

# The Dragonsitter's Surprise





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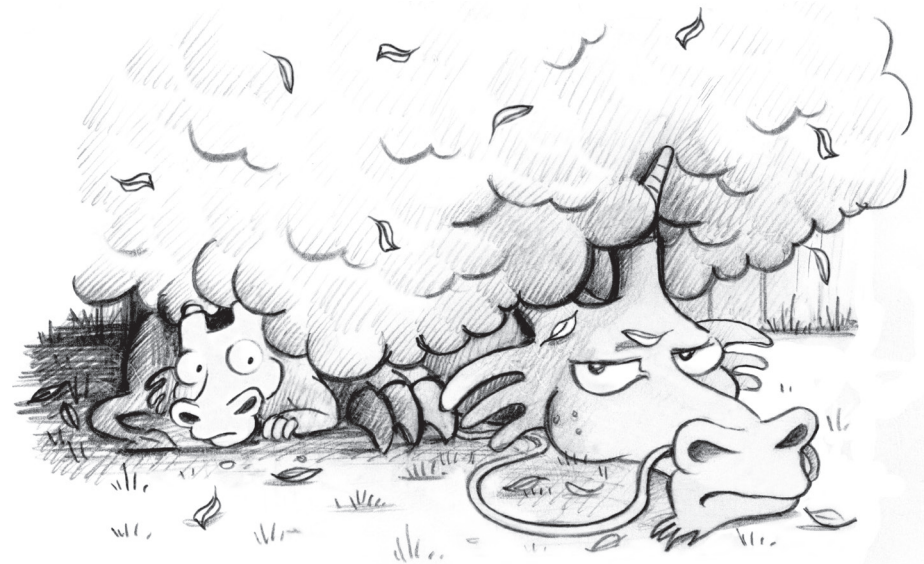
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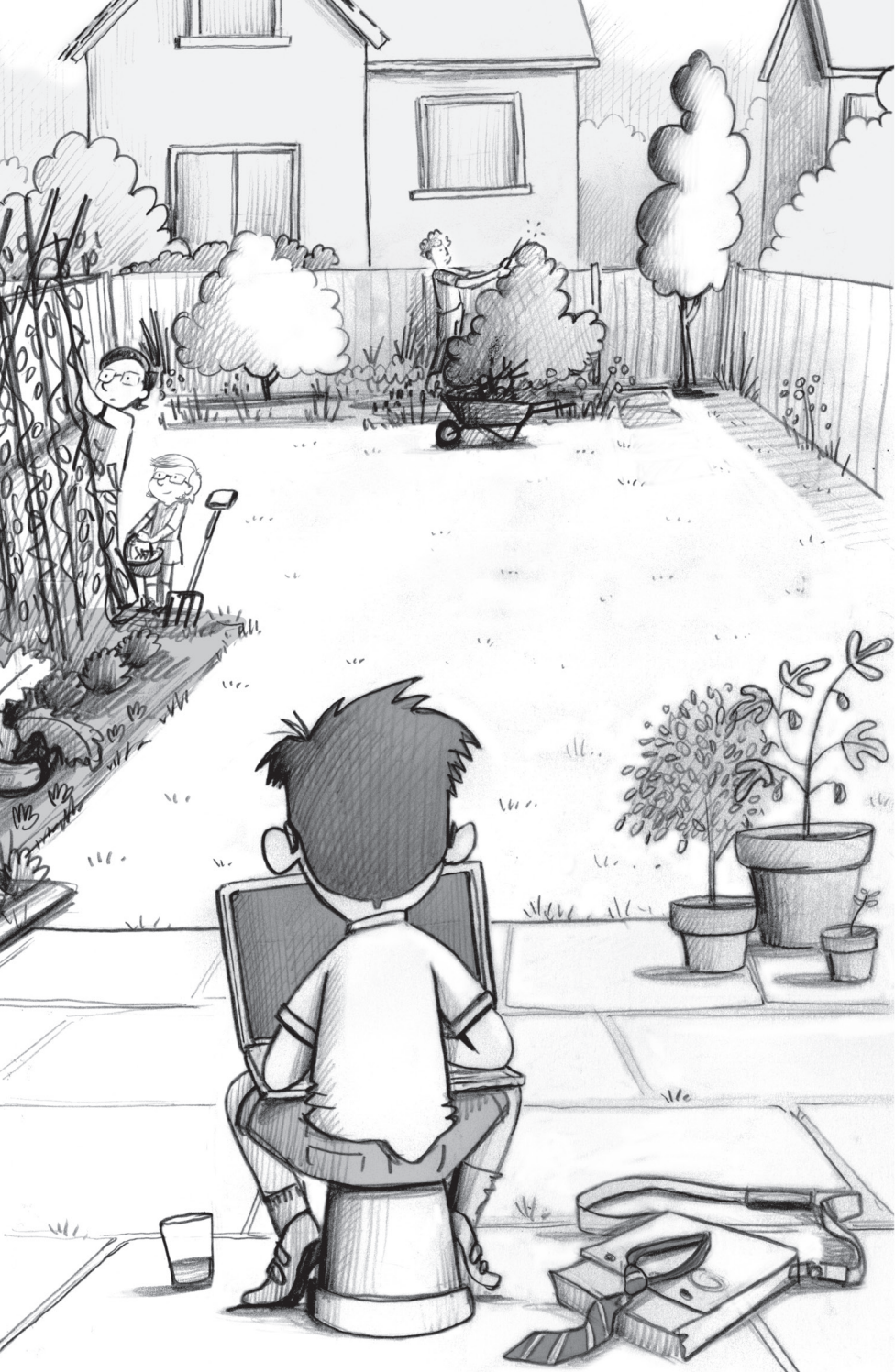


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**From:** Edward Smith-Pickle

**To:** Morton Pickle

**Date:** Monday 10 July

**Subject:** Very exciting news!

 **Attachments:** The egg



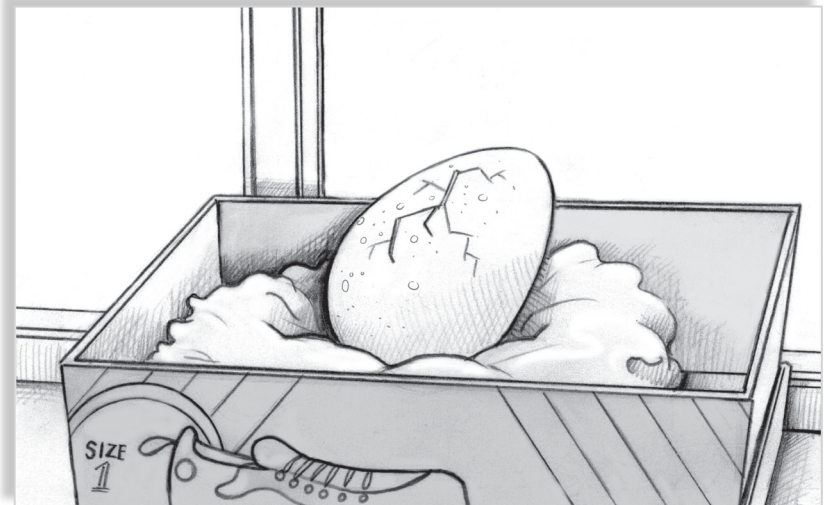
Dear Uncle Morton

Do you remember the egg?

I mean the one you gave me for my birthday.

You said it was dead, but you were wrong.

Look at this picture and you'll see why.



I have already prepared some nice cold sausages and a bar of milk chocolate for the baby dragon's arrival.

I can't wait to see it!

Mum wants to put the egg at the end of the garden till it hatches. She and Gordon spent ages cleaning the house, and they don't want it all messed up.

But what if the baby comes out and gets eaten by one of the cats from next door?

For now I've left it on the windowsill in my bedroom. I hope it will be safe there.

Love from  
your favourite nephew  
Eddie

**From:** Morton Pickle

**To:** Edward Smith-Pickle

**Date:** Tuesday 11 July

**Subject:** Re: Very exciting news!

**Attachments:** The best noodles in Mongolia



Dear Eddie,

Thank you for the delightful photo, but don't get your hopes up.

That egg is dead.

If there is a baby dragon inside, very sadly it will be dead too.

I bought that egg many years ago in a noodle restaurant behind Ulaanbaatar's main railway station.

The chef was planning to use it to make chow mein, but he let me buy it instead. The egg was dead then, and cannot have come alive since.



I can imagine how surprised you were to find a crack in the shell, but sunlight or a sudden change in temperature must have caused that particular fissure.

Please send my best wishes to Emily and the rest of your family. I hope your mother and Gordon are enjoying married life.

Things are busy here. I am hard at work preparing for my expedition to Uzbekistan. I shall be flying over the mountains in a hot air balloon, searching for unicorns.

Would you like to come with me?

With love from

your affectionate uncle

Morton

**From:** Edward Smith-Pickle

**To:** Morton Pickle

**Date:** Wednesday 12 July

**Subject:** More cracks

 **Attachments:** Egg inspection

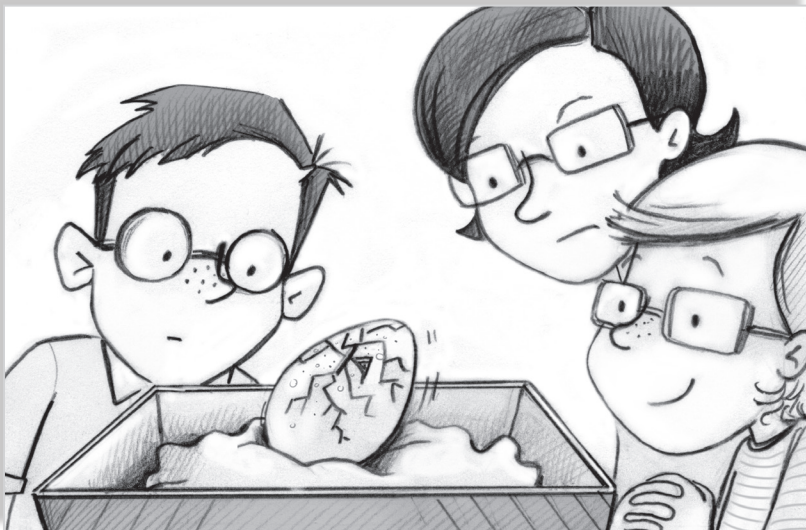


Dear Uncle Morton

I know you're the expert on dragons, but even so, I think you must be wrong about this egg.

It's now covered in cracks.

Mum swears she hasn't touched it.



Gordon was doing DIY over the weekend, but I don't think an egg could be woken up by the sound of hammering.

Emily says she hasn't even been in my room since last Friday.

There is only one possible explanation. The baby is on its way.

Love from

Eddie

PS Thank you for the invitation, but Mum says I'm not allowed in a hot air balloon and visiting Uzbekistan is out of the question. Which is a pity, because I would really like to see a unicorn.

**From:** Edward Smith-Pickle

**To:** Morton Pickle

**Date:** Thursday 13 July

**Subject:** Mum needed



Dear Uncle Morton

Could you bring your dragons to our house? I need Ziggy's help. And Arthur might be useful too.

The egg is going crazy. Every few minutes it shakes and judders and jiggles. Whatever is inside must be coming out soon.

When the baby arrives, it's going to need a mother.

I asked Mum if she could help, but she said she's got her work cut out already.

Also she's a bit under the weather. She ate a dodgy sandwich the other day, and she's had a funny tummy ever since.

So could you please bring Ziggy here ASAP.

I know she isn't really its mother, but she could be its stepmother instead.

Love from

Eddie