

# MR. MEN

in Adultland

*Roger Hargreaves*



James Thomas

Misterland was falling apart.

All the buildings were forty-five years old, which is very, very old indeed.

Fixing things costs money, you see, and that's not something they had very much of. And forty-five years is a long time to go without paying for anything.

Something had to be done!

The Adults who lived in Misterland were fed up of working for free. The greengrocer closed his shop. The zookeeper closed the zoo. The baker stopped baking. The butcher stopped butchering.

Oh dear!



One day, there was a big meeting.

"What will we do?" asked Mr Worry. "We used to help the Adults, and they'd do things for us. Now all they want is money!"

"I've had a leak for eleven months!" shouted Mr Funny. "I'm serious!"

"It's awful. I'm down to two dinners a day!" sobbed Mr Greedy. "Mr Forgetful only has half a car!"

"Look, this was bound to happen. It's time to grow up!" said Little Miss Bossy. "We need to get jobs!"

"BUT THERE ARE NO JOBS!" roared Mr Noisy.

He was right. The adults had all the jobs! And there was only one place where people went to work.

"Oh no!" gasped Little Miss Wise. "We have to go to Adultland!"





And so it was that they all packed their bags and got ready to leave.

All except Mr Mean. He took some of the money he had been hoarding under the floorboards - and bought them all plane tickets! You're probably thinking that was a very generous thing for Mr Mean to do. But really, he just wanted to have Misterland all to himself!

The tickets, of course, were for the cheapest airline in the world. It was no surprise when all the luggage went missing!

Off they went.

"House my see can I!" shouted Mr Topsy Turvy.

The plane wobbled. It went up. It went down. Sometimes it went up, then up again! Yuck!

All anybody could afford was water.



Eventually, they landed in Adultland, with the most horrendous bump.

From the moment they stepped off the plane, there was nothing but bad news.

First, the luggage. What a mess!

Between them, they had lost twenty-seven spare hats, nineteen teddy bears, eighteen pairs of shoes, six hundred yards of bandages, and whatever Mr Forgetful had remembered to pack.

Then there were the Adults. They had so many questions, even Little Miss Curious was speechless!

"Who are you? What do you do? When are you leaving? Where have you come from? Why are you here?"

And so on.

Adultland really was a different sort of place.



Mr Uppity discovered, to his dismay, that he was in the same situation as everyone else who got off the plane.

"I say. You there!" he shouted at the woman who was checking everyone's papers. "Where are the limousines? I need to find a hotel."

"No limousine for you," said the woman.  
"Limousines are for Very Important People."

"I have never heard such nonsense!" he cried. "I have been important all my life!"

"Not here, you're not. I've never heard of you," replied the woman. "Now. Skills?"

"Never mind that! Don't you know who I am?"

This continued for some time.





After more hours than Mr Dizzy was able to count, everyone was allowed to get on a bus. Mr Bounce sat up top, to enjoy the speed-bumps. BOUNCE!

"Look at the lovely trees!" said a very excited Mr Clumsy.

On they went.

"Look at the ugly shops!" said a concerned Mr Worry.

The bus kept going.

"Look at the scary dogs!" said the terrified Little Miss Twins.

Where they stopped was anyone's guess. Nobody felt too good, except for Mr Nonsense, who had managed to get a stray cat stuck to him.

"OUT!" shouted the bus driver, who stared at everyone as they got off.



Because they had next to no money, they all had to stay in one house, in the most dangerous part of town, between a factory and a rubbish dump.

There was no hot water. Mr Busy couldn't have his usual five showers. He couldn't even have one!

(Little Miss Splendid found that out the hard way.)

Mr Grumble found a mouse in the oven.

They were squished together, six to a room. Mr Uppity and Mr Rude insisted on having their own beds.

Mr Noisy's snoring shook the walls. In a way, Little Miss Shy was glad, because at least nobody could hear her cry.

"It's not so bad!" insisted Mr Cheerful. "Just think of it as a holiday!"





“This is worse than the home I left!” thought Mr Grumble, as he struggled to get to sleep. “Bah!”

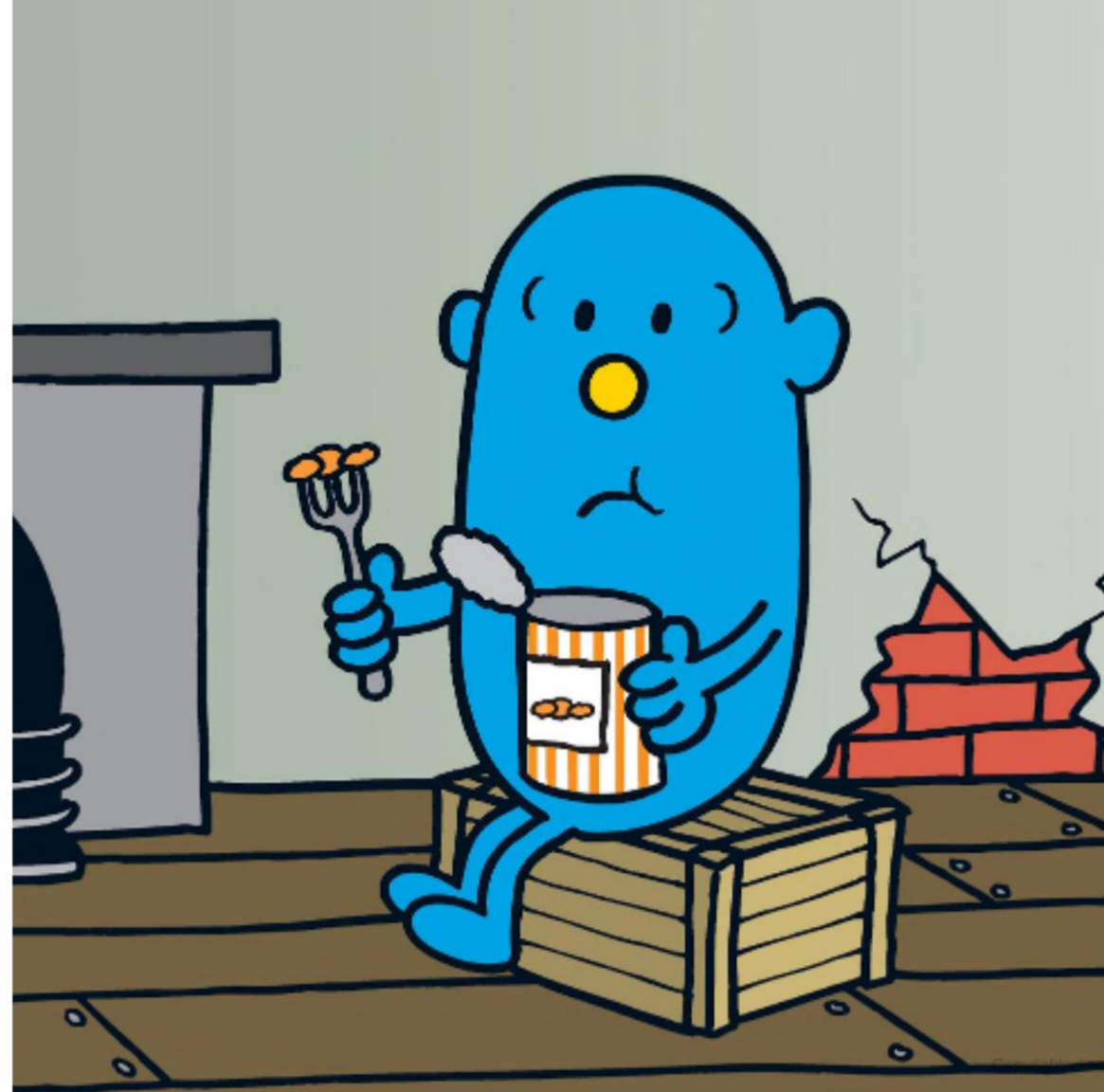
He wasn’t wrong. At least Mr Mean had a tin of cold beans.

Cold beans, and a wooden box (he was too mean to buy furniture).

And he had the whole of Misterland to himself.

He was beginning to regret everything.

Wouldn't you?



The first time they all woke up (cold and hungry) in their strange new home in Adultland, it was a Monday morning.

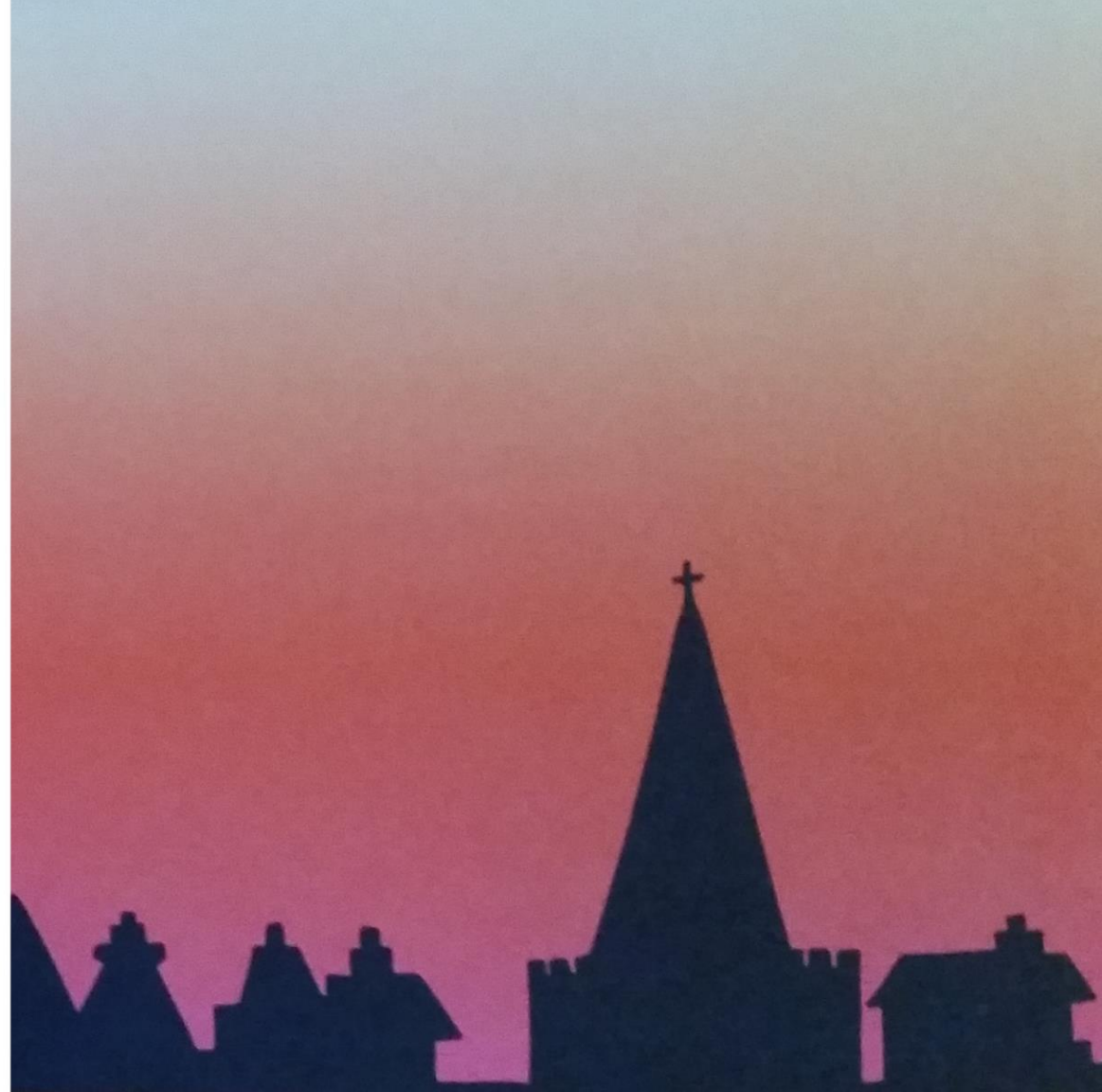
And in Adultland, Monday meant Work.

So, after squabbling over who got to use the bathroom first, they all trudged out the door into a miserable Monday morning and went to look for work. Mr Nonsense went looking for a wok.

Mr Jelly couldn't believe his eyes, or his ears! There was traffic and noise and hustle and bustle and "out of my way!" and beeping and smoke. Mr Greedy was sure all the Adults had skipped breakfast. He wished they had given it to him!

Little Miss Fickle couldn't decide what job she wanted, so she went to twenty-two interviews.

Little Miss Late slept in.



Mr Impossible went looking for a job.

The man behind the desk asked him if he had any experience.

"I have special powers!" he replied. "You name it, I can do it!"

He was told that there was no such thing as special powers.

"Yes there is! Nothing is impossible!" protested Mr Impossible, struggling to change colour.

"My dear fellow," replied the man, "you'll find that a great many things are impossible here in Adultland. Now, what made you want to be a teacher?"





Mr Impossible wasn't the only one who was suffering.

In fact, everybody felt a little less than themselves. Or, at least, a little less themselves than they usually were.

Mr Marvellous soon realised that he couldn't rely on being marvellous anymore. How could he get a job? What could he do, now that he was no longer the best at everything?

And how was he going to afford hair gel, now that he was broke?

"Think!" he said to himself.

He was usually the best at thinking. But not anymore. He was feeling something very strange.

Stress.



Mr Nosey went to the detective agency and sat in the waiting-room, reading a newspaper just like the other adults. He read everyone else's newspapers, too, just to be nosey.

When his turn came, he sat down in the office to be interviewed.

"It says here," said the man, "that you just arrived from Misterland."

"That's right," answered Mr Nosey. "You have lots of certificates. What's that one for? Who is that in your photograph? Is that your wife?"

"Look, I'm afraid we can't hire a non-Adult, Mr Nosey. Adultland citizens only."

"But I'm the nosiest person you'll ever meet! I can be a detective! I can find anyone and anything!"

"Great," replied the man. "So find the door."



"Hello!" Little Miss Sunshine would say each morning, as she passed people on the street.

The Adults never had time to chat. They only had enough time to say something rude, like "Idiot!" or "Go away!" or something to that effect.

Each morning, there was less sunshine in her Hello.

The Little Misses were beginning to feel like they weren't wanted in Misterland.

The Mr Men were getting tired of being chased by dogs. It seemed unfair, like how the cockroaches kept eating all the bread before everyone woke up.

At night, Mr Funny would tell jokes in a comedy club, but nobody would laugh. Adults said he wasn't rude enough. So he gave up!

Mr Rude, on the other hand, was a big hit.





"Ah yes! This will be the job offer I've been waiting for!" said Mr Chatterbox to the postman one Tuesday morning.

"No it won't!" snapped the postman. "No jobs for you!"

Which was an odd thing for a postman to say.

Adults everywhere were shouting at the Mr Men.

It was hard to walk from one end of the street to the other without getting shouted at!

Sometimes, they were "in the way". Other times, they were "too small". Some heard that they were "too green" or "too purple"!

Imagine being told that!

It was all very stressful.

Mr Perfect had a hair out of place.



Some of them did get jobs.

Little Miss Somersault performed tricks for strangers in the park.

Her boss was a nasty fellow. He didn't have any time for Ifs or Buts or Maybes.

"You want to get paid or not?" he would shout.

What a rude man!

Mr Fussy got a job shining shoes. He was so good at it that he could see his reflection crying in them.

Little Miss Tidy, meanwhile, cleaned people's houses. None of them trusted her, or learned her name, or gave her the hug she so desperately needed.

Even Little Miss Hug needed a hug!



Mr Birthday and Little Miss Fun became party clowns. They got no respect and almost no money.

Little Miss Magic became a door-to-door salesperson. Of course, her magic didn't work in Adulthood, so she had to tell lies instead.

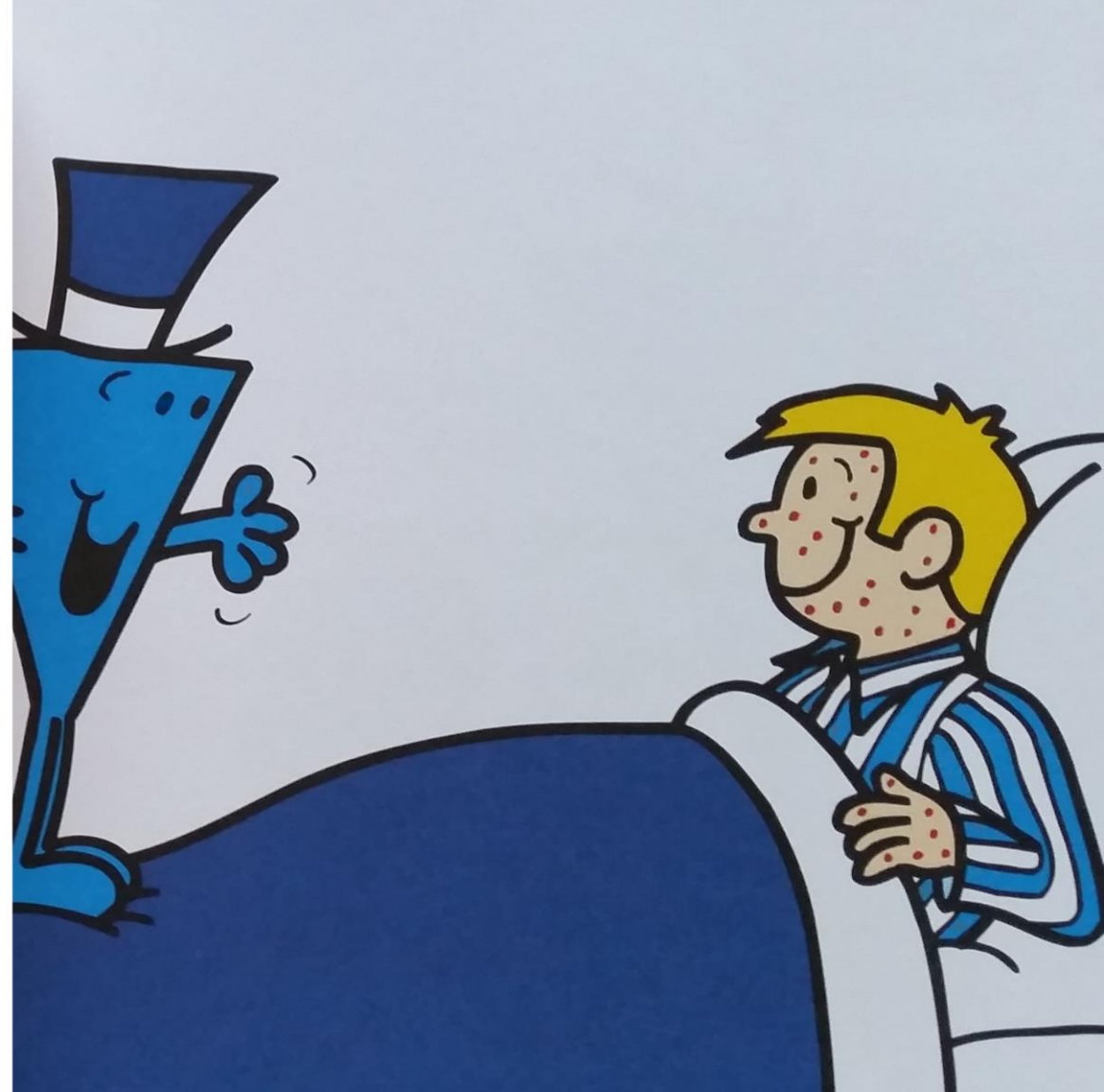
Telling lies about cleaning products? The very idea!

Mr Cool became a children's hospital entertainer.

It went well for the first few minutes.

But he soon found out that what he thought was cool and what they thought was cool were very different.

He was out of date! And being out of date is the least cool thing you can imagine!





Mr Lazy failed miserably as a lifeguard.

He was so bad at it, in fact, that he was giving the other Mr Men a bad name.

"One more incident," said Mr Lazy's boss (waking him up in the process), "and you're fired!"

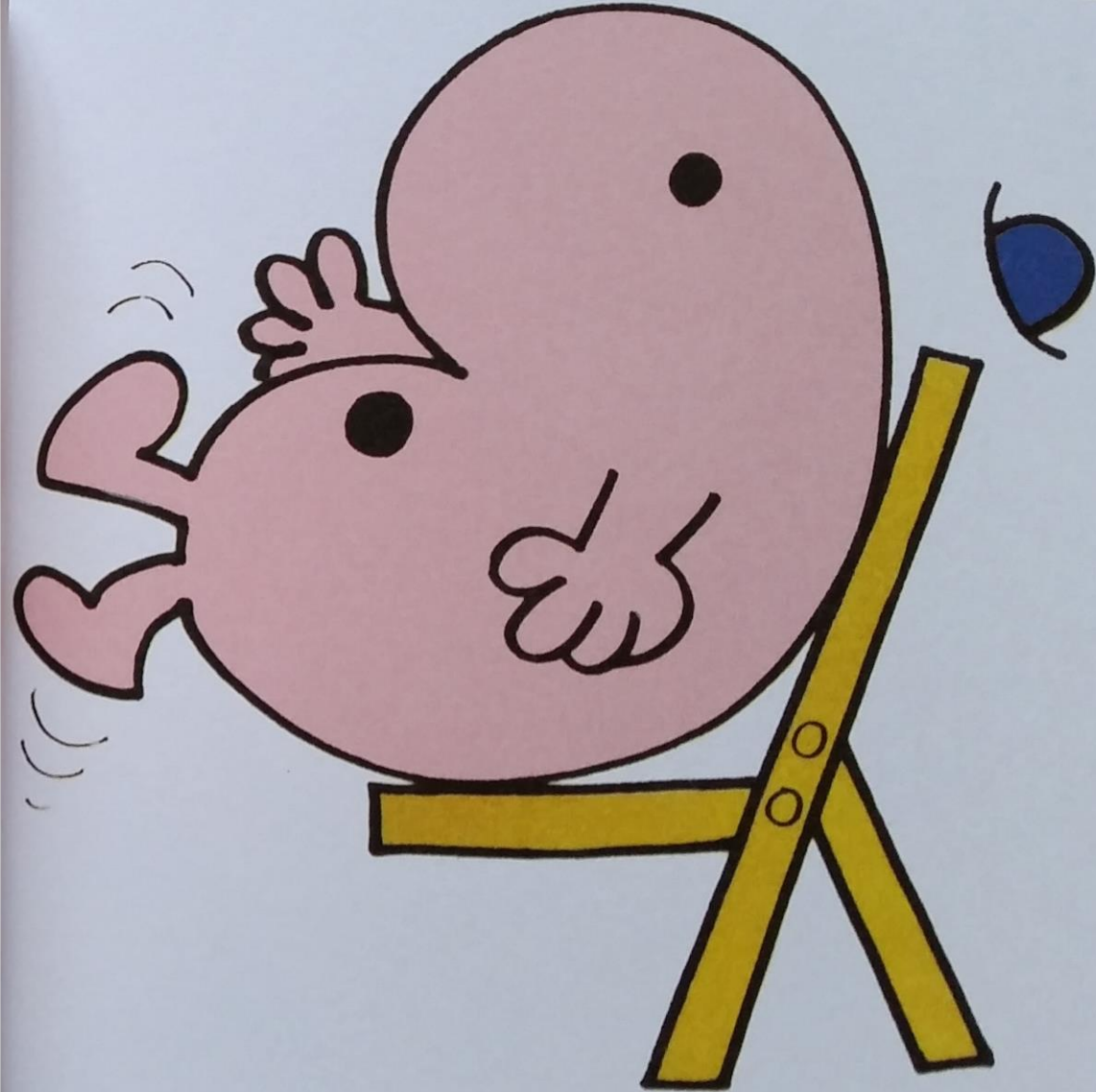
He couldn't even remember the last incident!

Speaking of which, Mr Forgetful was sure he had a job, but he couldn't remember what it was.

"Am I a baker?" he wondered.

He was not a baker.

He did not have a job.



Mr Small got a job in the zoo, which sounds completely wonderful. Except if you're tiny, and you have to clean the crocodiles' teeth!

He was swallowed fifteen times in his first week.

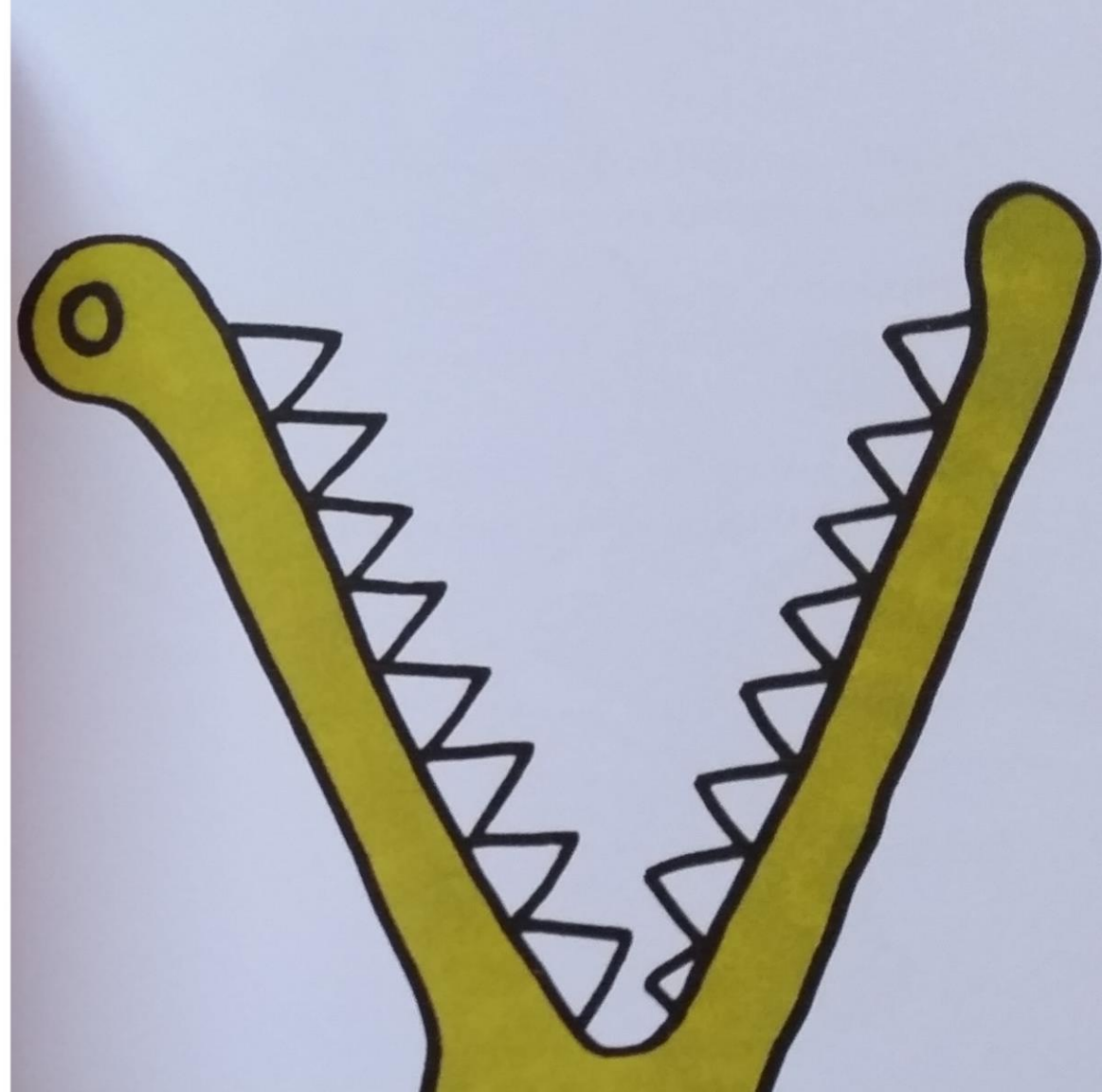
Mr Tall earned some money by chasing prisoners who escaped and dropping them back into the prison yard.

In a way, he was jealous of them.

"Three meals a day!" he muttered. "And your own mattress!"

The money he was getting barely covered his lunch.

At least he didn't have to get the bus!



Mr Happy modelled for a knitwear catalogue.

Knitwear, he thought, must be popular with adults. (Like football and traffic and fighting.) The phoneboxes all had advertisements for knitwear models.

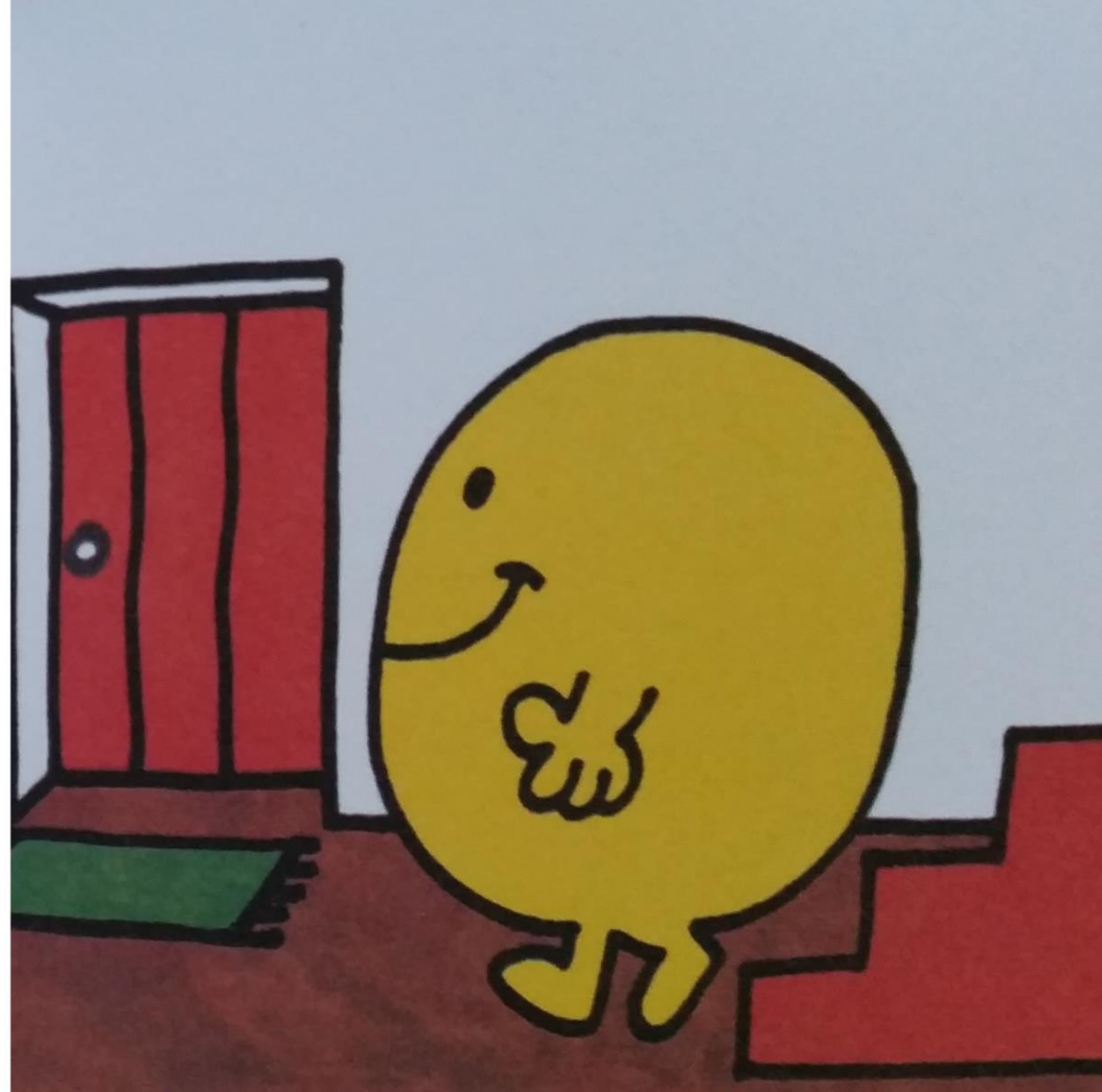
The photographer worked in a basement, and he was always clearing his throat. He smelled funny.

Mr Happy had never worn knitwear before. It was itchy. It's hard to be happy when you're itchy!

"Come on, misery-guts! Give us a smile!" barked the photographer.

Being a model was tough. No matter how itchy Mr Happy got, he kept having to put on more knitwear. But the photographer told him that the more he wore, the more he'd get paid.

Mr Happy felt disgusting.





Little Miss Splendid became a hairdresser.

At first, it was wonderful. Nobody knew how as much about splendidness as Little Miss Splendid. Nor was anybody quite as talented at making people more splendid. She was the leading expert on splendification.

But soon she grew tired of splendifying people's hair.

Adults expected her to ask them about their plans for the weekend. They talked and talked and talked about their miserable, boring lives. Little did they know that she had to share a bed with four Little Misses and an unknown number of ants!

After a few weeks, she had had quite enough of her new job.

"You people make me sick!" she shouted, as she strode out the door, twirling her scissors.



Mr Tickle tried offering tickles to people at bus stops. He ended up getting chased a lot.

He gave people shoulder rubs for money, but couldn't stop tickling them instead.

He really was trying. It was those hands of his!

Adults did not want to be tickled!

Then, sadly, he turned to theft.

First, it was fruit. Vegetables, too.  
Soon he was stealing books and shoes.  
Then he stole a policeman's truncheon and went on the run.

Oh dear!





Mr Fussy got a job stacking shelves in a supermarket. He kept turning things around so the labels faced out. He made sure the floors were shiny and the fruit was organised by colour.

The Adults laughed at him because he kept to himself. But nobody would sit with him in the canteen.

He was good at his job. The best!

Poor Mr Fussy.

Each morning, he took his tablets.

He started telling himself it was okay to take a few more, once it was an even number.

One day, the electricity got cut off, and he couldn't iron his shoelaces anymore.

This was too much!





For those who did earn money, life was different in Adultland.

They started to act like the Adults.

Little Miss Neat and Little Miss Tidy got their own place. The window even had a curtain!

They tried hosting "dinner parties", which were as dreadful as they sound.

That's really as good as it got.

Well, at least they could save some money to go back home to Misterland!

"I can't wait to fix my roof so I can move back in!" said Mr Brave.

"I think I'll stay here," said Little Miss Fickle. "Or not!"



Little Miss Busy couldn't believe they had gone to Adulthood on purpose.

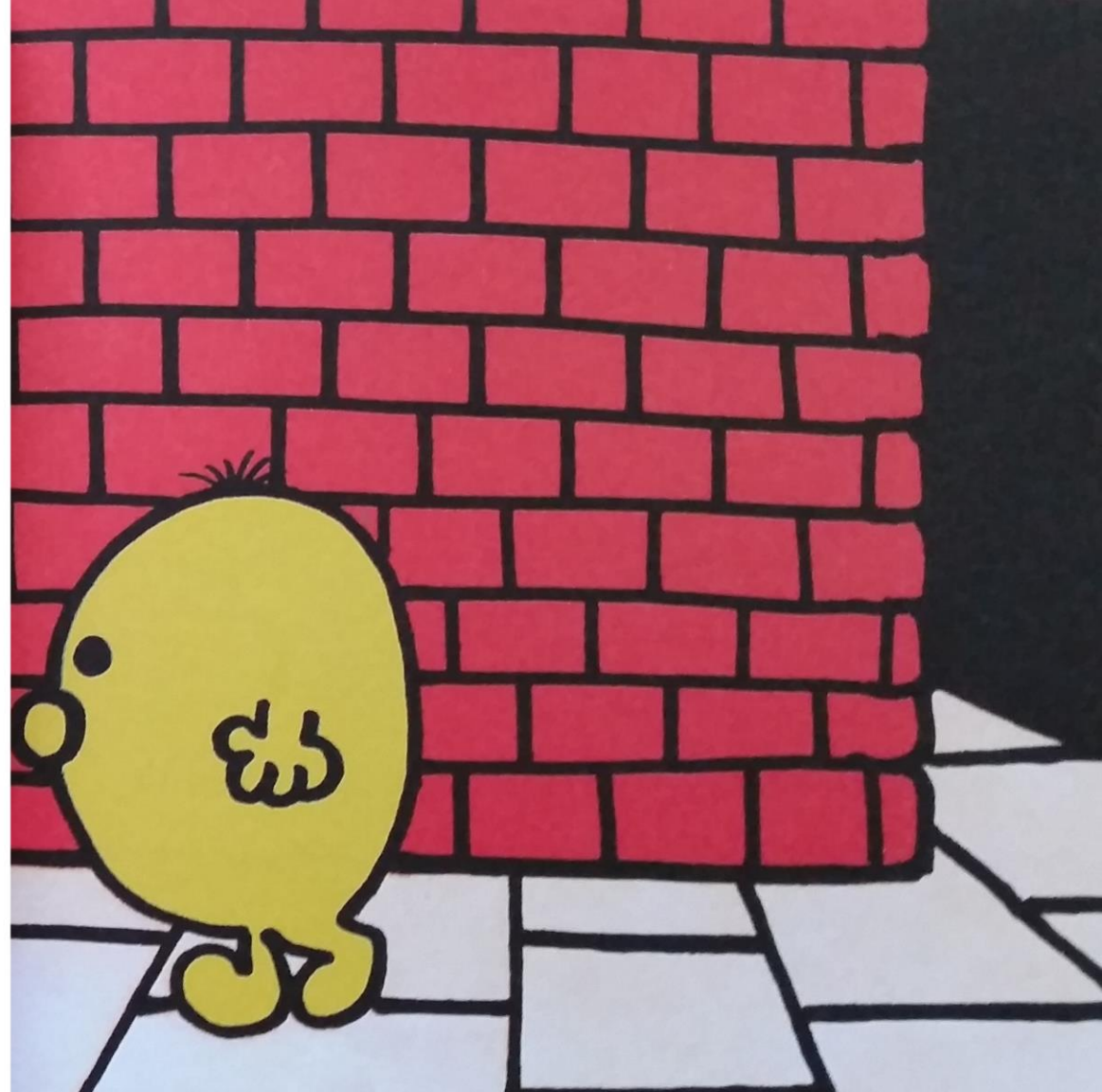
Mr Cheerful wanted to help his friends to look on the bright side, but he couldn't even cheer himself up.

Mr Bump could often be heard banging his head against the wall.

Mr Small ran home every night, afraid he'd be stepped on.

Mr Daydream decided to pretend that he was still in Misterland.

Everyone hoped that Little Miss Brainy could think of a way out of the mess.



But that's the thing about Adultland.

You can never leave!



# THANK YOU FOR READING

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