

Bad Frog at School



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Chapter One

It was Olly's first day at his new school. He had new shoes and a new coat and was carrying a new rucksack.

They all felt a little strange. Going to a new school felt strange too. But what felt stranger than anything was leaving behind his new pet – Mr Splat.

“You can't take a frog to school,” Mum had told him. “Pets aren't allowed.”

“He'll be quite happy here at home with me,” Great-Aunt Grindle said.

So, reluctantly, Olly said good-bye to Mr Splat before setting off.

He was nearly at the school gate when he heard a familiar noise.

SPLAT! SPLAT SPLAT!

Olly turned round. There was Mr Splat jumping down the road towards him.

“Mr Splat! You can't come with me!” Olly cried.

“**BURP?**” said Mr Splat.

“No! Go back home!” urged Olly.

“**BURP!**” said Mr Splat, and he jumped onto Olly's feet.

“Oh, help,” said Olly. “I can't take you home, or I'll be late for school. But I can't take you into school either!”

He could only think of one thing to do. He took off his new rucksack and opened it. At once Mr Splat jumped in.

“Come on, then,” said Olly. He hoped that he would find somewhere safe to put Mr Splat when he was in the school. A frog couldn't spend all day inside a rucksack.

The school was very big, with children everywhere. Olly didn't know which way to go, so he asked a friendly looking boy with freckles.

"I'm supposed to be in Mr Field's class," he said. "Where is it, please?"

"That's my class," the boy said cheerfully. "I'm Eric. I'll take you there."

"BURP!" said the rucksack.

"Pardon?" said Eric.

"Er, sorry," mumbled Olly. "I ate my breakfast too fast." He thought he had better not tell anyone about Mr Splat, since pets were not allowed in school.

He followed Eric through a door and across a courtyard. In the courtyard there was a little pond. It was surrounded by tall plants and covered with weed.

It was the perfect place for a large, unwanted frog to spend the day. Quickly Olly bent down and fumbled with his rucksack. He slipped Mr Splat out into the plants without anybody noticing. Mr Splat was hidden by the leaves.

"BURP!" he said approvingly.

"You stay there," Olly told him. Then he hurried after Eric to his new classroom.

His teacher, Mr Field, greeted Olly with a smile.

"Welcome to our class," he said. "We're going to assembly now. Everyone line up quietly at the door."

They trooped into the big hall. There were hundreds of children sitting on the floor. At the front stood Mrs Lettifer, the Head, looking very tall and stern. Nobody dared to even whisper.

Mrs Lettifer announced, "We have two new children in our school today. Let us say hallo to them. Please stand up, Sophie."

A little girl stood up at the front. She was very small, and she was crying.

“Dear me,” said Mrs Lettifer. “Whatever is the matter?”

“I miss Rufus!” Sophie wailed.

“Rufus?”

“Rufus is my dog!” Sophie hiccupped.

“Rufus will be waiting for you when you go back home,” said Mrs Lettifer, sounding impatient. “Our other new child is Oliver. Please stand up, Oliver.”

Olly stood up. He felt very conspicuous.

“Welcome to our school,” said Mrs Lettifer. “And do you have a dog waiting for you at home?”

Olly thought of saying, *No, but I have a frog*. He opened his mouth to say it.

And then two things happened.

First, he remembered that Mr Splat was not at home. He was at school, safely in the pond.

Secondly, he realised that Mr Splat was not safely in the pond. Because just at that moment something big and green went ***SPLAT!*** against the window, right behind the Head.

Chapter Two

Children screamed.

Mrs Lettifer whirled round. “What was that?” she said.

SPLAT! Something big and green jumped up and hit the window again – and again, and again. **SPLAT! SPLAT! SPLAT!**

Because Olly was standing up, he could see through the window to the courtyard and the pond.

And because Olly was standing up, Mr Splat could see *him*. Now Mr Splat was trying to get inside the school to be with Olly.

All the other children began scrambling to their feet, jostling to see this strange green thing that was leaping at the window with such loud **SPLATS**.

“It’s a giant frog monster!” shouted Eric.

“Nonsense!” said Mrs Lettifer. “Whatever it is, Miss Cuff the Caretaker will take care of it.”

Sure enough, a harassed-looking woman appeared in the courtyard waving a broom.

“Get the frog monster!” yelled Eric. Miss Cuff began to chase Mr Splat round and round the pond, trying to whack him with the broom.

But every time the broom went **WHACK**, Mr Splat just hopped away. He was used to dodging brooms. Great-Aunt Grindle had tried to whack him with a broom, but she had never caught him.

Neither did Mrs Cuff. Instead, as she gave one mighty **WHACK**, she lost her balance.

She teetered – she toppled –

And then she fell splash into the pond.

“The giant frog monster’s drowning Miss Cuff!” yelled Eric. The younger children began to shriek and cry.

Mr Splat turned round and gave them all a wide and wicked grin, before he hopped away.

Olly could not see where he had gone. By now, teachers were rushing into the courtyard to help Miss Cuff out of the pond; but when they looked around for Mr Splat, they could not see him either.

“Silence!” thundered Mrs Lettifer. “I will not have you shrieking like a flock of mad macaws. Everyone walk quietly back to class!”

So everyone walked back; but they were not quiet. They were all chattering excitedly about the giant frog monster that had tried to break in through the window and eat up Mrs Lettifer.

Olly didn’t say a word. He didn’t dare tell them that Mr Splat was his. He would end up in terrible trouble for bringing a frog to school and making Miss Cuff fall in the pond.

Where could Mr Splat have gone? He hoped his pet would find somewhere else to hide.

Maybe Mr Splat would hop back home... That thought comforted Olly a little, until he remembered where the courtyard was.

It was in the middle of the school. Mr Splat could not hop home without going through the building.

“Oh, help!” thought Olly, and he crossed as many fingers as he could. He had to uncross them again for maths, because he needed them to count on – but he did not stop worrying about Mr Splat.

Break time came. “Are you coming out to play?” asked Eric. “We’re going to play Chase the Giant Frog Monster!”

“In a minute,” Olly said.

He pretended he was going to the cloakroom; but instead, he went back to the courtyard to look for Mr Splat.

The courtyard was full of children gazing at the pond. They were poking sticks in it and talking about the Giant Frog Monster.

However, Olly felt sure that Mr Splat was no longer in the pond. He wouldn’t have put up with all those sticks being poked at him. So he must have hidden somewhere else.

But where? Olly gazed around. There were four doors into the courtyard, one on each side – and all of them were open. He walked around and peered through each door in turn.

At the last door, he saw what he was looking for.

A line of big wet **SPLATS** led down the corridor. Nobody noticed Olly as he slipped through the door and followed them.

There were no children here. The corridor was quiet. The splats led to another door, which was closed.

Olly was about to push it open when he heard a voice.

“What are you doing here?”

He turned round. It was Mrs Lettifer.

“I- I’m just looking for the toilet,” stammered Olly.

“Oh, you’re the new Oliver, aren’t you? Well, you’re in the wrong place. This is the staff toilet. The children’s toilets are down there. Turn right at the corner.”

“Thank you,” said Oliver.

He had to walk the way she pointed. Stopping at the corner, he looked back.

Mrs Lettifer was just going in through the closed door where the trail of splats had led.

Olly held his breath. For a moment all was silent.

Then there was a loud and piercing scream.

Chapter Three

The door burst open. Mrs Lettifer came staggering out backwards. After her came leaping something big and green. It wore a wide, wicked grin and several yards of toilet roll.

SPLAT! SPLAT! SPLAT!

A group of children came hurtling in from the courtyard as soon as they heard the scream.

“It’s the giant frog monster!” they yelled. “Catch it!” As Mr Splat bounded up the corridor, they gave chase.

Mr Splat was heading straight for Olly. Olly had to protect him – even if it meant a terrible telling-off for bringing a frog to school.

So he stood still, held out his arms and waited for Mr Splat to leap into them.

But Mr Splat had other ideas. He did not leap into Olly’s arms. He leapt the opposite way, and splatted off down a different corridor.

Olly began to run after him. The other children ran into Olly, and all of them fell over in a shouting heap.

They sat up and looked around.

“Where’s the giant frog monster gone?”

Mr Splat was nowhere to be seen. The children opened doors and peered into rooms and cupboards until Mrs Lettifer swooped down on them.

“Back to your classrooms!” she cried. “I will not have you snuffling round the school like little wild wart-hogs!”

All the children trooped back to their classrooms in disgrace. So did Olly. He tried to pretend nothing was wrong: but he was very worried.

For the rest of the morning, while Olly tried to listen to Mr Field, he was also listening out for Mr Splat.

But nothing went **SPLAT** on the window. Nothing went **SPLAT** on the door. Maybe Mr Splat had found a good, safe place to hide. He hoped so.

At lunchtime, Eric said, “Are you having school dinner? Good! So am I! It’s sausages today. I’ll show you where to go.”

In the dining room, Olly lined up behind Eric, holding a plastic tray. The dinner ladies put sausages and peas and mash on one side of each tray, and banana custard on the other side.

The food looked good. Olly’s stomach rumbled hungrily. But when it was his turn, the dinner lady ran out of banana custard.

“Don’t worry! We’ve got plenty more,” she assured him. Going to the back of the kitchen, she fetched an enormous dish of banana custard. She put it on the counter, and dug her big spoon into it.

WHOOSH!

The bowl erupted like a yellow volcano. Everybody in the queue was splattered with huge dollops of cold custard.

In the middle of the bowl was something fat and green and grinning. It jumped out, covered in custard, and took a mighty leap onto the nearest table.

“A giant custard frog monster!” shouted Eric.

“Mr Splat!” gasped Olly; but nobody heard Olly. They were too busy shrieking as Mr Splat leapt across the tables.

SPLAT! He sprang into a pile of peas.

SPLAT! SPLAT! He bounced across a mound of mashed potato.

SPLAT! He pounced upon a sausage and gobbled it up in just one bite.

“**BURP,**” he said.

Before anyone could catch him, he jumped to the next table. Sausage rolls were Mr Splat’s very favourite food; so sausages were the next best thing. Mr Splat was on a sausage hunt.

Within minutes he had leapt on every table in the room, gobbling up sausage after sausage. The stunned children were covered in splats of peas and mash and custard.

Last of all Mr Splat jumped onto a table where a very little girl sat crying.

It was the new Sophie. Mr Splat grabbed a sausage off her plate and gulped it down. Small Sophie sat and stared with her mouth open. She was so surprised that she forgot to cry.

“BURP!” said Mr Splat. He grinned a wide and wicked grin. Then he leapt for the door – just as Mrs Lettifer appeared.

Chapter Four

“Stop that frog!” cried Mrs Lettifer.

Mr Splat did not stop. He leapt onto Mrs Lettifer and landed on her shoulder.

“Erk!” she screamed. She tried to grab him, but he was so slippery with custard that he slid straight through her hands. Then off he splatted down the corridor, leaving a custard trail.

When the children tried to follow him, Mrs Lettifer held her hand up.

“Stop!” she commanded. “I will not have you chasing through the school like a herd of headstrong hyenas! Sit down and eat your lunch.”

So they all sat down and ate their lunch – even Olly, although he could hardly swallow a thing for worrying about Mr Splat.

Meanwhile, Mrs Lettifer and Miss Cuff went hurrying off after the frog. They were bound to catch him, Olly thought. And then what would they do to him?

He decided he would have to confess everything to Mrs Lettifer. It was the only way to make sure she did not hurt Mr Splat.

So after lunch, he walked up and down the school looking for her. When he found her, she looked very cross, and she did not have Mr Splat. Instead she had Small Sophie, who was crying again.

Before Olly could speak, Mrs Lettifer said, “New Oliver! Please take Small Sophie out to play. I need to find this dreadful frog.”

She marched off before Olly could tell her that the dreadful frog was his. So instead he took Small Sophie’s hand and led her out into the playground.

“What do you like to play?” he asked her kindly.

Sophie just sniffed and stuck a thumb in her mouth.

Olly racked his brains to think of a game that she could play. But all he could think about was Mr Splat.

In desperation he suggested, “How about a game of *What time is it, Mr Splat?*”

Small Sophie took out her thumb. “How do you play that?” she asked.

Olly explained. It was almost the same game as *What time is it, Mr Wolf?* except that instead of getting chased by a wolf, you got chased by a giant frog monster.

And when it chased you, it went **SPLAT, SPLAT, SPLAT!**

Small Sophie liked this game. So did the other children in her class. Soon Olly was surrounded by small children creeping up on him very loudly and shouting **SPLAT! SPLAT! SPLAT!** They hadn’t quite got the hang of it, but they were having fun.

By the time they went inside, half the school was shouting **SPLAT! SPLAT! SPLAT!** as they bounced through the door.

“What a dreadful noise!” said Mrs Lettifer, glaring at them. “I will not have you jumping through school like a crowd of crazy kangaroos! Creep in silence to your classrooms.”

She was so annoyed that Olly did not tell her about owning Mr Splat. It did not seem like a good time.

At least Mrs Lettifer had not found his pet. Olly hoped that Mr Splat had found a really good hiding place, where no one would discover him.

But then he realised there was a problem. How would Olly discover him? He would have to find Mr Splat at home time. He couldn’t leave him here all night!

Olly began to worry again. He worried all through art, and all through reading.

“Time for PE,” said Mr Field. “If I’ve heard you read, go down to the hall and practise throwing beanbags. I’ll be there in five minutes.”

So the children went down to the hall and got the box of beanbags out of the PE cupboard.

Olly was still trying to work out where Mr Splat could be. He was so busy looking round for his pet that he kept missing the beanbag that Eric threw to him.

“What’s the matter?” Eric asked.

“I’m just wondering where that frog is hiding,” Olly said. “Where would you hide, if you were a frog?” Eric knew the school much better than Olly, so he might have some good ideas.

But Eric just started shouting **SPLAT! SPLAT! SPLAT!**

And then the rest of the class joined in, shouting **SPLAT! SPLAT! SPLAT!** and pretending that their beanbags were giant leaping frog monsters.

“Just what is going on?”

Mrs Lettifer had marched through the door holding Small Sophie by the hand. Small Sophie was crying again.

“What is the meaning of this dreadful noise?” demanded Mrs Lettifer. “I’m trying to cheer up Sophie, and all I can hear are splats! I will not have you splatting in this school like a jamboree of jumping jellyfish! Put away those beanbags.”

Everyone went quiet. Eric opened the PE cupboard and got the box. Sadly and silently, everybody dropped the beanbags in.

Olly was the only one who saw something big and green and grinning appear over the cupboard door.

He gasped. No one else had noticed Mr Splat. Mrs Lettifer had her back to him, and everyone else was crowding around Eric and the box.

Nobody was watching Olly. He waved his hand frantically at Mr Splat, trying to tell him to go back in the cupboard.

Small Sophie stopped crying and looked at him in surprise. Then she turned round and saw Mr Splat.

Mr Splat did not move. Perched on the door, he grinned a wide and wicked grin.

“**BURP!**” he said.

“I beg your pardon?” said Mrs Lettifer.

“Oops!” said Small Sophie. “Sorry.”

At last Mr Splat jumped back into the cupboard and disappeared. Olly almost collapsed in relief.

Mr Splat was hidden again; but now Olly knew where to find him. There were only ten minutes to go till home time. In ten minutes he could smuggle Mr Splat into his rucksack, and carry him safely home.

Just as long as Sophie didn’t say anything...

He looked at her and put his finger to his lips. Small Sophie smiled and put a finger to her lips too. “Ssh!” she said.

“Quite right,” said Mrs Lettifer. “We’ve had enough noise. Well, what are you waiting for? Back you go to your classroom!”

As they turned to go, there was a mighty rumble. Then, with a crash, the PE cupboard burst open.

Chapter Five

There was a cascade of basketballs, footballs, tennis balls and ping-pong balls. They cannoned out of the cupboard and bowled the children over like ninepins.

A dozen hoops bounced out and wrapped themselves round Mrs Lettifer. Skipping ropes hurtled out like flying snakes and tangled up the children's feet.

Finally, out hopped Mr Splat.

"Get that frog!" cried Mrs Lettifer.

Nobody got the frog. Nobody could move. All Olly's class had been bowled over and tied up; and Mrs Lettifer was trapped inside the hoops.

Mr Splat gave them all a wide and wicked grin.

"**BURP**," he said.

Olly was in despair. What awful thing would Mr Splat do next? He was about to call him when he heard a voice say,

"Mr Frog!"

It was Small Sophie. She was holding out a sausage.

Mr Splat's eyes gleamed. He jumped over to Sophie – **SPLAT**, **SPLAT**, **SPLAT** – and gobbled up the sausage.

While he was busy gobbling, Olly managed to free himself from the ropes. He threw himself on Mr Splat.

"Caught you!" he said.

"Well done, the pair of you!" exclaimed Mrs Lettifer. "But Sophie, where did you get that sausage?"

"Um... I found it on the floor," said Sophie.

"Now, what shall we do with this dreadful frog?" said Mrs Lettifer.

“I know!” said Olly, firmly grasping Mr Splat. “If someone fetches my rucksack, I can put Mr – I can put the frog inside and take it home. It know a place where it’ll be quite happy.”

“Is there a pond near you?” asked Mrs Lettifer. “What a good idea. Well, Eric, you heard Oliver! Don’t just lie there like a stranded seal! Go and get his rucksack!”

So Eric got the rucksack, and Oliver put Mr Splat inside.

“It’s almost home time,” he whispered. “You won’t be there for long.”

“I must say,” Mrs Lettifer declared, “I am very glad to have two such helpful and resourceful new children in my school. Off you go now, all of you.”

Ten minutes later, Olly had his coat on and was ready to go home. All his class were crowding round him. They wanted to see inside the rucksack, but Olly shook his head.

“He’ll get out and start splatting around the school again,” he said.

“But that was great!” they cried. “It was the best day ever!”

“Maybe you could take him home,” suggested Eric, “and keep him as a pet.”

“Maybe I could,” said Olly. “That’s not a bad idea.”

As the bell rang, everybody rushed outside. Olly saw Small Sophie talking to her Mum.

“There he is!” she said. She ran over to Olly and whispered, “Can I tell you a secret?”

“All right,” said Olly.

“I didn’t really find that sausage on the floor. I put it in my pocket at lunch time so I wouldn’t have to eat it. I hate sausages! I was really pleased when that big frog ate my other sausage up!”

“Good,” said Olly. “Shall I tell you a secret?”

When Sophie nodded, he bent down and whispered.

“I’m not going to put that frog into a pond. I’m going to put him in my wardrobe, because that’s where he lives.”

Small Sophie burst out giggling and clapped her hands to her mouth.

“I’ll never tell,” she promised, and she skipped back to her mum.

Olly set off home. Although he felt very tired, for a first day it hadn’t been too bad.

He’d made friends with Eric, he’d been praised by Mrs Lettifer, he’d cheered up Small Sophie – and he’d given his new class their best day ever!

Actually, no, he hadn’t done that: Mr Splat had.

“Thank you, Mr Splat,” said Olly to his rucksack.

“**BURP!**” said Mr Splat.

The End

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Have you read the other stories about Olly and Mr Splat? The first story, *Bad Frog!*, and the third story, *Bad Frog At Work*, are free to read or download at Emma Laybourn’s website

www.megamousebooks.com.

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