

High in Masque Tower . . .

NORA!!

YOU CALLED, GRANDDADDY MASQUE?

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS? HAVE YOU?

MY EVIL EMPIRE IS IN CHAOS. CHAOS!

WE'RE LOSING MORE MONEY BY THE DAY . . .

THIS IS YOUR FAULT. IT'S TIME YOU LEARNED SOME GOOD OLD-FASHIONED VALUES LIKE RESPECT FOR YOUR ELDERS AND BASIC ACCOUNTANCY AND-

GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF THOSE SILLY BOOKS! READING. BAH!

BUT GRANDDADDY I HAVE TO READ THIS, IT'S HOMEWORK FROM SCHOOL-

WITH MORBID CRAWFORD IN PRISON, HIS RAVENS ON SECURITY AREN'T EVEN DOING THEIR JOBS ANY MORE!

I'M FINDING RAVEN FEATHERS EVERYWHERE.

AND NOW, I CAN'T EVEN RELY ON THE MAYOR FOR THAT NEW CONTRACT. SHE SAYS SHE

'NEEDS TO BE MORE CAREFUL AFTER THE CARROT DEBACLE'.

ENOUGH!

I'VE ASKED YOUR BROTHERS TO KEEP AN EYE ON YOU. LET'S SEE IF THEY CAN STEP UP AND BE THE GRANDKIDS I NEED.

THEM?

SERIOUSLY? THEM?

PLEASE JUST GIVE ME ONE MORE CHANCE. I CAN SAVE YOUR EVIL EMPIRE.

OH, REALLY? AND I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE A BUSINESS PLAN READY TO GO?

DON'T THINK I'VE FORGOTTEN THAT YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT. IT WAS YOUR IDEA TO AIRLIFT CARROTS FROM BARGES.

THAT MAYOR IS SO KEEN TO KEEP HER SNOUT CLEAN SHE'S CLASSING ALL PETTY CRIME AS SERIOUS CRIME NOW.

IMAGINE, WE COULD ALL GO TO PRISON FOR DROPPING LITTER!

HE HUH EGH HGH HE.

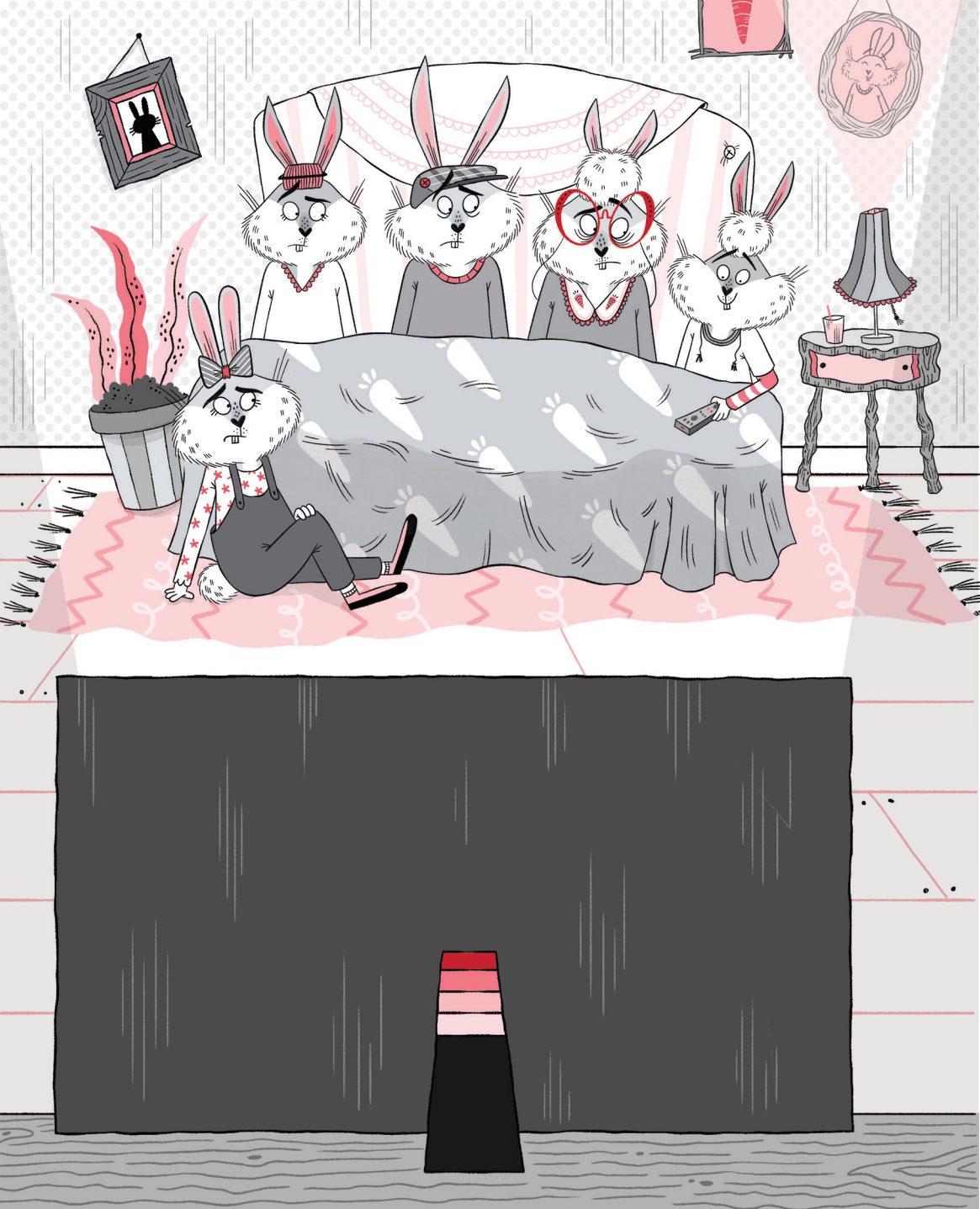
I DO.

IS THAT YOUR EVIL LAUGH?

YOU SOUND LIKE A GHOST WITH A SORE THROAT.

YOU MAY HAVE JUST GUESSED MY GASTLY IDEA.

NOW, GRANDDADDY, IF YOU'LL JUST LET ME EXPLAIN . . .



CHAPTER ONE

Reggie flicked the button on the remote control and changed the channel for the fourth time in twenty-three seconds. He was met with a chorus of groans from his family who were squeezed on the couch next to him.

‘Just pick a channel,’ his big sister Lettice moaned.

‘Your sister is right,’ Dad said. ‘You’ve been flicking through news channels back and forth and it’s making me a bit dizzy.’

‘Me too,’ Mum agreed. ‘Seeing all the news on all the channels is not good for my nerves.’

Reggie pinged back to the news channel the Rabbit family usually watched and settled back against the plump cushions of the couch.

‘I don’t understand where Detective Fox is,’ he said, mainly to himself. ‘Who is keeping the city safe?’

It had been weeks since Reggie and his best friend Pipsquark had teamed up with Detective Fox and his partner Nancy, to solve the Great Carrot Heist. But since then, there had been no news of the great detective at all.

Reggie knew better than to assume that Bearburgh was now completely crime-free, and he suspected that the Masque family were planning their next move.

The TV screen was filled with Mayor Bear’s massive head. Reggie couldn’t help stifling a yawn as the mayor

talked about refurbishments to the town hall and all the new apartment buildings she was planning to build. She even showed off a model of the project.

‘. . . Beaver Builders will be starting with the town hall. Unfortunately, the roof is leaky and the original building is damaged as a result.’

