



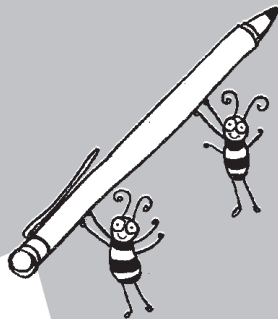
EPIC
ADVENTURE

(Kind of)

By
Liz Pichon.



Not very
secret stuff



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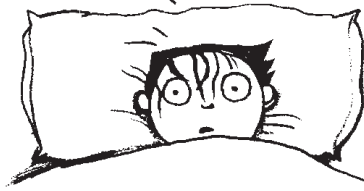
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I'm woken up by GOOSE HONKING.



(Not a car beeping like I expected.)

I press my watch a few times outside Delia's room just for **FUN** before I go to school.



Derek gives me the PEN straight away, which is a GOOD START to the day.



When we get to school

Mr Keen is saying "Hello" and "Morning" to everyone.

"Hello, Derek, and who's that with you? Oh, it's you, Tom!

I couldn't see your face.

Your hair is all over Hello, sir. your EYES!"





(It's not that long.)

I'm walking to class and pushing my hair out of my eyes when I SPOT a BIG new poster on the school noticeboard. Derek and I STOP to READ it and accidentally

SCHOOL TROPICAL DISC

Get ready for some **SCORCHING TUNES!**

Money raised goes towards the school **library.**

FOR YEARS 5 and 6.

Dress for HOT weather.

IT'S SUMMERTIME at OAKFIELD SCHOOL!

create a bit of a jam in the corridor.



Then **Buster Jones** comes along and starts telling everyone, "KEEP GOING! CORRIDOR MONITOR coming through. Who's holding everyone up?"



(That'll be us, then.)

"Oh, it's you, Gatesy. I didn't recognize you with the long hair."

"It's not THAT long," I tell him.



He looks at the poster on the wall and says,



"What do you THINK?"

Derek and I wonder if it's a trick question, but we both say we like it. (Just in case.)

"Did you do it, **Buster?**" I ask.



"NO, of course not. But I've added a few things, if you GET ME. Shhhhhhhh!"

Don't say a word."

We won't.



Looking at the poster* again, it takes me a while to see what **Buster's** been up to. He's got a bit of a reputation in school, but he's always **OK** with us. I think the teachers give him lots of **JOBS** to keep him busy and stop him getting into mischief. It hasn't worked this time, though.

Mr Sprocket is here (and dancing), so **Buster** goes into **CORRIDOR MONITOR** voice again.



"**MOVE, EVERYONE!** You too, **Gatesy.**"

Derek goes off to class and we arrange to meet up and swap **SECRET MESSAGES** later. I can hear

Buster saying,



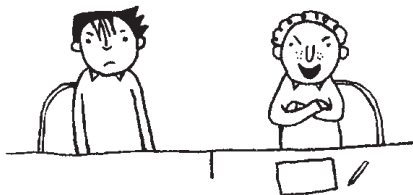
NOTHING TO SEE
HERE. IT'S JUST A POSTER
FOR A TROPICAL DISCO,
THAT'S ALL. HURRY UP!

I know he's **not**

talking to **ME**, but his voice still makes me go faster.

* See close-up of poster on page 222

Marcus is already in his seat, and it doesn't take long for him to remind me about Julia's party.



(And not in a good way.)

"It wasn't my fault we got stuck!" he tells me (even though it was).

"If you say so, Marcus," I sigh.

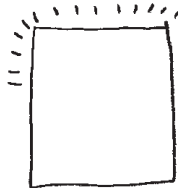


"HEY, I got a **SECRET AGENT PEN** in my **PARTY** bag. What did you get?" he wants to know while showing off his pen.



"A yo-yo..." Marcus doesn't look that impressed.

"I'm glad I got this **PEN**. I've been writing **SECRET MESSAGES** with it." He shows me a **BLANK** piece of paper.



"WOW - that looks very important,"


I say jokingly.

"It IS. That's why you can't see it."

"Oh, but I can!" I tell him and I take out my pen and shine my torch on it. Marcus takes it away quickly. "It's **SECRET!**"




AMY sits down and asks us both if we're going to the **TROPICAL disc**.

 "I'm going - it sounds fun, just like Julia's party was!" she says happily.

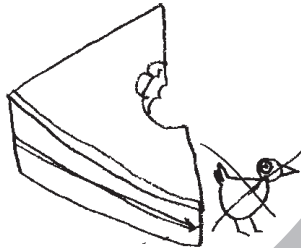
"I'M GOING TOO!"

I say a bit loudly. 

 "Calm down, Tom," Marcus tells me.

I still have my **SECRET AGENT PEN** out, so while Mr Fullerman is calling out the register, I take a sneaky look at Marcus's **SECRET NOTE** with my torch.

I LIKE
SANDWICHES.
Not
BIRDS.



(It's not much of a BIG secret, if you ask me.)

I do a few of my own **SECRET MESSAGES**,
which I show to **D**erek after school ...







... and keep away from teachers and Marcus.



SECRET MESSAGE*

June's dad  (our next-door neighbour) is in the band **Plastic Cup**.  But ever since their reunion didn't exactly go to plan, he's been miserable. I know this because I can hear him singing really **GLOOMY** songs through my bedroom wall. 

 Derek's dad told us the band kept arguing about "musical differences" all the time and then they decided not to go on tour, which Derek's dad was really sad about. 

That's when all the **gloomy** singing started.

He's doing it now...



*See page 232 for message.

I get Dad to come and have a listen.

"Oh dear, that sounds grim.

He probably doesn't even know you
can hear him. I'll have a little word if
it keeps you awake," Dad assures me.



We keep listening as he sings the same
thing OVER and OVER again.



I'm starting to know it off by heart...

Plastic Cup

Plastic Cup

Where did it all go wrong?

(Everywhere)

Plastic Cup

Plastic Cup

We'll write another song

(No chance)

Plastic Cup

Plastic Cup

We're too old to fight
(We're not)
Plastic Cup
Plastic Cup
Everything will be all right
(It won't)



When he **EVENTUALLY** stops, Dad is relieved.



"Phew. At least **NOW** you can get
some sleep, Tom."

You'd think so,

BUT I can't get the **TUNE** out of my



Every time I close my eyes all I can do is count

 **plastic cups** jumping

over fences - when it should be sheep. →





I keep trying.