

THE GHASTLY MCNASTYS

THE LOST TREASURE
OF LITTLE SNORING



LYN GARDNER & ROS ASQUITH

Piccadilly

Chapter 1



Captain Gruesome McNasty and his twin brother Captain Grisly McNasty were standing on the deck of their ship, *The Rotten Apple*. They had just thrown their rusty old anchor over the side of the ship,

which had screeched to a halt leaving a terrible trail of skid marks in the sea.

‘Sweaty socks!

What a wickedly wonderful day for gruesomeness,’ declared Captain Gruesome gleefully, scratching his handlebar moustache, which was home to 761 nits, 77 fleas and a ferret.



for ghastliness,' agreed his brother, Grisly.



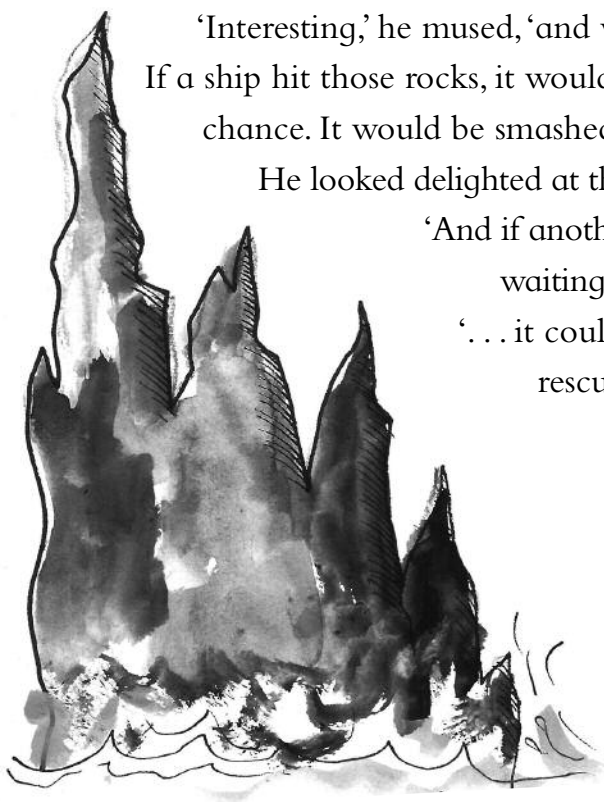
Captain Gruesome got out his telescope, stroked his moustache thoughtfully, and considered the treacherous rocks which jutted out from the sandbanks and formed a semi-circle not far from the harbour mouth of the small village on the island shore. The village was called Little Snoring on Sea. The rocks, which rose from the sea like vicious teeth, were known locally as the Jaws.

‘Interesting,’ he mused, ‘and very useful. If a ship hit those rocks, it wouldn’t stand a chance. It would be smashed to pieces.’

He looked delighted at the prospect.

‘And if another ship was waiting nearby ...’

‘... it could go to the rescue of all the passengers and crew,’



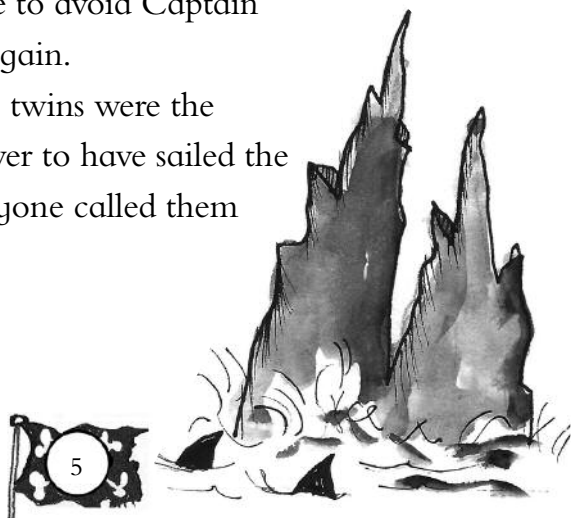
squawked Pegleg
Polly, the parrot.

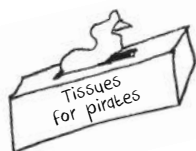
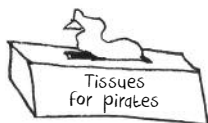
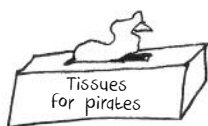
‘Idiot bird,’
snarled Captain
Gruesome, swiping
his fist in Polly’s
direction and missing.

‘The waiting ship could
snaffle any treasure that
happened to be onboard, and leave
the passengers and crew to their grisly fate
on the sandbanks as the tide rises.’

‘Nasty boys! Porky pies!’ squawked Pegleg
Polly, flapping her wings and lifting off her
perch just in time to avoid Captain
Gruesome’s fist again.

The McNasty twins were the
nastiest pirates ever to have sailed the
Seven Seas. Everyone called them

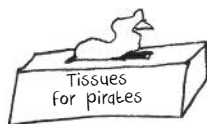
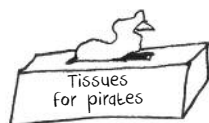
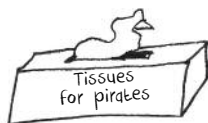
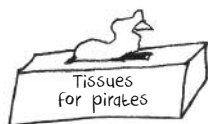
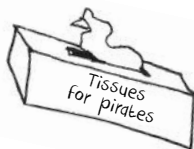




‘those nasty boys’, except their friends, who called them Bob and Tim. They didn’t have any friends though, only imaginary ones, and even they refused to play with the twins and would only play with each other.

But they did have a second mate called Mrs Slime. Mrs Slime

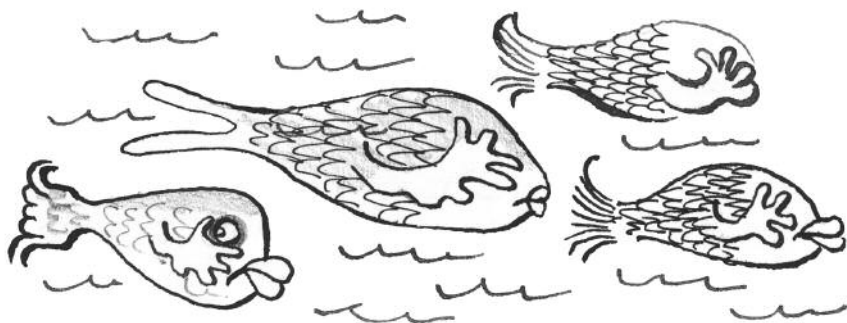
was called Mrs Slime on account of her nose, which ran a great deal. She didn’t like the McNasty twins much either, but they paid her in boxes of tissues. That was very useful because she had already used up both sleeves wiping her nose.








Captain Gruesome and Captain Grisly were so ghastly and nasty that even the fish put their fingers over their eyes and swam in the opposite direction when they saw the twins coming in *The Rotten Apple*.



The twins were the meanest of the mean, and horrible in every way. The thing that Captain Gruesome McNasty liked best was making anyone he spied doing something nice or helpful walk the plank into shark-infested seas. Captain Grisly McNasty's

favourite thing was eating cold, lumpy mashed potato left over from last night's tea. He kept it hidden in his big bushy beard just in case he felt peckish and was more than 700 leagues from the nearest McNasty's (a fast food chain run by distant relatives featuring those famous octopus burgers that taste of Brussels sprouts with custard).



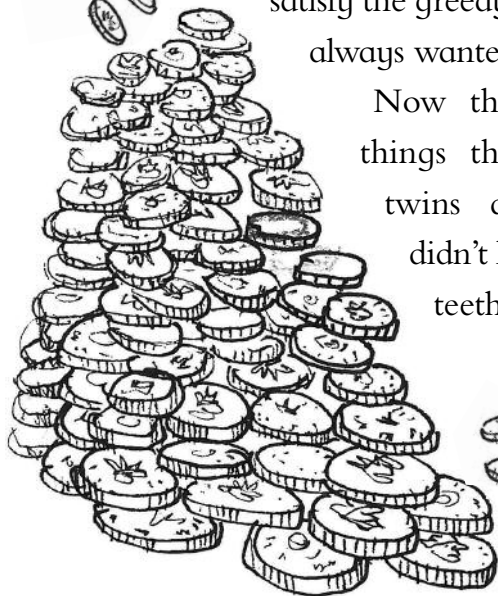


But their absolute favourite thing was



Particularly treasure that didn't belong to them but which they could STEAL. Every night, straight after tea, they counted all their stolen treasure. However much they had, it was never enough to satisfy the greedy McNastys – they always wanted more.

Now there were lots of things that the McNasty twins didn't like. They didn't like brushing their teeth, so they didn't



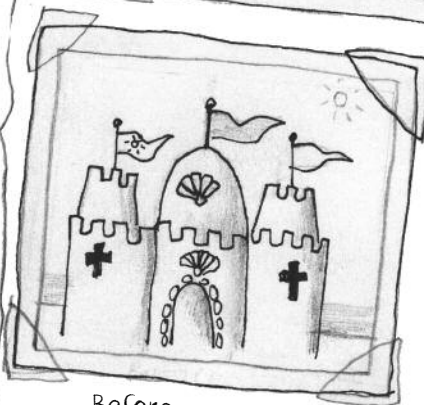
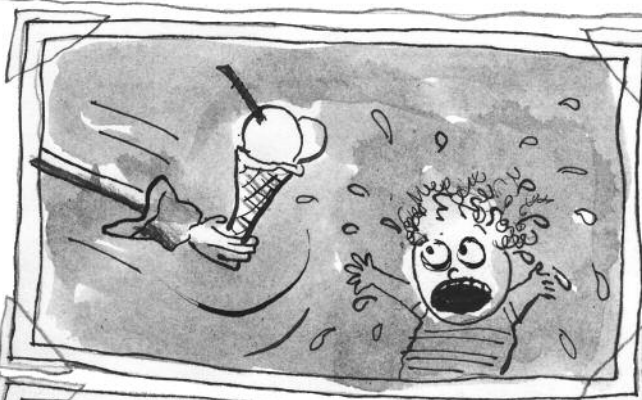
Best before
10/6/1956



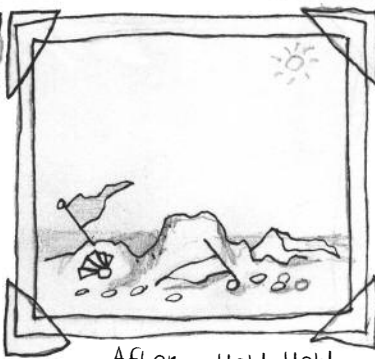
brush them except on February 29th, and they never ever made an appointment to see the dentist because all dentists terrified them. They loathed boiled cabbage, which they thought smelt like cats' pee (which it does, however much your mum tries to tell you otherwise). They hated doing long division, which all pirates learn at Pirate School so that they can share out treasure, because they didn't like sums and they didn't like sharing. They didn't like school and school didn't like them. (The McNasty twins had been excluded from Pirate School after the first week for cutting off all the girls' plaits with their cutlasses and holding the headteacher for ransom for 100 chocolate ducats in the art cupboard.)



The McNasty Twins' Holiday Album



Before



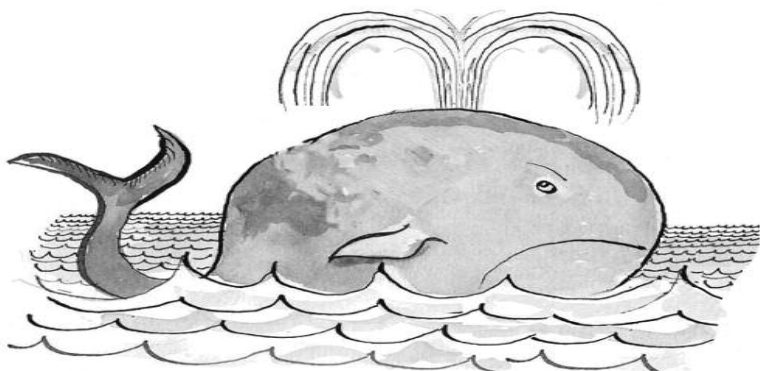
After Heh! Heh!

But there was one thing that they hated more than all these things put together and that was the thought of anybody else finding treasure because they thought that all the treasure in the world should belong to them.

Captain Gruesome and Captain Grisly, who had the *Pirate Post* delivered by carrier seagull every morning, had long read of the rumours that Little Snoring was the site of buried pirate treasure. But it had taken them months to locate the village because they had been kicked out of Pirate School before completing basic map-reading, which meant they often sailed their ship around in circles for days on end.

Their steering was so awful that on their way to Little Snoring *The Rotten Apple* had sailed right through the middle of a family of whales, scattering them across the sea and





bumping the enormous mother whale very hard on the nose. The McNastys, who had no manners at all, didn't say sorry to the whale, but sailed away, laughing loudly.

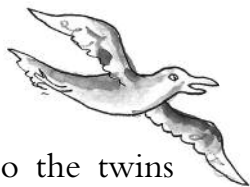
Now at last they had reached their destination. There could be no doubt that they had found the right place because when they peered through their telescopes they could see a sign on the harbour wall that declared:



Excited by the prospect of being so close to treasure, they pointed their telescopes again towards the picture-book perfect village perched on the tip of the shore. First they examined the turquoise-blue harbour, the pure white sands that sparkled like diamonds and the rolling green hills. Then they looked at the lighthouse. Since it had been built more than 100 years ago, the lighthouse had prevented 345 ships and 32 rowing boats from being wrecked on the Jaws and ending up on the sandbanks. The lighthouse was perched high on the hill behind the



**WHERE NO ONE IN THEIR RIGHT MIND
WOULD WANT TO GO**



which was a bit frightening so the twins stopped looking pretty quickly.

They turned their telescopes back to the little village with its pink and white houses, the church with its tall spire and the school.

‘Sweaty socks!’ said Captain Gruesome happily.

‘Squeaky pants!’ declared Captain Grisly excitedly.

They both laughed out loud with pleasure, a sound so terrible that several gulls flying overhead fainted in terror and fell into the sea with a loud plop.

‘This must be it! At last! Our search is over,’ said Captain Grisly.





‘Nobody and nothing in this sleepy little place is going to stop us stealing the lost treasure of Little Snoring,’ replied his brother. ‘All we have to do now is find where the treasure is hidden and we’ll be the richest as well as the nastiest pirates ever to sail the Seven Seas.’

‘Take down the pirate flag, Mrs Slime,’ ordered Captain Gruesome, ‘and put up something more suitable. We don’t want anyone to guess that the McNastys are in town.’

Mrs Slime sniffed loudly but did as she was told. She knew that if she refused she would be made to walk the plank immediately, and a soaking would only make her cold worse.

‘Nasty boys! Porky pies!’ squawked Pegleg Polly.





Chapter 2

(Definitely twice as good as Chapter 1.
It must be, because my pet terrapin tried to
eat it and he is very fussy about his food
and wouldn't touch Chapter 1.)

At the same time that the McNastys
were looking at the village of Little
Snoring, Tat was sitting in the school, sighing
heavily. He chewed the end of his pencil and
ran his hand through his hair. He looked out

of the window at the dazzling sea and wished again that he was playing on the sparkling sandy beach of Little Snoring. Tat wiped his forehead. It was far too hot for school. He felt like an ice cream cone that had been left out in the Sahara Desert.

Miss Green, the teacher, had set all the children some terrifyingly difficult long division sums. Tat was already in deep, deep trouble with Miss Green for failing to finish last night's maths homework. Tat hated maths, but he always tried his best. He had tried his best on the homework but had got completely stuck on question 193.





Determined not to be defeated, he had gone downstairs to ask his mum and dad for some help, but when he reached the kitchen, the door was closed and he heard the low murmur of voices.

‘All I’m asking for is some money to buy Tallulah some new shoes,’ Tat’s mum had said tearfully. Tallulah was Tat’s little sister. ‘She outgrew her last pair months ago. She’s been complaining for weeks that she can barely walk in them.’

‘I’m sorry, my darling,’ said Tat’s dad, ‘but we can’t afford new shoes. Our situation is quite hopeless. Since the harbour master said

that machines are cheaper than people and I lost my job as the lighthouse keeper, there has been so little money coming in. I saw our landlord this morning. We're six weeks behind with the rent. Unless we can come up with the money by Monday, we'll be evicted from the house.'

Tat's mum had burst into tears. Tat's heart had lurched. They were going to be forced to leave the home where he and his little sister had been born and lived their whole lives. All thought of maths homework had flown straight out of his head as he'd desperately tried to come up with a plan to help his mum and dad. He had tossed and turned all night with worry.

In the morning, Tat's mum had been very pale and over breakfast she said to her husband, 'There is only one thing for it,

dearheart. We will have to row to the mainland tomorrow morning and sell my wedding ring.'

Tat's dad was appalled. 'I won't let you. It won't raise enough money and it means too much to us both.'

Tat's mum shook her head sadly. 'We can't eat gold.'

Tat's dad had hugged his wife, and Tat had said, 'You can have all the money in my piggy bank.'



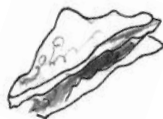
Tat's parents had hugged him hard too.

'I'm afraid it won't be nearly enough, Tat,' said his dad, 'but it's kind of you to offer. The way you can help is to stay with your Aunt Tessie tomorrow night while your mum and I go with Tallulah to the mainland and try to sell the ring. Maybe it will be worth more than we think and cover our debts. Then we can buy some shoes for Tallulah.'

Aware of Miss Green's eyes now burning holes in him, Tat looked down again at the sums in front of him. His head hurt. The sums were impossible.

Tat wasn't stupid, he just wasn't good at school things – he was brave as a ~~lobster~~ lion and brilliant at drawing tractors and dinosaurs, climbing trees, rowing boats, swimming underwater and eating jam sandwiches.





Tat – in case you’ve been wondering, and I can hardly blame you if you have – wasn’t called Tat because he had been bought very cheaply by his parents in a car boot sale, but because it was short for Trevor Augustus Trout, which is a perfectly good name for a fishmonger or a bank manager but is a perfectly ridiculous name for a ten-year-old boy with a snub nose who is very brave and likes jam sandwiches.



He looked longingly over at his best friend Hetty. Hetty, who was the cleverest girl in the school and quite possibly the entire world, had already finished all her sums and was sitting quietly reading a book called *Six Impossible Things Before Breakfast: A Practical Guide for Young Over-Achievers*. If only Hetty was sitting next to him, she would have helped Tat by explaining very carefully what he had to

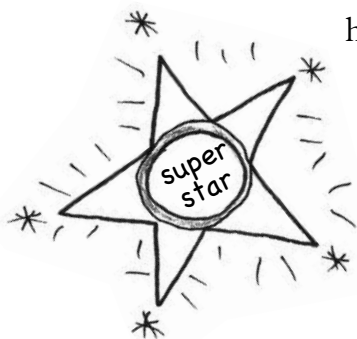


do, because Tat
and Hetty were
best friends.

Hetty was very
good at
explaining –
much better than
Miss Green who
was often rather
cross with everybody

and always very cross with Tat. If Hetty was
his teacher, he knew that he would have
lots of superstars, but he hadn't
had a single one. Ever.

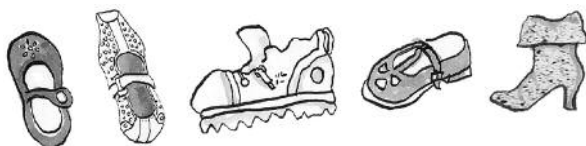
It was so unfair!
Hetty looked up
from her book
and winked
at Tat.





Tat grinned at her and pulled a copy of the *Little Snoring Gazette* out of his bag and unfolded it carefully under the desk. He couldn't wait to show it to Hetty. Tat was only mildly interested in the headline which screamed in big black letters:





But he was very interested in a much smaller headline at the bottom of page three.



He scanned the story below that told how an old treasure map had been found in an ancient book in the Greater Snoring library and confirmed the rumours that the lost treasure of the notorious pirate Captain Syd was buried somewhere in Little Snoring. Unfortunately the map was so old

and so faded that it was impossible to see exactly where X marked the spot, but experts who had examined the map had declared it genuine and believed that the lost treasure was likely to be buried on the beach or in the



**WHERE NO ONE IN THEIR RIGHT MIND
WOULD WANT TO GO.**

The University of Greater Snoring was offering a generous reward to anyone who found it, although one of the experts had said that after being buried for 400 years, it was unlikely that the treasure would ever be discovered.

Tat smiled to himself. The expert had no idea just how determined Tat could be. He knew that when he explained that his family might lose their house unless they found the treasure, Hetty would help him with the digging. They would find it, even if they had to dig all weekend.



Tat heard a meow at the window. It was his cat, who was called Dog. Dog, who was of no particular make of cat but many makes all rolled into one, was called Dog because he thought like a dog and behaved like a dog, even though he looked and sounded like a cat.



MEEOW

Dog meowed loudly again and scratched at the window to get Tat's attention. Tat glanced out of the window. In the distance he could see a ship had put down anchor far off the shore. Unlike his maths, Tat's eyesight was very good. This was because he ate six carrots every morning before breakfast, which lots of people, including Hetty, would find completely impossible but Tat found easy. His eyesight was so good that he could just make out the skull and crossbones flag at the top of the mast of the ship. He could also see a woman climbing the mast, wiping her nose on her sleeve as she headed upwards towards the flag.

A skull and crossbones! It could mean only one thing. Pirates! Maybe they had heard about the treasure too. Tat gasped.



Everyone in the class turned to look at him.

‘What is it now, Tat?’ asked Miss Green impatiently.

Tat pointed out of the window towards the sea.

Dog, who had cat’s eyes and could see everything, raised a paw and pointed too. Dog’s paw was shaking with fear.

Everyone looked, but none of them saw, because they





didn't eat six carrots
before breakfast
every single day.

Miss Green turned to
Tat very sternly. 'Silly
boy! It's just a friendly ship paying our
lovely island a visit.'

'But . . . but . . . but,' said Tat, 'it's flying a
skull and crossbones!'

'Stupid boy – you need to eat more carrots
and get your eyesight checked,' said Miss
Green. 'Tat, you've got more imagination
than brains, and if there's one thing I can't
bear in my classroom it's imagination. Go
and stand in the corner for the rest of the
lesson.' With that she pulled down the blind
on the window and set the children another
maths problem that was so hard that
everyone's brain except Hetty's overheated.