

MICHAEL ROSEN'S

NICE!

poems

Featuring
"HOT FOOD" &
"NO BREATHING
IN CLASS"



Illustrated by Hannah Robinson



First published 1988 by André Deutsch Ltd as *The Hypnotiser*

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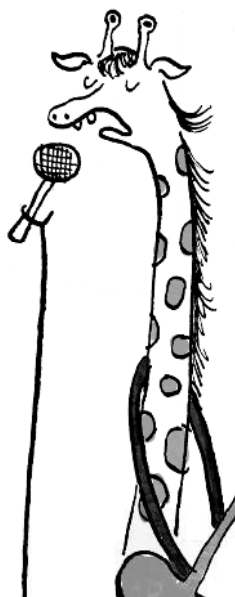
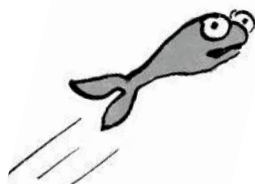
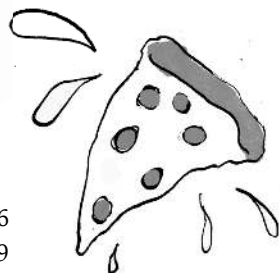


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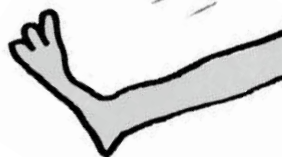


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INTRODUCTION

In 1988, I published a book of poems and jokes called *The Hypnotiser*. It went through various editions, but in the end it went out of print. That's a way of saying that you couldn't get a new copy of it.

So what happened next was that my son Joe Rosen filmed me performing most of the poems from *The Hypnotiser* and put them on YouTube. I had no idea what was going to happen next, but I soon found out. First of all, people started watching the videos. Then some young people (mostly teenage boys) started having fun with the videos, chopping them up and making mash-ups. The most famous of these was part of my poem "Hot Food", especially the bit where I say "Nice!" Next thing I heard from Joe was that I had become a meme! All over the world, people were watching that little clip of me saying "Nice!", sometimes writing a caption on it, because they think I'm saying "Noice!" In China, it became so famous they invented a name for me: "NICE grandpa" – or, in Mandarin, "Nice Yé-Yé".

All this has turned out to be great fun. People see me in the street or on stations and ask me to say "Nice!" And it all started out as a poem in a book that first appeared in 1988.

Of course, there were lots of other poems in that book, and though it was nice to have videos of them, people complained to me that they couldn't get a new copy of the book they all came from.

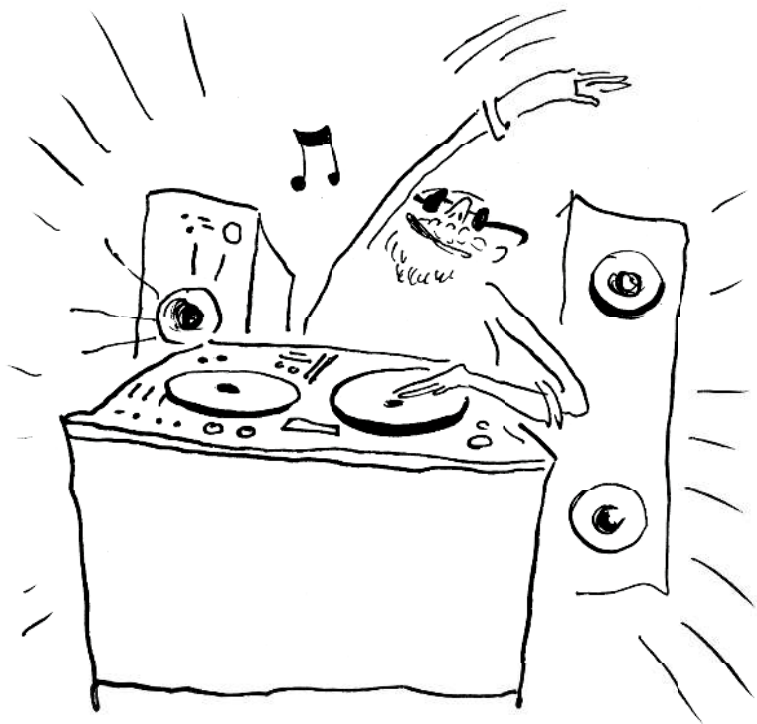
That's why we've made this new edition. You may recognise some other poems from my videos. Or it may be the first time you've ever seen these poems.

Why not have some fun performing them? Make videos of your versions, perhaps? Or you could make up your own poems, inspired by mine. Find a poem in the book and say to yourself, "I could write a poem like that," and just do it!

I've got more tips for writing poems in my book *What Is Poetry?*, also published by Walker Books.

I hope you have loads of fun reading, performing and writing poems.

Michael Rosen
April 2026



HORRIBLE

I was starving.
All I had for breakfast was
one apple and fifteen raisins.
It was half past twelve
and I had to get to Hemel Hempstead.
So I bought a pizza
and I ran and ran
and jumped on my train.

As we pulled out of Euston Station
I began to eat.
Trouble was:
my pizza was in a paper bag –
one
sloppy
cheesey
pizza
with the melting cheese and tomato
stuck
to the bag.

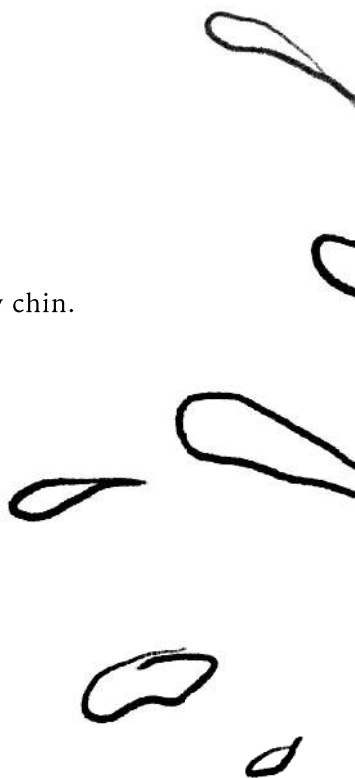
So I peeled the paper off my pizza
but it was all slippery and sticky
and the pizza came off in
soggy lumps
that I scooped together
and pushed into my mouth
blob
by
blob.

But there were dollops of pizza
hiding in the corner of the bag,

so I was holding the bag up to my face,
tipping it into my mouth.
I was drinking pizza
and my fingers were running with
dribbles of tomato
and slops of spicy cheese
all over my knuckles.

So there I was licking at my skin
but my fingers were trailing all over my chin.
So off went my tongue round my face
hunting for drips of pizza
but a bit of paper bag
had got into my mouth
so I was in there trying to get it out
with the finger I was licking.
It was diving into the
slobber
in my mouth
and I was snuffling with my nose
like I was
breathing in
pizza.

It was then
I noticed
the woman opposite.
She was watching me.
She looked like
she had never seen anything
quite
so
horrible
in all her life.





COOL GUY AND FOOL GUY

Cool guy
met
fool guy
going down the street.

Said
cool guy
to
fool guy
who ya gonna meet?

Said
fool guy
to cool guy
I don't want no meat.

Said
cool guy
to
fool guy
I mean meet not meat.

LAURA SINGING

When Laura sings songs
she stands in front of you
she opens her mouth really wide
she opens her eyes really wide
she opens her arms really wide
she takes in huge breaths
and out comes this huge sing-song sound
that goes on and on and on
in great waves
with hundreds of different words and noises:

HAPPY HAPPY
HAPPY BIRTHDAY CAKE
HAPPY BIRTHDAY CAKE
THE CAKE
THE CAKE
THE DOOR
AND THE DOOR
AND THE DOOR IS OPEN
MERRY MERRY MARY
MERRY MARY MERRY
MERRY MERRY
DA DEE DEE
DUBBA DEE DEE
NAOMI GO TO SCHOOL
YES
OH YES
MY PYJAMAS GO TO SCHOOL
PYJAMAS GO TO SCHOOL
MERRY MERRY MARY
THE DOLLY IS ON THE WATER
THE BOOK IS ON THE WATER

THE PAPER IS ON THE WATER
ON THE WATER
THE WATER
ON THE WATER
I WENT ON THE PHONE
I CALLED THE PHONE
I WENT IN THE TAR-TAR
I WENT IN THE BOO BOO
I WENT IN ANOTHER BOO
SHOP SHOPPING
SHOP SHOPPING
SHOP SHOPPING
I MAKE A PIZZA
THE PIZZA
MUCKY PIZZA
MUCKY PIZZA
PIZZA IN THE BATHROOM
I EAT THE BATHROOM
I EAT THE DOOR
I EAT THE BATH...
I tired now
I not sing any more,
she says.
And we have to go,
hooray hooray lovely singing
and clap our hands
otherwise she will get angry with us.

MY PROJECT: TRANSPORT

Kinds of Transport

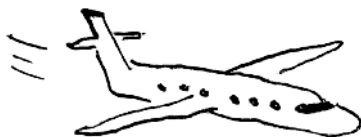
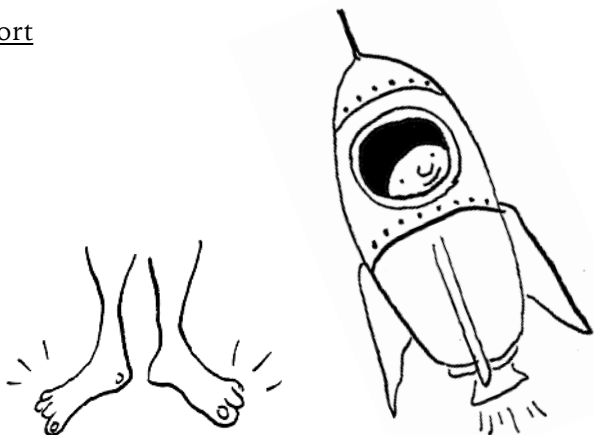
The Spaceship

The Plane

The Bicycle

The Foot

The Nose



HOT FOOD

We sit down to eat
and the potato's a bit hot
so I only put a little bit on my fork and I blow –
whooph whooph –
until it's cool,
just cool,
then into the mouth:
nice!

And my brother,
he's doing the same –
whooph whooph –
until it's cool,
just cool,
then into the mouth:
nice!

There's my mum,
she's doing the same –
whooph whooph –
until it's cool,
just cool,
then into the mouth:
nice!

But my dad.
My dad.
What does he do?
He stuffs a great big chunk of potato
into his mouth.

Then
that really does it.
His eyes pop out
he flaps his hands
he blows, he puffs, he yells,
he bobs his head up and down
he spits bits of potato
all over his plate
and he turns to us and he says,
“Watch out, everybody –
the potato’s very hot.”

