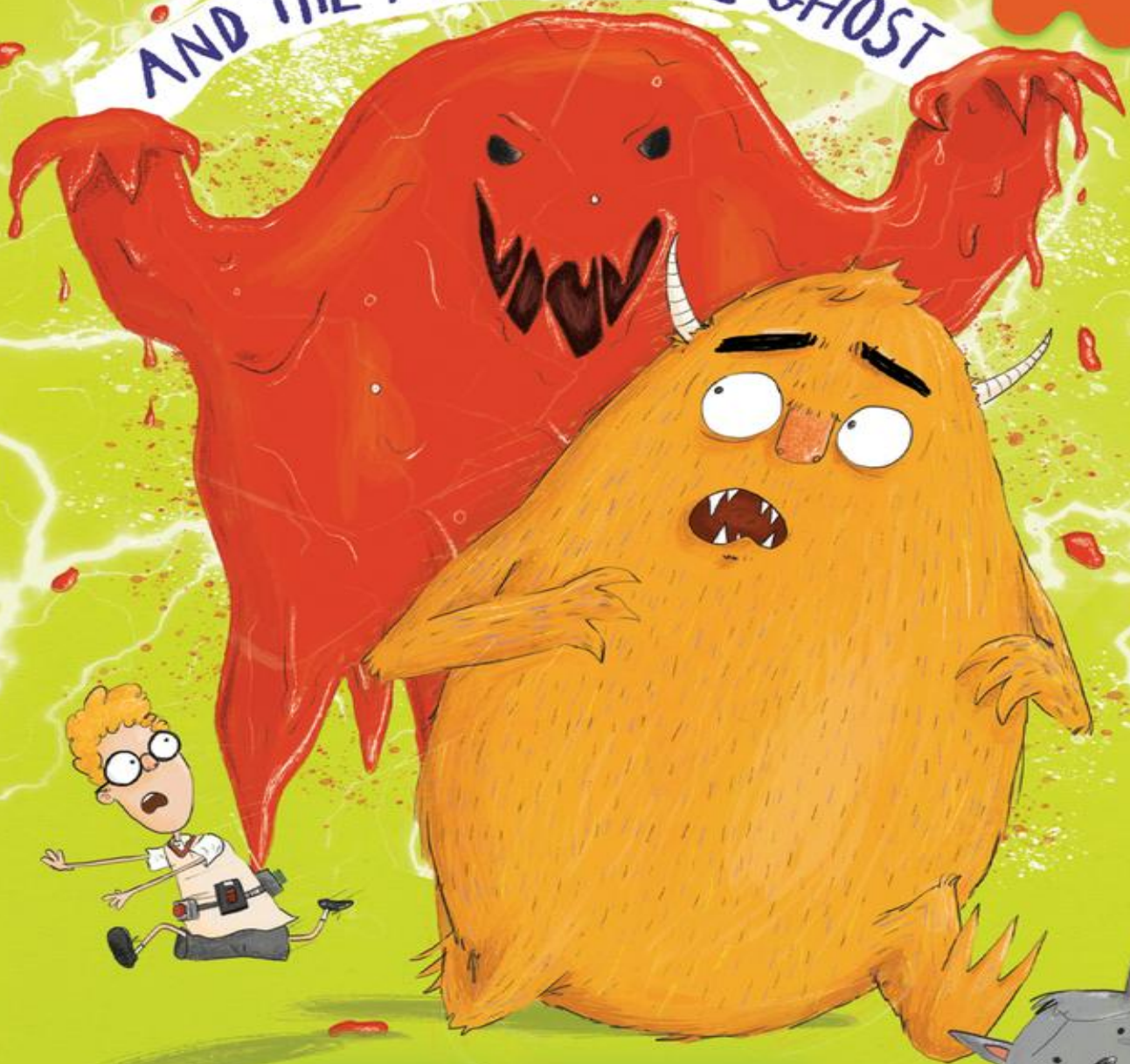


MONSTER MAX

AND THE MARMALADE GHOST

WARNING:
this book may
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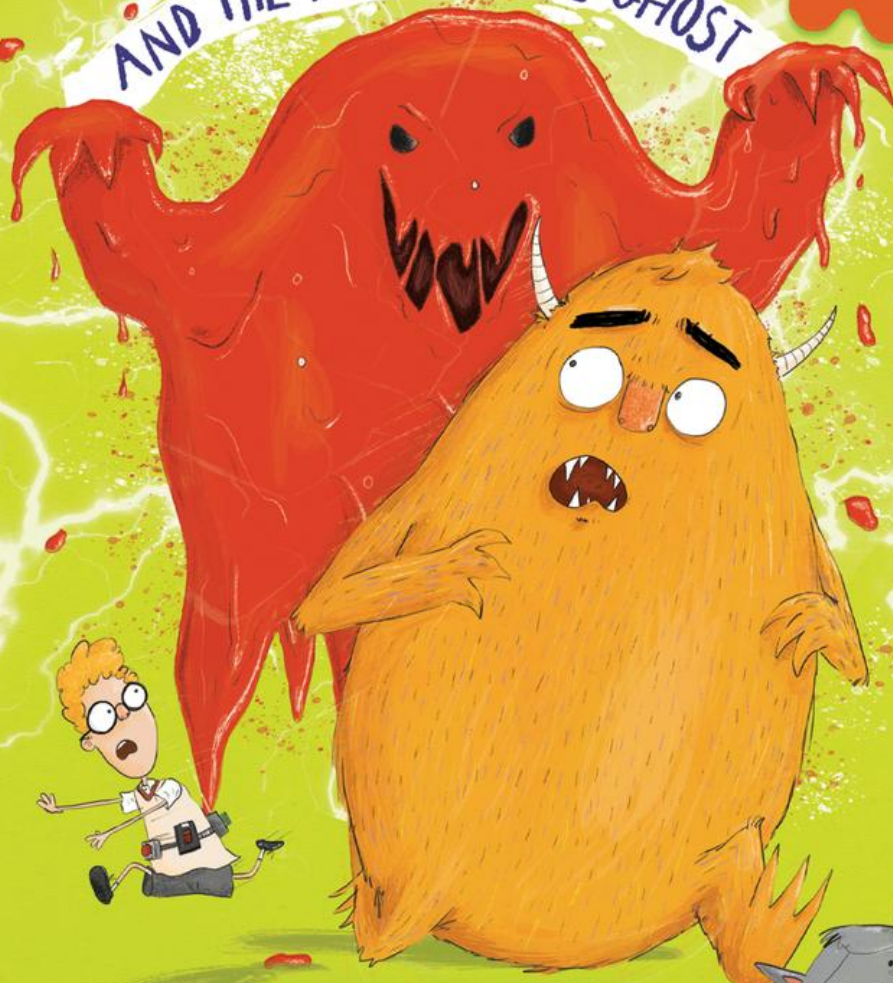
ROBIN BENNETT
ILLUSTRATED BY **TOM TINN-DISBURY**



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Dedication

To anyone who loves marmalade - including
Paddington
RB

For Zach, my very own Monster Max
T T-D



ALL ABOUT MAX



Max is a very special boy: he can turn himself into a scary monster just by **BURPING**. And he can turn himself back again by **SNEEZING**.

This is because he comes from a land called Krit. Perched on the top of a very pointy mountain, it's the smallest, most hidden country in the world. Also, in Krit, being able to change into a monster, wolf, bear or bat isn't considered unusual at all. For example, Max's mum comes from Krit and she can turn into a wolf.

Sometimes, Max burps by mistake, which can be a nasty surprise if you are standing next to him in the supermarket. And flowers make Max sneeze, so he often finds himself far from home in just his pants.

These days, he's trying to be a better monster ... with mixed results.

He's even got a logo:





CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE

DEDICATION

ALL ABOUT MAX

- 1 HELICOPTER STRIKE ... AT NIGHT
- 2 THE TOOT BALDEN DAY CENTRE FOR OLD (AND NOT SO OLD) PEOPLE
- 3 PHANTOM POOS
- 4 THINGS JUST KEEP GETTING WEIRDER
- 5 BATTLE WITH GHOSTS
- 6 DON'T CELEBRATE TOO SOON
- 7 THE MARMALADE GHOST
- 8 BAD
- 9 LIBRARY
- 10 ALL WIGHT NOW
- 11 FIGHT BACK
- 12 SHOWTIME
- 13 LUCKY
- 14 FANGHORN GETS REALLY ANGRY

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1

HELICOPTER STRIKE ... AT NIGHT

Max and his (joint) best friend Peregrine were at Max's house playing MONSTER MAX AND THE MIGHTY PEREGRINE version I.2.

The monitor showed a cold night in dark mountains far, far away from home and the boys were on their deadliest rescue mission yet: Max's parents and his cat, Frankenstein, had been captured and taken to Krit by Fanghorn and his evil Red Eye wolves!

The game had VR and voice control, so it felt completely real. A bit too real, actually...

The boys looked out of their rescue helicopter as it screeched across the starry sky. Then they looked at each other.

'Shouldn't the turny thing on top be going around?' asked Max.

'If you mean the rotor blades? Then, "yes" would be the answer to that question,' said Peregrine. 'Definitely.'

'And should the skinny bit at the back be on fire?'

'No. Most certainly not.'

'Well, I don't think much of your helicopter building,' said Max, as both boys peered down at the dark and very scary forest they were about to crash into. 'I thought you were meant to be a Genius Inventor and All-Round Smarty Pants.'

'I am,' said Peregrine huffily (as huffily as someone who is just about to be squished into the side of a tree

can sound). 'But most helicopters aren't designed to have angry Rock Giants throw boulders at them. I can't think of everything.'

'I suppose you'd like me to burp,' said Max.

'That would be useful,' said Peregrine.

'Well, Ohhhh Kayyy,' said Max, making it sound like he was doing Peregrine a massive favour.

So he burped...

There was a flash of light and the VR goggles showed Max the boy double in size and grow several very large teeth and a lot of extra hair, just as he could in real life.

'Roar!' said Max the monster. 'Grot feels great,' he continued through a mouthful of long, pointy teeth. 'At least one of us knows grot he's doing ... um, so grot next?'

Peregrine sighed.

'We jump out of this thing,' he replied, 'before we die horribly.'

'Gro Kay!' said Monster Max, grinning from horn to horn ... and they jumped.

Monster Max landed with a tremendous THUMP, making the ground shake, sending up huge clouds of snow. The Hero Jump, he liked to think of it. Then he looked up, scanning the night sky for any sign of Peregrine.

'Aaaaarrrrggghhh!' said Peregrine, as he fell out of the swirling black clouds.

'Grotcha!' said Max, catching Peregrine easily. Unfortunately, claws don't work very well on wet rocks and his long, spiky talons, which he was using to grip the shiny, smooth ground, started to slip.

This would've been fine had it not been for the cliff – the great big cliff, right in front of them.

'Weeee!' said Monster Max.

'I don't think so,' muttered Peregrine, as two large grabbers sprang out of his backpack and gripped onto a handy tree.

They stopped falling, but a deep roar (that wasn't Max) echoed from the craggy rocks above their heads. A very large tree flew into the air.

'The Rock Giants are still chucking things at us!' shouted Peregrine as the tree hurtled towards them, its roots and branches shaking in the moonlight.