

HOW TO
MAKE A

PET MONSTER

HODGEPODGE

LILI
WILKINSON



Illustrations by
**DUSTIN
SPENCE**



For Banjo (the oldest), and Emlyn (the tallest),
and Jolyon (the wildest). **LW.**

For my wife, Shay. Thank you for all your love
and support. **DS.**

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Allen & Unwin
83 Alexander Street
Crows Nest NSW 2065
Australia
Phone: (61 2) 8425 0100
Email: info@allenandunwin.com
Web: www.allenandunwin.com



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ALBERT
STREET
BOOKS

1 HOW TO LIVE IN A **SPOOKY** HOUSE



I'm Artie.

I'm eleven years old,
and my new house is
SPOOKY.

1

I MEAN
REALLY
SPOOKY.



I mean creaky floorboards, dusty attic,
spiders everywhere, **SPOOKY.**



If I believed in ghosts, **WHICH I DO NOT,**
I would think this house was **haunted.**

Mum says the house has 'amazing bones'.

She means it will be great when she
fixes it up, but it makes me think of
actual bones.

It makes me think of skeletons that
jump out of wardrobes...if I believed
skeletons could do that, **WHICH I DO NOT.**

The spooky house isn't the only new
thing in our lives.

It's not just me and Mum living here.
There's also Mum's partner, **David Cole.**
David Cole and Mum have been together
for a while, but this is the first time we've



all lived together in one (**SPOOKY**) house. I don't really know what to call David Cole, now I see him every day. Mr Cole is too formal, David or (worse) Dave is weird, and obviously I'm not going to call him 'Dad', because he isn't my dad.

So I am currently experimenting with not calling him anything.

It seems to be working.

But David Cole and this (not haunted) house aren't even the **newest** or **spookiest** thing about my life now.



Do you know what is?

IT'S WILLOW.



Willow is David Cole's daughter. She's a year older than me, and she's

UTTERLY TERRIFYING.

My bedroom is next to hers, and she's always **SHOUTING** on the phone to her friends, or making sounds on her electric guitar like someone is stomping on a bag of cats.

All I want to do today is read my **Junior Scientist** magazine in peace.

I can't read in my bedroom, because Willow is playing her electric guitar.



I can't read at the kitchen table, because David Cole is making dinner. By the way, David Cole does not believe in recipes. Here are some things he's made since we moved into the scary house:

1. Mashed potato and custard sushi
2. Peanut butter and onion waffles
3. Fried rice with banana and pickle
4. Cheese and strawberry salad
5. Pizza with tinned corn, sweet potato and jam

I can't read **ANYWHERE** downstairs, because it is **Out Of Bounds** while Mum is doing renovation stuff.

I can't read outside, because it's raining.

I can't read in the bathroom, because people keep wanting to go to the toilet.

Maybe I can read in the attic. The attic is at the top of a very skinny flight of stairs which *creeeeeak* when you walk up them.

It's quiet up there.

It's also **SPOOKY**.

I don't believe in ghosts.

Or monsters.



But I
DO
believe in...

SPIDERS.
and
LIGHTNING.
and
THUNDER.

Maybe this wasn't
a good idea after all.

There's a little window
in the attic. The branches
of the giant fig tree in the
backyard clatter and bang
against the window like
SKELETON FINGERS.

I trip on a dirty old sheet
and tumble into the dust.

Under the dirty old sheet
is a **dirty old chest.**



The kind of dirty old chest that a
monster might hide in if they were real,
**WHICH I DO NOT BELIEVE THEY
ARE.** And even though I am **so scared**
I think I might **throw up**, I open the chest.

There isn't a monster inside. Or a
skeleton.

There's a **book**, which is **MUCH** more
interesting. It's called **THE BIGGE BOKE
OF FETCHING MONSTERS.** I think 'bigge
boke' just means 'big
book' in old-time
language. 'Monsters'
definitely doesn't mean
real monsters though.



Suddenly there's a

BIG FLASH

of lightning, followed by

DARKNESS.

I'm in the dark.

ALONE.

In a spooky attic in the spookiest house in the world. Holding a big spooky book about **monsters**.



And it's really, really, **really** lucky that I don't believe in ghosts or walking skeletons. Or monsters.

BECAUSE THERE IS
SOMETHING
STANDING IN THE DOORWAY.



2 HOW TO FIND A **BIG CREEPY BOOK**

It's Willow.

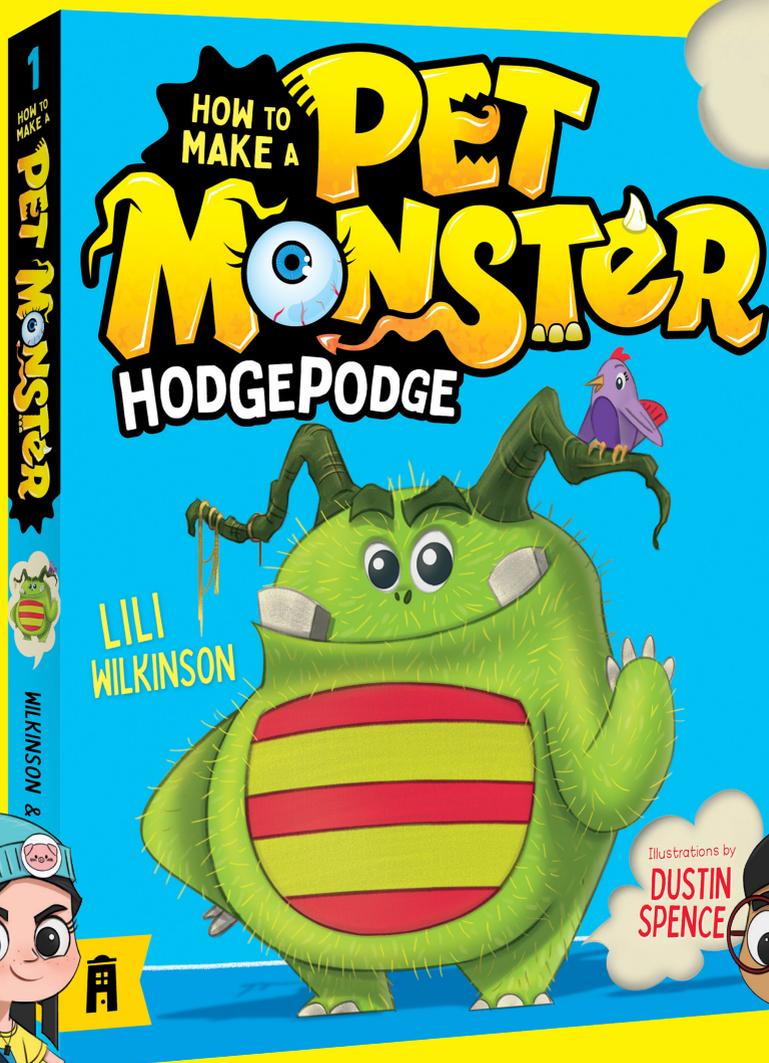
'What are you doing?'
she asks.

'N-nothing,' I say. 'Just
looking for somewhere quiet. To read.'

'You can't read with the lights off.'
Just as she says that, the lights
flicker on.



YOU DEFINITELY CAN'T MAKE A PET MONSTER,
BECAUSE MONSTERS DO NOT EXIST...
RIGHT?



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A HILARIOUS NEW SERIES!

