

# The Kerfuffles



Written and Illustrated by

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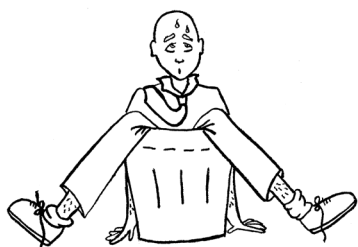
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Dedicated to my sons

Cameron & Mitchell

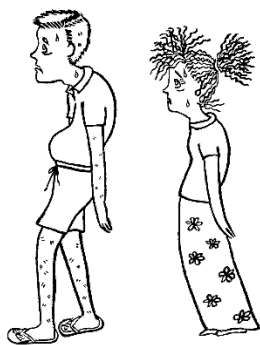


# Contents



Rise And Shine .....	7
Time To Get Up .....	15
Stinking Hot! .....	21
Breakfast At The Kerfuffles .....	37
Morning Rush .....	49
It's Missing! .....	55
The Mad House .....	63
Cheeky Muggy .....	75
Back To School .....	87
How Hideous! .....	93
The New Class .....	105
Dad's USB .....	111
Commotion In The City.....	115
Dad's Dilemma.....	127

The Bin.....	143
Mum's Dilemma .....	151
Mrs Rule's Surprise .....	161
Mr Border's Dilemma.....	169
Chaos In The Classroom .....	175
Emergency!.....	185
The Stain .....	193



# Chapter 1

## Rise And Shine

“Oh, no... not school again!”

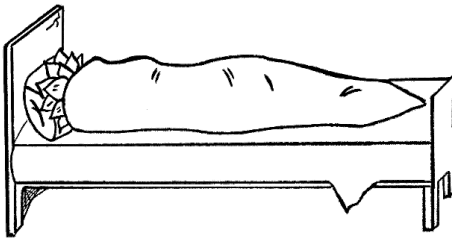
Drake groaned.



He slowly opened his eyes and squinted at his alarm clock. Everything looked blurry. He could barely even focus.

It was the day he had been dreading all Summer long. Suddenly, Drake felt ill. Sweat formed on his forehead and he felt hotter than usual. He needed some air.

Wrapped tightly in his sheets like a cocoon, he tried to stretch out but could hardly move an inch. His hands lay pinned under his body and were now totally numb.



Drake shook his shoulders crazily about until he loosened the bed sheets that were tightly squeezing his body.

“Wakey, wakey...rise and shine,” Mum’s cheery voice made Drake cringe.



Her quick footsteps echoed through the long hallway, becoming louder by the second. In the next room, his twin sister had already covered her head with her doona. She knew Mum's routine only too well and tried to muffle her Mum's annoying voice.

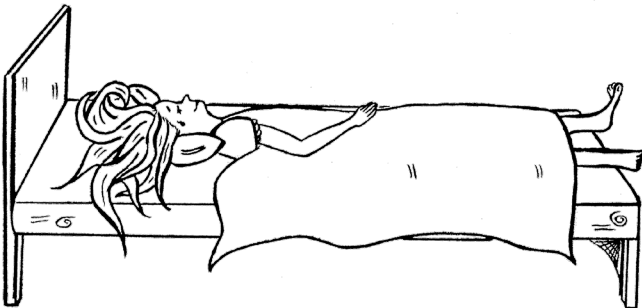


What if they were both in the same class this year, Drake wondered. It had never happened before. Could this be the worst year ever? He didn't want to think about it for a second longer.

“Time to wake up, kids!” Mum sang out in her high screechy voice. She somehow always managed to make all the loose floorboards in the hallway creak.

“Oh, no...” Drake groaned.

Cindy could now clearly hear her brother’s squeaky morning voice seeping through her bedroom wall. Her brother was so weird.



She lay quietly and waited. Drake hated school and Cindy couldn't wait to hear him whinge and moan. He really did make school mornings entertaining for her and she guessed that today wouldn't be any different.



Meanwhile, Drake was trying hard to focus on his clock again. Everything started to look a little clearer. He had to concentrate and think of a good excuse to stay home, and fast. Time was running out. His heart pounded and he could barely think.

Then, he had an idea. Definitely not his best, and if he was honest, probably his worst ever. Nevertheless, he quickly practised his pitiful excuse. He tried to look on the bright side, it may possibly even work. Mum might actually believe him for once! Drake tried to cross his fingers for good luck, forgetting they were still totally numb.

He cleared his throat and waited. The moment had to be precise. Mum's footsteps came even closer. Three, two, one! He quickly blurted out his excuse. Perfectly timed, he thought proudly.

“Mum, my hands are numb! I can’t write today! I have to stay home!” Drake moved his arms about in crazy movements for extra effect. A difficult task while still wrapped in a cocoon but done to perfection. Then, trying to hide his grin, he quickly turned away and buried his face deep in his pillow.

“I can’t hear you, honey. We’ll talk about it later!” Mum answered without even pausing to look.

In a flash, she was gone.

Within seconds, the numbness in Drake’s hands unexpectedly turned into pins and needles. Without warning, his hands became unbearable.

“Aah!” Drake’s high-pitched scream echoed through the hallway.

“You can stop faking it, now. Mum’s not around anymore, Drake!” Cindy yelled through her bedroom wall.

“I’m in agony!” Drake shouted, his hands now throbbing.



“Good try, Drake!” Cindy smiled. “You really don’t know when to give up, do you?”

What a way to start the day, Drake thought, screwing up his face in agonising pain. Cindy was now laughing hysterically. Today was going to be a great day after all, she just knew it.

# Chapter 2

## Time To Get Up



Drake glanced around his room, still refusing to get out of bed. The old floral wallpaper seemed to irritate him even more this morning. Over the holidays Dad had promised to paint his room.

Unfortunately, Dad was easily distracted by other things. Drake knew that his room could be painted any time within the next ten years.

Drake squeezed his eyes shut again, trying to drift back to sleep. Surprisingly, his hands now felt much better, almost back to normal. After his excuse had been rudely ignored by Mum, he had decided that staying in bed would do the trick. Hopefully if all went well, no one would even notice him there. He could stay in bed all day.

Drake smiled. Clever idea.

Suddenly, a loud voice broke the silence.

“Hello, this is Mrs Kerfuffle. My son, Drake, has pins and needles. So, unfortunately, he will have to stay home today. Pity...” Cindy mimicked Mum’s annoying voice to perfection.



Drake's eyes opened immediately. His eyeballs almost popping from their sockets. Drake was ecstatic! It finally worked, Mum actually believed him! He cradled his hands, as though they were still sore, and held them up in the air.

Unfortunately, it was Cindy who smiled back. His twin stood in the doorway holding an imaginary



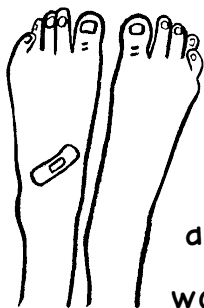
phone to her ear. She poked out her tongue before spinning around and strutting off towards the kitchen. Drake groaned loudly while his hands fell back onto his mattress with a thud. His sister was such a pain!

“We all know your ‘stay in bed trick,’  
Drake. You do this all the time. We’ll be  
late for our first day. Get up!” Cindy’s  
voice boomed from the hallway.



Drake lay still for a while longer. He had  
no energy to even move another inch.  
Soon, all he could hear were cupboard  
doors opening and closing, the kettle  
boiling and cutlery clanging as Mum  
frantically prepared breakfast.

Reluctantly, Drake untangled his legs from his sheets before hanging his feet over the edge of his bed. He struggled to sit up and slouched his shoulders forward, his chin almost touching his chest. He rubbed his eyes then squinted, hunching over to take an even closer look.



Today his little pinky toes looked extra funny laying sideways like that. Had they always been that way, he wondered.

“We’re late!” Cindy’s booming voice trailed through the hallway yet again.

“I’m coming,” Drake shouted as he gave his toes a quick rub. He would have to examine them another time, he decided. Perhaps.

Beams of sunlight blinded him from different directions as they bounced off the old brass chandelier that hung from his ceiling, then ricocheted straight into his eyes.

Drake squinted. Yes, today was going to be horrible, he just knew it.