



Chapter 1

Doink! Something bounced off Eric's head. He looked up with a start.

"What's the matter Eric?" asked Miss Roper.

"Nothing Miss," said Eric, rubbing his head.

"What's wrong with your head?"

"He's got nits Miss," said Miranda, and everyone laughed.

"No I haven't. Someone threw something at me. I bet it was you."



“Eric... Stop disturbing Miranda. Bring your book here and show me what you’ve written so far.” Eric could feel every eye in the class on him as he went to the front.



“What does this say?” said Miss Roper.

“Once upon a time, Miss,” muttered Eric.

“Once begins with an ‘O’,” said Miss Roper, writing one in with red ink.

Eric stared at the page as he went back to his desk. He knew he’d written an ‘O’. It was a big capital ‘O’, he



remembered writing it. He remembered going over it again while he tried to think of something to write. He might even have drawn a face on the 'O'. So where had it gone?



Something else hit Eric on the head. He looked around angrily, getting ready to throw something back.



“Once upon a time... what?” Eric looked up to see who was talking to him.

“What’s the matter Eric?” asked Miss Roper.

“Nothing Miss.”

“Well get on with your work then.”

Eric wished he could draw a picture instead of writing a story. He had all his best ideas when he was drawing. He never had any trouble thinking of what to draw. Right now he was simply itching to draw Miss Roper; did she have any idea how funny she looked when she pulled that face?



“You haven’t written anything in the last five minutes, I’ve been watching you, and stop doodling,” Miss Roper’s voice cut into his thoughts again.

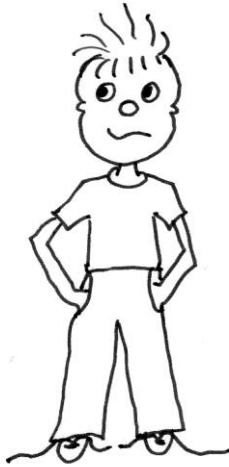
“I’m thinking Miss.”



He turned his attention back to his work, just in time to see the red capital ‘O’ being ripped off the page in front of him. Eric rubbed his eyes and looked again.

“Oh so I’ve got your attention now have I?” said a little voice. Eric looked around to see if anyone else had heard, but the rest of the class was still hard at work.

As he looked down at the little man stood on the page in front of him, he looked very familiar. From his unruly spiky hair, to his trainers, with their over long laces, trailing untied behind; he looked just like one of Eric’s doodles.



“Ow...” something else hit Eric. It was red, he noticed, as it rolled across the desk and onto the floor.

