

Young times

A hairy moment for Max

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ILLUSTRATION BY ROBIN CURTIS

Max frowned at his little sister. Lucy was reading. "This storwee is bwilliant," she lisped happily. "Huh." "The people are so weal you feel they're weally there," she cooed. "Huh," Max repeated. "Stories are made-up stuff. You're talking rubbish." "It feels weal," Lucy insisted. "Anyway, I'm going next door to play with Webecca." Max sighed, picked up the book and flicked through the pages. He stopped at a picture of a spectacularly hairy monster waving a mighty club. He was definitely looking for lunch, probably human. "You're a mess," Max muttered to himself. "It's not my fault," rasped the monster, leaning over the back of the sofa and breathing down Max's

neck. "Just got unruly hair, that's all." Max boggled. Yes, the monster was really there, gazing down at the picture of himself. "There's a good bit on the next page," the monster growled. "I eat a prince." Max turned over. The picture monster had a pair of wriggly legs sticking out from his monster-mouth. Max grinned with delight and wondered what happened next. He carried on reading and turning the pages, enthralled. As he neared the end Max worried that the monster would get killed by a brave prince,

but instead the monster married his reading teacher, gave up eating royalty and joined the local library. Max was a bit disappointed by the ending but he loved the book. "There are loads more," grunted the monster. "You just have to find them. Is that your sister coming back?" "Yep. She's a pain." "Can I eat her?" Max almost said yes, but he didn't think his parents would approve. "I'd better go then," muttered the monster, and vanished as silently as he'd appeared.

Max smiled. What a great story! He wished he could be a monster himself. On the other hand he wasn't too sure about eating princesses. They hadn't even been cooked. Perhaps he could have a barbecue to hand? Max watched Lucy come back into the room. No, she was way too skinny. Maybe when she was older she'd fatten up. Max sighed and picked up another book. ● *Jeremy Strong is one of hundreds of writers involved in our Books For Schools campaign. His new book, The Battle For Christmas, is out now*

daily dingbat

Which word or phrase is this? Say what you see.



Friday's answer Loop the loop

puzzle of the day

picture ladder

Write the names of the pictures into the numbered rows of the grid, and the yellow squares will reveal a lucky charm.



1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

Friday's answers 1. Drizzle 2. Downpour 3. Deluge 4. Shower 5. Cloudburst

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