

THE WORLD'S WORST PARENTS

"YES!" cried all the girls, except Carol. Carol grunted, "KUH!" which Belle took to mean "yes".

In no time, the girls were having a whale of a time. Laughing, joking, climbing trees, skipping through the fields and making up games. And, best of all, picking their noses and scratching their bottoms to their hearts' content. Preferably with the same hand.



The girls were being happy being themselves,
while their parents made absolute
fools of themselves.

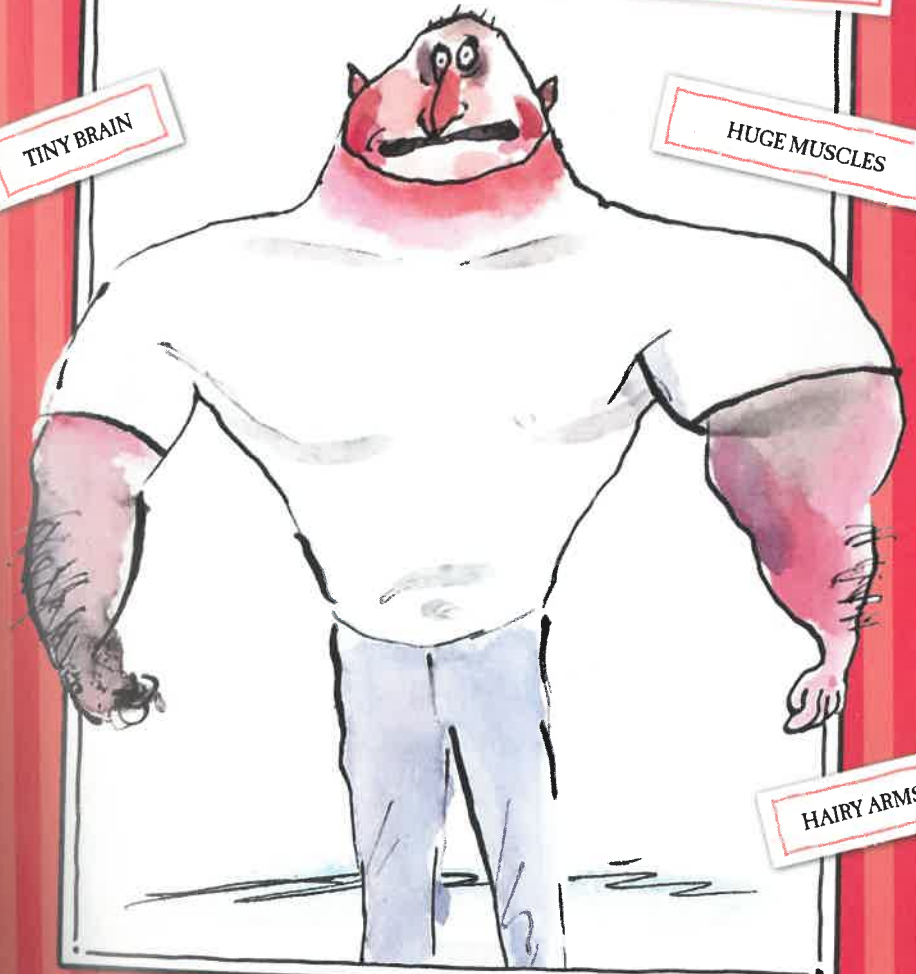
BARRY BOVVER

The dad who was not
the brightest spark

TINY BRAIN

HUGE MUSCLES

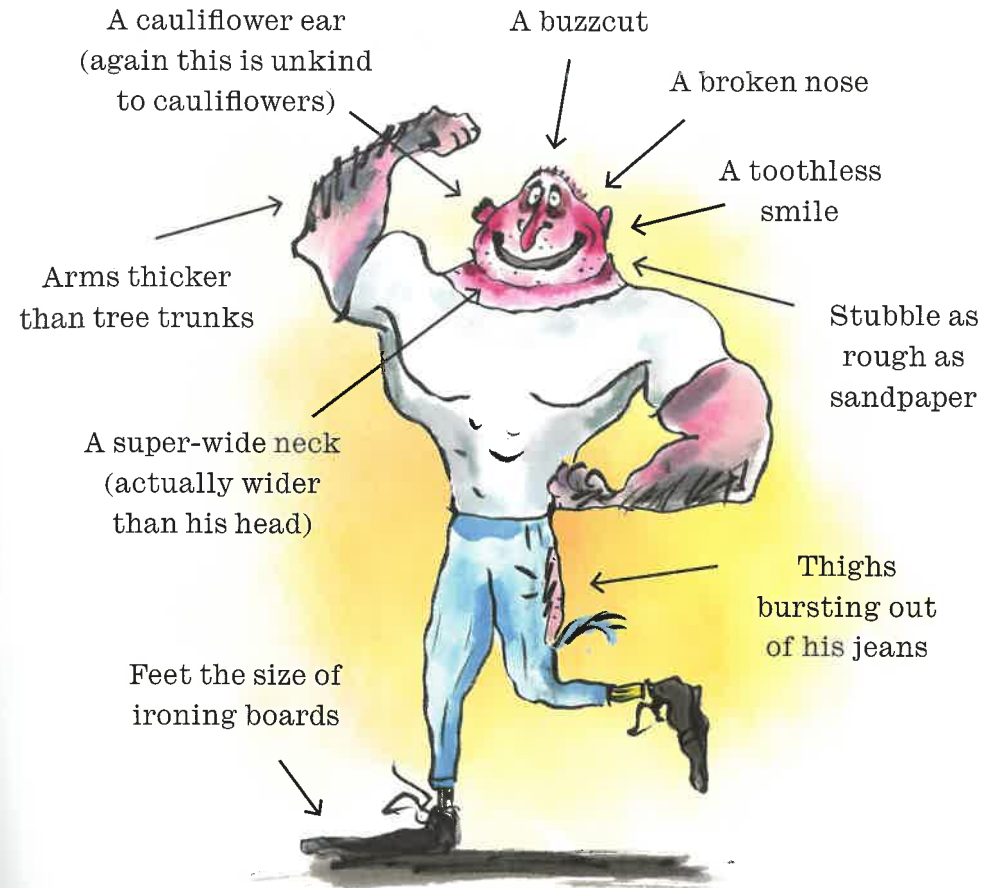
HAIRY ARMS





BARRY BOVVER

TO SAY BARRY BOVVER looked like King Kong would be unkind to King Kong. This beast of a man had:



But his brain was the size of a ping-pong ball.

Whenever he was called upon to use it, such as when asked to spell his own name, he would cry,

"MY BRAIN HURTS!"

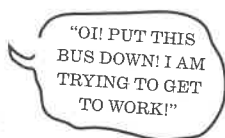
Fortunately, most of the time Barry Bovver didn't have to use his brain. That's because his job was all about how

big his muscles were. Barry was a **Strongman**. He competed with other strongmen all over the country to see who was the **strongest strongman** of them all.

In these contests, the strongmen would:



Lift a double-decker bus above their heads



Wrestle a rhinoceros "MOO!"



Pull a tree out of the ground YANK!



Eat a tank "BURP!"



Perform a squat-lift, holding a walrus "HOOT!"

Run a race with a fridge-freezer strapped to their back "GRUNT!"



Flip a fire engine over SMASH!



Do a staring competition with a hamster NIBBLE!



Snap a train carriage in half KERUNCH!

Do a tug-of-war with an aeroplane as it tries to take off



"EXCUSE ME! I AM TRYING TO GO ON HOLIDAY WILL YOU PLEASE LET GO?"

Just like Barry, all the other famous strongmen looked as if they'd been inflated.

There was:



Micky Might: famous for competing in only a pair of very tight red underpants.



Chaz Carnage: he ate a shark for breakfast.

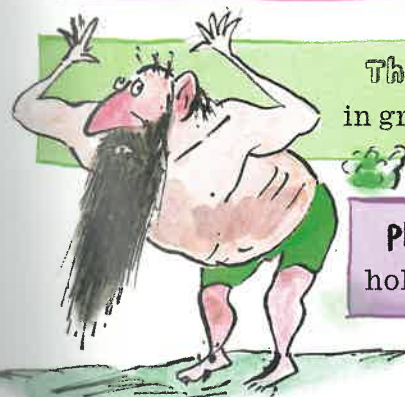
Vince Vicious: legend has it he once head-butted a house, and the house crumbled to the ground.



MUNGO MUSCLE: he only worked out his top half so he had the biggest chest and arms and the smallest spindliest legs.



The Ogre: he only spoke in grunts. From both ends.



PETE PUNCH: he could punch a hole in concrete, and often would.



Gunter Girth: he was so wide he couldn't fit through any door.

Dick Dense: famous for being the cleverest of the strongmen, as he once got a C in Pottery.

Thunder Thump: his fists were bigger than his head.

And the one strongwoman, **Cloris Clout:** she was the most terrifying of them all. Cloris could lift all the strongmen with one hand. And an elephant in the other.

Whenever Barry entered one of these strongmen competitions, which happened most weekends at **FUNFAIRS** and in pub car parks, his family had to come too: his wife, Bianca, and their daughter, Brian.

I know what you are thinking: who would call their daughter **Brian**?



Barry Bovver, that's who. The man didn't realise that Brian was a boy's name.

"MY BRAIN HURTS!"

he exclaimed whenever anyone asked about this.

Needless to say, it was hard being a girl named Brian. But nothing was as hard as having Barry Bovver for a father...

If the family went for a picnic and were sitting in the shade, Dad would rip up the tree and move it somewhere else.

RIIIIIIIIIIP!

When Mum served up an entire roast hog for Sunday lunch, Dad would eat the whole thing in one gulp.

"BURP!"

If there wasn't any room in the supermarket car park, Dad would free up a space by lifting a parked car and placing it right on top of another.

CRUNCH!



When the school bus left one morning without his daughter, Dad yanked it back to the bus stop.

SCREECH!



Once, Dad leaped on to a bouncy castle at Brian's birthday party, and all the children were bounced miles into the air.*

W H O O S H !

If Brian got low marks in a test, Dad would storm into school and swing the teacher around by their ankles until his daughter was made top of the class.

WHIRR!

"YES! IT'S AN A+ NOW, MR BOVVER! PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, I BEG YOU, LET ME GO!"



Whenever Barry went to the loo, he yanked the chain on the toilet so hard that he would bring the bathroom ceiling down with it.

CRUMBLE!

CRASH!

CLATTER!

* **WALLYFACT:** They are still waiting for one of the children to come back down. At the time of writing, a boy named Leo is just re-entering the Earth's atmosphere.

When Father Christmas didn't give Brian a nice enough present, Barry Bovver lifted up the grotto, complete with Father Christmas, reindeer and elves, high into the air until he did.

"HO! HO! H-H-HELP!"



If there was no food in the house, Dad might pull a brick out of the wall and snack on that.*

KERUNCH!

Christmas dinner was always an ordeal, as poor Granny would be yanked across the room and fly out of the window if she dared to pull a cracker with her son.

"A A A H H H !"

CRASH!

Sadly, Barry Bovver was not the brightest spark. So Brian soon learned it was best not to tell her father when something went wrong, or he was likely to respond not with brains but with **BRUTE FORCE**.

* **WALLYFACT:** Bricks are not tasty. If you do find yourself having to eat one, do smother on some jam or peanut butter. Though, I warn you, bricks will still taste rather "bricky".



One afternoon, the girl returned home from school in floods of tears.

"Brian, my darlin'!" exclaimed her mother. "What's the matter?"

Before she spoke, the girl looked through the kitchen window into their little garden.

There she could see her father weightlifting. He had a long metal pole with a caravan on each end. Barry was pushing them up and down as he counted his repetitions.

"A million and five, a million and six..."

It was safe. He couldn't hear. So the girl continued.

"Oh, Mum, it was the headmistress! She accused me of cheating in the exam!"

"Did you?" asked Mum.

"Of course not!" exclaimed the girl. "It was this boy, Swifty Swindle, who cheated by copying me! He is



always doing that and getting away with it!"

"That's awful! I need to have a word with that woman!"

"If you could, Mum," said the girl, dabbing her eyes.

"But promise you won't tell Dad!"

Before Mum had a chance to answer, a huge face loomed at the kitchen window.

"DON'T TELL DAD WOT?" It was Barry Bovver and, judging by his expression, he was in a bovver.

"Nothing, Dad," lied his daughter.

"Go back to your weightlifting, Barry," urged his wife.

"You've still got another million reps to go!"

But Barry was not going to give this up. "Someone's upset my little princess. Brian? Tell me. Who done this?"

"Brian! Don't tell him it was the headmistress!" blurted Bianca. Mum was not the brightest spark either.

"MUM!" exclaimed Brian. "You've gone and done it now!"

"Sorry, love!" she muttered.

"I'm going to give that headmistress a piece of my mind!" Barry declared, stomping into the kitchen.





"DAD, NO!" exclaimed Brian, holding on to one of his arms.

"BARRY, PLEASE!" exclaimed Bianca, holding on to one of his legs.

The beast kept on striding forward. There was nothing that could hold Barry back.

This was a man on a mission. He didn't have time to go through the door. Doors are for wimps! So, instead, Barry Bovver walked straight through the wall.

CRUNCH!

BOOM!

Dust and debris exploded everywhere as the front wall of the house tumbled to the ground.

Brian and her mother were left coughing and spluttering...

"HUH!"

"HUH!"

...as Barry powered on through the dust cloud and down the street.

Any parked cars that were in his way got flipped over on to their side.

WANG!

A cement mixer was tossed over his head into some poor person's front garden.

DUNCH!

They received a brand-new driveway whether they wanted it or not.

A rubbish truck coming down the road was head-butted...

BASH!

...and whizzed backwards.

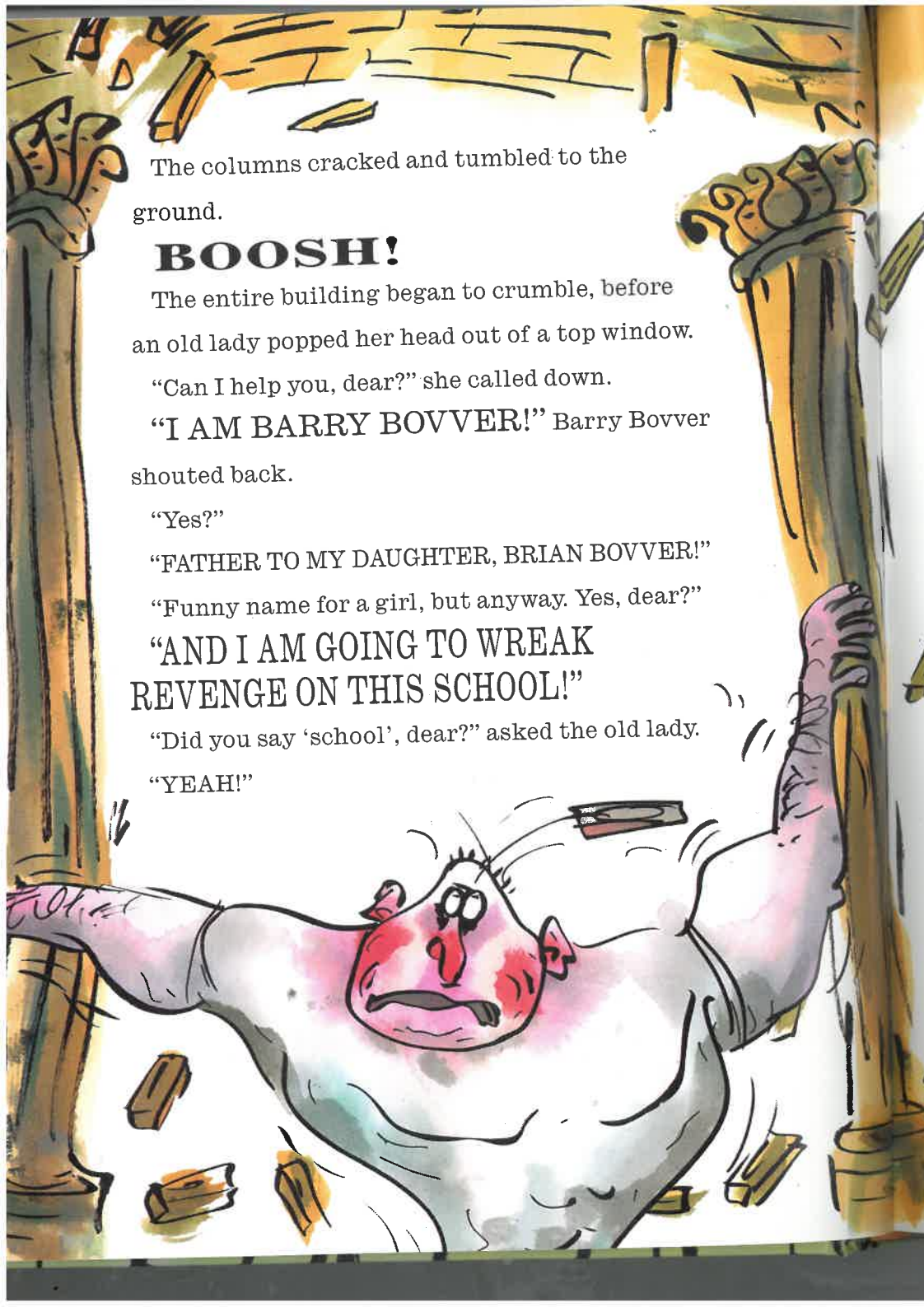
SCREECH!

There was no stopping Barry Bovver.

In no time, the brute had reached his destination.

He stood in front of the huge building and took a deep breath. Barry stomped up the stone steps and stretched out his long arms between the columns that held up the building. Then, with all his might, he pushed them asunder!

CRUNCH!



The columns cracked and tumbled to the ground.

BOOSH!

The entire building began to crumble, before an old lady popped her head out of a top window.

"Can I help you, dear?" she called down.

"I AM BARRY BOVVER!" Barry Bovver shouted back.

"Yes?"

"FATHER TO MY DAUGHTER, BRIAN BOVVER!"

"Funny name for a girl, but anyway. Yes, dear?"

"AND I AM GOING TO WREAK REVENGE ON THIS SCHOOL!"

"Did you say 'school', dear?" asked the old lady.

"YEAH!"

"This isn't the school, dear," she replied. "This is the old folks' home. The school is right next door."

This stopped Barry in his tracks.

"MY BRAIN HURTS!" he exclaimed.

"Easy mistake to make. We are always getting their post. School is just there, dear!"

"SORRY! AND THANK YOU!"

"Have a nice day, dear!" added the old lady as the front wall of the building tumbled to the ground.

**CRASH! WALLOP!
BANG!**

All the old folks were revealed in their rooms, cooing at Barry Bovver's remodelling of their home.

"Ooh, what a lovely view!"

"Nice to have some fresh air!"

"Is it time for tea?"

Meanwhile, Barry Bovver stomped off next door. To be completely sure he was in the right place, Barry shouted up at the building.

"HEADMISTRESS?"

After a moment, a proper-looking lady popped her head out of her office window.

"School is closed!" she barked, patting her hairdo.

"I AM BARRY BOVVER!" he shouted up.

"MY DAUGHTER BRIAN BOVVER'S DAD!"

"Peculiar name for a girl, but do go on!"

"MY PRINCESS IS IN TEARS. POOR PRINCESS BRIAN. SHE NEVER CHEATED IN NO TEST!"

"Yes, I am so, so sorry. Apologies! Apologies! I made a mistake! It was Swifty Swindle all along. The boy has been put in detention. I just telephoned your home, but there was no answer!"

"THE FRONT WALL CAVED IN!"

"Oh dear. I am sorry to hear that! Now, I must dash home to catch some cartoons before tea. So I do pray this is the end of the matter!"

"NO, IT IS NOT!" raged Barry. "I AM GOING TO TEACH THIS SCHOOL A LESSON!"

"We do the teaching here, thank you, Mr Bovver," replied the headmistress.

"DON'T YOU MAKE A MUG OUT OF ME! THE SCHOOL IS FOR IT!"

With that, the beast of a man leaned down, and wedged his mighty sausage fingers underneath the building.

"DAD! STOP!" shouted a breathless Brian, who had just made it to the school gates with her mother. Both were coated from head to toe in dust.

"BARRY! PLEASE! THINK!" added Bianca.

"I DON'T FINK! IT MAKES MY BRAIN HURT! I USE MY MUSCLES!" he boomed. "NOW STAND BACK!"

Then, after a considerable amount of huffing and puffing, he lifted the entire school building off the ground.

"OOF!"

"PUT THIS SCHOOL DOWN AT ONCE!" ordered the



headmistress. "OR I WILL PUT YOU IN DETENTION TOO! YOU CAN WRITE OUT A HUNDRED LINES: 'I MUST NOT LIFT THE SCHOOL BUILDING OFF THE GROUND!'"

"NO!" shouted Barry.

"I AM NOT DOING NO DETENTION! I'M GONNA PUT THIS SCHOOL WHERE IT BELONGS! IN THE BIN!"

Holding the entire weight of the school building with his arms, he staggered across the playground to the wheelie bins in the corner.

"HUH! HUH!

HUH!" he exclaimed

in effort. The school was heavy! A thousand times heavier than two caravans.

"I DON'T THINK IT'S GOING TO FIT, DAD!" shouted Brian.

Her father was really straining with the weight now. Beads of sweat as big as tennis balls were pouring down his face. He looked up at the huge school building, then down at the not-so-big bins. Even Barry Bovver could see this wasn't going to work.

"DO YOU HAVE ANY BIGGER BINS?" he called up to the headmistress, who was clinging on to the window frame for dear life.

"NOOOO!" she wailed. "NOW PUT THE SCHOOL DOWN THIS INSTANT!"

Barry went left, then right, and then the entire school building began wobbling.

"PLEASE, DAD! DO AS THE HEADMISTRESS SAYS!" called Brian.

Now the beads of sweat were the size of footballs.

"I DON'T THINK I CAN HOLD IT ANY..."



But before Barry could say "LONGER" he lost his grip and the school came crashing down upon him.

BOOM!
SPLAT!

"DAD!" called Brian as her horrified mum held her tight.

There was no way they could lift the school building, however hard they tried.

"IS HE ALL RIGHT?" hollered the headmistress.

"NO! HE IS NOT! CALL AN AMBULANCE! CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE! CALL THE POLICE!" bawled Bianca.

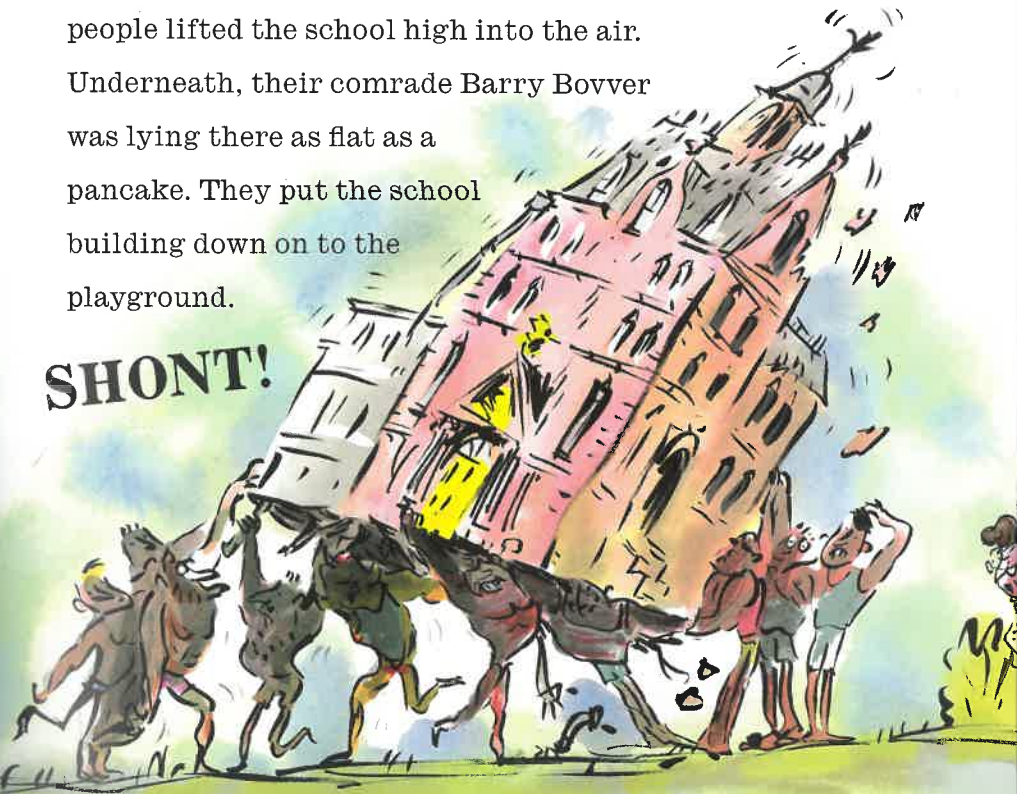
"I know!" exclaimed Brian. "Let's call the strongmen!"

That's exactly what they did, and in no time the nine strongmen and one strongwoman had arrived.

Micky Might (dressed only in his tight red underpants), **Chaz Carnage**, **Vince Vicious**, **MUNGO MUSCLE**, the **Ogre**, **PETE PUNCH**, **Gunter Girth**, **Dick Dense**, **Thunder Thump** and **Cloris Clout** all rushed to the scene. Once they were all there, they gathered around the school building, and placed their sausage fingers beneath it.

"HEAVE!" called Brian, and the ten strong-people lifted the school high into the air. Underneath, their comrade Barry Bovver was lying there as flat as a pancake. They put the school building down on to the playground.

SHONT!



Brian and Bianca rushed over to him.

"DAD! DAD! Are you OK?" gushed his tearful daughter.

"Sorry, Brian. I fink the school was just a tiny bit too heavy for me!"

NEE-NAW! NEE-NAW!

An ambulance sped into the playground. The doctors rolled Brian Bovver up like a French-style crêpe so they could fit him in the back of the ambulance.

"Is he going to be all right?" asked Brian.

"We should be able to knead him back into shape," replied

the doctor. "I hope his brain hasn't been damaged in some way."

"I don't think there is any chance of that," replied the girl.

Just as the ambulance doors were

about to close, Barry the crêpe sat up from the stretcher, and addressed his fellow strong-people.



"I know I am not the brightest spark," he began, "but I hope I have taught you all an important lesson today..."

"What?"

"Do tell us!"

"We wanna know!" replied all the strong-people.

"I may not be the brightest spark, but remember this. Never try to lift a school building above your head!" declared Barry.

There was silence for a moment before all the strongmen and one strongwoman broke into applause.



Brian smiled. "You will always be my brightest spark, Dad.
The brightest spark of light in my life."

The man looked close to tears.

"Fanks. Next time I will try to use my brain!" he said,
pointing to his chest.

Brian didn't have the heart to tell him his brain was
actually in his head.



And as the ambulance doors closed,
Barry Bover smiled and waved goodbye
with his **huge** flat hand.

POSY POOCH

The mother who loved her dog
much more than her child

