

**MY  
MUM IS A  
SPY!**



**ANDY MGNAB**

**JESS FRENCH**

**ILLUSTRATED BY NATHAN REED**



**WELBECK  
FLAME**

# Chapter One

Idris sighed. When Mum had told him that Lucía was coming to stay for half term, he had prepared himself to share the TV remote and maybe some of his model animals, but he had not prepared himself for this.

'Are you ready?' Lucía asked, bouncing excitedly. There was a scrap of paper clenched in her hand, which she was waving wildly from side to side.

'No,' Idris said, turning his back on Lucía and storming out of the room. He didn't make it far before a loud crunch stopped him in his tracks.

**'Ouch!'** he yelled, looking down to see a small plastic object crushed beneath his tiger slippers. From behind him, Lucía let out a loud squeal.

'My spy drone!' she cried. 'Please tell me that wasn't my spy drone.'

'Er . . .' said Idris, thrusting his hands into his pockets. 'It was an accident.'

'Nooo,' she wailed, dropping to her knees and gathering the broken pieces.

Philby, Lucía's scruffy brown dog, bounded into the room and started sniffing around the scene of the crime.

'Get away, Philby,' Lucía said.

'Come here, Philbs,' said Idris softly, calling the dog towards him. Philby was the only good thing about Lucía coming to stay. For as long as Idris could remember, he had begged Mum for a dog, but she



had always said no. Mum was more of a cat person. Unfortunately for Mum, when she had fallen in love with Lucía's dad, she'd had to accept that whenever they came to stay, Philby would come too.

'It's OK,' Lucía said, 'you just broke one of the propellers. With a bit of superglue it will soon be as good as new.'

'Oh phew,' said Idris sarcastically. 'So glad that you will still be interrupting *Creature Feature* with the buzzing of that useless machine for the rest of the week.'

*Creature Feature* was Idris's favourite television programme. Hosted by Jungle Jack, it was packed full of incredible animal facts. Jungle Jack was Idris's idol, and one day, Idris hoped to be a wildlife presenter just like him. Or maybe a vet. He wasn't entirely sure yet; all he knew

was that he would definitely work with animals, preferably outside. He couldn't imagine anything worse than being stuck in an office all day, like his mum.

'So now will you listen to me?' Lucía asked.

'I already told you,' Idris said. 'I'm not interested.'

'Well, I'm going to read it to you anyway,' Lucía said. She cleared her throat and began, 'Reasons that Sarah is a spy. Number one . . .'

**'Arrrgh,'** growled Idris.

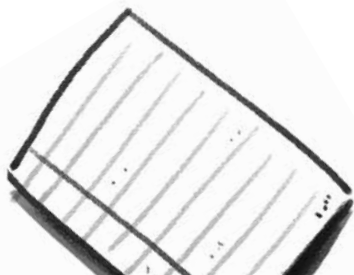
Could Lucía be any more annoying? When she'd been obsessed with sports cars back in the summer, she'd been unbearable. She'd zoomed around the flat, screeching around corners and reversing quickly down the hallway. But this was worse. Lucía's latest obsession was spies.



She wouldn't talk about anything else. She spent her days creeping about, listening through doors, writing codes and scribbling down anything that she considered to be a clue. Worst of all, she was convinced that Idris's *mum* was a spy.

Idris stomped into his bedroom and slammed the door. He could hear Lucía banging on the other side and knew that he was risking another complaint from Mrs Jones next door, but he didn't care. He'd had enough. He scanned the room for his headphones, catching snatches of what Lucía was shouting as they drifted through the door . . .

' . . . crossword champion . . . different name. . . car chase . . . five languages. . . '



He hurried over to his desk, which stood below a poster of an orangutan. Ah, there were his headphones. He thrust them over his ears and the sound of Lucía's voice was drowned out immediately. Idris looked at the orangutan poster and sighed.

'I bet you've never had this problem, have you?' he asked. 'You're a solitary male. You spend almost all of your time alone in the treetops.'

Idris wished he could live alone in the trees. He barely ever got to spend time in the wild. There was a nature reserve just out of town, but his mum was usually too busy working to take him.

'That's Lucía,' he said to the orangutan, jerking his head towards the bedroom door. 'Annoying, isn't she?'

He sighed and sat down at his desk.



'Oh, and to top it all off . . .' He put his head in his hands. 'She thinks my mum is a spy.'

He almost laughed at how ridiculous it was. His mum was the furthest thing from a spy he could imagine. He could list a million reasons why she would make a terrible spy. In fact, that was exactly what he would do! He sat up straight and started

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to ferret through the messy piles on top of his desk until he found his notebook. He flicked past his notes on rattlesnake venom and found the first clean page, then wrote:

REASONS MY MUM IS ABSOLUTELY,  
DEFINITELY 100% NOT A SPY

1. She works fifty hours a week at Bingo Blotts' Paperclip Factory - when would she have time to be a spy?
2. The last time she exercised was a Zumba class at the village hall when I was five.
3. She can barely deliver a lamb chop, let alone a karate chop.
4. She is useless with technology. She doesn't even own a smartphone.
5. Her idea of an exciting day out is going to the zoo and spending three hours watching the guinea pigs.

Idris sat back and cracked his knuckles. He felt a bit better after writing his list. He almost felt guilty about slamming the door on Lucía.

The problem was, when Lucía insisted that his mum was a spy, it just reminded Idris of how *boring* and *ordinary* his mum was. Lucía would never understand how that felt. Lucía's dad was an *exotic animal vet!* **COOLEST. JOB. IN. THE. WORLD.**

