

THE WORLD'S WORST PARENTS

You may even spot a tiny shed also made out of plastic bricks in the garden. In case you were wondering, that is where Monty Monopolize now lives. And the annoying father is only allowed two **BRICKO** bricks to play with.

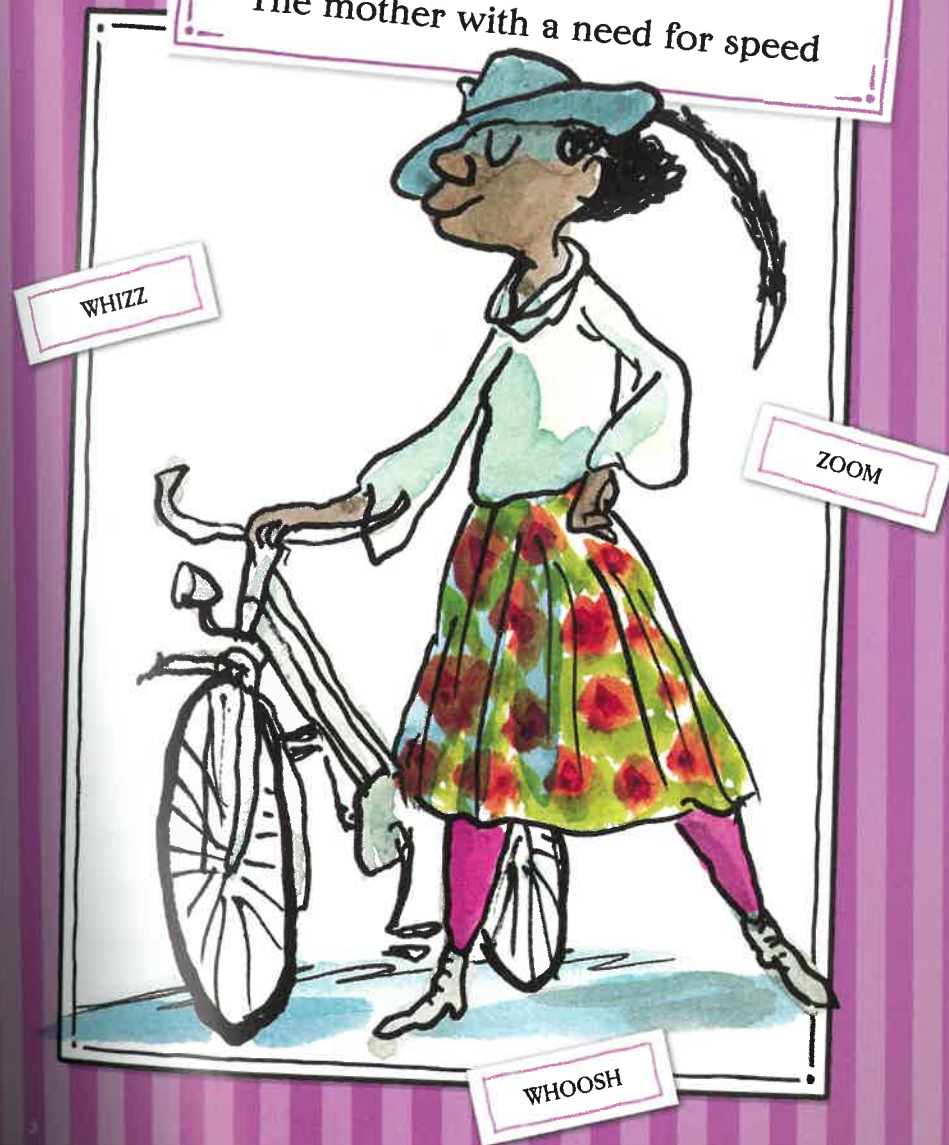


CLICK!

CLICK!

HARRIET HURRY

The mother with a need for speed





HARRIET HURRY

YOU HAD TO WATCH OUT when Harriet was about. The long-limbed lady always rode her bike far too fast. The mother of six children, all girls, she dressed in cream silk blouses and long, flowing, flowery skirts, topped off with a feathered felt hat. Each morning, Harriet piled

all six of them on to her old-fashioned lady's bicycle to race them to school. Despite her proper appearance, Harriet was a **SPEED DEMON**. And the route from the country house where the Hurry family lived to school was downhill. So, with all the weight of her six children on the bicycle, Harriet could reach eye-watering speeds.

She would overtake sports cars...

WHIZZ!

...speed through red lights...

WHOOSH!

...soar over speed bumps...

ZOOM!

...take short cuts through

hedges...

RUSTLE!

...and perform a triumphant wheelie

when they finally reached the school.

WHIRR!

To understand this obsession with speed, we need to go back to when Harriet was a **baby** herself. At her birth, she shot out of her mother's tummy super-fast. So super-fast that the midwife couldn't catch her. The poor



lady was like a goalkeeper trying to catch a speeding football booted by a star striker.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



Baby Harriet soared over the head of the midwife...

WHOOSH!

...sailed out of a window...

ZOOM!

...luckily landing in an empty pram

idling outside the hospital.

DOOMP!

The force of Baby Harriet's landing made the pram shoot off.

WHIRR!

The seconds-old infant was immediately speeding away from the hospital. As the child's mother screamed from



the window of the maternity ward...

"STOP THAT BABY!"

...the newborn sat up in the pram, cooing with delight to be going so fast.

"GOO! GOO! GAA! GAA!"

The pram rattled off down the road.

RITTLE! RUTTLE! ROTTLE!

It weaved in and out of the path of oncoming ambulances.

NEE-NAW! NEE-NAW!

Someone must have alerted the **police**, as in no time three **police officers** on motorbikes were chasing after Baby Harriet.

One of them shouted at the baby, **"STOP, BABY! OR I WILL PUT YOU UNDER ARREST!"**

Baby Harriet was having none of it. Instead of stopping, she bounced harder and harder on her bottom.

BOINK! BOINK! BOINK!

But trouble was ahead. They were heading straight for a river at colossal speed. The baby bounced harder and harder still. **BOINK! BOINK! BOINK!**



The pram hit the riverbank so fast that it soared over the water and landed on the other side.

DOOF!

The **police officers** were not so lucky. Despite revving their engines...

ROARR!

...they weren't going fast enough and plunged into the river.

SPLOSH!

Now there was no stopping Baby Harriet. Up ahead, more **police** had set up a roadblock of **police** cars to stop the runaway baby. There was no way through. Or was there?

A huge smile spread across Baby Harriet's face when she saw the **police** cars lined up ahead of her. She bounced and bounced up and down on her bottom...

BOINK, BOINK, BOINK!

...making the wheels of the pram spin until they were nothing but a blur.

WHIRR!



The **police officers'** faces turned to panic as they realised the runaway baby was not going to stop.

They closed their eyes as she leaned back and the front wheels of the pram lifted. It was a pram wheelie! Or "preelie"!*

Then **DISASTER STRUCK**. The back wheels of the pram hit the bonnet of a **police** car.

SLAM!

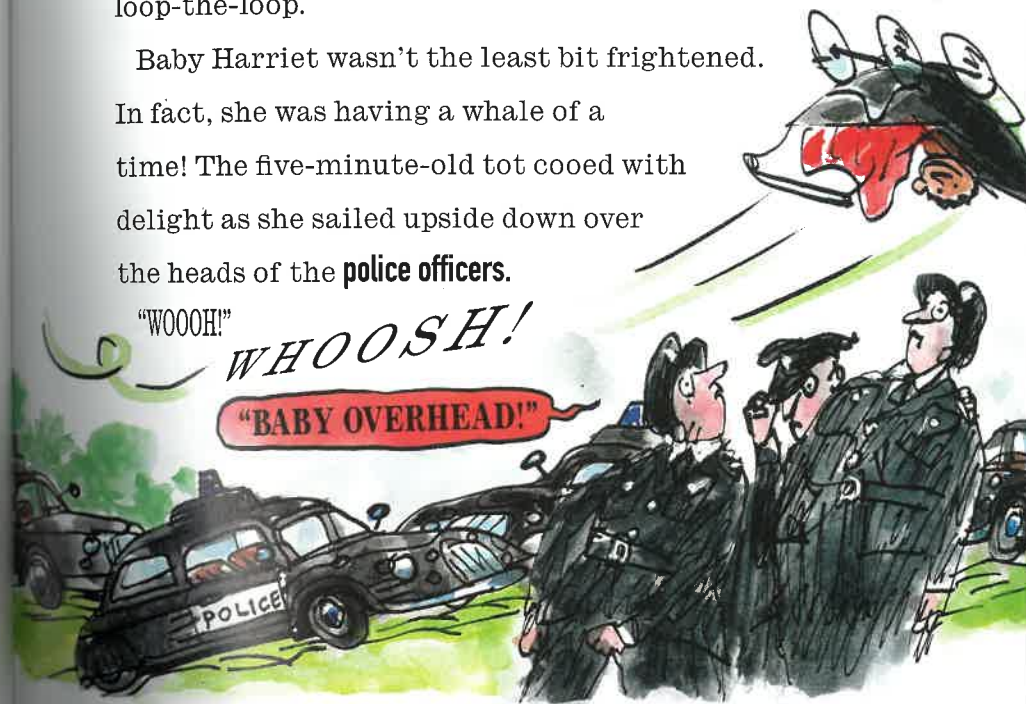
The pram somersaulted through the air, performing a loop-the-loop.

Baby Harriet wasn't the least bit frightened. In fact, she was having a whale of a time! The five-minute-old tot cooed with delight as she sailed upside down over the heads of the **police officers**.

"WOOOH!"

WHOOSH!

"BABY OVERHEAD!"



* See your **Walliamsictionary** for the full definition. It has one billion made-up words for you to enjoy.

By some miracle, the pram hit the road on all four wheels at the other side of the **police** roadblock.

DONK!

It was now going faster than ever.

ZOOM!

Just up ahead was a **Formula One** racing track. The pram managed to speed through the entrance...

WHIZZ!

...swerve round the barriers...

SCREECH!

...before racing along the track.

Baby Harriet weaved through the pack of racing cars, taking the corners on the inside and speeding like never before.

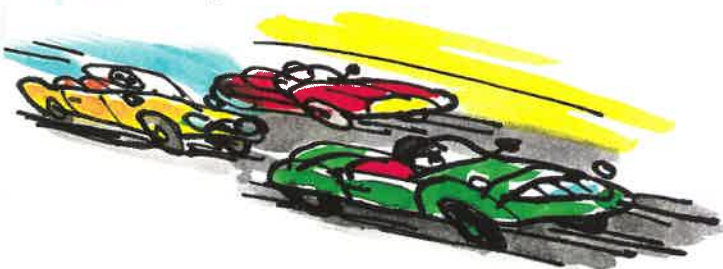
ZOOM!

The finish line was in sight.

The baby bounced up and down as hard as she could on her bottom...

BOINK! BOINK! BOINK!

...and when the chequered flag was waved...



WHOOSH!

...Baby Harriet in her pram took first place!

The crowd cheered.

"HURRAH!"

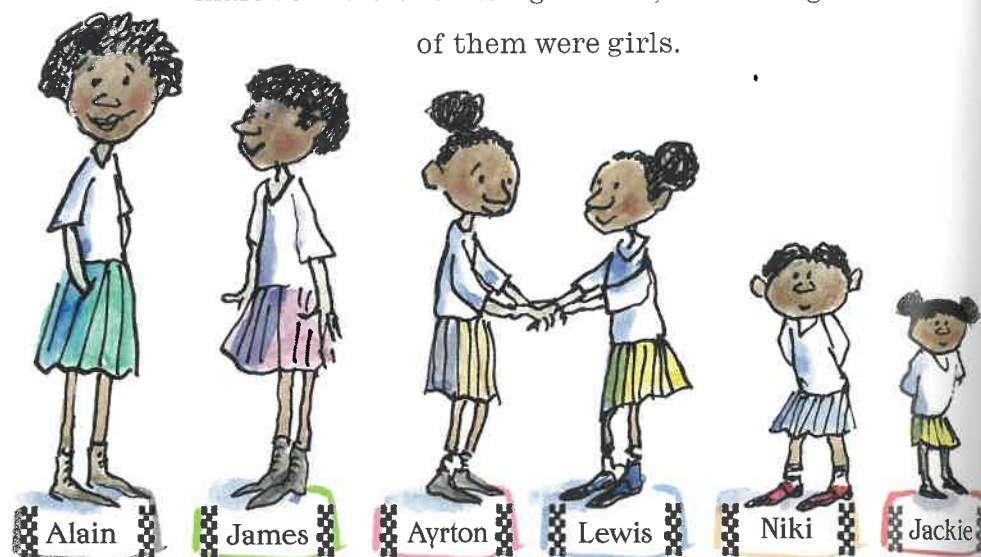
The furious **Formula One** drivers had to stand by and watch a newborn baby lift the trophy, before spraying champagne all over them.

FIZZ!

That glorious moment made headlines all over the world:



Forty years later, that baby had grown up and become a mother to six children. She named them after famous male **Formula One** racing drivers, even though all of them were girls.



Formula One racing was all that Harriet watched on the television, much to the displeasure of her ageing cardiganed husband, whom she named "**the Tortoise**".

Harriet had the racing on long into the night and would shout at the TV if her favourite driver was not going fast enough.

"COME ON, MAN, FOR GOODNESS' SAKE!"

"PUT YOUR GREAT FAT FOOT DOWN!"

"I COULD CYCLE FASTER THAN THAT, YOU BUFFOON!"

She would wake up the whole house with her shouts. Not that her six daughters had any interest in **SPEED**. They hated the fact that their mother always cycled them to school so fast. The girls had to balance like a **CIRCUS ACT** on her bicycle, which she had named "**LIGHTNING**".

Despite their pleas for her to slow down...

"NOO!"

"HELP!"

"TOO FAST!"

"MAMA!"

"SLOW THE HEAVENS DOWN!"

"ARGH!"

...Mama would pedal harder and harder and harder.

WHIRR! WHIRR! WHIRR!

When she reached **TOP SPEED**, Harriet would holler,

"FASTER! FASTER! RAH! RAH! RAH!"

She treated the school run as if it were a race, a race she had to win at all costs. If Harriet didn't beat every other mother and father, she would be in an almighty **FUNK** all day. It meant that she would pedal harder the next morning, and the ordeal of the school run for the

girls would become worse and worse. The six had to cling on to **LIGHTNING** for dear life:

Alain to the front wicker basket...

James to the front wheel guard...

Ayrton to the handlebars...

Lewis to the back wheel guard...

Niki on the back of the saddle...

And Little Jackie to Niki's shoulders.

The girls thought each day might be their last.

So, one morning when they'd



arrived at school after **LIGHTNING** had had a near-miss with a fire engine, the Hurry children decided that enough was enough.

They had to do something about Mama.

Each of the girls had a different idea.

Alain was the oldest, and so went first: "We should bury **LIGHTNING** in the rose garden!" she exclaimed.

But her younger sisters reckoned their mother would find it in no time, and that they would end up having to go to school with soil on their bottoms.

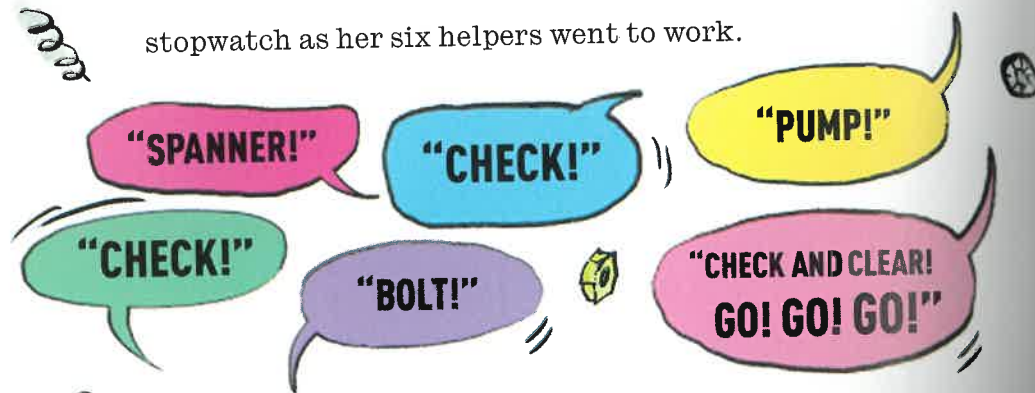
James was the second oldest. She thought she had a good idea,

suggesting, "Why don't we tie Mama's bootlaces together so she can't cycle so fast?"

The girls soon imagined the bicycle crashing, and all of them landing in a giant heap on the ground. Not fun. Not fun at all.

Ayrton was next. She thought that "puncturing one or both of **LIGHTNING'S** tyres would definitely slow Mama down"!

However, Harriet had trained her daughters to be her back-up team, like **Formula One** drivers have. The girls would be ordered to change **LIGHTNING'S** tyre in less than three seconds flat. Mama would check the stopwatch as her six helpers went to work.



Lewis proposed, "If we saved up all our pocket money to buy Mama a horse, then she could ride us all to school on that instead?"

This was judged to be the **WORST** idea so far. Mama would be sure to ride the horse as if she were a jockey at the **GRAND NATIONAL**. A racehorse would be infinitely more **dangerous** than a bicycle. And, of course, bicycles don't **BITE** bottoms, like some horses have been known to do.*

Niki's suggestion that they "sneak out of bed in the middle of the night, armed with glue pens to coat the whole road with glue to slow down **LIGHTNING**" didn't even warrant a response.

All eyes turned to **Little Jackie**. "I know!" began the youngest of the sisters. "I will join the **police** and then I can arrest Mama for speeding!"

This was greeted with howls of laughter!

"HA! HA! HA!"

"HO! HO! HO!"

"HEE! HEE! HEE!"

The Hurry sisters had never heard anything so **ABSURD**.

"**LISTEN!**" shouted **Little Jackie** over the guffaws.

* **WALLYFACT:** The worst offender in terms of a horse biting bottoms is world-record holder **Nibble**, a Shetland pony who once bit the bottoms of 347 people at a summer fair in 1981. And I still have the bite marks to prove it.

"I can go to the **police** station straight after school and ask to become a **police officer**."

"YOU CAN'T JOIN THE **POLICE**, LITTLE JACKIE!" mocked **Alain**. "You're far too young! You have to be a grown-up to join the **police**!"

Being the oldest, **Alain** liked to think of herself as the boss. The other four chimed in, following suit.

"WHAT A SILLY IDEA!" "AS IF!" "JACKIE'S JUST A BABY!"

"SHE BARELY COMES UP TO MY KNEES!"

"BE QUIET, THE LOT OF YOU, AND LISTEN!" shouted **Little Jackie**, who was by far the **feistiest** of the six. Her sisters fell silent. "If we all sit on each other's shoulders, with me at the top, I can pass myself off as a grown-up!"

This stumped the others for a moment.

"But the **police officer** will know it's just six kids on each other's shoulders," reasoned **James**.

The others all murmured in agreement.

"MURMUR!"

"MURMUR!"

"MURMUR!"

"I'VE ALREADY THOUGHT OF THAT!" announced **Little Jackie**. "We borrow Mama's **super-long** dressing gown! And, look, I've got **this**!"

The girl produced a joke-shop moustache that she'd received in her stocking at Christmas. She smoothed down her hair and stuck on the moustache.

Suddenly, **Little Jackie's** plan didn't seem so stupid after all.



So it was set in motion.

There was much arguing about who should go at the bottom. No one wanted to go at the bottom. Little Jackie took charge and managed to convince Alain that "being on the bottom is the most important job of all as you are the legs of the operation".

That swung it!

The sisters arranged themselves vertically in order of age. It was like a family of **CIRCUS** acrobats as, one by one, they climbed on to each other's shoulders.

At the bottom, Alain loved the fact that she, and she alone, chose where the legs would take them.

They were her legs, after all.

Then it was James on Alain's shoulders.

Next, Ayrton was on James's.

Then Lewis on Ayrton's.

Further up, Niki was on Lewis's shoulders.

Finally, Little Jackie was perched at the very top.

Mum's fuchsia-pink dressing gown turned out to be the perfect length for this ruse. It ended just above Alain's knees. So, one windy



morning before Mama and Papa woke up, the six sisters wobbled their way out of their country house, and down to the local **police** station.

Walking down the street, **Little Jackie** got some strange looks, what with being impossibly *tall*, and having the face of a girl with a joke-shop moustache stuck on, not to mention the long, pink, *frilly* dressing gown. But she styled it out by peering down her nose at passers-by.

Finally, the tower of girls made it all the way to the local **police** station.

Standing on duty behind the counter that morning was an especially stern-looking **police officer**, PC Staid.



On seeing this vision in front of her, her **beady** eyes nearly burst out of her head.

"YES?" barked Staid.

The girls were so taken aback by the bark that they very nearly lost their balance.

WIBBLE! WABBLE!
WOBBLE!

"Erm, um, hello..." began **Little Jackie**, her joke-shop moustache coming loose as her face beaded with sweat.

"ARE YOU DRUNK?" demanded Staid.

"No!" replied the girl, putting on a deep **manly** voice. "I just had a pineapple juice."

"That's what they all say! Are you here to report a crime?"

"No! There is a big problem with speeding in this town and I want to sign up to be a **police officer!**"

Staid shook her head. "You look a little young to be a **police officer!**"

"Told you so!" hissed **Alain** from the bottom.

Little Jackie silenced her sister with a sharp *shhh* under her breath.

"OUCH!"

"What was that?" demanded Staid.

"Just a **bottom burp!**" replied the girl, trying to make her voice sound even **deeper** than before.

"It didn't sound like a **bottom burp**. It sounded like a cry of pain!"

"It was a **big** one! So it was a little bit painful!" she lied. "My bottom does that sometimes. **Yelps!**"

The PC rolled her eyes. "Well, if you want to be a **police officer**, you have to fill out this form here."

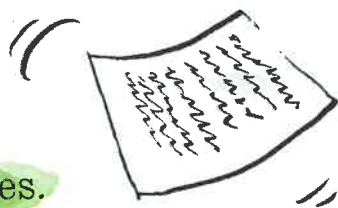
She passed a piece of paper across the desk. The hands that were poking out of the sleeves of the dressing gown were actually **Ayrton's**. As **Ayrton's** face was hidden behind the dressing gown, she couldn't see **where** the form was. So, when she reached out her hand to grab it, she missed.

Not once.

Not twice.

But three times.

After accidentally grabbing PC Staid's hand, when **Ayrton** finally got hold of the piece of paper, she managed to scrunch it into a ball.



SCRUNCH!



"You **are** drunk!" accused Staid again.

"No! No! Just a tiny bit clumsy," lied **Little Jackie**.

"Clumsy isn't good for a **police officer**. You might drop your truncheon! And then where would we be?

ANARCHY!"

"Please can I have another form?" asked **Little Jackie**.

"And this time I would really appreciate it if you could put it straight into my hand!"

Staid sighed theatrically as grown-ups often do, and did what the girl asked. "**HUMPH!**"

"Thank you so much!" replied **Little Jackie**, turning to go.

"Not so fast!" barked Staid.

Oh no! thought the girl. *What now?* "Yes?"

"Why do you want to be a **police officer** so much?"

"It's my mama."

"What about your mama?" asked Staid.

"She **SPEEDS!**"

"Does she now? How fast are we talking?"

"Well, once she went so fast that she broke the sound barrier.

BOOM!

"That is fast."

"I told you it was fast."

"I know, but I didn't know it was **that** fast."

"Should have been paying close attention. I did say fast!"

Staid sighed again. "HUMPH! Well, good luck with your application, Mr...?"

"Little Jackie!" replied the girl, her joke-shop moustache now flapping off. "I mean..."

"Good luck, Mr Jackie Little!"

"Goodbye!" mumbled Little Jackie. On the way out, the tower of girls knocked over a stand, scattering leaflets everywhere...

FLUTTER!

...tripped over a **police** dog...

"WOOF!"

...and knocked over a **policeman** and the robber he had handcuffed.

"OOF!"

Staid shook her head in disbelief.



The plan hadn't quite gone to... er... plan. Even so, Little Jackie filled out the **police** application form and sent it off. To her and her five sisters' great surprise, the very next day Little Jackie received an official letter from PC Staid.



The next morning, the tower of girls wobbled excitedly all the way down to the **police** station. As the sun rose over the town, they were met by PC Staid, who immediately began to explain how a **SPEED GUN** worked. It was a device that **police officers** use to point at vehicles they think are going over the speed limit.

"So, you just point that at the bicycle?" asked the girl.

Staid spat out her tea.

SPLURT!

"BICYCLE?" she exclaimed.

"Yes, my mama **SPEEDS** on her bicycle!"

"We normally use this on cars and motorbikes and the like. We have never, ever, **EVER** stopped someone on a bicycle for speeding!"

"Trust me. I did say fast."

"That you did," admitted the PC.

"And Mama can pedal a great deal faster than any car or motorbike!"

"Well then, we must set a **SPEED TRAP** for later."

That is exactly what they did. It was decided that the best time would be when Mama would be returning to

school that afternoon to pick the girls up.

So the sisters sneaked out of school early, and arranged themselves on top of each other, before putting on their **police** outfit.

This was a cap, which was far too big for **Little Jackie's** little head, and a very, very, very long police jacket that PC Staid had kindly provided. The **police officer** met the new recruit, PC **Jackie Little**, just outside the school gates. As the bell rang for the end of school...

DRING!

...they hid in a bush, and Staid handed **Little Jackie** – well, of course, really **Ayrton** – the speed gun, which she immediately dropped.

CLUNK!

When the tower of girls and Staid both tried to pick it up at the same time, their heads banged together.



CLONK!

Eventually, they got into their hiding place, and not a moment too soon, because in the distance they could see Mama racing down the road on **LIGHTNING**.

At first, she and her bicycle were little more than a tiny blur on the horizon. Then the blur became bigger and bigger as she sped nearer and nearer.

Mrs Harriet Hurry did not disappoint.

Peddalling harder than ever, the mummy in a hurry cycled straight over the roof of a sports car...

ZOOM!

...jumped over a motorbike as if she were part of a display team...

WHOOSH!

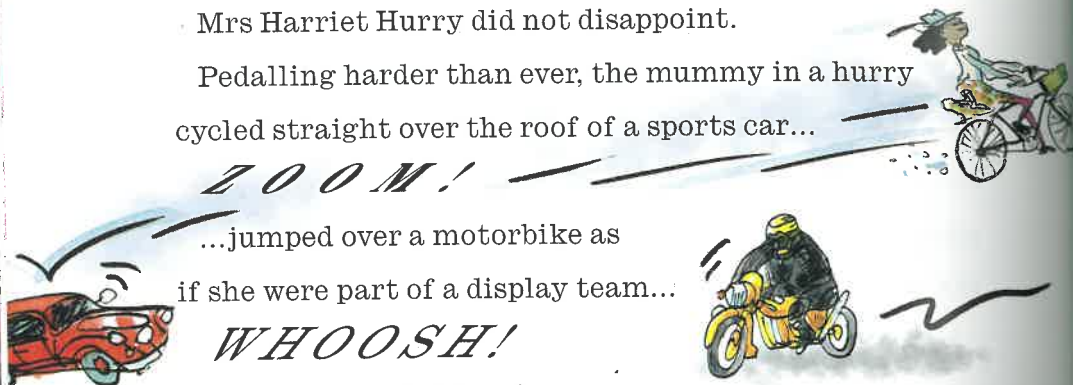
...and smashed through a fruit-and-vegetable stall, hurling food everywhere.

SPLAT! SPLUT! SPLOT!

"OI!"

Then, with a big grin on her face, Mama took to the final straight. She pedalled **LIGHTNING** as if she were competing for a gold medal at the Olympics.

"FASTER! FASTER! RAH! RAH! RAH!" she cried.



Still hiding in the bush, Staid shouted, "NOW!"

Ayrton pressed the button on the **SPEED GUN**.

CLICK!

Mama was going at such an impossible speed that the **SPEED GUN** actually exploded.

KABOOM!

The sound of the explosion was so loud that it shocked everyone, not least Mama. **LIGHTNING'S** front wheel hit the back of an old lady's mobility scooter.

KABOSH!

Harriet Hurry somersaulted through the air with a look of horror on her face. Oh, how she wished she could somehow slow herself down to a stop.

"HELP!" she shouted as **LIGHTNING** crash-landed on to the road and smashed into hundreds of pieces.

CRASH! BANG! WALLOP!

Meanwhile Mama landed on the top of a very tall tree.

TWANG!

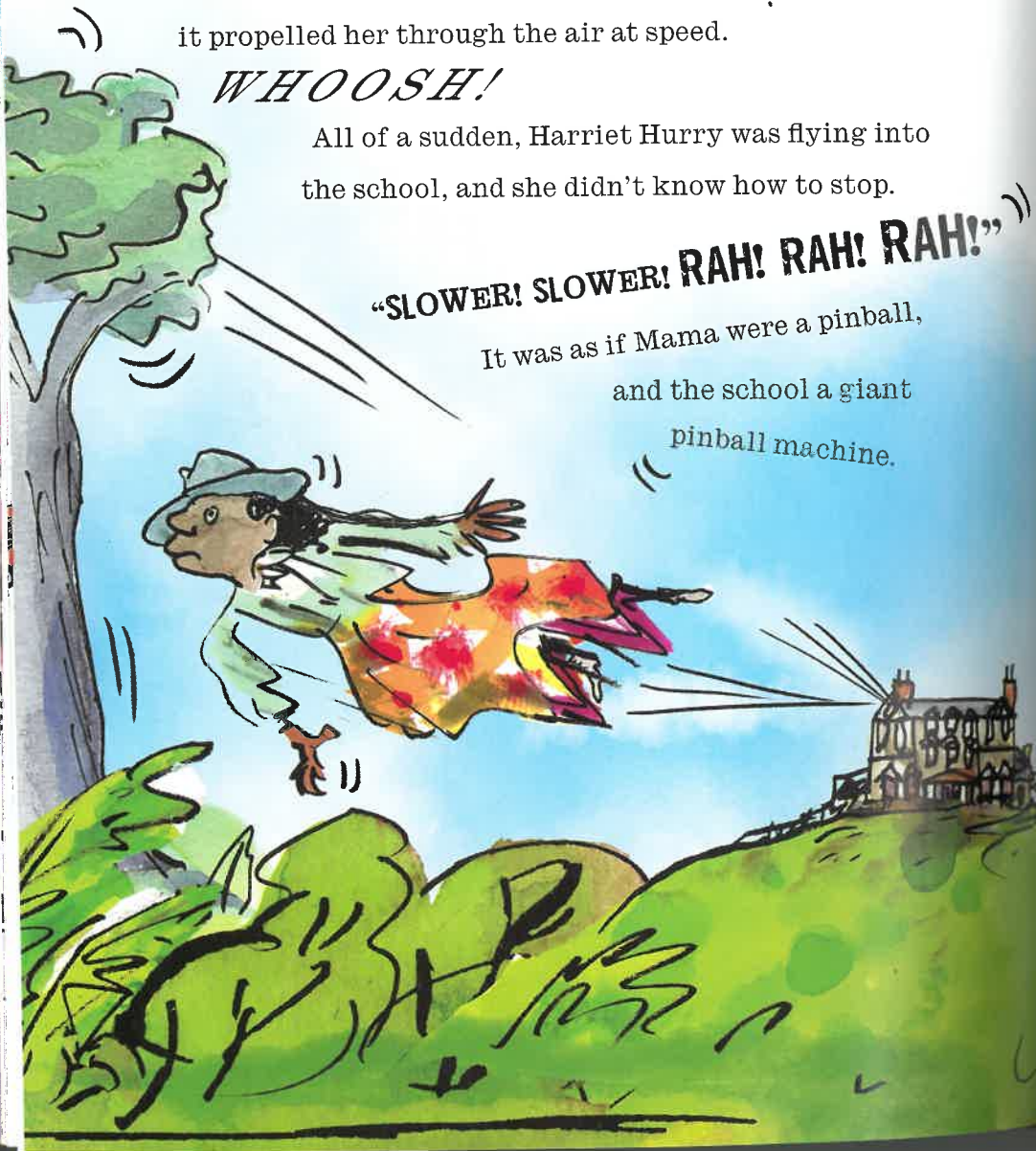
The tree swayed with her weight, and as it swung back it propelled her through the air at speed.

WHOOSH!

All of a sudden, Harriet Hurry was flying into the school, and she didn't know how to stop.

"SLOWER! SLOWER! RAH! RAH! RAH!"

It was as if Mama were a pinball,
and the school a giant
pinball machine.



Her daughters all peeped out from the line of buttons on the long **police officer's** jacket. They watched helplessly as their mother **bounced** headfirst into the climbing frame...

CLONNNK!

...rebounded on to the clock tower...

KERLANG!

...hit the goal post...

TERFUNK!

...and smacked straight into the swing.

SWINKDONK!

The swing swung her straight through the window of the science block...

SMASH!

...and out through the other side.

SMASH!

The lady then spun round on the roundabout...

WHIRR!

...before flying off to the slide...

PLONKA FONK!

...speeding down it...

RRRUMMPH!

...and landing upside down in the sandpit.

BOOMPH!

Harriet was half buried, her legs wagging up in the air.

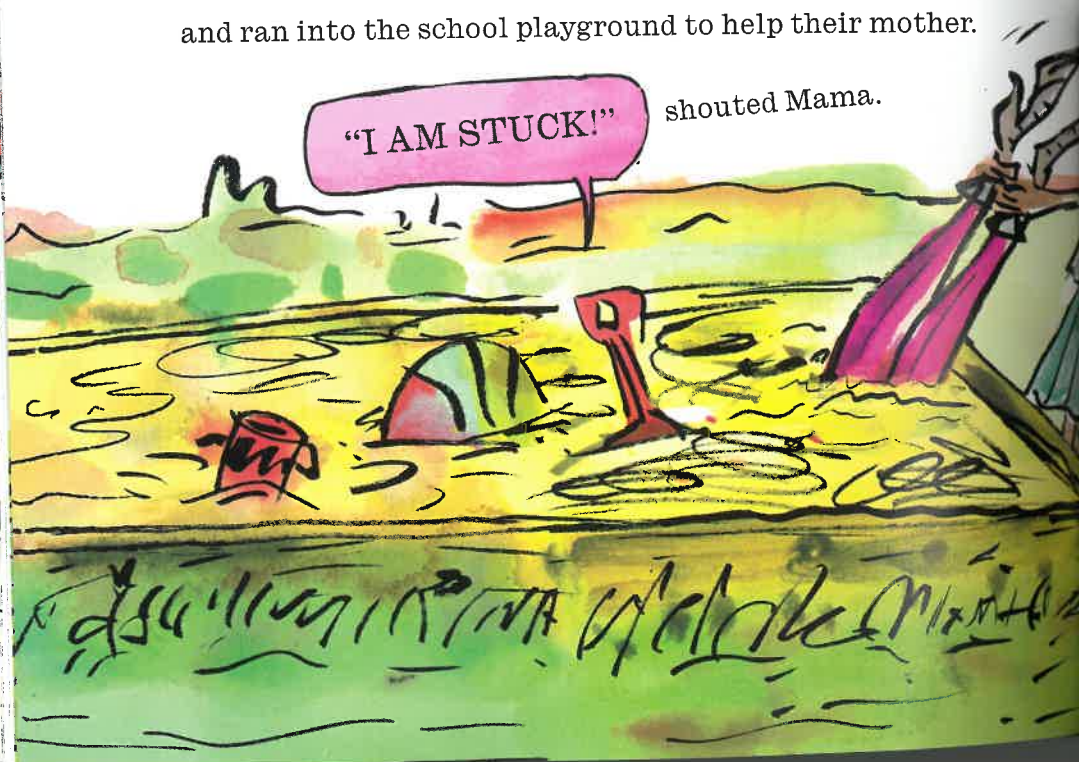
"HELP!" she cried.

"MAMA!" shouted the girls in shock.

"There's something I need to tell you," began Little Jackie, turning to PC Staid. "I am not really this tall."

"I had absolutely no idea!" lied the **police officer** with a knowing wink. Little Jackie smiled back as one by one the six girls jumped down from each other's shoulders and ran into the school playground to help their mother.

"I AM STUCK!" shouted Mama.



The sisters formed a human chain to yank her out of the sandpit. **Alain** held on to her mother's feet as **James**, **Ayrton**, **Lewis**, **Niki** and finally **Little Jackie** held on to each other.

"HEAVE!" called **Alain**, and they all heaved. But Mama wouldn't budge. Staid dashed over and joined the chain.

"HEAVE!" commanded the **police officer**.

Like a cork coming out of a bottle, Mama popped out of the sand.

POP!

Soon everyone was lying exhausted in a big heap on the ground.



DOOF!

The school doors banged open and the girls poured out.

On seeing the huddle of people lying on the ground, the biggest girl in the school, Tulisa Thunder, shouted...

"BUNDLE!"

Tulisa ran and leaped on top.

"OOF!"

As the kids streamed out of their classrooms, they all joined in too.

"OOMPH!"
"OOOOOF!"
"OOMMFF!"



"HELP!" shouted Mama, trapped at the bottom of the pile.

"EVERYONE OFF THIS INSTANT!" bellowed a squashed Staid. "I WILL GET THE HEADMASTER TO GIVE YOU ALL EXTRA MATHS HOMEWORK!"

That did the trick. The children all piled off as quickly as they'd piled on.

"REVERSE BUNDLE!" shouted Tulisa Thunder from near the bottom of the pile.

A few moments later, the family were all standing in the playground, clearing sand out of every conceivable place: ears, nose, hair, socks, shoes.

"Do you promise never, ever to **SPEED** again, Mama?" asked Little Jackie.

Harriet Hurry looked most unhappy, but reluctantly agreed. "YES!" she sighed.

"Say 'I promise'," prompted Alain.
"I promise!" repeated Mama.



Staid's beady eye noticed something. She exclaimed, "Madam! You have your fingers crossed behind your back!"

"MAMA!" moaned the girls.

"All right! All right!" snapped Mama, shaking the last grains of sand from out of her bloomers.

"I PROMISE! **LIGHTNING** exploded into a billion pieces anyway!" she added.

"Then my work here is done," said the PC.

"We can't thank you enough," said Little Jackie.

"You would make a darn fine **police officer**, Mr Jackie Little."

"Thank you," replied the littlest of the littlest girls.

"Come back to the **police** station in ten years' time, and let's see what we can do."

Little Jackie looked disappointed. "That's ages! And I loved being a **police officer**. Please can I stay one? Please!"

Staid looked lost for words. All the girls were now pleading with the PC on their little sister's behalf.

"PLEASE!"

"All right! All right!" blustered Staid. "I will make you the very first **POLICE KID!**"

"YAY!" cried the sisters.

"You didn't have your fingers crossed behind your back?" accused Mama.

"I would not dream of it, madam!" snapped Staid.

"Here!" The lady took off her own **police** hat and placed it on Little Jackie's head.

"Farewell, ladies!"

"GOODBYE!" called out the girls.

"And thank you," added Little Jackie.

"Thank you!" replied Staid, and she paced out of the playground, shaking sand from her socks as she did so.

Mama gathered her girls around her and **hugged** them tight.

"A thousand thank-yous, girls. You taught your mama an important lesson today."

"I hope so," said Little Jackie.



THE WORLD'S WORST PARENTS

"No more **SPEEDING!** No more bicycle!"

"Good, good, Mama," cooed the girls.

"Now, where is the nearest **SKATEBOARD** shop?"



"NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"
they screamed.

LORD GRANDIOSE

The father who was
an upper-class twit

TWIT

TWIT

TWIT

