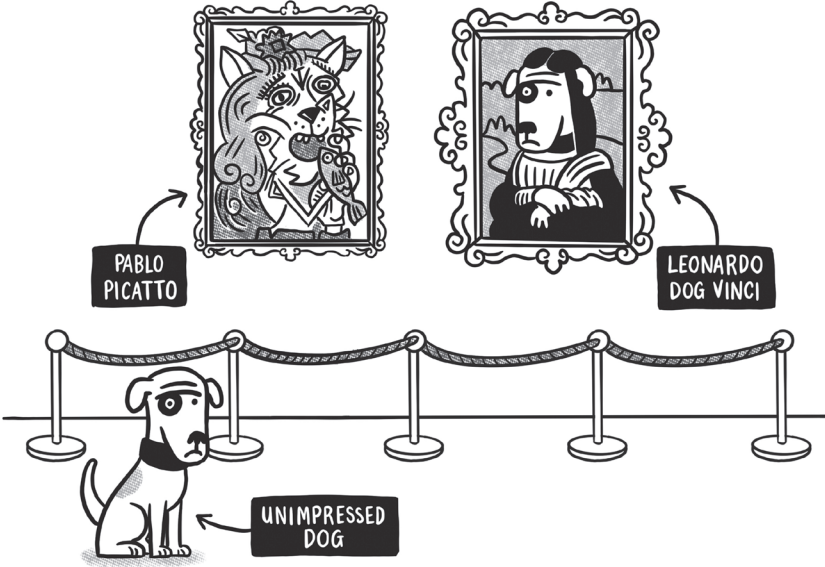
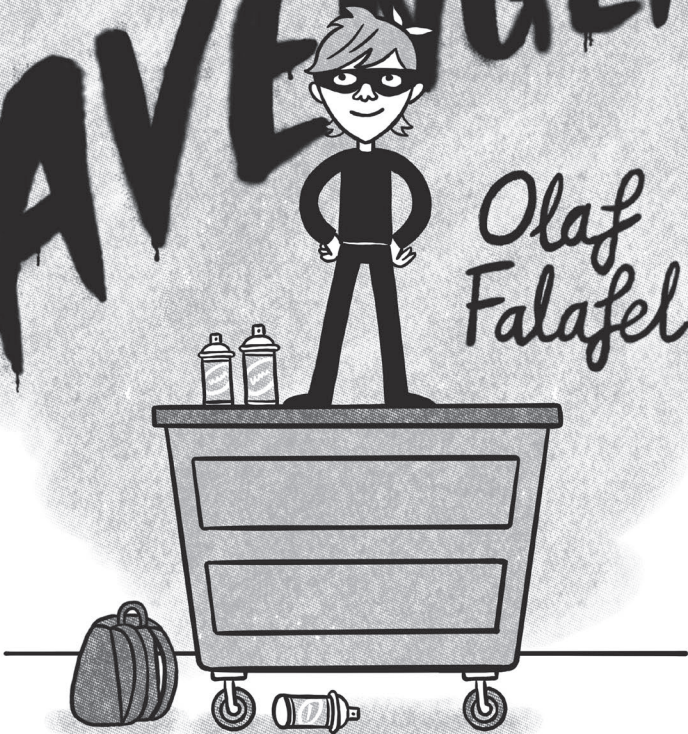


TRIXIE PICKLE ART AVENGER



TRIXIE PICKLE ART AVENGER

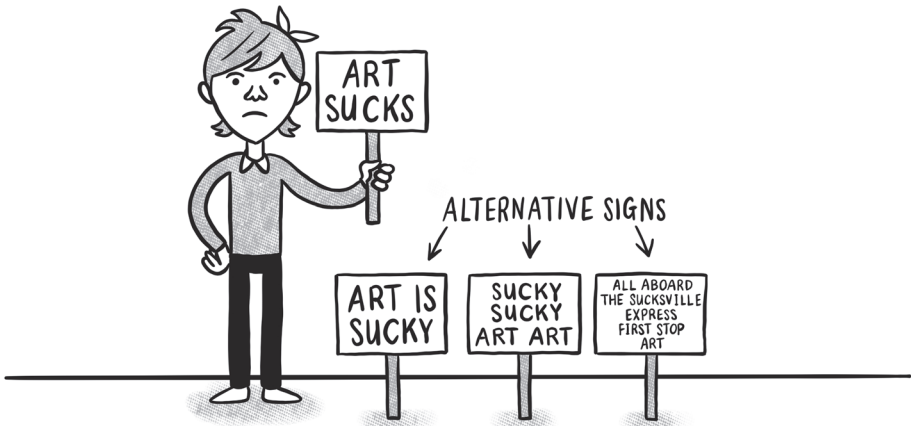


PUFFIN

CHAPTER 1

TROMBONER SQUEEZER

Hello, readers! I want to start this book by telling you that art sucks. There you go, I've said it – ART IS SUCKY.



Although when I say 'There you go, I've said it – ART IS SUCKY' it's not really me saying that; it's the person who I was before all the stuff that happens in this book happened (which I guess is technically still me, but it's not the me who is currently talking to you right this minute).

Sorry for such a complicated beginning – it's just my way of letting you know that I USED to be like a lot of you: I USED to think art was boring.

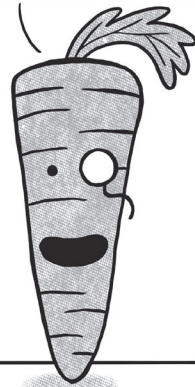
SO LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT.
I'M THE OLD ME WHO
THOUGHT ART SUCKED ...



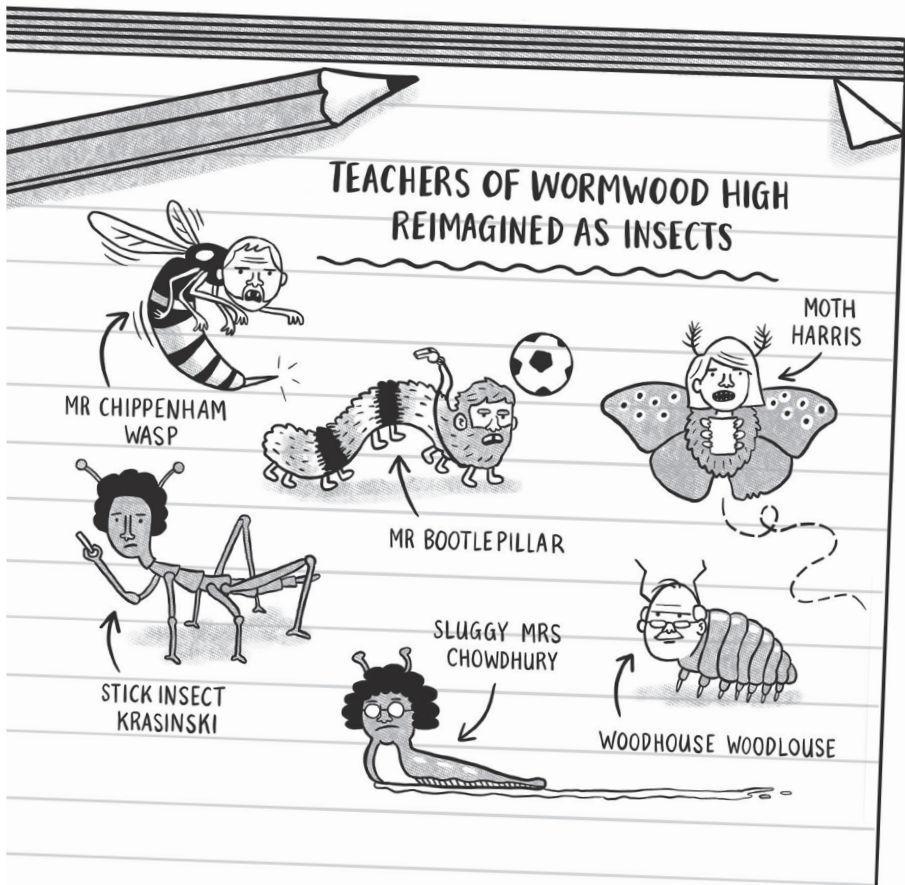
... AND I'M THE ME
FROM NOW WHO
THINKS ART IS COOL.



AND I'M A TALKING CARROT,
IN CASE THIS BIT WASN'T
CONFUSING ENOUGH.



Don't get me wrong – I really like drawing. If you ask me, some of my cartoons should qualify as art, but my art teacher, Mr Woodhouse, doesn't agree. He discovered my 'Teachers of Wormwood High Reimagined as Insects' drawing in the back of my book and he gave me after-school detention cleaning paintbrushes. I dread to think what he'd be like if he saw any of my actual comic strips (I'll show you some of those later on in this book).



You can't really blame me for being down on art – Mr Woodhouse's classes are dull. Have you noticed how some teachers know that their subject is boring, so they go over the top to try to make it fun? Unfortunately for me, Mr Woodhouse is the exact opposite.

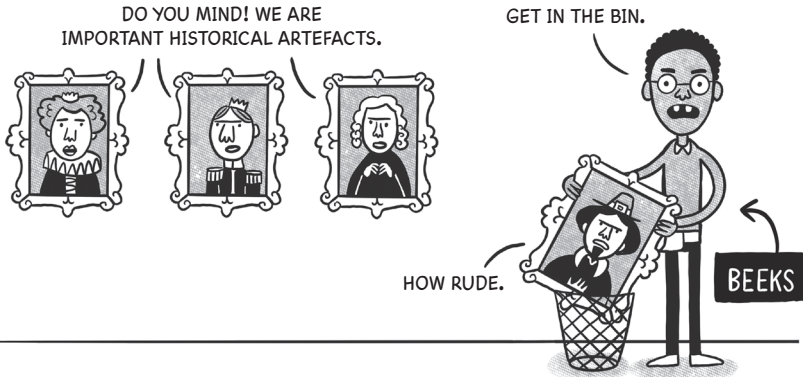


I reckon he must have made a bet in the staffroom about how many kids he can get to fall asleep in his class (his record is four, by the way). Every lesson, he brings in random objects from home and we have to sit in a circle and draw them. I swear sometimes he forgets to bring in stuff and we actually draw whatever he can find in his car.



When we aren't drawing his random rubbish, he teaches us about what he calls 'proper art'. I think he has the word 'proper' confused with 'mind-numbingly dull'.

His lessons are always about fusty old paintings of miserable kings and queens and other posh people I've never heard of. To borrow my best friend Beeks's catchphrase, his 'proper art' can 'get in the bin'.



Mr Woodhouse used to go on about how amazing Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is – apparently everyone always says her smile is 'enigmatic'.



Actually, before we go any further, I need to point out that this book contains some words that you might not know the meaning of – like 'enigmatic'. I've done this on purpose because my mum only lets me read books if they 'develop my reading' and 'expand my vocabulary'.



If your parents thought that this was just a really funny book with loads of jokes and farts in it, they probably wouldn't buy it for you.



Hi, this is Geraldine Puffin, owner of Puffin Books, here. I just wanted to tell you not to worry, as this IS still a really funny book with loads of jokes and farts in it.

Hi, Gerald Puffin here, Geraldine's husband, chipping in to let you know that this book also contains two of the funniest toilet-related stories you're ever likely to hear. That's all from me for now. Speak again soon! Enjoy the book - bye!



.....

As well as sprinkling a few unusual words throughout this book, I've also made some fact files about the different artists that I mention, but I promise it's only the not-boring stuff.



FACT FILE: LEONARDO DA VINCI



He painted the *Mona Lisa*.

He used to cut up dead bodies and draw them.



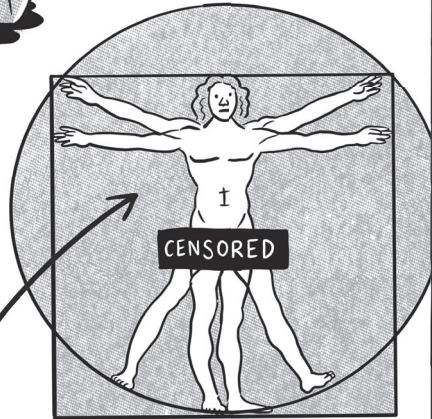
Looks like a wizard



He was ambidextrous, which means he could draw, write or cut up dead bodies with either hand.

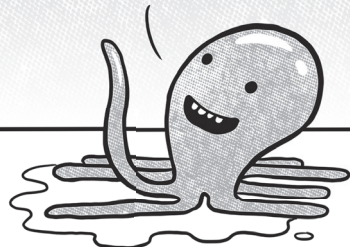
He was obsessed with the proportions of the human body.

He drew this famous diagram called *Vitruvian Man*, which I think looks like a human octopus.



IF ANY ADULTS ASK, THIS BOOK IS ACTUALLY QUITE EDUCATIONAL.

HA HA!
HE LOOKS
RIDICULOUS!



Anyway, where was I? Oh yeah, Mona Lisa's smile being enigmatic. 'Enigmatic' is just another word for mysterious, and people have never been able to work out whether Mona Lisa is actually smiling or not, AND, if she is smiling, no one knows exactly what she's smiling about.

I have my own theory. I think Mona Lisa had just let out a really squeaky fart and that smile of hers is actually a mixture of relief, because the fart had been trapped indoors for so long, and embarrassment, because it made such a weird noise. A noise like a trombone being played badly.



It's for this reason that, instead of calling her Mona Lisa, I call her Tromboner Squeezer. Beeks did a tromboner in maths class once that went on for so long that Mr Davidson, the supply teacher, thought it was a fire alarm and made us all queue up in the playground.

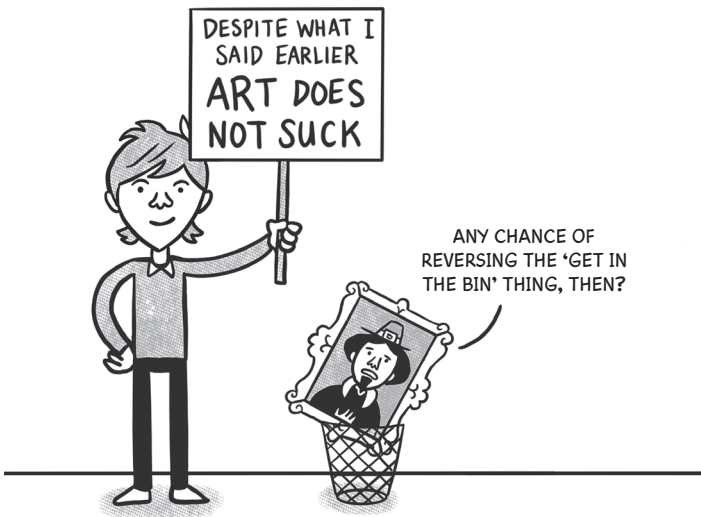


On the whole, though, despite what the me from the first sentence of this book said, the me from now doesn't think art sucks any more. In fact, it does the opposite, whatever that is. Art blows?

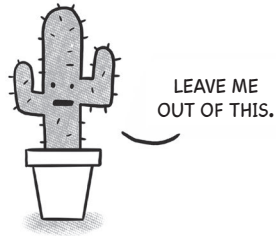


No, rewind. I'm pretty sure if you say something blows that's also bad. Here you go: I think art neither inhales or exhales. Glad we cleared that up.

Right, in the next few chapters I'm going to tell you all about why I no longer think art is boring and I'll also fill you in on the secret double life that I now lead.



Buckle up and get comfy, or, if you prefer to be uncomfortable, go and sit on a hedgehog, because we're about to begin.



On the flip side, art is 100 per cent not sucky if you are a child who doesn't want to get run over by a car, or a depressed dog, or a kid who doesn't want to be bullied (or a bully who deep down doesn't actually want to be a bully).



That's it – that's the end of the book.

I'm off now.

Bye.

See ya.

Au revoir. (That's 'bye' in French.)

