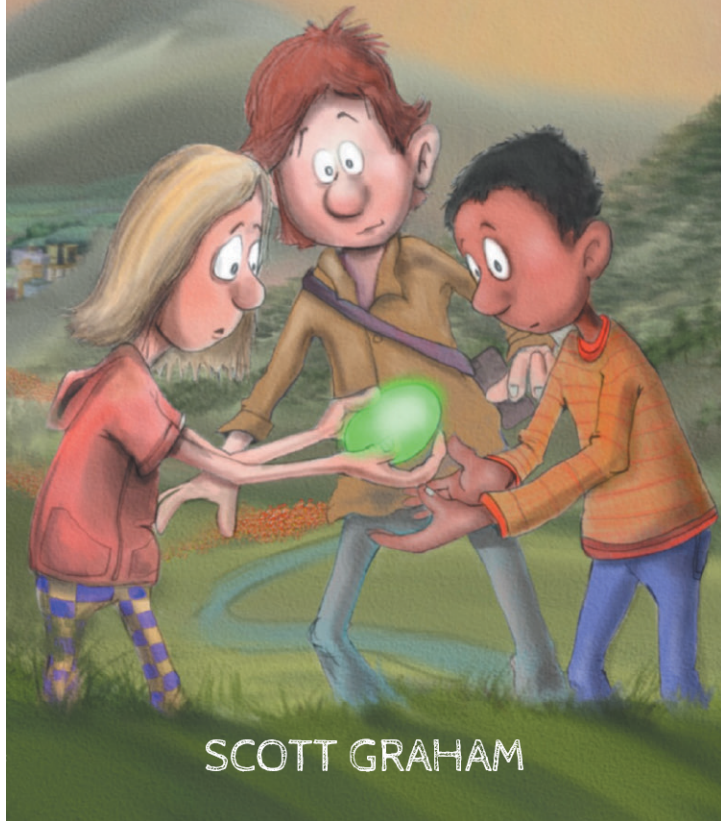


Poopy Patinski's
GREEN EGG
Adventure



SCOTT GRAHAM

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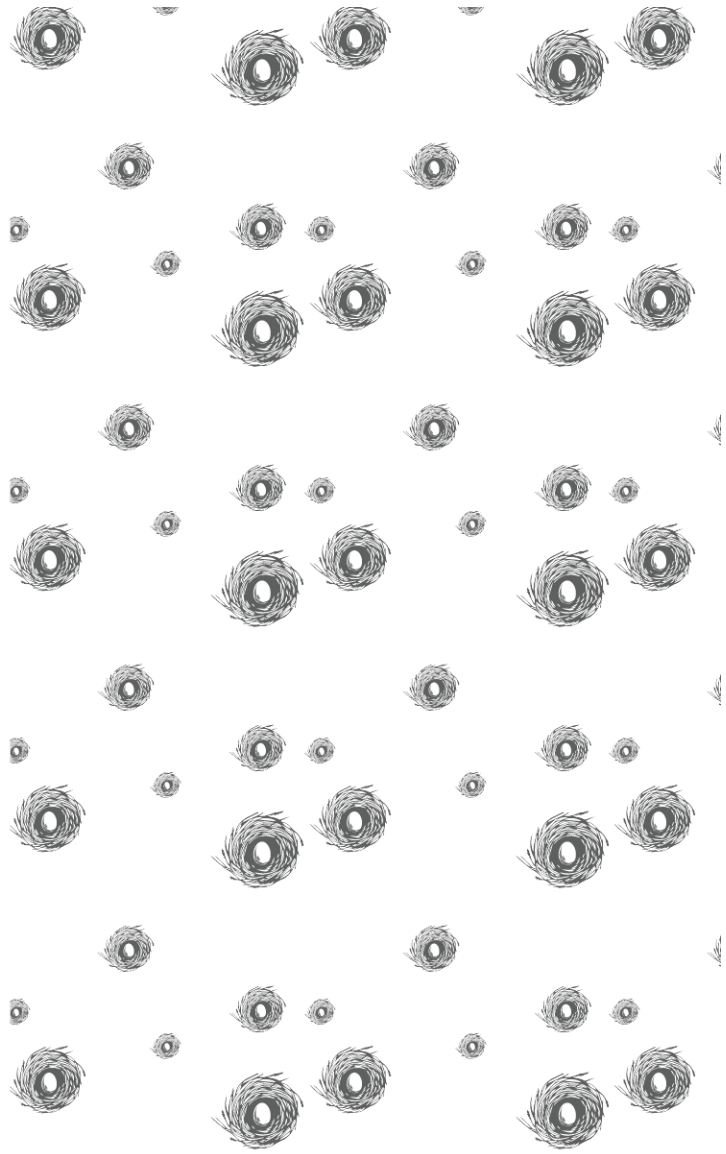
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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my two grandmothers, Granny Rogerson and Granny Graham, my super grannies. They both lived incredible lives in Perth, Scotland, raising my two amazing parents, Bill and Isabella Graham. They are my inspiration.



Table of Contents

Chapter 1	
Not an Ordinary Day	1
Chapter 2	
The Splitting	12
Chapter 3	
To Think the Impossible Means to do the Impossible.....	24
Chapter 4	
A Chance to Change Everything	26
Chapter 5	
I Don't Want to go to Camp	32
Chapter 6	
A New Danger.....	39
Chapter 7	
Fingloria.....	43
Chapter 8	
Evil Can Never Die	50
Chapter 9	
Older Than Dirt	53
Chapter 10	
The Tunnels Beneath the Towns.....	60
Chapter 11	
Greatness has Returned.....	70
Chapter 12	
Out of the Woods.....	77
Chapter 13	
Embleton.....	84
Chapter 14	
A New Day and a New Beginning	96



Chapter 1

Not an Ordinary Day

As I lay in my warm bed under my tattered green blanket, I quietly listened to the wind encircling my house in its frozen embrace, dreading the day that was about to begin. It is the day when all the ten-year-olds in the eastern townships meet in the public square to get their colour and number: the diversification or, as the commoners call it, the Splitting. The eastern townships are located at the foot of Finkle Mountain, surrounded by the Forest of Enzar. They are made up of the towns of Finkle, Embletown, and Corwhin. The Splitting has been going on for hundreds of years and has gone through many generations. Every ten-year-old, whether they wanted to or not, has to take part in this horrid event and be

Not an Ordinary Day

classified by their strengths and weaknesses. Does any ten-year-old know what they were good at? I know I don't! I didn't think it was fair to classify people by their strengths or by their weaknesses. This was why I disliked the Splitting.

My name is Tipple. I live for adventure. I love riding my burnt-orange Fastback 100 bike in the town quarries, making forts in the forests, and sleeping under the stars. My bike used to be my father's, which I inherited. We don't have a lot of money, so the Fastback 100 was the bike I got. I didn't care, though, as my bike was the coolest bike in town. It has a small tire in the front (for extra speed) and a big, meaty tire in the back, with a black banana seat and cool Screamer/Eliminator-style curly handlebars. I put my hockey cards in the spokes, so it sounds like a real chopper. When I ride my bike, I feel invincible.

I also love hearing about the stories that had made our town strong: stories about dragons and mythical monsters that had struck terror into the hearts of our villagers. These stories are written down in the Book of Finkle, which are archived in Embleton's library. It is a book that houses the

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

stories and legends that make up the histories of our towns. I wished that I could have been part of one of these stories, as I love adventure. I had a strange feeling that today was going to be the day for my adventure, my story, and my legacy.

I crawled out from under my blanket and stumbled into the frigid air, taking a moment for my eyes to adjust to the bright winter morning that filled my room. Our house was always cold, as we couldn't afford a house with electricity. We had a fire burning in our fireplace, but the heat seldom made it upstairs to where I slept. It heated our main floor nicely, but not our second. I pressed my face against my window, staring at the empty streets of Embleton, a small town just south of the town of Finkle. The buildings were old and worn, with ancient cobblestone streets that held the stories of many generations: generations that approved of categorizing people by colour and rating them with a number that would represent their strengths. The Splitting had gone on too long, not because it helped our town, but because no one could think of a better way of teaching our youth how to become leaders in our community. This event was unique to our township.

Not an Ordinary Day

There had been other townships that had had this event but realized it pulled people apart. I was not sure why our leaders hadn't figured this out yet. We needed someone who was courageous with new ideas to change the way we did things in Embleton. Maybe if I could have gotten enough of my friends together, we could have gotten the adults to change the way they thought about what made our citizens and town great.

I knew a lot of my friends were tired of the Splitting. They hated the thought of competing against each other. Some had tried to stop this ridiculous event but had gotten in trouble from the adults who feared change. My friend Damir went to one of the town meetings and attempted to get the leaders of Embleton to stop the event. He told our leaders that the Splitting was not promoting the potential in anyone. It led people to believe that they were only good at one thing, and that was ridiculous. It limited people. Damir suggested that they have a Celebration Day instead, which would encourage the ten-year-olds to work towards reaching their potential and see that they have more than just one strength or one weakness.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

"Why would we listen to a scrawny ten-year-old boy who knows nothing about the traditions of our township" was the statement that echoed throughout the meeting hall that day. Damir was escorted out of the building and was punished by his parents for disrupting the council meeting.

I made my way down the stairs to get a hot bowl of Wiffle Doodles, my favourite cereal, which was probably more sugar than cereal. I started thinking about all the kids who would be at the Splitting. There are the nice kids, shy kids, worried-about-everything kids, bullying, bullied, athletic, and everything-needs-to-be-popular kids, nerdy, geeky, and smelly kids, smarter-than-smart, and adventurous kids. Every personality was going to be at the Splitting.

The worst of the kids at the event had to be Dora Delorkius. She was an impish little princess whose dad came running to her rescue every time she shed a tear. The reality was she was always shedding tears. She was the shedder queen. In gym class, she seldom played the games. She made such a fuss that the teacher directed her to the sidelines. The teacher probably didn't want to

Not an Ordinary Day

deal with Mr. Delorkius. He was as dumb as a sweet potato. He believed he knew everything but knew nothing.

My house was very quiet this morning, as my parents had already left for the community hall where they were learning about Moo Moo Chickens and how to rid our town of these naughty numb-skulls. These creatures were harmless but incredibly annoying. They have been an annoyance for years. They loved playing tricks on the people of Embleton, which stressed everyone out. The adults of our town meet every year on the same day as the Splitting. I guess it was their way of feeling as if they were contributing to the good of our town. With all the discussions and all the meetings they have had, they still haven't figured out a way to rid our town of these Moo Moo Chickens.

Whenever they think they have found a way of freeing our town of these pesky creatures, the Moo Moo Chickens counteract their plan with something more amusing.

I layered myself with the warmest clothes I could find and made my way onto the iced roads of Embleton. I twisted my way through the streets

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

and alleys that held the poignant smells of fish and rotting meat. I called on my friend Shammy Shameala. He stood about five foot two, was skinny as a rake, had brown eyes and brown hair, with olive-coloured skin. He was my best friend. We did everything together, which would include the Splitting. I hope we ended up in the same group as I couldn't imagine doing the Splitting without him.

The strange thing about Shammy was that he loved stinky meat. Kids had tried to get the meat banned from school, but our principal loved it. He loved the smell and the taste. As long as Shammy brought extra meat for the principal, he was allowed to bring it to school. This meat was made up of garlic and cloves and exotic spices that smelled like a dirty gym sock. Every day at school, Shammy opened his lunch bag, which released the most disgusting odour into the classroom. Kids ran hysterically into the hallway to escape the treacherous scent. The smell was so strong that kids hung out of the classroom window, gasping for fresh air.

Dora was, of course, the first one at the window, rudely pushing her way past everyone. Last Monday, Dora was a little too fast. She got to the

Not an Ordinary Day

window first, but the push of the rest of the class catapulted her out of the window and into the garbage bin below. This was the same bin that held a week's worth of Shammy's stinky meat. The trash was never emptied until Monday afternoon, so there was plenty of Shammy's meat for Dora to enjoy. She was covered from head to toe. I guess it doesn't pay to be pushy.

Dora began a petition and even had her dad complain to the principal, but that didn't do any good because the principal loved Shammy and his stinky meat. It may not have been fair, but in this case, no one was complaining. Dora was mean and selfish and needed to learn that you didn't always get what you wanted. She also needed to learn to be kind to others. So Shammy's rights won over Dora's this time, and he continued to bring stinky meat to school.

Shammy and I continued to walk toward the town square, and as we did, we could hear the din of hundreds of ten-year-old kids as they too made their way to the Splitting. These kids came from the three towns that made up our township. We knew a few of the kids from camps and school events, but

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

most were strangers. The number of ten-year-olds changed from year to year. However, this year's crowd seemed more significant than other years. We were both a little nervous as we didn't know if we would be in the same group or if we would be split into opposing groups. How could I compete against my best friend?

Even though Shammy and I were best friends, we were entirely different. Shammy was a little quirky and extremely intelligent. He could answer the hardest math question before anyone else had the chance to even think about it. He was a creative genius. He built the coolest fort that was made from hairnets and women's pantyhose in my backyard. It allowed the flow of air but protected us from pesky mosquitos. He was always coming up with creative contraptions. He made me a cool slingshot, which I carried with me everywhere. I loved Shammy. He inspired me by his creativeness and his ability to be himself, no matter what. Other kids often made fun of him, but he didn't seem to mind. He knew who he was and who he was supposed to be. If other kids didn't get him, they didn't get him. It wasn't something he spent a lot of time worrying about.

Not an Ordinary Day

I, on the other hand, am average—average grades, average looks (at best), and average talent, average, average, average, boring, boring, boring. My only saving grace is I am good at music. I can play the guitar and sing, which was my way of making friends and feeling cool. I was not in a band yet, but I thought after the Splitting I could talk Shammy into being our drummer. He did like banging on things, especially when he got mad. Both Shammy and I were always looking for ways of looking cool. We even dreamed of becoming superheroes. We trained every weekend in our backyards, pretending to fight dragons, destroy Moo Moo Chickens, and outwit the evil Freud Ian Shlip. We even came up with the name “The Utter Boys,” as we hoped we would be the ones who destroyed the Moo Moo Chickens, and what name better described two boys with utter destroying power? We were “utterly” magnificent.

In case you haven't heard about Freud Ian Shlip, let me be the first to tell you. Shlip had been the principal of Milmac Public School and creator of the annoying Moo Moo Chickens. These creatures roamed the outskirts of Embleton and were under his evil power. They weren't powerful but, as I said

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

before, were annoying. They were so annoying that our parents spent days trying to figure out a way of ridding our town and forests of these creatures. This was what our parents did while we were at the Splitting. They took our brothers and sisters and met in the Embleton Community Hall to discuss traps, poisonous gas, raids, creating armies, and other methods of destroying the creatures that were tearing our town apart. They had been doing this for years but still weren't able to figure out a plan that worked.

Shammy and I were ready for whatever happened at the Splitting this year. We wanted an adventure and a chance to show everyone in town that we were cool and more than what the Splitting deemed as significant. We didn't want to be limited by this silly event. If we only had known what was about to happen. We hadn't realized that this year's Splitting was about to change everything.



Chapter 2

The Splitting

When Shammy and I arrived at the Splitting, it had already begun. Mr. Wincoolie was the organizer this year. The senior council members, who were the elders of Embleton and made most of the big decisions, took turns when it came to organizing this event. Mr. Wincoolie was the chosen one this year. He was a funny-looking man, with a head that looked too big for his body, a pudgy face, and a big belly, and whose breath could peel paint. In his day, he had been placed into the fat and lazy group. Being called fatty and lazy for his entire life had led him to a life that lacked opportunity and fulfillment because, like many others, he'd repeated the lies of the Splitting, which eventually had become his

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

life. His beliefs in himself dictated his destiny. The Splitting often led people to believe that they were limited by their weaknesses, and this was the lie. My grandfather told me that if you believe that you are only as good as what you can't do, you don't see all the things you can do. My grandfather was a wise man. I loved him so much. He taught me the importance of respecting others and seeing the potential in myself. He told me that there were people in the world who focused on the negative. They saw the bad in everything and everyone. They would attempt to steer you away from reaching your potential. Their words would pick and claw at your inner core, but if you were secure in what you believed, they would have no lasting effect, and you would reach your destiny and fulfill your potential.

Looking at the crowd, I saw what you would expect to see, which was a vast number of differences. There were big, small, and skinny kids, kids with blond, brown, black, and red hair, smart kids, dumber-than-dirt kids, nice kids and downright-mean kids. Every difference was present, and every difference was about to be categorized and would compete to prove to Embleton that people needed to be split into groups to be used for the

The Splitting

advantage of the town. This was an event unique to Embleton. The smaller villages that surrounded our town all thought our custom was ridiculous. I needed to figure out a way to stop this madness.

All of a sudden, a murmur rippled through the crowd. Something was happening. Mr. Wincoolie was handed a crumpled piece of paper that, when he looked at it, made the colour run out of his face. He looked sick. One of the citizens heard Wincoolie repeat what he'd read on the paper to his assistant and began spreading the information through the crowd. Moments passed, and Mr. Wincoolie slowly made his way to the mic that was teetering on the podium. He cleared his throat and began an announcement that no one expected.

"Fellow citizens, the goal of today's event was to continue a tradition that has been part of Embleton for over one hundred years. To define the strengths, weaknesses, and differences of our ten-year-olds so that they can become contributing members of our town. I just received news that our Green Egg has been stolen by the dreaded Moo Moo Chickens and has been taken to a camp in the Forest of Enzar.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

"Once we realized the Green Egg had been stolen, drones were instantly launched into the sky. The drones photographed the Moo Moo Chickens running into the forest. There is a homing device attached to the egg that allows us to track its whereabouts. We know that it was moving toward the centre of Enzar. This is where we think the Moo Moo Chicken's camp is and where we must go to retrieve our egg."

Shammy and I looked at each other in disbelief.

"How do you think the Moo Moo Chickens were able to steal Embleton's most precious object?" Shammy asked.

"I am not sure. I thought the vault where it was housed was impenetrable. My parents used to tell me stories about how tricky the Moo Moo Chickens are. They are able to sneak into locked houses and played tricks on people. They steal food, rummage through clothes drawers, leave foul-smelling odours in the bathrooms, and flood homes by turning on the facets. They must have figured out a way into the vaults."

The Splitting

“Why do you think the Moo Moo Chickens would want the Green Egg? Is this just one of their annoying deeds, or is there more to it?” I wondered.

“My dad used to tell me stories about the Green Egg and Poopy Patinski. He told me that the Green Egg was originally found in Finkle Mountain by the legendary Poopy Patinski. He became a great wizard and ruled over the town of Finkle and Embleton as our guardian. No one has seen Poopy for years. However, we know he still rules over us, because of the prosperity and safety we experience,” added Shammy.

“I heard the Green Egg is a dragon’s egg born from the great Kimono dragon, who is the great wizard who taught Poopy Patinski how to be a wizard. Both male and female dragons can lay eggs. When this particular egg was born, it rolled into a long, dark tunnel and was believed to be lost. The Kimono dragon couldn’t go into this particular tunnel as it was too big. Poopy was sent on a quest by the Kimono dragon to find the egg. He had to endure many days and nights in the mountain, battling a multitude of strange beasts before he was able to retrieve the egg. When he found the egg and

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

brought it to the dragon, the dragon knew that Poopy was worthy of becoming the guardian of Embleton and its surrounding towns. His bravery, selflessness, and inner strength were all characteristics of a leader," I replied.

"My grandfather taught me that there are some who believe a leader is a person who holds a leadership position, or who has power because of money, intelligence, or wealth. A true leader is someone who adds value to others and puts others before themselves. It is also a person who tries to be their best in every situation. This describes Poopy Patinski."

Poopy was asked by the dragon to bring the Green Egg to the city hall and lock it away in a secret vault buried deep beneath the basement. He thought the egg would be safe there. You

see, it wasn't an egg that contained an embryo of a dragon. It was an egg that held a secret. Shlip believed the secret was something that might give him power and magic that he could use against the people of Embleton. I would listen to my parents for hours as they told me these stories. I thought they were tales made up to ignite my imagination.

The Splitting

Little did I know that the stories my parents had told me were all true. Maybe there would be a story that would include Shabby and me. Maybe the Utter Boys would become heroes and be included in the stories told around campfires.

"Somehow the Moo Moo Chickens figured out where the Green Egg was and connived to steal the egg and use its power to rule all the surrounding lands. If we don't get the Green Egg back, who knows what the Moo Moo Chickens might do it!" I exclaimed.

In case you are one of the few that do not know about the Moo Moo Chickens and their creator, let me enlighten you. They were created by the evil Freud Ian Shlip. When Shlip was a ten-year-old boy, he had taken part in the Splitting. Shlip was so mean that he was placed in a group by himself. He was such a mean kid that the bullies didn't want anything to do with him. As Shlip grew into a man, his soul darkened and his mind became riddled with evil thoughts. His passion was to infect the citizens of Finkle and Embleton with his evil. He resented them for their taunts about his orange, cotton candy-like hair and for leaving him out of

everything. Who would blame them, as no one wanted to be around such a villain.

When Shlip became an adult, he bullied his way into the school system. He got a job as a teacher at Milmac Public School. He was a horrible teacher. He taught children that evil was good and good was evil. When he applied to be principal, no one dared to run against him, as everyone was afraid of what he would do if they did confront him. Even some of our police force was under his control. If anyone tried to oppose Shlip, they would either be harassed by the corrupt cops or have to deal one-on-one with Shlip. They often got shipped off to other schools or vanished from the community. No one dared to ask questions, as they felt they might be next. He became the most despised principal who ever walked the halls of Milmac Public School. His breath was so rancid that it stunk up the hallways of the school and any classroom he visited. He took away everything that was fun. He took away chocolate and candy and clubs, and fun was forbidden. Milmac became a very sad place to go to school.

I asked my dad about Shlip. He didn't like talking about him. He warned me not to ever go near

The Splitting

Shlip's five-acre farm. It was the place where Ship used to live and where he had plotted against the townsfolk. Every evening, Shlip would lock himself in his barn, and secretly work on something diabolical. No one knew what it was, but if it involved Shlip, it had to be something dark and evil.

On a Saturday, many years ago, there was a loud explosion heard coming from Shlip's barn. There were a few curious boys, one of them being my dad, who decided to check it out. When they arrived at the farm, they saw smoke billowing out of Shlip's barn. My dad peered through a crack in the barn and couldn't believe his eyes. There were beakers bubbling, fires burning, and gray smoke hovering over the old barn floor. My dad could see there were cows and chickens hysterically milling about the barn. Suddenly, out of the darkest corner emerged a strange-looking creature. It was only about three feet tall. It stood on its hind legs and was covered in black spots. It had the face of a chicken but the body of a cow. Did the explosion, in combination with whatever was in the beakers, create this creature?

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

This was the beginning of the Moo Moo Chicken madness. My dad had never been the same after that experience. He seldom talked about the incident, but if he did, he would shake, perspire and feel sick at the thought of the evil creature created by Shlip.

I had to pry information out of him. Ever since the creation of the Moo Moo Chickens, Shlip had been training them to wreak havoc. They were not dangerous but very annoying. These creatures were constantly creating mischief around town. Just a few weeks ago a Moo Moo Chicken had stolen a pair of our mayor's underwear, soaked them in water, froze them, and hung them on a flagpole outside his office. They'd thought this was funny. They had probably wanted to embarrass the mayor. After all, who knew he wore pink-and-yellow floral underwear? Moo Moo Chickens hid up in trees and moved from bush to bush, hiding in alleyways and behind houses. They were seldom seen, but when they were, they moved quickly out of catching range.

The Moo Moo Chickens were being used by Shlip against our town. He was trying to get the great citizens of Embleton to move away. It was his way of getting back at all the kids who had made fun of

The Splitting

him when was a boy. He was so angry about being bullied that his anger turned to revenge.

A few years back, on a cold, dark evening in the fall, Shlip had created an army of Moo Moo Chickens and marched on the town of Finkle with the intention of destroying the townsfolk in their sleep. Poopy Patinski had known of Shlip's plan and had been waiting for him and his band of bullies at the edge of Finkle. There had been a great battle like no other battle in Finkle history. When the smoke cleared and the battle was over, Poopy and his alliance stood in a field littered with the bodies of thousands of Moo Moo Chickens. Poopy and his alliance had won the battle and had banished Shlip into the Forest of Enzar. Years later, Shlip was found dead in an old abandoned house, killed by one of his own creations. People were relieved that Shlip was gone. They had hoped the Moo Moo Chickens would eventually disappear too.

"Maybe this is Shlip's legacy? Maybe the Moo Moo Chickens are seeking revenge for Shlip?"

Maybe they think they can use the magic of the Green Egg to fulfill Shlip's vengeance?" stated Shammy.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

Mr. Wincoolie continued. "So, for the first time in the history of Embleton, we are not going with the Splitting. Instead, you can choose who you want in your group. Each group must go into the Forest of Enzar and attempt to retrieve the Green Egg."

The crowd went crazy. In a hundred years, we have never been permitted to split into our own groups. How is this possible? How could a kid from the lower edges of Embleton work with a superior kid from the north side? Could big kids work with skinny kids? Red-hair kids never worked with brown hair kids. That would be crazy.

You see, no one looked forward to his or her tenth birthday. Life was full of fun and excitement before becoming ten. Hide-and-Go-Seek, camping in the backyard, and daily bike rides were all part of our lives. The dread of turning ten was knowing that our lives would change forever. We wanted to continue with our childhood and explore our strengths and weaknesses ourselves. We were too young to give up our childhood fun. What happened next was beyond belief.



Chapter 3

To Think the Impossible Means to do the Impossible

All the kids at the Splitting knew what they had to do. They had to create a team that would go into the Forest of Enzar to retrieve the Green Egg. The team would have to be brave and smart and have a knowledge of the forest. Now this forest wasn't a natural forest. It was a forest that was darker than dark and filled with evil magic, Moo Moo Chicken traps, and creatures that would never allow you to pass through without a fight. We would need the knowledge of all the beasts that lived within the darkness of the forest. There were so many strange beasts that this would be impossible. There was the dreaded Pickle Weasel that preyed on human flesh, the Gonzolian Munchouser

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

that tickled people to death, and the ferocious Wangle-beaver that lulled their victims into an internal sleep with their voices. These were just a few of the many beasts that lived within the walls of the forest. We all had learned about these animals at school and had been warned never to go into the Forest of Enzar, as it was extremely dangerous.

As I looked around at all the children, I saw kids with similar skills and interests forming groups. The big kids were with the big kids, red-hair kids with the red-hairs, and of course, the bullies with the bullies. I wanted to get together with someone who had different skills than me. I figured this would make our team stronger. I think I had the bravery and determination covered. I wanted someone whose talents complemented mine. If I could find someone who was intelligent and inventive, our team would have a great combination of skills. It was time to show the town of Embleton that everyone had something great to offer. The word "different" was no longer going to be a bad word. It was going to be a word kids would see as something they wanted to be. Who wants to be the same as everyone else? This makes me think of another word, and that's "boring."



Chapter 4

A Chance to Change Everything

I didn't have to look far for my partner, as I already knew. It was time for the Utter Boys to have their adventure and write their chapter in the storybooks of Embleton. I grabbed Shammy and pulled him under the bleachers.

"Listen, we finally have the chance to do something together. We can make the difference we've always wanted to make. Let's get the Green Egg back from the Moo Moo Chickens and show Embleton that two different guys can work together and do something amazing. Our team will be you and me. We need to get onto the path that leads into the Forest of Enzar before anyone else."

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

"I'm not sure I'm up to an adventure that involves traveling into the Forest of Enzar with beasts that could rip me to shreds," exclaimed Shammy. "I'm a homebody and don't do very well battling real, boy-eating creatures."

Shammy was hesitant. He wasn't as brave as I was. It has always taken a lot of encouragement from me to get Shammy to do anything out of his comfort zone. With his brains and my courage, we were destined to be the winners of this challenge. Although Shammy was afraid, he knew there wouldn't be a better choice than pairing with me. He realized our skills complemented each other. On the walk to the Splitting, he had already told me that he hoped we would be in the same group. He was afraid but excited to start our Utter Boy adventure.

"Come on, Shammy. I believe in you. You are my best friend, and I can't do this without you. What do you say?" I asked.

"Well, maybe I could go. You're my only friend, and I can't afford to lose you. You are going to need my smarts if you are going to get this egg back. OK, I'm in," replied Shammy.

A Chance to Change Everything

The Splitting had always taken place at the entrance to the Forest of Enzar because the forest was used for other town events like the Turbo Toilet Race. The kids from the richer families could afford to buy their kids Turbo Toilets, which they rode all over town, flaunting their new rides. I didn't care because my Fastback 100 bike was cooler than any overrated, over-shined turbo pooper.

We grabbed our knapsacks and ran toward the opening of the forest. The other kids were too busy trying to put their teams together to notice us tear past them. We stood for a second in front of the path, wondering if we should go in. After all, we were only ten-years-old. What did we know about being brave? We had no idea what we were getting ourselves into because if we had, we would have certainly turned back.

Both Shammy and I pushed ourselves into the darkness of the forest. As we entered, the air became cold and dank, with darkness surrounding our frail frames. We ran for a while but realized we couldn't run any longer, as we could barely see two feet in front of us. We slowly pushed ourselves through the overgrown path, stumbling over fallen branches and rocks that

lined our way. After hours of walking, fatigue began to affect our brittle bodies. We paused for a moment to regain our strength. The only sounds we heard were the twigs snapping from the creatures that crept around us and the sound of our beating hearts. The silence was deafening. It was like a huge weight pressing down on us. The eeriness of the moment was suddenly broken by a blood-curdling scream.

"What was that!" Shammy whimpered.

"That scream could only come from one animal, and that is an Attack Squirrel. My friend Dirk Dooley told me that the scream was like hearing fingernails slide down a chalkboard. It was loud, high-pitched, and scary. He also told me that they were the size of an elephant and as ferocious as a lion. I think he may have exaggerated that fact. Dirk suggested that they may have been working with the Moo Moo Chickens and were probably in on stealing the Green Egg."

As we walked into a clearing, we could not believe our eyes. Standing in front of us was an Attack Squirrel wearing what looked like a diaper.

Shammy pulled out his flashlight and pointed it at the strange creature. It stood there, motionless,

with its eyes leering in our direction, waiting for us to make our move. The Attack Squirrel slowly moved forward and hissed a warning.

“You do not belong here. You must go back and not go any further because if you do, you will be greeted by a force you will not be able to stop.”

The sight of a squirrel in a diaper was hilarious. Neither Shammy nor I felt threatened. What could an Attack Squirrel do to us anyway? Shammy saw this as an opportunity to show me that he could be brave.

“Listen, you diaper bunny. You better beat it before we come over there and give you your first diaper wedgie,” exclaimed Shammy. “The only force you have is the rancid smell that is coming out of your diaper!”

“Yeah, I think your diaper needs changing, so you better go home, squirrel!” I yelled.

“I don’t think you understand. This diaper I am wearing is not an ordinary diaper. It is a Hyper Diaper. It gives me supersonic strength. The other thing I think you should know is that I am not alone.”

Out of the woods came an army of Attack Squirrels, all wearing Hyper Diapers. The squirrels were in the

trees and coming out of the woods, surrounding us on every side. We didn't have a chance. They were holding spears, crossbows, and slingshots made from the wood found in the forest. One squirrel didn't look very menacing, but the hundreds that surrounded us with their weapons did.

The head Attack Squirrel stepped in front of the army of squirrels. He looked different from the rest. He had a black body and a bright red tail. His name was Chippie, as he wore a name tag that said, "My Name is Chippie." The name tag was stuck on a brightly coloured shirt that covered his slightly rounded body. He seemed to need the recognition. The other squirrels wore camouflage outfits, minus the name tag. Chippie pulled an acorn out of his pocket and hurled it at us. It bounced a few times and landed right at our feet. As it hit the ground, it produced a putrid odour that knocked both Shabby and me out cold. The last thing I remember was wondering why anyone would name a squirrel Chippie and thinking how ridiculous squirrels look wearing diapers.



Chapter 5

I Don't Want to go to Camp

When Sammy and I awoke, we were hanging about twenty feet in the air in an oversized birdcage with impenetrable wrought-iron bars. Jagged barbed wire weaved its way around the cage, which would make it difficult for us to escape. As we looked through the bars, we could see smoke billowing from a campfire. There were a few groups of Moo Moo Chickens sitting around discussing their evil deeds, and Attack Squirrels marching up and down a dirt road, listening to commands from a deranged, oversized grey squirrel. This must have been their leader. We must be in the secret Moo Moo Chicken camp. There was a rumour in town about a secret camp where Moo Moo Chickens lived. No one knew for

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

sure. However, there were so many stories told about Shlip and his Moo Moo Chickens and their evil deeds that most people believed that there would be some camp that bred their evil. A few years ago, an elderly man had stumbled upon the camp after hiking in the woods. When he'd told people what he'd seen, no one believed him. He was old and had shown signs of losing his mind. My dad had told me that evil could never be eliminated as it exists in all of us. This camp was the heart of evil, and we were in it.

We heard the chatter from the Attack Squirrels that they had formed an alliance with the Moo Moo Chickens and were forming a plan to use the Green Egg to conquer Embleton and its surrounding towns. Shammy and I needed to get out of this prison and recapture the Green Egg before the Moo Moo Chickens figured out how to harness its power.

"Hey, Tipple," Shammy whispered. "There is an Attack Squirrel holding on to the rope that is holding us up in this cage. The rope was too short to tie on any tree, so the head squirrel made this guy hold it as a punishment for not getting up on

I Don't Want to go to Camp

time today. I heard the head squirrel ream this squirrel out earlier. If we can get him to drop the rope, the cage will crash to the ground and open. If we can create a distraction, we may be able to grab the Green Egg and hightail it out of this place. What do you think?"

"The only problem with your plan, Shammy, is that when we fall twenty feet to the ground, we may be falling to our deaths or seriously get hurt. What happens if we fall and the cage doesn't open? I like your idea of getting the guard to drop the rope, but how can we cushion our fall and guarantee the cage door will open? The other issue is we don't know where the Green Egg is."

Out of a large tent in the camp came a huge Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken. These things were four times the size of a regular Moo Moo Chicken in height and weight. It was the creature that was thought to have killed Shlip. Ironically, they were created by Shlip to be bodyguards. I noticed its hands were covered with magical green dust. This was the same dust that would have covered the Green Egg.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

"This Moo Moo Chicken must be watching the Green Egg. They must be hiding it in the tent!" I exclaimed.

"Shammy, do you still have any of that stinky meat you eat at school?"

"Of course I do. I always carry some extra slices with me in case I need it for a snack."

"OK, here's the plan."

I pulled my Super Deluxe Cosmic Slingshot out of my back pocket. It was the slingshot Shammy had given me for my tenth birthday. The squirrels probably didn't realize I still had a weapon on me, because I hid it in my secret pocket. The slingshot wasn't very big and could fit in a small space.

It may have been small, but it was powerful. It could put a hole in a tin can that as sixty feet away. I always carry my slingshot with me in case I run into those no good Finkle bullies who love giving me Pop Rock Romanos. A Pop Rock Romano is when pop rocks are poured in your underwear followed by a can of cola. The candy pops around in your undies, making you dance around in pain. It's a feeling that I do not enjoy.

"Roll a few pieces of that stinky meat it into a ball so that I can place it in my slingshot. I'm going to nail that Attack Squirrel right between the eyes, so he drops the rope that is holding the cage. I'm also going to get the Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken to walk under the cage so when we fall, we fall on his oversized, jelly belly. I will get the Moo Moo Chicken over to us by challenging him. These things are so full of themselves that they'll never walk away from a challenge."

Shammy rolled the biggest piece of stinky meat he could and gave it to me to load it into my slingshot. I needed to get the Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken to walk under the cage before I could hit the Attack Squirrel. As luck would have it, the Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken began walking in the direction of the cage.

"Hey, Moo Moo Chicken! My friend wants to challenge you to a wrestling match. He thinks he can take you down in less than a minute," I yelled.

"Are you crazy? This guy will squish me like a bug. Maybe you could challenge him? You're a lot bigger than I am," squeaked Shammy.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

The Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken noticed the two prisoners and began lumbering its way over to the cage. It had never heard of any ten-year-old boys who would have the courage to challenge the fiercest and most dangerous beast of the camp. Most ten-year-old boys it met either met their end or were imprisoned by Shlip.

"You two runts couldn't even beat my grandma in a wrestling match, let alone beat me, the strongest creature in the Forest of Enzar. How are you going to do anything when you're locked in a giant birdcage?"

The Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken was standing directly under the cage. We had to act immediately if we were going to escape and capture the Green Egg.

I fired a huge ball of the stinky meat right at the Attack Squirrel. I made sure I had my nose clothes-pegged shut, so as not to be bothered by the smell. I carried a few clothespins around with me because I never knew when Shammy would pull out one of his stinky-meat sandwiches. Shammy didn't care, as he loved the smell of his stinky meat. He was weird that way. The meat hit the squirrel right on

I Don't Want to go to Camp

the nose. The smell of the meat was so strong that the squirrel instantly passed out and, as he did, dropped the rope that was attached to the cage. The cage plummeted down to the ground and right on top of the Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken. The beast went down without a grunt and a groan. He instantly entered LaLa Land.

The Moo Moo Chicken was so tubby that when the cage hit its stomach, it sunk into its belly.

This made the landing very quiet, not alerting the other Moo Moo Chickens or Attack Squirrels. The impact was strong enough to pop the cage door open. We didn't waste any time. We ran toward the large, mold-covered tent. When we entered the tent, we stood in awe as we couldn't believe our eyes.



Chapter 6

A New Danger

The only thing in the tent was a bunch of tree stumps—short bits of a tree that weren't good for anything except to stand on. I suppose you could stand on them and give a speech on why it is frustrating to be in a tent with a bunch of useless stumps! Why would the Moo Moo Chicken be guarding these things? It didn't make any sense. There must be something special about these stumps. Maybe they too were magical? Without warning, the ground began to shake. There was a rumbling sound coming from the tree stumps, a sound that seemed to be getting closer to the surface.

"I hear voices," I whispered. "Let's hide!"

A New Danger

The tent began to sway back and forth as the noise got louder. There was a loud bang, followed by a creaking sound. The tree stumps were elevators. Doors began to open, revealing sweet, blue-haired grannies. One by one, these lovely looking grannies started streaming out of the tree elevators. The entire tent filled up fast with the grannies with clothes that smelled like mothballs. These grannies must have been created by the Moo Moo Chickens. We were hiding behind a large steel barrel. We didn't have much time before we would be discovered. We had to figure out what the Moo Moo Chickens' plan was, and that meant going where no boy had gone before—down a tree elevator to who knew where.

"We need to run for one of those elevators to see where all the grannies are coming from and find out what else the Moo Moo Chickens are planning. As soon as we see an empty elevator, let's jump on it and find out where it goes," I said.

The tent was crowded. Shammy and I darted from one tree to another until finally, we found an elevator that was free of grannies. The grannies were so caught up in their granny gossip that they failed

to notice us. They were probably talking about what they were going to do with the Green Egg. We hopped onto the elevator, only to see one button—a red button. Every kid knew that red buttons were always bad news. Red buttons started things that weren't supposed to start and ended things that weren't supposed to end. What choice did we have now? As we peered out of the elevator through the crowd of grannies, we could see that the Attack Squirrel and Moo Moo Chicken were starting to awake. We couldn't wait any longer. I slammed my hand on the red button. The elevator door closed and started to move. It plummeted downward and then stopped.

There was a loud hum, followed by an explosion. Both Shammy and I were rocketed horizontally. We were traveling underneath the floor of Enzar at high speed. We were holding onto each other as we bumped and thrashed about in the elevator.

"I knew we shouldn't have hit that red button!" yelled Shammy. "Red buttons are bad!"

The elevator began to slow down. It squealed and bumped, thrashed and smashed, into the walls of the tunnel. When it finally stopped, there was an

A New Danger

eerie silence. The door slowly opened. The air was filled with a sweet, familiar smell. We were staring at the legendary village of Fingloria.

Fingloria had been partially destroyed by the Kimono dragon and Poopy Patinski in the battle between Shlip and his band of bullies. Shortly after this battle, Shlip had been found dead in an old, dilapidated house in the centre of Enzar. He was killed at the hands of a Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken. This had been Shlip's new supersized Moo Moo Chicken, which would have served as a bodyguard, but had also been an unstoppable creature. One of these creatures had turned on Shlip after he'd refused to share one of his delicious chocolate cookies. Mouchilians have huge tempers and love chocolate. Shlip died at the hands of one of his creatures over a cookie. It was pathetic. His skeletonized body was found in the house. The body had been identified as being Shlip because of his orange hair and the note to his son found in his pocket. Although Shlip was dead, it had been said many times that evil could not be destroyed. What we were about to find was something we would have never expected.



Chapter 7

Fingloria

Fingloria had been made from the chocolate and candy that Shlip had stolen from his students at Milmac Public School. He had used his role as principal to hide his evil plan of destroying Embleton and the Fantastical Town of Finkle. He had stolen so much candy and chocolate that he'd used it to create an underground village. He and his band of bullies had worked in Fingloria, creating an army of sumo babies that would unite with the Moo Moo Chickens and march on Finkle to destroy its citizens in their sleep. Fortunately, Shlip's army had been destroyed by Poopy Patinski and Chico Chico-let with the help of other Finklites before they had been able to march on Finkle and cause any damage. I knew all the Shlip stories as my

Fingloria

father had told them before bed each night. I had these stories embedded in my imagination forever.

As Shammy and I gingerly walked through the empty streets of Fingloria, my mind filled with many questions. Who could have rebuilt Fingloria and why? Why were there so many grannies coming out of this place, and why weren't there any people in the streets? Was this the start of the Moo Moo Chickens' new evil plan?

Fingloria was different now. In the stories told about Fingloria, the town had been magnificent. The buildings had all been made from the richest chocolate, and the roads had been paved with sugar. The rooftops had been sweet cracker crusts, and the lakes had been made from the creamiest cocoa. Each door had been meticulously crafted out of exotic wood that was only found in the darkest parts of Enzar. Shlip had ordered his Moo Moo Chickens to get the wood needed to make these doors. No one from Embleton had dared enter the parts of Enzar as they were filled with Bewildered Beasts and Ripticious Reptiles that would sooner eat you than greet you.

As Shammy and I looked upon the city, we saw that the buildings had changed from sweet, delicious

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

chocolate to bitter, stale chocolate and the sugar that paved the street was harsh and brittle. The doors of each building were now old and worn, with wrought-iron knockers that displayed the images of the many characters that wandered the streets of Fingloria. There was an image of Poopy Patinski, Eric Crunchlunch, and even Chico Chico-let, past heroes of the town of Finkle. Had Fingloria become a shrine to all the people that had gone before? The town was different, now filled with bitter remains of the delicious candy that once had made this town.

The streets were tranquil and barren. The only sounds Shammy, and I could hear were the sounds of our hearts beating faster and more erratically as we moved closer to the centre of town.

"This place is kind of scary. It's dark and damp, and the streets smell like your filthy gym socks. I feel like something terrible is about to happen," Shammy stated.

"There must be something going on down here. This is where the grannies came from. The gas lights that are lining the street are lit, which means someone would have had to light them. Let's keep moving. This road looks like it will lead to the centre of town," I whispered.

Fingloria

We slowly made our way through the village, and as we did, we were being taunted by our fears. Our minds were telling us to go back, but our bodies kept moving. We could hear a small group of people chanting. We weren't alone. The street started to narrow. It was as if we were being funnelled into something sinister, something that was riddled with evil. As we poked our curious faces around the corner of the brick alley wall, we peered at a small group of people dressed in black robes with hoods that concealed their faces. They were staring at a lone figure that was standing on a small, ancient balcony. This figure was also dressed in a robe, but his robe was lined with sapphires and emeralds.

"He looks like the leader," I murmured.

"His voice sounds very familiar. I feel as if I know this guy, but I don't know why?" Shammy said.

This shadowed figure seemed to be the one in charge of whatever was going on. This mysterious figure was turned toward the crowd and was standing in the shadows of the building, which made it difficult to see his face. Shammy and I could hear his scratchy voice spew out venomous

words, disclosing a plan that would soon start an unforgettable adventure. We listened.

"My fellow Freudinites, we have in our possession the greatest source of power that has ever been. The one who possesses this has the power to do good or extreme evil. It was stolen from the vaults of Embleton by one of my Moo Moo Chickens and brought to us so that we can fulfill our destiny. We will use this power to infiltrate not only Embleton but all the surrounding towns, which includes the Fantastical Town of Finkle. We will destroy all that is good, so the power of evil infects all those who survive. The citizens of Finkle will pay for their taunts and exclusion."

The hooded man walked off the balcony and into the gothic building that was decaying behind him. He quickly returned with a decorative box in his hands. He held the box up above his head and announced:

"I give you the power of the egg. Behold!"

The crowd went berserk. They began cheering at this mysterious man, a man whose intentions were no good. Who was this man, and why was he so

Fingloria

interested in destroying the lives of so many innocent people? His message seemed all too familiar.

“Hey, Shammy! Did he say something about Moo Moo Chickens?”

“Yes, he referred to the Moo Moo Chickens as his Moo Moo Chickens,” replied Shammy.

“I have a really bad feeling that I may know who this guy is,” I announced.

The mysterious figure took his withered hand and, with his bony fingers, opened the box to reveal the Green Egg. It was the reason both Shammy and I were there. It was our mission. We had to retrieve this egg. It had to be placed back in the hands of those who would use the power for good.

The evil one continued:

“I have come up with a devious plan that is fool-proof. I will use the power of the Green Egg on an army of robotic grannies. They look like sweet, grey-haired grandmas. They will get jobs at department stores and in schools. They will become lunch ladies and delivery girls. They will be involved in everyday life. No one will ever suspect that the

sweet old ladies will be the demise of life as the people of Embleton know it.

The egg will make them extremely strong, sneaky, and conniving. When they have infiltrated the entire town, I will signal them to destroy, and when they do, no one who is good will survive. They will use their strength and their ability to mislead and destroy the good people of Finkle and then Embleton. Only the evil has a chance of survival. I will finally take over Embleton and Finkle.”

“Who is this guy?” whispered Shammy. “He’s scary and kind of annoying.”

As the crowd wound its way into hysteria, the crazed figure lay the Green Egg back in its box. As he did, he grabbed the hood of his robe and pulled it off his orange, cotton candy-like hair. His blackened eyes starred in the direction of both Shammy and me, but he didn’t see us as we were hidden in the shadows of the alleyway.

We were in shock. We stared in disbelief as we gazed into a face that we believed had died years ago. How could this be? How could he be alive!



Chapter 8

Evil Can Never Die

The cloaked figure we were staring at was none other than Freud Ian Shlip. He was supposed to have died at the hands of one of the Mouchilian Moo Moo Chickens. Shlip must have staged his death so that he could work privately on taking over Embleton and Finkle. If people thought he was dead, they would fall into a false sense of security. They would go about their days not realizing that Shlip was plotting their ends.

“Why does Shlip want to take over Embleton and Finkle so badly?” asked Shabby.

“I think it is because he can’t stand people who do good. It makes him feel inferior. He knows that

the citizens of Emblem and Finkle are good people with good intentions. This bothers Shlip, as he sees them as hypocrites. How could good people inflict so much bullying on him when he was a child? Many of them stood back and watched and did nothing to help him. This has led him to seek vengeance," I replied.

"Why didn't anyone help him?" Shammy asked.

"People tried, but Shlip was so wrapped up in his mean, little world that he didn't see it as help. He thought they were just pretending to care. Shlip is also a small man who is obsessed with power. He thinks that beneath the streets of Finkle lies a myriad of tunnels that are lined with the magical green dust that encases the Green Egg. He believes that if he harvests the dust he can mold it into any shape and any size. This would give him power over not only Finkle and Embleton, but the entire world. He would become the most powerful man who has ever existed. This cannot happen. We must stop him, even if it means losing everything."

"I have an idea," I announced. "Let's get close to Shlip. Let's create a distraction that will give us the opportunity to steal the egg. Once we

Evil Can Never Die

have the egg, we can find the entrance to the tunnels, which will lead us back to Embleton.”

“How in the world will we get close to Shlip without being caught by one of his stinky Moo Moo

Chickens or grannies?” asked Shammy.

“It’s time to get our granny on. It’s time to get old and crusty.”



Chapter 9

Older Than Dirt

I noticed that we had passed a woman's clothing store. It wasn't a regular clothing store, but a store for old fashion, Raging Grannies. Raging grannies were women who dressed up in old fashion granny clothing and fought for equality and human rights. It must be where all of Shlip's grannies got their mothball-smelling clothing. It was time to dart into the store and begin our makeovers. We were in luck. There was a sign on the front door that said, "Back in an Hour." Whoever worked in the store must have been on their lunch breaks. This would give us the opportunity to get on our granny disguises. Both Shammy and I made it into the store without being seen. On went the grey wig, the false teeth, a hideous,

Older Than Dirt

flower-patterned dress and, to finish off the look, ruby-red lipstick. We turned around at the same time to face reflections of ourselves in a mirror. We weren't sure if we should laugh or cry.

"You remind me of my Great-Aunt Muffy, but you kind of smell like my Auntie Jean. What is that horrible scent?" I asked.

"I think it's this mink stole I found in this trunk," replied Shammy.

"That's not a mink stole. That's a skunk!"

Shammy screamed so loud that the group that was in front of Shlip all turned in the direction of the store simultaneously only to see two strange-looking grannies running toward them with some furry animal attached. Shammy grabbed hold of the skunk and threw it into the crowd. It landed on a huge Mouchilian Moo Moo Chicken. The Moo Moo Chicken hurled it high up into the air. It landed right at the feet of Shlip and, when it did, lifted its tail and gave Shlip a squirt right in the face. Shlip started screaming and ran into the crowd, leaving the Green Egg behind.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

This was our chance. We climbed up onto the vacant balcony and grabbed the egg. In all the confusion, the crowd didn't even notice that two strange-looking grannies had just stolen the egg.

"Shove the egg in your jacket, Tipple, and let's get out of here!" yelled Shammy.

"I am so scared I am about to wet my pants! Let's get the heck out of this place before we get caught, and I embarrass myself!" I exclaimed.

We ran for all we were worth. We ran right past Shlip, who had jumped into the town water fountain to rid himself of the horrendous stink. Our only hope was to find the secret tunnels that led to Embleton. The problem was they were secret tunnels, which led one to believe that they wouldn't easily found.

As we ran through the town square and past what looked like an old schoolhouse, we could see a strange-looking man peering out the doorway, motioning us to enter. He looked harmless enough, and we didn't have any other ideas, so we hurled our bodies through the doorway. We needed someone to trust. He could have been one of Shlip's henchman, but we had to take a chance. The man who stood

Older Than Dirt

before us looked withered with age. His eyes were brilliant green, and his hair was starting to turn from blond to silver. It was the same colour as my dad's hair: arctic blonde. This man stood with confidence and looked wise.

"Your parents have told you many stories about me," the mysterious man announced. I am the guardian of both Embleton and Finkle, and I'm here to help you return the Green Egg to where it rightly belongs. I have been watching you and have been pleased with what I have seen. Your friendship has molded you into a powerful team. You have come to realize that no one should be limited by one strength or one weakness. We all have potential to be great. We sometimes need to believe in ourselves or have someone believe in us. Let me show you where the tunnels are, as they are not a secret to me. This is how I keep an eye on what is going on in Embleton and Finkle. Come with me now, as we are running out of time. Shlip's men will find us if we don't get a move on."

"Why haven't you tried to stop Shlip and get the egg back?" I asked.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

"The Green Egg was brought to Shlip today by the grannies. They received it from the Moo Moo Chickens. I had planned on retrieving the egg after dark but knew you would both be a part of this adventure. The success of this adventure would be based on teamwork and not the efforts of one," replied the old man.

Shlip was furious. He couldn't believe that the Green Egg had been taken. This could destroy his plan of destroying Finkle and getting back at all those who'd taunted him as a kid. He turned to his army of super grannies and Moo Moo Chickens and screamed, "The Green Egg has been stolen! Find it, and I will reward you. Fail, and I will rip you to pieces! March down every road and alleyway. Comb through all of the buildings and leave no stone unturned. Bring me back my egg!"

Shammy and I could hear venomous screams as Shlip's army tore through the town. They seemed to be getting closer.

"Come with me," yelled the mysterious stranger. "The tunnels are behind this building in the alleyway."

“Who are you and why should we trust you?” asked Shammy.

“You must put your trust in me, as you always have. You and the people of Embleton and Finkle have put trust in me for many years. I have always been with you. For I am Poopy Patiniski, the great wizard. Come now, we can talk later.”

We couldn't believe our ears. We were actually in the presence of the great Poopy Patinski. Both Shammy and I knew we were in good hands and had a chance of bringing home the Green Egg.

No one had seen Poopy Patinski for years. There were so many stories told about him around campfires and dinner tables. People just assumed he was living in the mountains of Finkle.

Poopy didn't realize that Shlip was still alive, nor did he know there was a plan to capture the Green Egg. Shlip had been so secretive that he had been able to keep his plan from Poopy.

Poopy, Shammy, and I ran toward the back of the building and disappeared into a dark alley. As Shammy and I stood by Poopy in the darkness, we both stared at each other in silence. We could not

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

believe that Poopy Patinski was going to help us get the Green Egg back to Embleton. Our friends and family were never going to believe this. It was the adventure of a lifetime!



Chapter 10

The Tunnels Beneath the Towns

We found ourselves in an alley filled with old steel garbage cans. Poopy began to lift off the lids. He tossed them behind him, almost hitting Shabby in the head. The most disgusting odour emanated out of the containers. It was so strong that I started to feel sick. I wonder why Poopy was searching through garbage cans when we were about to be destroyed by a bunch of Freud's thugs?

"Come on, boys. This is the entrance to the tunnels. Shlip's band of no-gooders aren't smart enough to look in a garbage can. It's our chance to escape! Let's go!"

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

Without a second thought, both Shammy and I dove head first into the slime lined garbage cans. We didn't realize that the tunnels started off as a steep slide. As we fell deeper into the tunnels, we began to pick up speed. Shammy's pants got caught on a nail and got ripped right off. Luckily he had his lucky underwear on, so at least he wasn't flying at top speed down a tube to who knows where naked. His bare bum on a metallic slide would have created a squeaking sound which would have given us away. The tube suddenly changed direction and, as it did, started to slow us down. We finally stopped and pulled ourselves out of the tube. Poopy, Shammy, and I stood up and stared into the dimly lit tunnel. We had heard that the tunnels were filled with strange beasts and could be infested with Moo Moo Chickens. There was still a chance that these creatures could be waiting for us ahead.

I began laughing hysterically. Poopy started laughing too.

"What are you guys laughing at?" asked Shammy.

"I think your underwear is missing something," replied Poopy.

As Shammy looked at the back of his lucky underwear, he realized that there was no longer any material at the back, exposing his extra pair of brand new, Captain Fantastic underwear.

“No wonder my tush felt so hot and tender under my undies,” Shammy exclaimed.

“Here’s my extra pair of pants. Luckily I carry an extra part of track pants with me. I have fallen into too many lakes, streams, and creeks on my adventures. An extra pair of pants has always come in handy. Cover up before you catch a cold,” I exclaimed. “I don’t want to be staring at your fantastical underwear any longer than I have to.”

We started down the dimly lit tunnel. The tunnel was filled with water. The water was waist high in some areas. As I dragged my feet through the water, I imagined creatures around my ankles, pulling me into the water to my death. I had to keep my mind on getting out of this place and back to Embleton. There were old mining lights hanging from the ceiling, which created shadows that injected fear into our hearts. There wasn’t any electricity in the tunnel. However, the lanterns that lined the tunnels were lit with candles that looked

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

as if they would give us a few hours of light. As we walked deeper into the darkness, we came upon the remains of many "misadventurers" who either had gotten lost or had met their ends at the hands of the creatures that lived in the tunnels. These had been people from Embleton who'd gone into these tunnels in search of adventure. The tunnels were secret; however, the secret had been discovered by a few unlucky souls. Some sought gold and fortune; some sought the magic of the green dust. They most likely and accidentally stumbled upon the tunnels, not realizing that the tunnels secrets would never be explained by them. These adventurers had never returned. They either got lost or were thought to have met their ends by one of the evil creatures that lurked within the shadows.

We turned every corner cautiously, as we didn't know what fate lay ahead. We walked for a few hours in silence, alone with our thoughts. There was a phosphorus green dust that lined the tunnels. The light from the green dust illuminated the tunnel with an eerie glow. It reflected off our skin, making us appear to be inhuman.

"I wonder if the green dust that lines these tunnels is what covers the Green Egg?" I pondered. "Maybe the green dust is magical?"

Poopy continued to lead us through the tunnels. We hoped he knew where he was going, as Shabby and I didn't have a clue. I was looking forward to putting the Green Egg back in the vault when we made it home: that's if we made it home.

Suddenly, the silence was cut by a deafening howl followed by a squeal. We instantly jumped to the side of the tunnel, hiding in a dark, musty corner. The scream seemed to be getting closer, as was a disgusting smell.

It was so strong that our eyes began to water, making it very difficult to see. For a moment, there was a silence. We kept as quiet as we could and didn't move a muscle. We hoped that if we stood still, the creature that was making the terrifying sound would turn away from where we stood.

"Maybe whatever made that noise has gone away?" offered Shabby. "The smell doesn't seem to be as strong. Let's stay here for a few minutes, and if the smell disappears, we can start moving."

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

There were a few moments of silence, but the smell returned. The water started to move around Poopy. It looked as if something was moving quickly around him.

"I can feel something around my feet!" yelled Poopy. "It may be a deadly Weasilian Lamprey. They live in dark, wet tunnels and feed on human flesh! I was attacked by one of these creatures a few years ago while I was swimming in an underground lake, hidden within Finkle Mountain. It may be the same creature."

Without warning, Poopy disappeared under the water. The creature pulled him into the dark, silent abyss below. There was no screaming, just the water rippling around where Poopy once stood.

I yelled for Poopy, jabbing around in the water, but nothing. Poopy was gone!

"What are we going to do now? We need to save Poopy, and how are we going to find our way through this myriad of tunnels without his help? We will be like all the other unfortunate souls who have wandered down here.

We will be lost and forgotten!" cried Shammy.

"That's it!" I thought. "We have the magic Green Egg. Let's use it to get Poopy back and get out of this forsaken place. I'm tired of the darkness and tired of this disgusting smell. I have an idea how we can get out of the tunnels. I believe the Green Egg can show us the way. It will either show us the way out of this place or help us get Poopy back."

I took the Green Egg from the knapsack. It glowed so brightly that the light-filled every crevice of the tunnel. The power I held in my hands could tempt any man to use it for selfish desires. We knew that the egg could also be used for good, as it would read the heart of the one who held it.

"I have no idea what to do with this thing. How can we use its magic to get Poopy away from that creature?" I wondered.

"Maybe we both have to have our hands on it. We are stronger together than by ourselves. The Green Egg reads the heart of who is holding it. If we both put our hands on it and it reads our hearts, it will know that, despite our differences, we are a team

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

who works together and have a desire to do good. Let's fill our hearts and minds with getting Poopy released from the Lamprey and getting out of these tunnels."

Both Shammy and I put our hands on the egg. We filled our hearts and minds with thoughts of getting our friend back and returning to Embleton. At first, nothing happened, just silence. Then, the egg began to glow brighter than it had ever glowed before. It was so bright that we couldn't open our eyes. The water around us began to swirl and rise. Coming toward us was something magnificently huge. It was immersed in the water, so neither of us knew what it was. We just hoped it wasn't the lamprey coming back for us.

As the light from the egg dimmed, we saw our friend Poopy Patinski coming toward us. He wasn't alone. He was riding on the back of the lamprey. The magic of the egg must have worked.

We both yelled at the same time. "Poopy, you're back. We thought the lamprey had taken you to your death! Are you injured? Did the lamprey hurt you in any way?"

“No, I am fine,” replied Poopy. “It tossed me around in the water, but I was able to break free of its grasp. Once I was free, I was able to convince this creature that we meant it no harm. He thought we were part of Shlip’s army. The lamprey is our ally now. If it wasn’t for your faith in what the Green Egg could do and your willingness to work together, I might have perished. You have discovered the real secret. It is the secret that Shlip could never discover. You found the power that comes with working together. Shlip wanted all the power to himself so that he would have never discovered this secret. Both you boys are an example of the importance of working together for a common good. The power that comes from the egg may work with those who are evil. However, it only works when two or more work together. Most people who do evil are so absorbed in themselves that they never see their true potentials. The Splitting has been a tradition that ignores the power of teamwork. It ignores the strength of people’s differences to accomplish great things. The people who run Embleton say they value individual differences, but they don’t.”

“I agree,” I replied. “They worry more about the ineffective rules they create than they do the good

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

that comes out of teamwork and the power of human differences.”

“Let’s get out of this place and get back to Embleton, return the Green Egg, and stop the tradition of the Splitting for good. Come on, boys. We are going for a ride,” commanded Poopy.

Shammy and I climbed on the lamprey with Poopy Patinski. We were ready to return to Embleton with not only the Green Egg but also a new message of hope.



Chapter 11

Greatness has Returned

“Let’s ride this beast through these dark tunnels. If we stay on the back of this creature, it will glide across the surface of the water. We can trust it not to submerge itself into the deep, as it knows we would not survive. We may get a little wet, but that’s part of the adventure. Where the tunnels end, we must take the paths that weave through the Forest of Enzar to where we gathered for the Splitting ceremony. Let’s keep a lookout for Moo Moo Chickens and Shlip and his Super Grannies. I noticed that one of the Moo Moo Chickens was near the garbage cans just before we disappeared into the tunnels. I was hoping he didn’t see us, but it must have realized that we were the ones who stole the egg. I am sure

it would have looked peculiar and out of place to see two grey-haired grannies and a guy in a cloak running as frantically as we were and jumping into garbage cans. Now they will try to stop us, as they do not want us to teach the people of Embleton about the true power of what we have learned. Let us go.”

Poopy raised his fist above his head. We instantly flew at top speeds down the tunnel on the back of an enchanted lamprey. It was able to fly through the water with us on its back. Thank goodness, it didn't take us under the water, as I cannot swim and can only hold my breath for thirty-seconds at the most. It only took us a few minutes to get to the end of the tunnel. We climbed off the back of the lamprey and allowed it to swim off into the blackness of the tunnel. We were so grateful to be out of that stink hole, but dread soon filled our minds as we knew we were now surrounded by the dangers of the forest.

“I didn't notice that much green dust in the tunnel. Did you guys?” I asked. “There were remnants of the dust along the walls of the tunnels, but not as much as I thought.”

“There was only a small lining of green dust in the tunnels, and it was never magical. The dust comes off the phosphorus mineral deposits that line the caves and mountains in this area. Because it glows, many people see it as magical, but it’s not. Shlip was never able to find the tunnels to see that the dust was only a legend and not magical. It was a tale that weaved its way through many campfires and bedtime stories but was never anything more than a story. Shlip believed the stories to be true and was following a foolish dream. He found a few bags of the magical dust in the Forest of Enzar. He thought the dust originated from the tunnels. The bags were from Finkle Mountain, left in the woods by some explorer who could not handle the perceived power or responsibility of the dust. The only magical dust that ever existed was found in Finkle Mountain years ago, but no one has ever been able to find it again,” replied Poopy. “Let’s hope Shlip never finds it. Maybe that can be our next adventure—searching for the magical green dust? Let us continue to Embleton.”

Poopy, Shammy, and I set up camp in a secluded part of the Forest of Enzar, as we were exhausted from our adventure. There were strange noises

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

everywhere, and we felt eyes on us from every direction. We knew our time was limited before Shlip and his army found us. We had to get some food in our bellies and have a bit of rest. We had a few pieces of Shammy's stinky meat. It was disgusting, but anything was going to taste good, as we were famished. Poopy tried Shammy's stinky meat for the first time and told us it tasted better than a mothball, but not quite as good as toe jam. We hoped he was kidding, but it was hard to tell with him. Hopefully, he's not eating mothballs and toe jam for his dinners. That would be gross!

We were about to huddle together to catch some warmth and sleep when I saw three elderly women coming our way. They looked like harmless grannies, but we knew better. It was three of Shlip's Super Grannies. The grannies didn't waste any time. Two of the grannies started their ninja moves. They ran toward us, jumping and chopping in the air. They looked ridiculous. The third granny ran toward to the knapsack that she thought held the Green Egg. She was trying to snatch it. She grabbed the bag and ran into the Forest of Enzar. Shammy and Poopy were too busy fighting off the Ninja Grannies to even notice. I was amused by the

granny who stole the egg. I was laughing so hard I could barely get out a word. I had a little secret about her theft that I was about to reveal. I joined my friends after we chased the two crusty old ladies back into the forest.

"While you two were fighting the two grannies, the third granny took off with the knapsack that held the Green Egg," I announced. "I ran toward my knapsack to get it before the granny did, but unfortunately, she beat me to it, but I am not too worried."

"What are we going to do? Now Shlip is going to use the Green Egg to rain evil over Embleton," replied Shammy. Shlip might pound the egg into green dust and use its magic against our town. What will happen if he actually figures out the secret of the egg? Our town will be ruined."

I reached into my jacket and pulled out the Green Egg.

"I had a funny feeling that one of Shlip's followers might try to steal the egg, so I took it out of the knapsack and hid it in my jacket. When I saw the grannies, I knew one of them would try and steal

the knapsack, and I am kind of glad they did. Take a listen.”

Out of the silence of the woods came a horrific scream. The grannies must have opened the knapsack to realize they were duped. The smell of the stinky meat threw them into a tizzy. The grannies ran back in our direction, banging into trees and falling over each other. The stink from the meat created a malfunction in their circuitry. The stink put their sensory mode into overdrive, disorienting them for a few minutes. There was smoke coming out from under their wigs and sparks flying between their toes. They ran right past us and disappeared into the darkness of the forest. The screams slowly disappeared into the abyss.

Poopy, Shammy, and I gathered up our belongings and began the final leg of our journey through the Forest of Enzar. We didn't know whether we would run into any more of Shlip's gang, but if we did, we would fight together to win together.

“You know, guys, I get so angry every time I think about the Splitting. The top people of Embleton spewed words of believing in teamwork and say they value initiative; however, I believe their

Greatness has Returned

actions speak louder than their words. Every time I show initiative, my ideas get shut down. There seem to be feelings of jealousy when I'm successful. This is very discouraging. The Splitting has to be stopped, and people need to be encouraged to celebrate differences and work together so that the town of Embleton can be a place where anything can happen," Shammy exclaimed.

"Well said, Shammy. I am proud of you. This adventure has helped you grow as a leader. I am so glad you are my best friend, and I was able to go on this adventure with you," I replied.

"Let's get to Embleton before Shlip can stop us," said Poopy. "We wanted to show the people of Embleton what can be done when three different individuals worked together."



Chapter 12

Out of the Woods

Poopy, Shammy, and I were exhausted. We trudged through heavy bush and thick, disgusting, bug-infested swamps and shimmied across a log to cross a fifty-foot ravine. We finally arrived at the edge of a cliff where we could see the lights of Embleton below. The sky was painted with a thousand stars. It was breathtaking. The sun began to peek over the horizon, illuminating the sky with beautiful pastel colours. We had made it through the Forest of Enzar. We were almost home.

“Do you think our families have missed us Shammy? I know I have missed them. I think they are going to be proud of us for what we have done together.”

Out of the Woods

“They will be talking about our adventures for years. I am not sure they would have realized how long we have been gone as time stands still in the Forest of Enzar. When they see us with the Green Egg, they will be very proud,” replied Shammy. It felt so good to have gone on this adventure with my best friend and to have met Poopy Patinski.

As we stared down at Embleton, we could hear a rustling sound behind us coming from the forest. It sounded like hundreds, if not thousands, of feet. Within minutes we were surrounded by a thousand Attack Squirrels, rancid-smelling grannies, and Moo Moo Chickens. Leading the army, perched on top of a huge elephant was Shlip. He had been tracking the boys using the squirrels, who were experts in tracking things down, after all, they were always looking for nuts and other food to satisfy their hunger. Shlip had come to take back the Green Egg.

“I believe you boys have something that belongs to me, and I want it back!” cackled Shlip. “There is no way you will be able to escape. I have you surrounded.”

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

It looked hopeless. In one direction we faced Shlip and his band of bullies. In the other direction, we faced a cliff. There was no way to survive a fall from such a height. The situation looked dim.

"What are we going to do? I do not want to give the Green Egg to Shlip, and I don't want to fall to my death either!" exclaimed Shammy.

"There is always a way, my friends. Together we are strong. There is a success in all us. When you think the impossible, you can do the impossible. Believe, and you will overcome. Grab my hand!" commanded Poopy.

"Can't we try using the power of the egg?" I asked.

"You don't need the magic of the egg when you have the strength that comes from believing in yourself," exclaimed Poopy.

Shammy and I believed in Poopy Patinski. He was a great wizard. For years, both Shammy and I had felt like losers. We had never really gelled with the other kids in our school, and our ideas had always been dismissed as being foolish. We liked being different, but our differences had consequences—we weren't part of the popular group, we

Out of the Woods

weren't invited to many parties, and we were often excluded from activities. Maybe after people heard about our adventures, they would start to have more respect for what we have always valued—our differences.

We were starting to believe in ourselves. Both Shammy and I grabbed Poopy's hand. We faced the town of Embleton, and together we jumped. We jumped away from Shlip and off the cliff into the darkness below. We began to plummet down the side of the cliff. Shammy and I closed our eyes. My heart filled with the faith I had in our friendship and the love I had for Shammy. If this was our time to leave this earth at least we would leave it together. The darkness was slowly leaving as the sun began to rise above the horizon and fill the sky with pastel blues, ambers, and gold. There were fewer stars in the sky, and the moon still illuminated the ground below.

From the side of the cliff came a great gust of air and a loud swooshing sound. I could feel the warm air against my body. The sound was coming from one of the caves on the side of the mountain. We felt a great presence move by us as we descended

the mountain. We were falling quickly, but not as fast as the creature that moved past us. As we looked up toward where we came, we could see Shlip's evil face staring down at us. The image of him was slowly disappearing as we fell faster and closer to the ground below. In the direction of the mountain, we saw a great beast flying out of one of the caves. It flew high into the sky, blocking out the light of the sunrise. The air became cool, as we were embraced in its shadow. The beast rocketed down beside us and scooped us up in its embrace. It was the magnificent Kimono Dragon that trained Poopy to be a wizard. I had heard that this Kimono Dragon had once been a great wizard himself but had been transformed into a hideous dragon by Shlip. His appearance had been judged to be a reflection of how he was on the inside. This judgment had forced him to hide in the mountains of Finkle. No one had been able to see that the true wizard was still alive in the fierce-looking shell of a dragon. No one, that is, except Poopy Patinski.

He had known that the dragon was of a pure heart. You see, Poopy had met the Kimono Dragon years earlier while in Finkle Mountain. At first, Poopy had been afraid, but his fear had not led him to hurt

Out of the Woods

the dragon. Rather, he had been kind and offered his help. Poopy had noticed that the creature had been wounded by one of Shlip's guards. Poopy had used his skills to dress the dragon's wounds. The dragon had been surprised at his compassion and had promised that he would one day repay Poopy's kindness. The day had come to help Poopy.

Shammy, Poopy, and I were riding on the back of the dragon. We were holding on as we flew above the clouds. We could see Shlip and his army thousands of feet below. The dragon began its descent. He was flying right at Shlip and his army. The dragon let out a huge fire burp aimed right at Shlip. Some of Shlip's army was running back into the forest, while others were diving into a nearby stream. The fire was everywhere. As we flew over the fire-ridden area, all we could see was Shlip retreating into the forest with what was left of his crew.

The dragon flew through the smoke and raced toward Embleton. He gently landed in a beautiful field of lavender, letting the boys and Poopy disembark from his back.

"You have been a great teacher and friend, Kimono Dragon!" exclaimed Poopy. "Thank you for saving

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

us from the evil that plagues this land. When we finish our mission, I will return to you so I can learn new magic and new ways of becoming a leader.”

The dragon nodded its head and flew back toward the mountain and disappeared over the scarlet, cloud-laced horizon. They needed to get the Green Egg back to Embleton.



Chapter 13

Embleton

We walked through the beautiful valley that was filled with magnificent, fragrant wildflowers. We were on a path that would lead us into the centre of the Splitting. Time stood still for those who entered the forest. It felt as if we were away from the Splitting for days, but in Embleton time, it would only be hours. We could hear the din of the crowd still arguing about who was going to do what and who was going to pair up to recapture the Green Egg. The leader group wouldn't listen to each other because they all wanted their ideas to be heard first, the good-looking kids were too worried about messing up their clothes, and the bullies were fighting with each other. The dumber-than-dirt kids made it

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

into the forest but kept on getting lost. These kids had been arguing for too long. We were about to show them what teamwork could accomplish.

Shammy, Poopy, and I emerged out of the forest into a crowd of ten-year-olds all arguing about what they needed to do.

"These guys are arguing about the things they have always argued about. Nothing seems ever to change," I screamed.

The red-hair kids didn't want to work with the athletic kids because they were always giving them super wedgies. The smart kids didn't want to work with the creative kids, as they thought they were too smart for them. Didn't these guys realize that their skills would complement each other and make them stronger? Obviously not!

As we walked through the crowd, our presence was first noticed by a guy named Damir Dwauttlemire. Damir was an incredible leader who was loved by everyone. He was a gentle soul who did everything for everybody. The funny thing was that the name "Damir" meant to give peace and that's what he did. His gentle nature calmed people down,

Embleton

especially those who fought and argued all the time. He wasn't at the Splitting when it began but was called to help these boys figure out how to work together. Damir was a little older than we were and had already experienced the Splitting.

He was wise beyond his years and had great insight into the problems that could emerge at this event. He was a great problem solver and could change people with his incredible, leadership talents. As Poopy Patinski, Shammy, and I came into sight, Damir noticed us and saw we were carrying the Green Egg.

"Hey, everybody! Tipple and Shammy have retrieved the Green Egg and are with the great Poopy Patinski!" announced Damir. "You have wasted so much time arguing that these guys were able to recapture the egg! "

The crowd instantly stopped arguing and began to watch Shammy, Poopy, and I walk toward the town square and up onto the podium. Every eye was on us. There were looks of disbelief and wonder on each face as we walked up to face the crowd. By the expression on the kid's faces, it was evident that no one could believe that two guys, as

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

different as we were, could have made it through the Forest of Enzar, get past the Moo Moo Chickens, and retrieved the Green Egg.

“Friends and neighbours, Shammy and I have been through the greatest adventure of our lives. We dealt with Attack Squirrels and Super Grannies, were captured by the Moo Moo Chickens, and united our efforts with the great Poopy Patinski. Poopy helped us escape from Shlip after we captured the egg. We were successful because of what we did together. You have wasted your time arguing about who is better, stronger, smarter, and braver. In that time, you have not realized that it doesn't matter what talents you have as individuals. It matters how you combine your talents. We have to use all our skills together, as if we don't, we'll be destroyed forever. When we rediscovered Fingloria, we also discovered that Shlip is not dead. He faked his death so he could steal the egg and rule over Embleton and its surrounding cities. He is marching down from the mountain as we stand here and will be here shortly. We must pool our strengths together so we can defeat him and his evil army.”

Embleton

The crowd looked at each other in disbelief. How in the world would a group of ten-year-olds and a few adult supervisors be able to destroy Shlip's army? We needed the help of our parents, but they were at the community centre. Someone needed to run to the centre and tell our parents we needed their help. This would have been the time for our parents to use their knowledge that they had learned at their gatherings to destroy this evil force.

The ground began to shake. Shlip's army was getting closer. The trees began to sway back and forth, and the air got colder. Evil was about to announce its presence. There was a loud cry from within the forest as Shlip, and his army emerged through the darkness. Evil pierced each soul that stood within the town square. There before us were hundreds of Attack Squirrels, Moo Moo Chickens, and Super Grannies. Leading the army was Shlip, perched on a huge elephant, with its armour-tough skin and spiked tusks. Shlip and his army approached the crowd and quickly surrounded us. There would be no escape.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

"I have come to get what is truly mine. It is my destiny to rule your land and show you that your differences are what make you weak. You can't possibly work together, as all you do is fight. You fight over who is stronger and smarter. You do not have the courage to work together. You all make each other feel inferior by the skills you possess. You feel threatened by each other's greatness. This has been your story for centuries. It is not about to change now. Give up the Green Egg, and I will allow you to live!" screamed Shlip."

Poopy stood in silence. It was if he was waiting to see what we would do. Shammy looked at me and faced the crowd. He took my hand, and we faced the crowd together.

"Tipple and I are different. I have been called a geek and nerd. Tipple, on the other hand, is the adventurous one. He creates adventures at school and on weekends. He talks about slaying dragons and fighting off wizards. He loves racing through the woods on his Fastback 100 bike and sleeping under the stars. The adventure we finished was an adventure I did not want to undertake. I didn't want to go, but Tipple gave me the faith I needed

Embleton

to travel into the Forest of Enzar, face the Moo Moo Chickens, and get our egg back. I could not have done it without him. His bravery and courage gave me what I needed to go on this adventure. If it wasn't for my stinky meat, however, and my ability to help Tipple, we would have never retrieved the egg and escaped the Moo Moo Chickens. Without me, Tipple would have failed. By ourselves, we wouldn't have got the Green Egg back to Embleton. Together we saw victory. We needed each other, as you need each other. So I say to you, my friends of Embleton, can you see the strength we will have in uniting our talents? Can you see that if we come together, we can finally destroy Shlip?"

Shlip and his band of bullies stood listening to Shammy. They stared at the crowd, savouring the moments before they would make their move, as they believed they were about to experience victory.

"Surround these foolish people. I don't want anyone to escape. They all need to see that I am the one who is destined to rule over this township," commanded Shlip.

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

The Moo Moo Chickens began to surround the crowd as Shammy spoke. Shlip wanted to ensure that no one escaped. He was confident in the power he possessed. He intended to destroy everyone. He was enjoying the moments he thought he had before his victory.

The parents of the ten-year-olds were aware of what was going on as they could hear Shlip's army marching toward the Splitting. They quickly made it from the community centre to the Splitting to stand with their kids. They were able to squeeze by the Moo Moo Chickens before Shlip's army was able to surround them. The parents came with the knowledge they gathered from working together. They had finally realized that their success was not to be divided but to stand as one and stand up to Shlip and his army.

They'd had enough of Shlip's bullying. They needed to destroy Shlip forever. The roar of the crowd was deafening. They joined hands with their kids and began marching toward Shlip. They planned to march Shlip, the Moo Moo Chickens, and his army out of town for good. They believed that together they would have a chance at destroying the army

Embleton

of evil. As the parents and ten-year-olds marched closer, something magical happened. Poopy's eyes started to glow green. The egg that was with Tipple began to emanate a loud, high-pitched sound and a very bright light. The light began to direct itself onto Shlip and his army of thugs. Shlip tried to protect himself from the light and deafening sound, but it was no use. The egg was directing its energy to destroy the evil that surrounded it. The light and sound increased to an irritating level. The weird thing was that it was only affecting Shlip and his army. It wasn't harming anyone else. It must only have affected those who were riddled with evil. The light was so bright that it blinded everyone from seeing what was happening.

"This is not the last you have seen of me!" screamed Shlip. "Your differences will break your union and be your demise!"

The sound stopped, and the light was gone. And so was Shlip. Shlip, the Attack Squirrels, and the Super Grannies had disappeared. The people of Embleton began to cheer. Shammy and I couldn't believe it. We got the Green Egg back to Embleton, were not destroyed by Shlip, and survived the Moo

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

Moo Chickens. We couldn't have done it without the help of Poopy. We both turned to Poopy. He looked at us and smiled. He knew that his mission was now complete.

"You see my friends," announced Poopy, "You have realized the importance of working together. This was my goal—to teach you the strength that comes from teamwork. There will always be those who oppose you. I wanted to help you realize that you have the strength and power to stand up to those like Shlip, as there will always be individuals like him in this world. There is no real power in the Green Egg. It is simply an egg that was covered in the green dust from Finkle Mountain. The green dust can only light a tunnel because it has phosphorus properties. The grannies had no special power. They were merely robots. Real grannies are loving and compassionate. The robotic grannies are just a failed creation of Shlip. They would have eventually broken down and been useless. The egg has no power. Shlip thought it did because of the green dust, but he was wrong. The green dust has had no power for many years. You needed to go on this journey to show that the real magic comes from finding out what strengths and gifts you

Embleton

possess and using them to help others. When you use them together, you help many more.”

“What about the magic in the tunnel and what was that high-pitched sound and the light that came out of the Green Egg,” asked Shammy.

“What about the power Shlip used to turn the grannies into Super Grannies?”

“The lamprey in the tunnel was under my control all the time. I was never in any danger. I wanted to see how you would handle the situation. You were brave and used your strengths to help me. The grannies weren’t any more super than regular grannies. Shlip believed he created Super Grannies, but he didn’t. They had a few extra strengths, but that was because they were robots. They didn’t have any significant powers. Shlip wasn’t smart enough to create anything of significance.

“I learned great magic from the Kimono Dragon. Magic gets its strength from strong minds and determination. When you and Tipple came together, and the people of Embleton pulled together to defeat Shlip, I gathered strength to use the magic I was taught. Together we destroyed Shlip. My mission

Poopy Patinski's Green Egg Adventure

here is now complete. I must go and meet with the Kimono Dragon, as there is always so much to learn. You can't learn to be a leader in a day. It is what you do daily that with help you grow. I must continue to learn as should you."

There was a great flash of light, and Poopy was gone. Meeting Poopy was the best experience of our lives. Both Shammy and I were stronger from this experience. Poopy had taught us that we had the strength we didn't even know we had. Poopy must have planned our meeting and was hopeful that we would realize the true meaning of the Green Egg, and we did.



Chapter 14

A New Day and a New Beginning

Shammy and I were treated like celebrities. Everyone wanted to hear about our adventures in the Forest of Enzar and how we were captured by the Moo Moo Chickens and fought off Super Grannies. Our parents were so incredibly proud of us. They wanted to hear all about our adventure. They realized how foolish the Splitting was and how they should accept their children for who they were. The Splitting was replaced with a new event called Celebration Day. It would be a yearly event where all children and parents come together to participate together in a fun day of sports, zany activities, and adventurous fun.

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As years went by, the town of Embleton flourished into a great city. People from other villages came to learn about the power of working together and celebrating differences. In Embleton, it didn't matter what your talents were, as everyone was accepted for who they wanted to be. Nor were you judged by the colour of your skin or the beliefs you held. It was as it should be and is supposed to be.

Days after our adventure, Shammy got a job at Damir's dad's meat shop that sold stinky meat, and befriended Dora Delorkius. I would have never guessed Shammy would have become friends with Dora, but there was a significant change in people after we returned with the egg. Dora, like everyone else in Embleton, realized that she was selfish.

If she had brought candy to school, she'd never shared it. If she'd gotten a new dress, she would brag about it. Once the Green Egg was returned, she decided to change. She volunteered her time to help the elderly and taught children the importance of giving. Her candy was everyone's candy, and if she got a new dress, she would give away her old one. She stopped bragging and looked for ways of complimenting others.

A New Day and a New Beginning

Shammy could see the change and saw her true heart. She was still a little annoying, and Shammy and Dora didn't always see eye to eye, but at least she was better than she had been. Shlip hadn't been seen since he'd disappeared with his band of thugs. Poopy lived in the Finkle Mountains and was learning wizardry from the Kimono Dragon. He visited us every so often to make sure we were safe and worked together for the betterment of our town.

I was still looking for adventure. I got up early every morning to ride my Fastback 100 in the quarries and was constantly bugging Shammy to build forts with me in the forest. After all, he was my best friend. We had fun when we were together and kept learning from each other. I thought I got a little smarter hanging out with Shammy, and I hoped he started to see his adventurous side. Life was now as it should have been, was supposed to be, and would hopefully always be.

No grannies were hurt
in the making of this book.

The Green Egg Adventure is a tale that will be told around every campfire and beside every bedside to those young and old. It is a story about friendship, courage, and reaching beyond expectations. It is a carefully woven story about two boys who find the courage to fight Moo Moo Chickens and Attack Squirrels, battle evil grannies and come face to face with a sinister being who relishes havoc and chaos.

“A book every child should read! INCREDIBLE!”

- The Finkle Herald

The boys begin their adventure at the commencement of the Splitting, an event that groups red-haired with the red-haired, the strong with the strong and the weak with the weak. The Green Egg, which protects Finkle from evil, has been stolen. Shummy and Tipple enter the darkest parts of Enzar where they meet the legendary Poopy Patinski, a legendary wizard, who helps them with their quest.

"This stories challenges every human being to celebrate differences and work together for the better good. STUPENDOUS!"

- The Embleton Review

"This story will ignite your imagination and twist it into hyperdrive, wishing you too could be part of an adventure that changes the world. My students absolutely loved this book!"

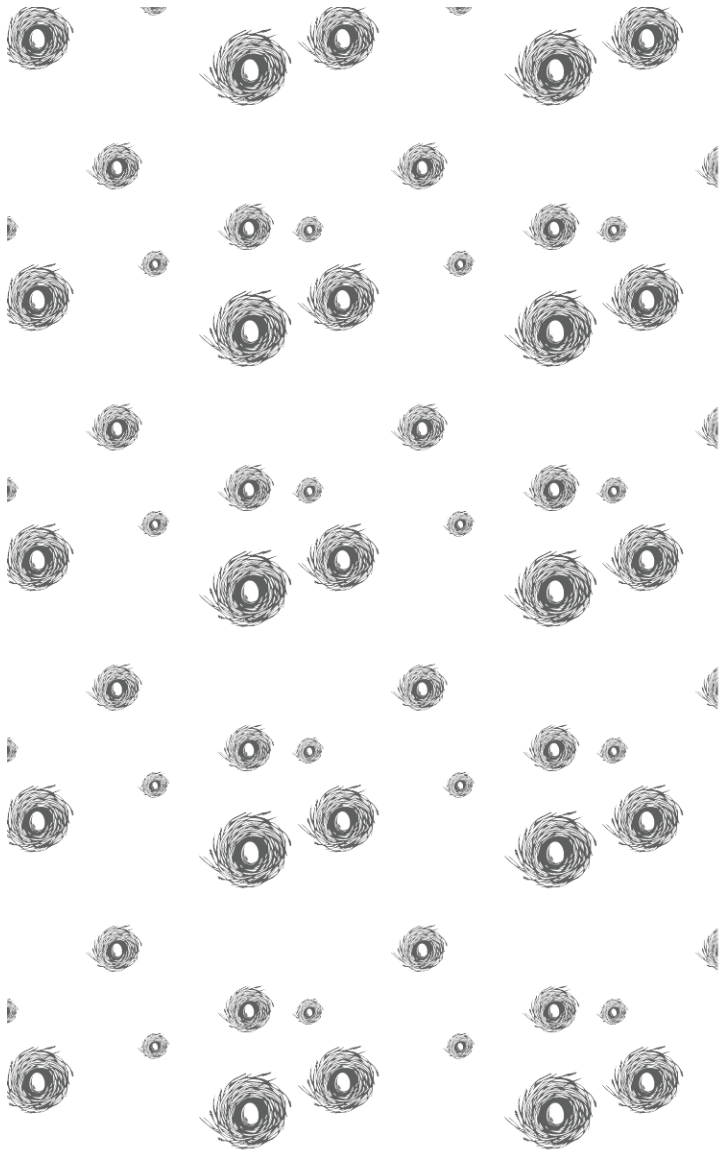
- Ms. Finklesten

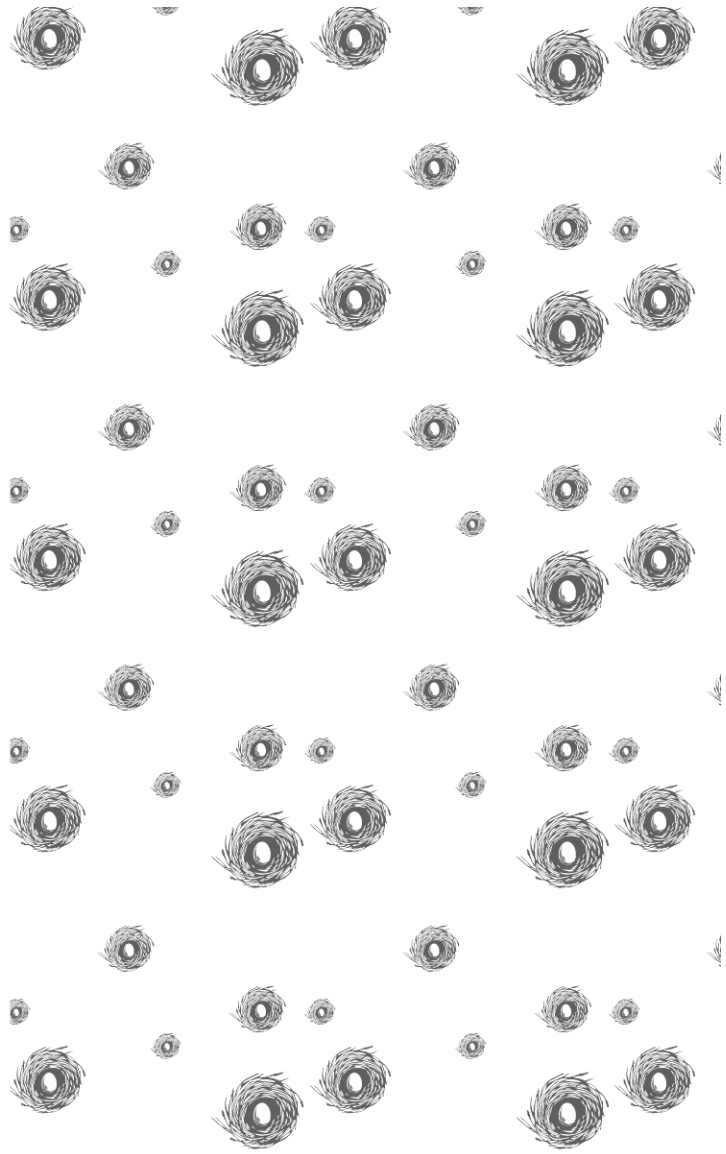
- Milmac Public School

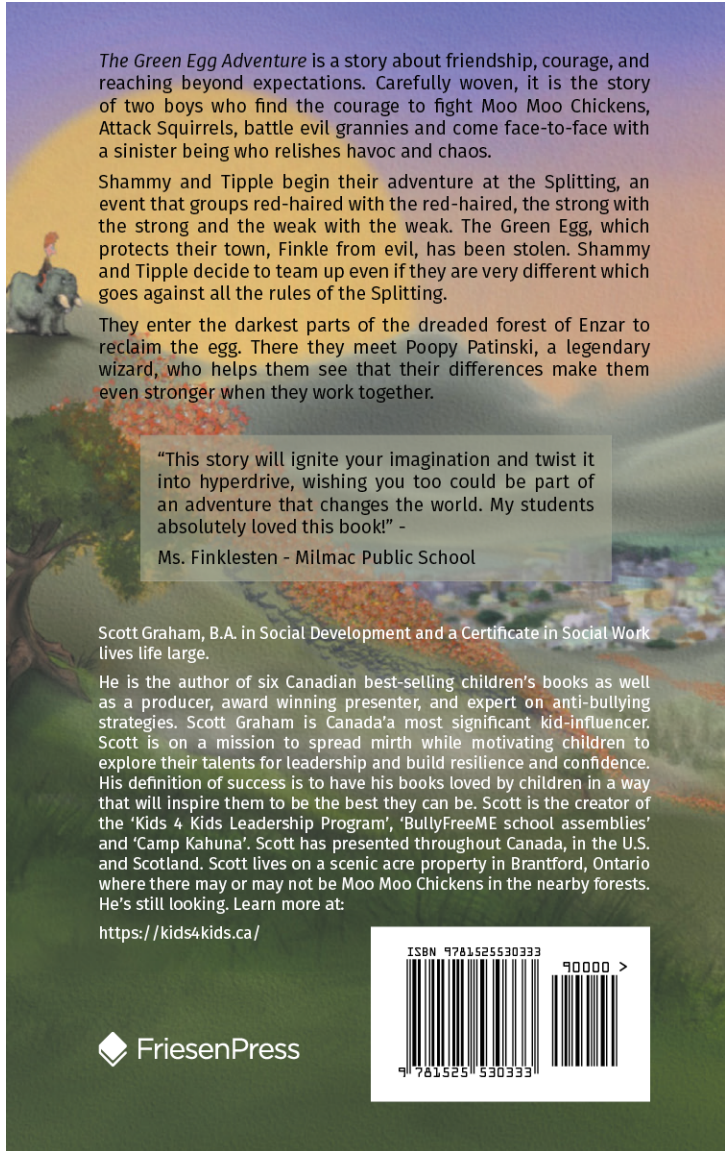
"I couldn't put this book down. I was laughing one minute and on the edge of my seat the next. It was an incredible adventure!"

- Davis and Cameron Burgie

- President and Executive Director
of the Kids Can Lead Everywhere Club







The Green Egg Adventure is a story about friendship, courage, and reaching beyond expectations. Carefully woven, it is the story of two boys who find the courage to fight Moo Moo Chickens, Attack Squirrels, battle evil grannies and come face-to-face with a sinister being who relishes havoc and chaos.

Shammy and Tipple begin their adventure at the Splitting, an event that groups red-haired with the red-haired, the strong with the strong and the weak with the weak. The Green Egg, which protects their town, Finkle from evil, has been stolen. Shammy and Tipple decide to team up even if they are very different which goes against all the rules of the Splitting.

They enter the darkest parts of the dreaded forest of Enzar to reclaim the egg. There they meet Poopy Patinski, a legendary wizard, who helps them see that their differences make them even stronger when they work together.

"This story will ignite your imagination and twist it into hyperdrive, wishing you too could be part of an adventure that changes the world. My students absolutely loved this book!" -


Ms. Finklesten - Milmac Public School

Scott Graham, B.A. in Social Development and a Certificate in Social Work lives life large.

He is the author of six Canadian best-selling children's books as well as a producer, award winning presenter, and expert on anti-bullying strategies. Scott Graham is Canada's most significant kid-influencer. Scott is on a mission to spread mirth while motivating children to explore their talents for leadership and build resilience and confidence. His definition of success is to have his books loved by children in a way that will inspire them to be the best they can be. Scott is the creator of the 'Kids 4 Kids Leadership Program', 'BullyFreeME school assemblies' and 'Camp Kahuna'. Scott has presented throughout Canada, in the U.S. and Scotland. Scott lives on a scenic acre property in Brantford, Ontario where there may or may not be Moo Moo Chickens in the nearby forests. He's still looking. Learn more at:

<https://kids4kids.ca/>



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