

There's a Boy under the Bed

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Smook sat on his bed and picked the icky marshmallow bits out of his sardine-and-broccoli muffin.

When he dropped them on the floor, a small pink hand reached out from under the bed and snatched them up.

“Aaargh, Mum!” screamed Smook.

“There’s a boy under the bed!”

Smook sat quivering on his bed, as far away from the edge as he could get.

“Don’t be silly, Smook.

There’s no such thing as a boy,” his mother called.

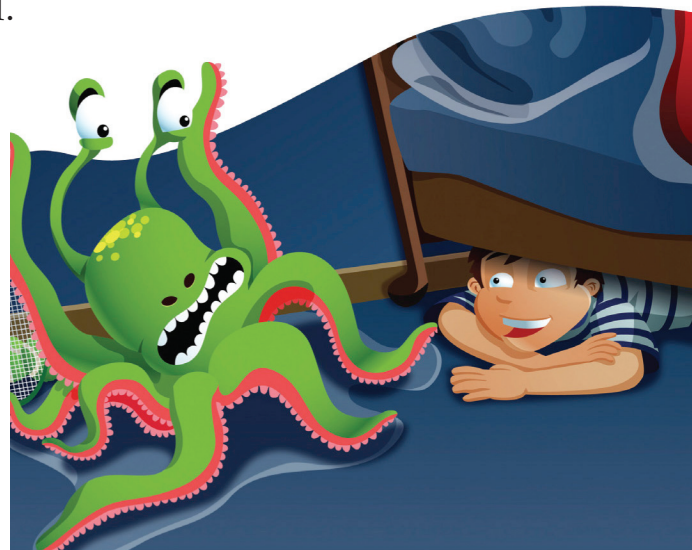
Smook sat in his bed and tried to read his book, but he couldn’t stop shaking. All he could think of was the hand ... it was no good.

He’d have to have another look.

Smook slid over to the edge of the bed. He took a deep breath and then slowly leaned over the side. He croaked to himself over and over, “Boys don’t exist. Boys don’t ...”

“Boo!”

“Aaargh!” Smook flopped to the floor – thump!



“Mum, Mum – there really is a boy under my bed!”

“Goodness,” said Mum, “you really are upset. Would you feel better if I came and looked under your bed, too?”

“Yes, please,” squeaked Smook.

Smook watched from the door as his mum poked a broom under his bed.

“See?” she said. “There’s nothing there.”

“Ouch!” said a small voice.

Smook’s mum flip-flopped backwards.

“Come out of there,” she croaked.

A boy crawled out from under the bed. Smook was disappointed. The boy was small and scrawny, and he didn’t look scary at all.

“How did you get here?” asked Smook’s mum.

“My sisters found a secret trapdoor,” said the boy. “They shoved me through it and then locked it behind me. I came out under there.” He pointed to Smook’s bed.

“Why did they do that?” asked Smook.

“Because I put ants in their soup and slug slime on their toast.”

Smook couldn’t believe it. “They pushed you through the trapdoor because you were nice to them?”

The boy shrugged.

Smook’s mother found the trapdoor and tried to open it. “It’s still locked,” she said.

“What are we going to do with you?”

“Can’t he stay, Mum?” Smook asked.

“Just till his sisters unlock the door?”



“Well, OK,” Smook’s mum said. She looked the boy up and down. “But you’ll have to check the door every hour, Smook. I don’t want any more humans in my home, and when the boy’s gone back through that trapdoor, I’m nailing it shut.”

Smook showed the boy his collection of dried fish heads. They made cheese and liquorice biscuits with spiders on top. And the boy taught Smook’s pet, Colossa, how to fetch.

Next morning, they found the trapdoor was unlocked.

“Please don’t go,” said Smook. “I’ll never be scared of boys again.”

“I’ll be back,” said the boy as he wriggled through the trapdoor.

“Not if I can help it,” said Smook’s mum, nailing the trapdoor shut.

At dinner time, Smook couldn’t even look at his snailburgers and seaweed salad. He already missed the boy under the bed. He went and got the hammer ...

