

The
EXPLODING
Life
of
Scarlett
Fife



MAZ EVANS

ILLUSTRATED BY CHRIS JEVONS



Scarlett



Maisie



Polly



Ms Pitt-Bull



Aunty Amara Aunty Rosa



William U and his Mum



Emmeline

Jakub



Gran



Rita



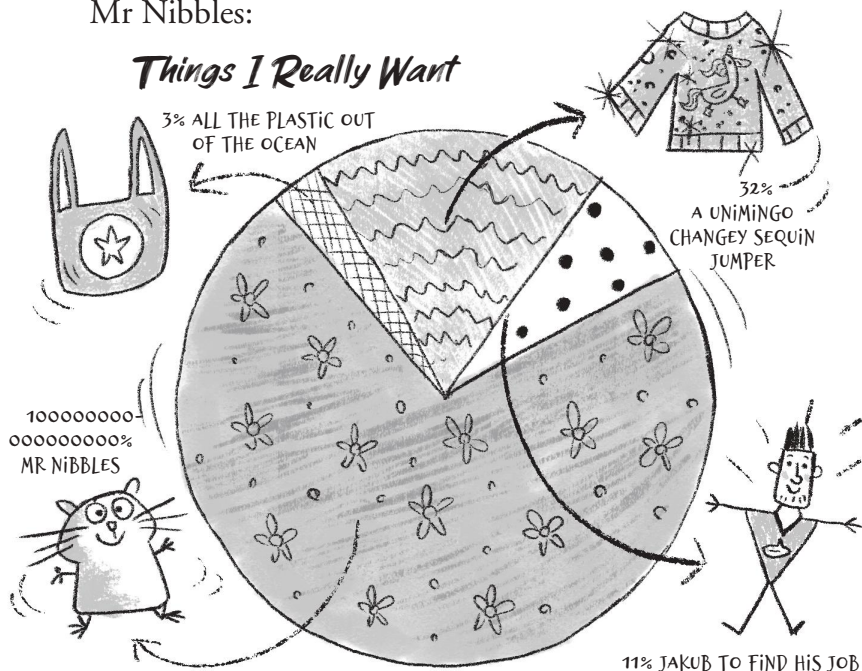
Bruce

CHAPTER 1

I AM SO ANGRY I THINK MY BUM MIGHT FALL OFF!!!!

Mr Nibbles was mine!!! Mine!!! Not stupid William U's!!!! Mine!!!!

Here is a pie chart that proves how much I want Mr Nibbles:

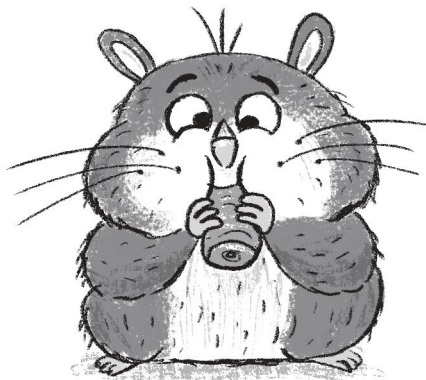


And I don't even care that this pie chart doesn't actually add up to a hundred per cent like pie charts actually should. (*Which I'd normally really care about, by the way, because that's how pie charts work and that's why I'm on The Purple Table in Maths, which we all know is the best one, but we have to pretend that all the Maths tables are the same, even though The Green Table still haven't learned their three times table and probably think a pie chart is a menu in a café.*) THAT'S how much I WANT MR NIBBLES!!

(*By the way, I really want Mr Nibbles.*)

Let me explain something:

Mr Nibbles is Rainbow Class's pet hamster and



everyone at St Lidwina's Primary School loves him (*except for Vashti because she says it's important to be an individual, which is why she never brushes her hair*).



Every week, everyone really wants to get the most Positivity Points so they can be Star of the Week and look after Mr Nibbles for the weekend.

I REALLY wanted Mr Nibbles to come home with me this weekend, so I have been **EXTRA SUPER MEGA GOOD**.

To get the most Positivity Points, I have:



★ Sharpened all the pencils at playtime (*even though Darcy had the new UniMingo hairbrush and she said it was my turn to try it at playtime after Milly and Roshin, but only if Milly didn't have nits any more like she did at Parva's hair-braiding party and we all got them and school had to send A Letter Home*).

★ Said thank you *all* the time (*even when I didn't mean it, like when the dinner ladies put broccoli on my plate, because the only place broccoli should EVER be put is in vegetable prison*).

★ Learned my eight times tables backwards



(although I wanted to do that because Maths is my favourite and I'm really good at it, which is why I'm on The Purple Table).

★ Helped to clean up the dinner hall after lunchtime *(even though it looked like the bottom of the monkey enclosure at a wildlife park after the monkeys had a party and then had to leave calmly and quietly for a fire alarm).*

This was what the top of the Positivity Chart looked like when I got to school this morning:

SCARLETT: 29

MATTHEW: 27

MAISIE: 25

WILLIAM U: 24

VASHTI: 23



(I was a bit worried when Vashti got four Positivity



Points for actually brushing her hair for the school photo, but she broke Darcy's UniMingo hairbrush doing it, so the points came right back off again.)

Mr Nibbles was mine. I was all ready for him and even made a special Mr Nibbles area in my bedroom with:

★ A bed.

★ A bath.

★ An obstacle course (*I don't want him to get bored*).

★ A book (*in case he wakes up in the night with bad dreams and can't sleep*).

★ A night light (*I don't want him to be scared and wake up with bad dreams*).

★ A teddy (*which I took out because it was bigger than him and I thought it might give him bad dreams despite the night light and then he might not like the book to get back to sleep*).

I was **SUPER EXCITED** because I've never



had Mr Nibbles before ...

And then this afternoon I went to the Positivity Chart to see:

WILLIAM U: 32

SCARLETT: 29

MATTHEW: 27

VASHTI: 26 (*She borrowed someone else's brush for the school photo.*)

MAISIE: 25



... and William U
standing smugly next to
Mr Nibbles's cage.

'WHAT?????!!!!'

I shouted. **'EIGHT
POSITIVITY POINTS?
HOW DID YOU
GET EIGHT**

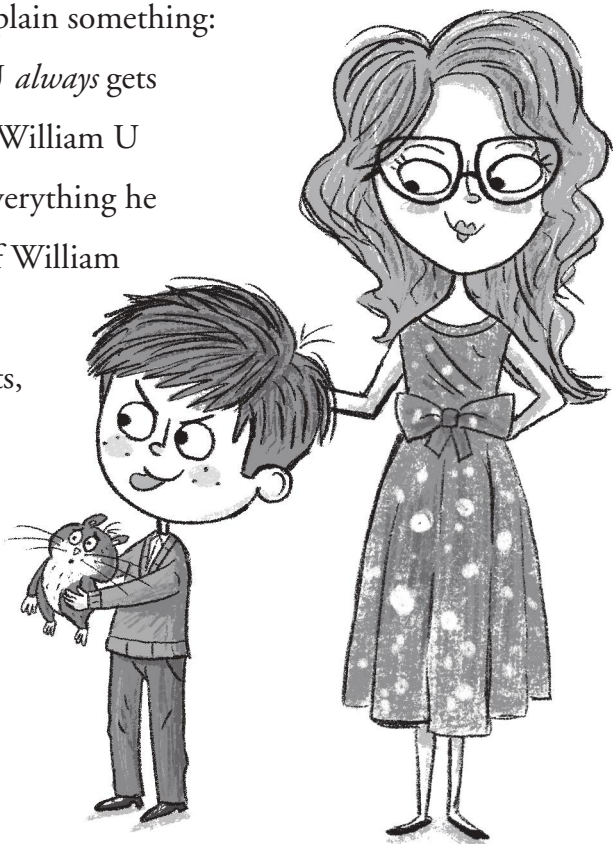
POSITIVITY POINTS? When the dinner ladies accidentally set the fish fingers on fire, the firefighters who saved the school didn't get **EIGHT POSITIVITY POINTS!** How did you ...?'

But then I followed his smug look in the direction of Mrs Underwood. Our teaching assistant.

And also William U's mum.

Let me explain something:

William U *always* gets Mr Nibbles. William U *always* gets everything he wants. And if William U doesn't get what he wants, William U's mum *always* gets it for him.



William U *always* gets loads of Positivity Points and has *never* been on The Cloud for making bad choices, even though he should live on The Cloud because he's super mean to everyone, but especially me because:

1) I'm much better than William U at Maths and he likes to be best at everything.

2) The one time William U came to my house for a playdate, he tried to pull the head off my UniMingo slippers and I told on him and my mum told his mum and although he never gets in trouble with his mum, he's never forgiven me for telling on him.

3) William U probably can't think of a third thing because I'm better than him at Maths.

(By the way, William U isn't to be confused with William D who can name all the dinosaurs and once ate a snail, even though William D WASN'T in France and the snail WAS in his garden.)



William U's mum used to work as a lawyer with my Auntie Rosa (*which is how bogie-head William U got invited to her engagement party, so I've got to see him tonight as WELL as all day at school*). Auntie Rosa told me that William U's mum used to get upset about people not getting paid enough, and people being treated unfairly, and people's human rights not being respected.

But then William U's mum gave up being a lawyer and had William U. So now William U's mum mainly gets upset about What Upset William.

On sports day, What Upset William was Felix beating him in the running race and getting a Special Sticker. William U's mum said that William U had Competition Aversion Syndrome so he should get a Special Sticker just for taking part. *(By the way, William U's mum says William U has lots of syndromes. Some of them are so new that the doctors don't even know about them. But William U's*

mum finds them on www.MyChildCentre.Universe and that makes them true.) But then What Upset William was that he only wanted Felix's gold Special Sticker, so William U's mum said that William U had Selective Sticker Syndrome and made Felix swap with him.

A few months ago, What Upset William was our old teaching assistant, Mr Chance, threatening to put William U on The Cloud for scribbling on Maisie's poem about worms. William U's mum (*who is also a school governor and head of the PTA, by the way*) told our old head teacher that not only was William U allergic to worm poems (*William U is allergic to everything, by the way, including green vegetables, homework, sitting next to Freddie and Spanish*), but that maybe it would be a good idea if William U's mum became Rainbow Class's teaching assistant instead of Mr Chance and also would the school like the PTA to buy every class a new laptop?



So this week, What Upset William was me getting Mr Nibbles. William U's mum said he had Hamster Co-Dependency Syndrome and gave him EIGHT POSITIVITY POINTS for sharpening the pencils, which was **TOTALLY** unfair because when I sharpened the pencils, she only gave me THREE POSITIVITY POINTS.

I went to ask my teacher Miss Hugg about it, but William U's mum came over and, although I couldn't hear exactly what they were talking about, William U's mum whispered something about Miss Hugg's application to the governors for a 'celery increase'. (*Which is weird, by the way – why would anyone want more celery? It should be in the cell next to broccoli in vegetable prison.*) Then Miss Hugg went very quiet and William U got Mr Nibbles and I got some **BIG FEELINGS** about it.

Let me explain something:

I am 135 cm and weigh 26 kg. Sometimes my



feelings must be at least 136 cm and weigh over 27 kg because they just don't fit inside me: these are my **BIG FEELINGS**. They bubble up inside me and before I can do anything about them, they come out of my mouth. The angry **BIG FEELINGS** get me in quite a lot of trouble, but I really can't help it. I have especially **BIG FEELINGS** about William U getting Mr Nibbles when it was my turn.

It's now playtime and I am SUPER ANGRY and I can feel the bubbles of angry in my tummy. But Maisie (*who, by the way, is my best forever friend in the whole wide world*) is telling me to 'Just Calm Down'. Telling someone to 'Just Calm Down' when they are angry is like telling someone to 'just hold it in' when they really need a wee. It's going to come out no matter what anyone says (*but at least with angry feelings you don't have to go home with your tights in a Special Bag like Milly did after the Year 2 Christmas disco*).



‘Scarlett,’ Maisie says calmly, ‘you need to get some perspective.’

Maisie talks a lot about perspective, which she says is about looking differently at something. Maisie always has a different perspective. Maybe it’s because she doesn’t have a mum and dad and she’s grown up with lots of foster families. Or maybe it’s because she wears red glasses.

‘You just have to accept it,’ Maisie says. ‘William U is Star of the Week. It’s *a feta company*.’

‘What does that mean?’ I ask her.

‘It’s French for “nothing you can do about it”,’ Maisie explains (*by the way, Maisie is super good at words, even in different languages*). ‘So you didn’t get Mr Nibbles? Think of all the children who don’t have enough to eat, or don’t have a home to live in.’

So I think about all the children who don’t have enough to eat or a home to live in and now I feel really angry for them and I still don’t have

Mr Nibbles this weekend, so I kick the climbing frame, which makes me fall over and now I have a sore foot and a sore bum, those children still don't have enough to eat or homes to live in, and **I STILL DON'T HAVE MR NIBBLES**, so I'm just going to shout a bit.

'I think your perspective needs a little more work,' Maisie says quietly as I yell on the playground floor.

Maybe I need to get red glasses too.

