

From the bestselling author of DRUM ROLL PLEASE, IT'S STEVIE LOUISE

SPOTLIGHT
PLEASE...

IT'S
STEVIE
LOUISE

ART BY
LEIGH HEDSTROM

TANYA HENNESSY



To my Pop, Jack Lonsdale. T.H.



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TANYA HENNESSY



ONE

‘Don’t pull at it, you’ll make it worse,’ I say to Alex as we sit in the Emergency Room. I turn to Hannah, who’s sitting next to him. ‘And you! **WHY** did you think this was a good idea?’

‘Steven, you are not the boss of us,’ Alex says, munching on a vending machine biscuit. ‘Let us live, woman!’

‘I do let you live, hence this situation.’ I wave my hands, gesturing at the actual hospital we are sitting in.

‘It happened under my care, Steven,’ Mum says. ‘I will not be nominated for parent of the year for this one. Alex, your dad is on the way to the hospital now.’ Mum’s face is calm, but I can tell she’s *furiosus* at Hannah.

‘Suzette, girl, he will be fine. This is **VERY** on brand for me,’ Alex says confidently. ‘He will think this is so funny. I promise.’

Let me explain. We are in the ER because Hannah superglued a thirty-centimetre fibreglass unicorn horn to Alex’s forehead and a long unicorn tail to his bum. (When I say tail, I mean Mum’s old rainbow hair extensions.)

‘You’re *ten* years old, *not five*, Alex. You’re more mature this!’ I say. Ugh, I sound like my mother.



'Steven, hello.' Alex points at the unicorn horn. 'I'm not mature. I'm *amazing, iconic* and, at times, **RIDICULOUS**. Hannah and I made a bold choice for me to be a real unicorn. Some people play with fidgets, or slime, and some people become life-size unicorn boys!'

'Where's Alex?' Alex's dad busts into the ER, in his work clothes, looking worried.

'Alex!'

'DAD! YOU'RE HERE!' Alex shouts, spraying biscuit crumbs.

'Alex!' Alex's dad runs over to where we are sitting. 'Are you okay? What happened?!'

Alex's dad reaches out to pull Alex into a hug, but pauses. He inspects Alex's horn and lets out a relieved sigh. He hugs Alex, carefully avoiding the horn, obviously thankful it is



just a URI (unicorn-related injury). (It should be said that Alex has also had an **SRI** – sequin-related injury – *AND* a **GRI** – glitter-related injury – this year.)

Before Alex can explain to his obviously confused dad, the doctor walks into the waiting room and calls out, 'Alex Townsend!'

Alex raises his hand as he finishes his biscuit. The doctor comes over and sits down with us.

'I'm Doctor Remy,' she says. 'Let's have a quick look at you, Alex.'

'Doctor Remy, I live for your nail polish!' Alex says, as the doctor inspects the base of the horn where it's stuck to his forehead.

Doctor Remy smiles. 'So, you wanted to become a unicorn, did you, young man?'

'Ah, maybe,' Alex replies.

'Is he okay?' Mr Townsend asks, still very confused. 'Alex, do you have a rainbow tail?'

'They are my old hair extensions,' Mum

says, rubbing her forehead and looking embarrassed. 'I'm so sorry, Rob.'

'Okay, so,' Alex says, clearly living for this moment. 'Hannah and I were talking about unicorns and how amazing and iconic they are, and then we decided I should **BE** a unicorn.'

'Oh, Alex!' Alex's dad says, sounding both relieved and annoyed.

'Don't worry, Mr Townsend,' Doctor Remy says. 'Alex will be absolutely fine. You think this is bad? We have someone stapled to a chair in here.'

Doctor Remy laughs, but Alex's dad just looks even more alarmed. Doctor Remy clears her throat and continues. 'The thing is, Mr Townsend, these have been glued onto Alex's skin with a very strong glue. It's perfectly safe, but it is meant for building houses.'

Alex gives his dad a sheepish smile.

Doctor Remy turns to Alex. 'We won't

be able to remove the horn or tail without damaging your skin. So, it's best if we let the glue dissolve **NATURALLY**. In a few weeks, the horn and tail will fall off all by themselves,' Doctor Remy explains. 'Until then, just be careful with it. That's a seriously pointy horn!'

'Wait, what?!' Alex says. 'Weeks?!'

'You really can't take it off?' Alex's dad asks. 'Does that mean that for the next few weeks he will be a unicorn-boy?'

'Oh my god,' Alex exclaims. 'I will have to go to school and go everywhere as a unicorn!' Alex is grinning with excitement. 'This is **EVERYTHING!**'

'I'm sorry, Mr Townsend,' says Doctor Remy. 'I don't want to risk removing it unless we absolutely have to. It will come off in its own time in a few weeks.'

'Thanks, doctor,' Alex's dad says. 'It could always be worse!'



'It could also be better,' Alex says. 'Hannah could have glued rhinestones to my face, too. What a missed opportunity!'

Hannah and I laugh, and even Mum smirks. But Alex's dad isn't so happy!

I can tell that Alex's dad – who is the nicest, kindest, most loving dad – is **SERIOUSLY CRANKY** at his unicorn son.



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