

The Sandman looked at the book, half-eaten by Richie, and licked the back of it with his tongue. The back cover was quite sweet!

## Messy



Marilyn had almost fallen half-asleep when she heard rustling at the desk. She got up to investigate. The lower desk drawer was open and the Sandman was peeking out from there.

“What are you doing here?” Marilyn asked.

“Looking for Messy,” the Sandman said and disappeared into the depths of the drawer.

Marilyn opened the drawer and watched the Sandman on all fours going through her stuff.

“Who is this Messy?” Marilyn enquired.

“Messy is a kind of a bundle who collects rubbish at the bottom and in the corners of the drawer,” the Sandman explained. “He is like a hedgehog who gathers mushrooms on its back. The only difference is that Messy gathers the junk that is in the drawers and he has no spines on his back.”

“Does he speak?” Marilyn asked.

“Boy, and how he speaks!” The Sandman smiled widely. “You can even say that he talks far too much. And he has so

much to say that once I listened to him until the early morning.”

“Where is he then?” Marilyn got excited.

“He must be roaming around in the drawers. This is why I’m looking for him, to hear an exciting story.”

“But Sandman, it was you who was supposed to tell me a story!”

“I was wondering that maybe I’d listen to one of Messy’s stories for a change and then tell it to you later. But let it be, I will tell you about Messy tonight. Would you like that?”



“I sure would,” Marilyn nodded and took the Sandman to the bed, next to her. The Sandman made himself comfortable and started to tell the story.

“Messy was born inside of a dust ball. Once when Messy was still as tiny as a fleck of dust, the draft took him traveling around the room.

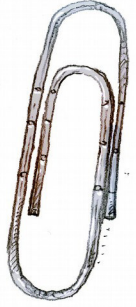
In the end he managed to grasp the desk drawer with his nails and climbed inside the drawer. It was your desk drawer, by the way. Messy really liked your drawer because there were so many things there. He loved putting everything in different places. Pieces of pencil lead, paper clips, shreds of paper, pens, screws, pieces of rubber – all of this was real treasure for him.

He collected the rubbish and spread it around the corners of the drawer. Then again he returned it to the center of the drawer – just as he felt like at the moment.

Messy’s biggest enemies were boxes, especially the ones with lids on. Messy couldn’t get his stuff from there.”

“Oh, right,” Marilyn remembered. “At some point I cleaned the drawers and collected all sort of junk in the boxes.”

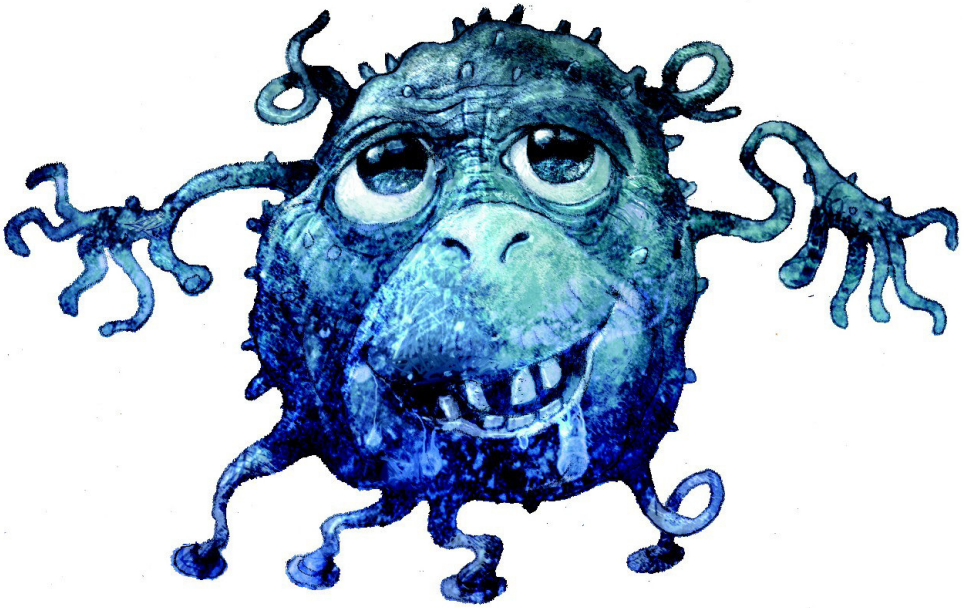
“This made Messy so angry that he moved temporarily to live in the sock drawer in the closet. The pairs of socks were so fun to mess up. When Messy



was feeling especially down, he sometimes even ate a sock. This is how single socks ended up in the closet.”

“So where is this Messy now?” Marilyn asked.

“Meanwhile Messy grew a lot bigger. I suppose you can say that the simple life in the sock drawer made him fat. This is probably why he can’t fit in your desk drawer anymore.”



All of a sudden they could hear loud clatter coming from the ceiling.

“There’s someone in the attic!” Marilyn said.

“I suppose it’s Messy, who else,” the Sandman figured. “Let him romp a little bit, so that he’ll get tired.”

But Messy didn’t get tired. There were shoe boxes, pot lids, bike frames, nails, screws, coat hangers, bags of rags

and two pairs of skis rolling down the attic staircase with loud banging.

“Help! He’s tearing the house apart!” Marilyn complained and looked at the Sandman, seeking for help. “Can’t you do anything?”

“I will sprinkle dream sand in his eye,” the Sandman decided and climbed to the attic with his sand sack.

In a short while there was silence. In the end Marilyn could hear the Sandman’s soft steps on the staircase and then the Sandman himself appeared at the doorstep, looking all pleased. He was dragging a bundle looking like a huge dust ball, holding a half-eaten slipper in his hand.

“Where will I put him?” the Sandman asked.

“I don’t really know,” Marilyn hesitated. “Why don’t you take him to the basement? We might need him sometimes, if he can really tell stories.”

The Sandman dragged Messy to the basement and left him snoring on an old sofa that had been thrown out.

“He’ll get used to being down here,” he mumbled to himself and went back up to sprinkle sleep sand in Marilyn’s eye. There was no way anyone could get any sleep with such loud banging.

