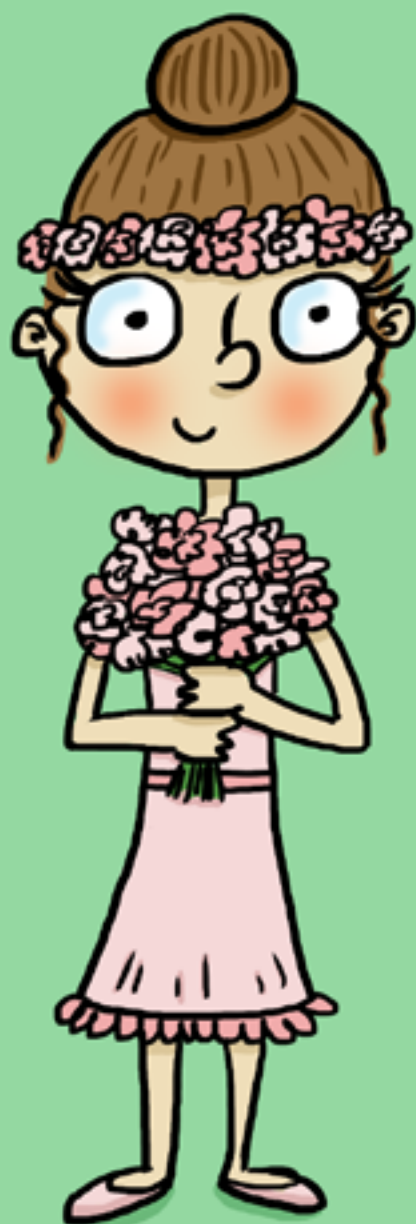


“Are you excited about Auntie Pippa’s wedding this weekend?” asked Papa Tom.

For a moment, I forgot all about Ollie being a zombie. I was VERY excited for Auntie Pippa’s wedding for one BIG reason. I was going to be a bridesmaid! I had a very special pink dress to wear, and flowers to carry.

Being a bridesmaid was very important. I had to help look after the bride! It was a very special job. But wait a minute! What if Ollie really was a zombie? A zombie at a wedding could cause all sorts of problems...

I couldn’t let this happen! It was my job as a bridesmaid to protect Auntie Pippa’s wedding from zombies. Even if the zombie WAS my brother Ollie.



I needed a plan. I turned the pages of my book.

It was time to get to work...



# Chapter Six

## The Wedding

The wedding day was bright and sunny. I needed to be ready. The book had a list of all the things I would need to take Ollie down and save the wedding.



## YOU WILL NEED:

1

### A weapon

Something hard.  
Hit the zombie  
in the head  
ONLY IF YOU  
HAVE TO.



2

### A disguise

We suggest a  
bush if you  
need to hide.

3

### Running shoes

You never know when you might need to run!



4

### Bait

We suggest meat. Zombies go crazy when they are hungry.



Papa Chris said maybe I didn't need to carry the book all day. I was almost at the end, so I said I would leave it in the car.

The last chapter was called 'How to Spot a Secret Zombie'.

It said I must keep an eye on him at all times. "Ollie!" shouted Papa Chris. "Time to go!" Ollie came down the stairs. But wait! What was this? Ollie looked like his old self again! He had had a haircut and was not wearing his hat. I could see his eyes again!







He was even wearing a suit, just like Papa Tom and Papa Chris.

Ollie didn't look like a zombie at all...

Sitting in the back of the car on the way to the wedding, I took a good sniff. I couldn't smell anything bad at all. Ollie smelled of spices and soap.

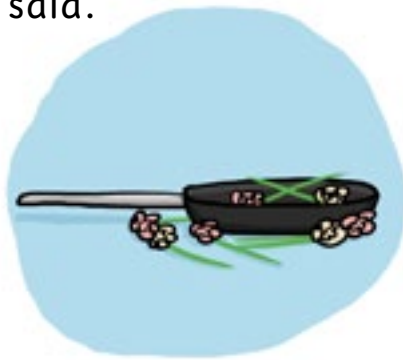
"You kids look great," said Papa Tom.

"You're growing up so fast," said Papa Chris.

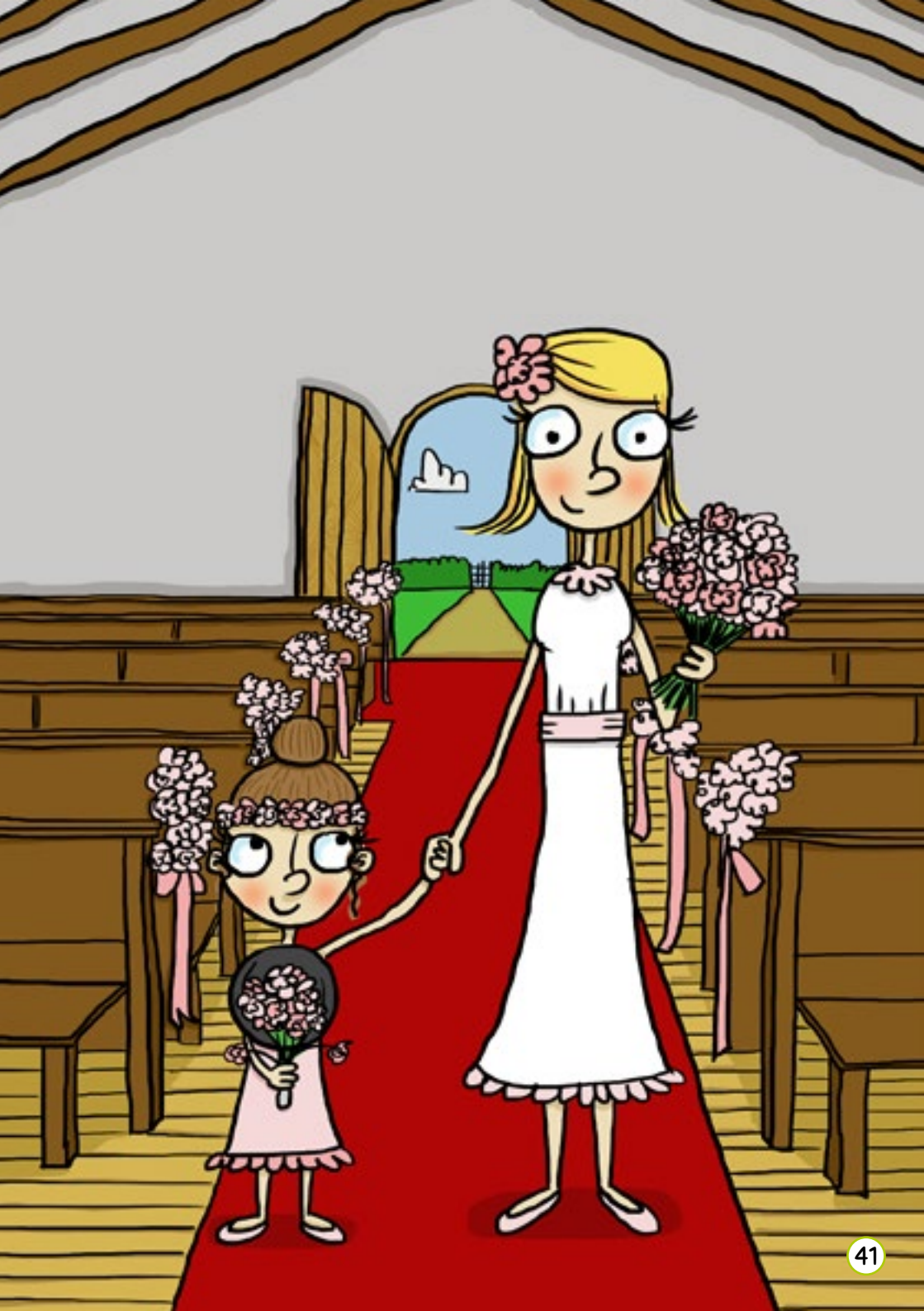
"You look nice, Paige," said Ollie.

Wait. HE TALKED?

"You too," I said.



I watched Ollie closely all day. He sat nicely next to Papa Tom and Papa Chris while I walked with Auntie Pippa. The frying pan fell out when we were about halfway, but I hid it in my flowers. I don't think anyone noticed.



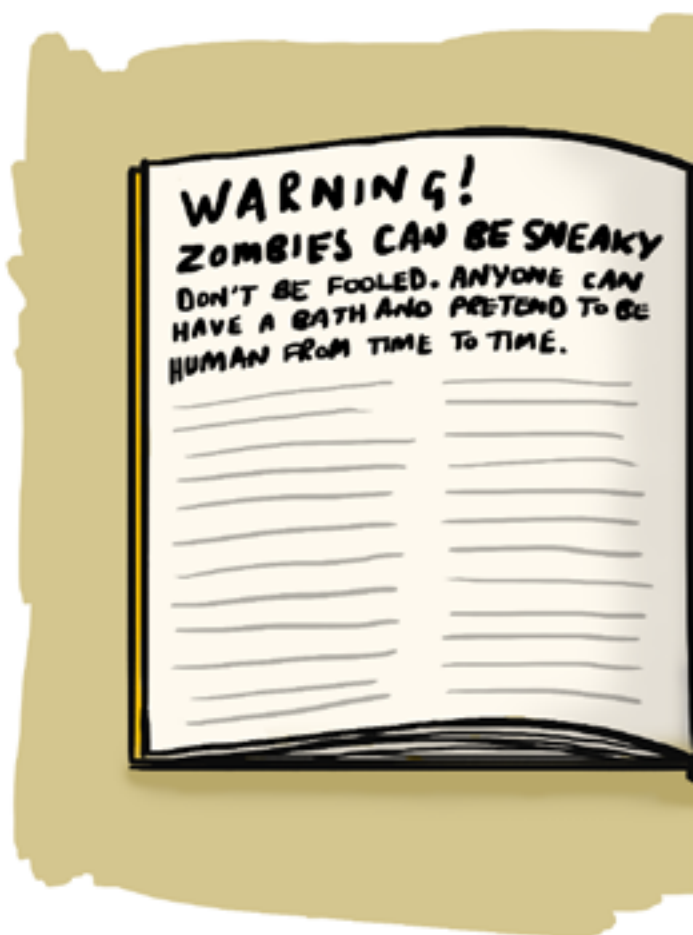
Ollie was lovely all day. He even danced! I watched the dancing with Papa Tom. He saw me looking at Ollie.

"Your brother has changed, lately, hasn't he?" Papa Tom said.

I nodded.

"He's turning into a man," said Papa Tom. A man. Not a zombie. Maybe my brother was just growing up?

Could I have been wrong? Maybe Ollie was not a zombie after all. Could he have changed





so much just because he was growing up?

I hugged Papa Tom tightly.

"Maybe," I said. "But he could also be a zombie."

Papa Tom laughed.

"Teenagers and zombies are similar," he said.

When we got to the car at the end of the night, the book was waiting for me on my seat. It was open at the last page.

I looked at Ollie, who was about to get into the car.

There was one more thing I could try. Just to be sure. I slipped a sausage from my pocket.  
"Hey, Ollie? Want a sausage?"





# My Brother is a Zombie!

1. What is Ollie's full name?
2. What does Ollie like to wear?
  - (a) Dark sunglasses
  - (b) A woolly hat
  - (c) A long scarf
3. Why did Papa Chris help Paige look on the internet?
4. What did Paige hide in her flowers?
5. Do you think Paige is convinced that Ollie is a zombie?  
How do you think she feels about him growing up?



## An Introduction to BookLife Readers...

Our Readers have been specifically created in line with the London Institute of Education's approach to book banding and are phonetically decodable and ordered to support each phase of the Letters and Sounds document.

Each book has been created to provide the best possible reading and learning experience. Our aim is to share our love of books with children, providing both emerging readers and prolific page-turners with beautiful books that are guaranteed to provoke interest and learning, regardless of ability.

**BOOK BAND GRADED** using the Institute of Education's approach to levelling.

**PHONETICALLY DECODABLE** supporting each phase of Letters and Sounds.

**EXERCISES AND QUESTIONS** to offer reinforcement and to ascertain comprehension.

**BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED** to inspire and provoke engagement, providing a variety of styles for the reader to enjoy whilst reading through the series.

### AUTHOR INSIGHT: **KIRSTY HOLMES**

Kirsty Holmes, holder of a BA, PGCE, and an MA, was born in Norfolk, England. She has written over 60 books for BookLife Publishing, and her stories are full of imagination, creativity and fun.

This book focuses on developing independence, fluency and comprehension. It is a lime level 11 book band.





# My Brother is a Zombie!

Paige's older brother Ollie used to be fun. But since he became a teenager, things have changed. Papa Tom thinks Ollie is just 'becoming a man' but Paige knows better. Armed with her trusty library book, a frying pan and some sausages, she sets out to discover the truth – but will she save Auntie Pippa's wedding? And will her dads believe her in time?

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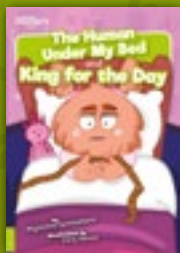
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