

CHAPTER 1

The first time I saw Squidge Dibley, his face was squashed against the classroom window.



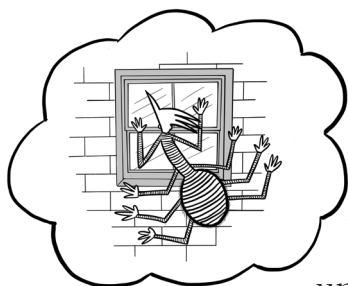
It's a third-storey window.

Squidge popped up like a piece of toast from a toaster, as if this was a *totally normal thing* to happen on a random Wednesday morning at Craglands South Primary School.

He blinked at me. I blinked back at him. Suddenly I understood what our class fish, Bubble O’Gill, must feel like when we stare into his fish bowl.



In that moment, I had a preview of the full-scale weirdness that was about to come. I’m talking **EPIC, EXPLOSIVE, INEXPLICABLE WEIRDNESS** that would change our lives forever.



I didn’t know it was Squidge Dibley then. All I knew was that it was impossible for **anyone’s** head to be at that window unless they were standing on a ladder, or hanging from a helicopter, or were some sort of half-spider creature.

Squidge pressed his face against the glass and smiled at me, like it was a perfectly normal thing for someone to peer into a third-storey window.

In the split-second before everyone spun around to see what the commotion was, Squidge Dibley was gone.

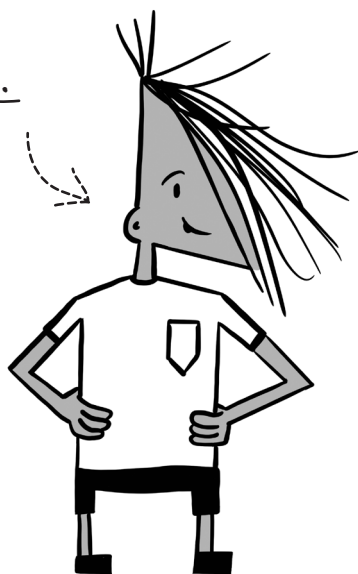
Nobody had seen him except me.

This was just the beginning.

Actually, it was the beginning of the end of all the stuff that happened, so I need to go back to the beginning of the beginning, before the stuff that happened at the end happened.

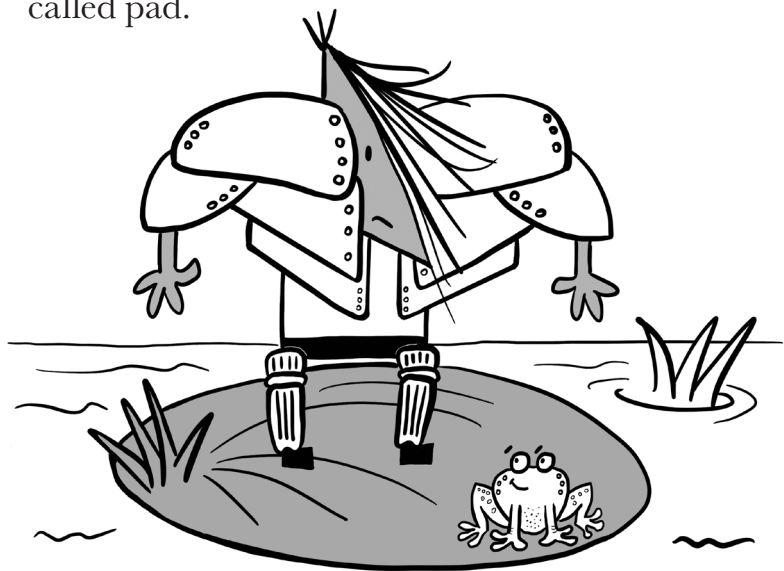
Here goes.

This is me.



My name is Padman.

People call me **Pad** for short, which is annoying, because there are so many **not awesome** things called pad.



Sometimes people call me **PandaMan** to be funny, but it's not funny at all. It just sounds like a lazy, overweight superhero.



Mum says that Padman is a totally normal name in Sri Lanka and that if you walk down any street there, you'll bump into a Padman soon enough.



Anyway, that's my name and I had to say it because a really good teacher told me that a narrator – that's **ME** – should tell everyone something about themselves so the person reading – that's **YOU** – knows who's telling the story.

I wish I had a better name, or maybe a cool nickname, but none of this matters, because this story is not about me. It's about how **Squidge Dibley** peered in the window and destroyed the school.

That's him again. 



So, now that that's out of the way, here's how everything began, before the beginning.

CHAPTER 2

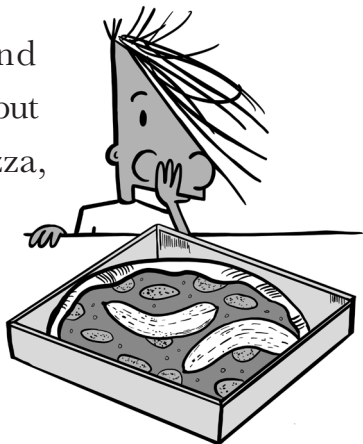


Our class – 6PU – is pretty bad. We don't *mean* to be bad. Individually, we're all pretty good kids. But sometimes when a school puts a particular combination of kids together in the same class, the mixture just doesn't work.

It's like ice cream and chicken drumsticks. On their own, perfectly fine. But mixed together, a total disaster.

Or like peperoni and banana. Fine on their own, but put them together on a pizza, and things get disgusting.

Our class – 6PU – is kind of like peperoni and banana pizza.



STUDENT CASE FILES

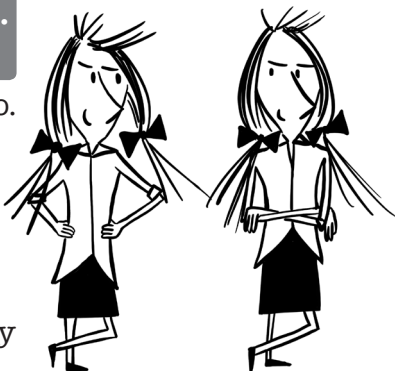
The Pritchard Twins. Ainsley and Audrey.

- Nobody knows who is who.
(Not even their parents.)

- Serial pranksters.

*See page 18

- Holders of the combined
Craglands' South Primary
record for most detentions.



Daniel Kwon-Yoon

- Seventy-three skateboards
confiscated since
kindergarten.
- 142 warnings for reckless
skateboard riding at school.
- Fourteen broken arms in six
years.

Nathan Kobeissi

- Can't stop eating paint.
- Suspended four times
for eating wet paintings
from the kindergarten
classrooms.





Shane Sloosman

- Born with adult teeth.
- Cuts his own hair due to fear of barbers.

Rebecca Peterson

- Musical genius.
- Sings her answer when asked a question.
- Suspended in Year 5 for 'inappropriate blasting of trumpet during visit by local mayor'.

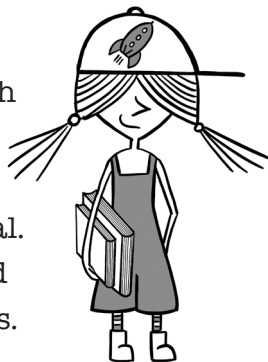


Lenny Battisto

- Curly haired since birth.
- Once got his finger stuck in Shane's nose, but denied putting it there.

Leanna Kingsley

- Space nut. Obsessed with the solar system.
- Accused Year 1 teacher of being extra-terrestrial. And Year 2 teacher. And Years 3, 4 and 5 teachers.



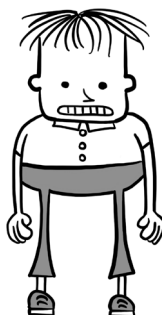


Abigail Takani

- Never studies.
- Never fails any exam.
- How is this even possible?

Rennie Grosse

- Once brought a carton of eggs into class. Turned out to be python eggs. School evacuated due to baby python outbreak.
- Obsessed with snakes. Scared of everything else.



That's not even half the class, but you get the idea of how we are the worst ever Year 6 class at Craglands South Primary.

That's why we've had four teachers already, and it's only second term.

Our first teacher was
Mr Wirthness.

Well, I say first teacher, but I guess what I really mean is first victim.

