

TWO TERRIBLE VIKINGS

and Grunt the
Berserker



FRANCESCA SIMON

Illustrated by Steve May



About the Author

Francesca Simon is universally known for the staggeringly popular Horrid Henry series. She is also the author of Costa-shortlisted *The Monstrous Child*, which she turned into an opera with composer Gavin Higgins for the Royal Opera House, and two picture books: *Hack and Whack* and *The Goat Café*. She lives in North London with her family.

About the Illustrator

Steve May is an animation director and illustrator. Steve has illustrated books by Jeremy Strong, Philip Reeve, Harry Hill and Phil Earle, as well as the Dennis the Menace series. He lives in North London.

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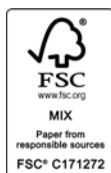
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2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

For Marta Fontanals-Simmons,
magic mezzo and the opera
queen of Niflheim.

F. S.

For Jackie, Andy and Yogi the dog
– my muse for Bitey-Bitey.

S. M.

Characters

Hack



Whack

Bitey-Bitey



Twisty Pants



Dirty Ulf



Elsa Gold-Hair



Thorkel the Stout



Muddy Butt



Grunt Iron-Skull



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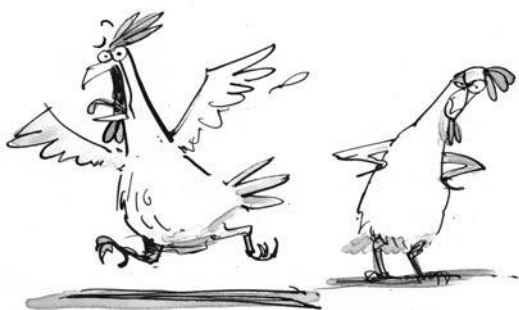
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Hack and Whack's First Day
at Viking School 49



Hack and Whack and
Grunt the Berserker 98



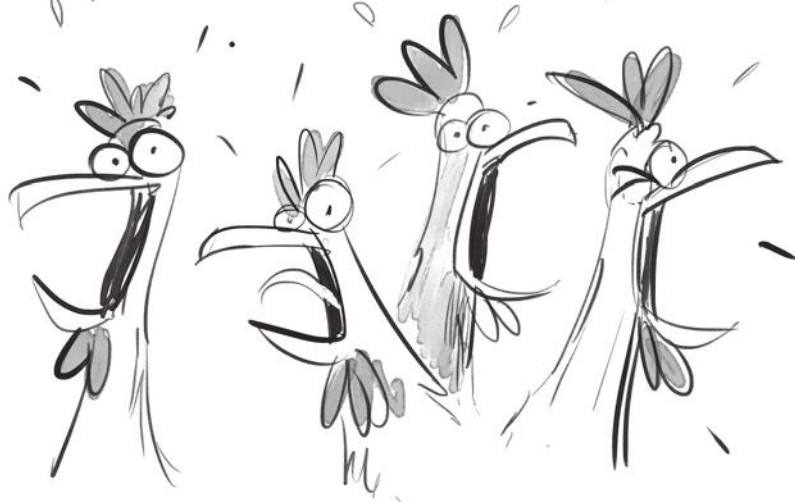
HACK GOES TO MARKET

Gaggala gaggala gu!
Gaggala gaggala gu!

Hack opened one eye.

Whack opened one eye.

GAGGALA GAGGALA GU!



Gaggala gaggala gu!

Gaggala gaggala gu!

Why were those stupid
roosters crowing? How could it
be time to get up? It was too

dark and too cold. Mum hadn't even made up the hearth fire yet.

Whack pulled the shaggy fur cover over his head.

'I need my rest,' yawned Whack. 'My bones, my aching bones,' he moaned.

'Get up, you lazy lumps!' shouted Mum. She yanked the fur off their sleeping bench. 'It's market day.'

Hack sat up, shivering.

Whack sat up, shivering.

Hack and Whack loved and hated going to the Bear Island market.

They loved seeing all the



wonderful things there.

They hated that they were never allowed to bring any of them home.

Instead they had to trudge for ages through snow and rain and ice, laden with furs or cheese. Then, when they **finally** got to the market, they had to tag along while their mother traded the cheese for fishing hooks, or the furs for an ivory comb or an iron pan.

‘I don’t want to go,’ said Hack.
‘It’s boring.’

‘Me neither,’ said Whack. ‘I’m
too tired.’

‘You can go to the market or
you can stay here and clean dirt
and grease from the sheep’s
wool,’ said Mum. ‘And soak and
scrape the sheepskins. **And**
wash the clothes and sweep—’

‘All right, I’ll go,’ said Hack.

‘I’m staying,’ said Whack. He
huddled back under the fur cover.

He'd find some way of avoiding all those chores, even if he had to hide in the storeroom all day.

‘I’m sending you on your own today, Hack,’ said Mum. ‘I’m too busy here. But you know what to do. You trade the cheeses for two soapstone bowls and some salt, if you can find some. Oh, and while you’re at it, take Pecky-Pecky and see if you can trade her for some walrus meat.’



Plod all the way to the market carrying Pecky-Pecky, the world's meanest chicken?

'No way,' said Hack. 'She'll eat me alive before I'm halfway there. No one's ever going to buy that evil bird.'

Pecky-Pecky was too tough to eat, and too fierce to get eggs from. Even the family's wolf cub, Bitey-Bitey, was scared of her. Pecky-Pecky was one bad bird.

Mum sighed. 'All right,' she

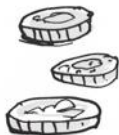


said. 'Heave your bones and go.
I've packed the cheeses for you.
And what's the golden rule?'

'If you can, RAID! If you can't,
TRADE!' yelled Hack.

Mum beamed. ‘And no dawdling,’ she added. ‘Whack!’ she shouted, poking the snoozing Viking. ‘Get up before the trolls take you.’

‘Nooooooooooooooooo,’ groaned Whack.



Hack and Bitey-Bitey set off along the coastal sheep track towards the market, crunching

through tufts of grassy moss flecked with frost. Icy mountains loomed across the water. All too soon, winter was coming.

Hack spotted Dirty Ulf and Twisty Pants walking ahead and ran to catch up, dodging around some wandering sheep. Twisty Pants was leading a skinny cow. Dirty Ulf was covered in even more soot and dirt than usual, and she smelled of burnt cloth.

‘What happened to you?’ said

Hack breathlessly.

‘Fire Hazard has done it again,’ said Dirty Ulf. ‘He set fire to the smithy. Why he doesn’t try to burn down the bathhouse I’ll never know.’

