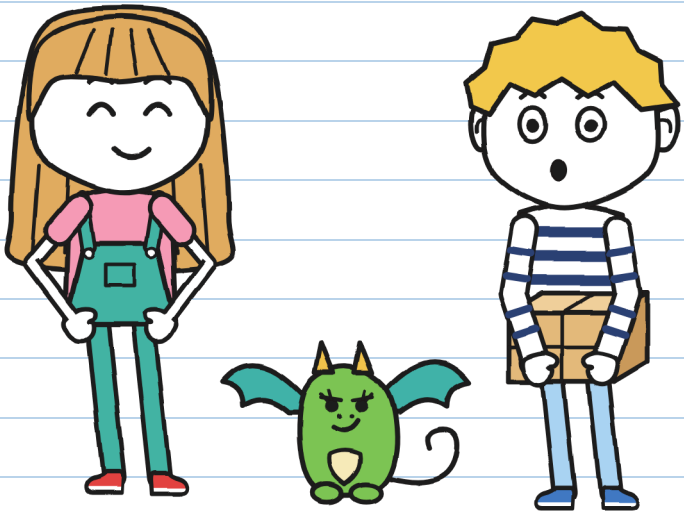
IMPOSSIBLE DELIVERIES · 1

This Package Bites

Lui Eriksson



(Gus's notebook)

SIZE L
Advanced level · 11+

IMPOSSIBLE DELIVERIES · 1

This Package Bites

Text and illustrations: Lui Eriksson

SIZE L · Advanced level · 11+

US English version: LinguAula

First edition: 2026

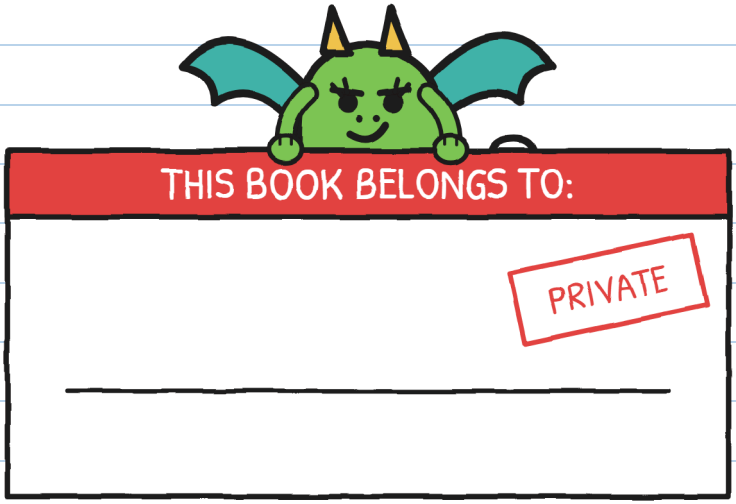
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LinguAula

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No packages were harmed in the writing of this book. Almost none. —J.

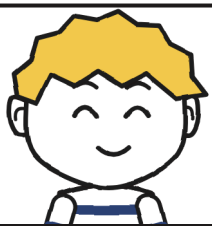


And nobody else. –J.

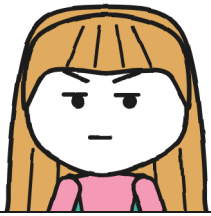
If you find it, return it before dawn.

Crumb bites because she lives in a story. With a real animal, look at page 76. –J.

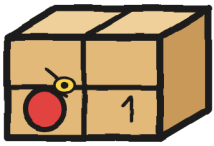
WHO'S WHO



Gus. New in the neighborhood. Professional courier (more or less). This notebook is his.



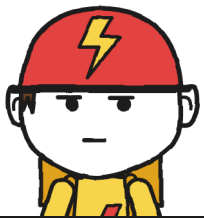
Julie. She writes in green, and what she writes in green doesn't come off.



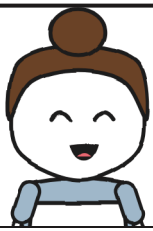
Package No. 1. Destination: the Dragon House. Instructions: keep warm.



Mara. Owner of Impossible Deliveries. She has one rule.



Tony. Rides for LIGHTNING. Delivers really boring stuff really fast.



Ellie. The baker. The hot air from her oven comes out through her grate.

DELIVERY NOTEBOOK
by Gus

PRIVATE.

"Private" means I read it first. –J.

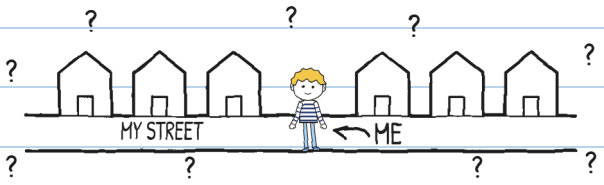


Moving box 14 said KITCHEN in big, confident letters, yet there wasn't a single spoon inside: just this notebook, one sock and a rubber frog that nobody will claim.

CHAPTER 1

The One That Can't Be Done

I've been in the neighborhood for four days, and so far I know exactly one street. All of it.

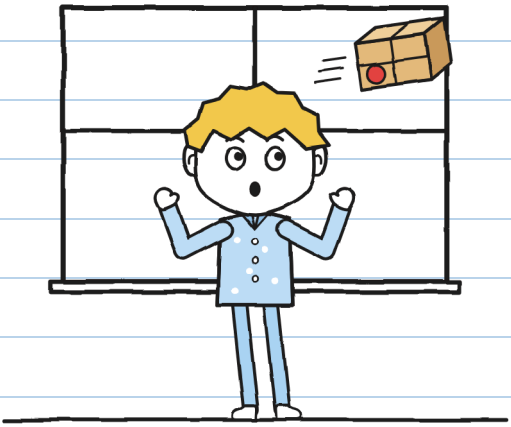


My plan for making a friend:

1. Say hello.
2. Say something interesting.
3. ???

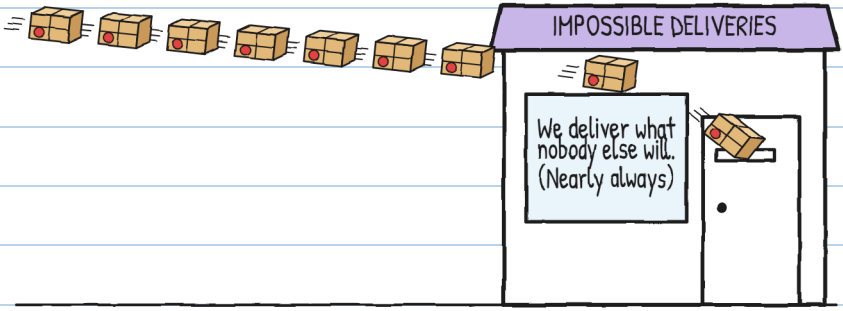
I got stuck on number 2. Number 3? Not a clue.

This morning I was woken by something flying past my window, which is not the kind of thing that happens on my street. Or so I thought.



It was a package.

Then came another, and another, until nine packages in a row, like ducks, had crossed the street and slipped through the mail slot of the shop across the way. (The other eleven, I found out later, had come back while I slept.)

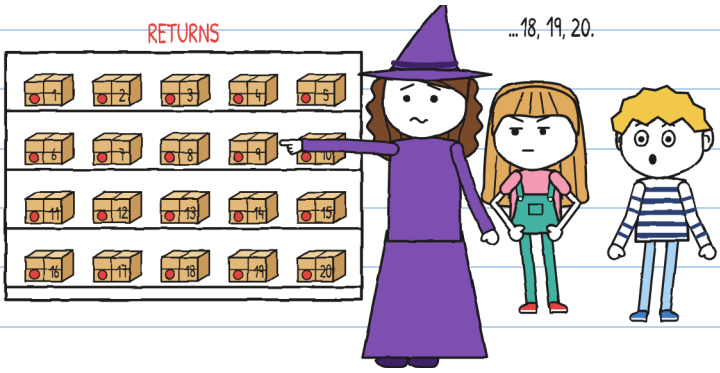


That, I thought, took care of number 2: "I've seen flying packages."

That's not interesting. It happens all the time.

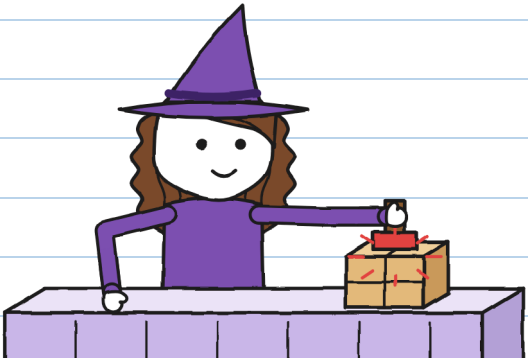
That note is Julie's. I met her this very morning in the shop across the street, and I've already learned two things about her: she writes in green, and what she writes in green doesn't come off. I've tried.

Anyway, I pulled my striped sweater on over my pajamas and crossed the street to investigate.

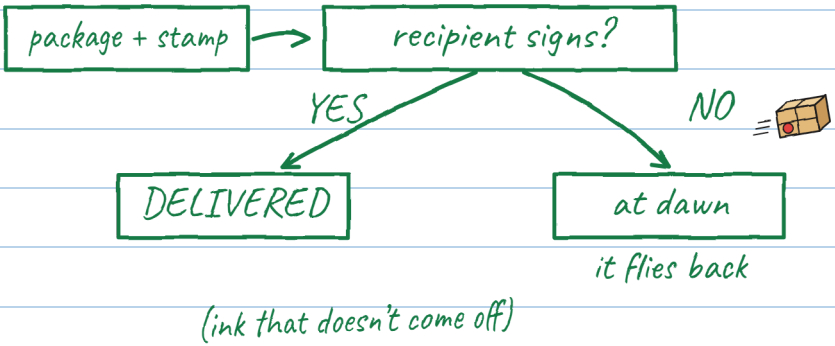


"They've all come back," said the witch, counting them off with one long finger. "Again."

The witch is called Mara. She runs a shop for impossible deliveries and owns a stamp that glows as if it had swallowed a light bulb.



Julie explained how it all works, drawing it in my own notebook without so much as asking:



That way no package ever gets lost. Or delivered.

The shelf is for the returns: twenty packages nobody has ever managed to deliver, all from one sender.

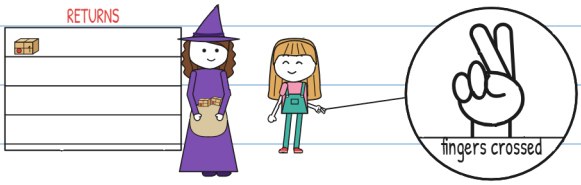
DESTINATION: …
SENDER: R.

"Who's R.?" I asked.
"Someone with awful handwriting" was all Mara said.

She put nineteen returns into a sack: that night she was taking a piano to a lighthouse, and she'd try them all again on the way and be back at dawn. Only one was left.

"That one can't be done," said Mara. "Just one rule: DON'T TOUCH THE SHELF."

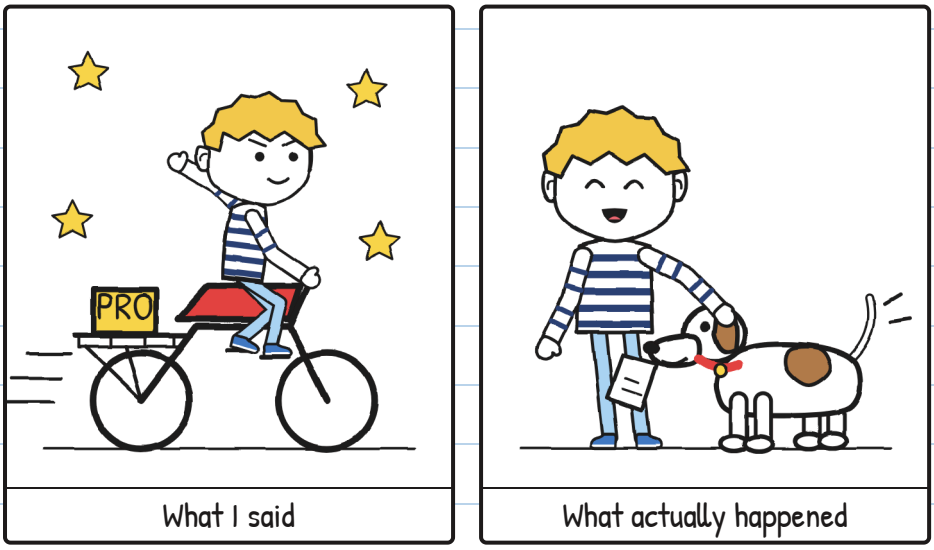
"Of course," said Julie.



The moment the door clicked shut behind Mara, Julie looked me up and down, the way you'd look over a used bike. "Can you do deliveries?"

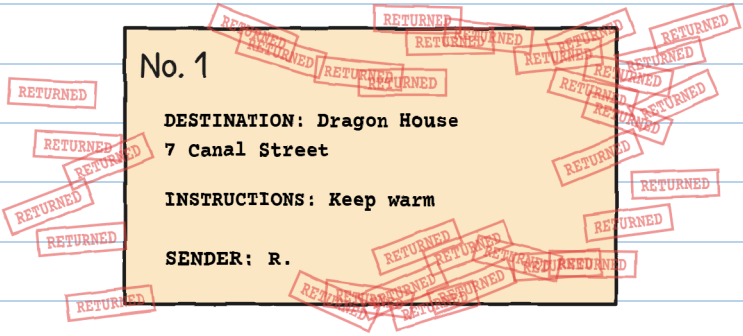
And I said what you always say when you're desperate to make a friend:

"Yes. In my old neighborhood I was a professional courier."



Professional. For dogs.

Julie took down the only package left: number 1, the one that can't be done. Her hands were shaking slightly, and so were mine, although I hid it better: the only giveaway was my sweater, which I'd put on backward.

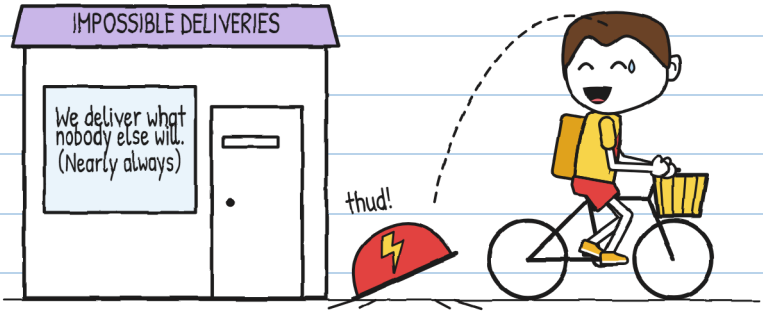


"If we deliver it before dawn," said Julie, "Mara will see I can handle the returns."

"And if we don't?"
"If we don't, it flies back by itself, and it's as if nothing ever happened."

It sounded like an excellent plan to me, but then I still didn't know what was inside.

A bike bell trilled, and a boy appeared outside the shop window, wearing a helmet and a yellow backpack that said LIGHTNING DELIVERIES. TEN MINUTES OR IT'S FREE.

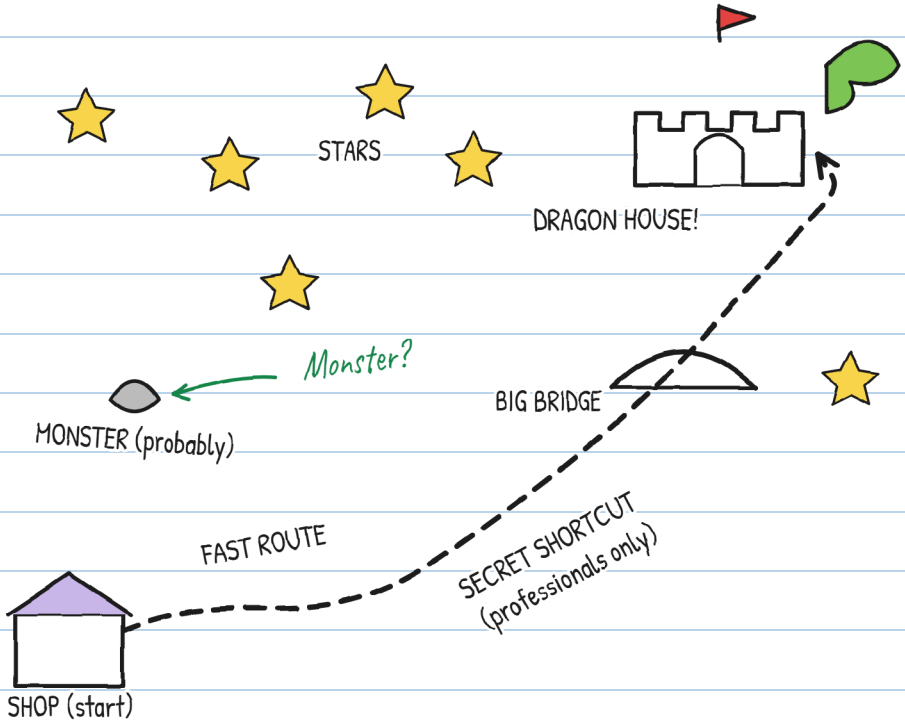


"Impossible Deliveries?" he said, reading the sign. "The only impossible thing around here is you two delivering anything."

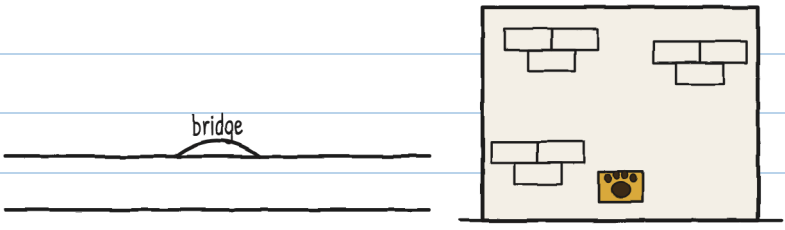
Tony. Delivers really boring stuff really fast.

"Well, today we're delivering this," said Julie. Tony read "Dragon House" on the label and laughed so hard that his helmet fell off with a thud.

I drew a delivery map, because professional couriers always make maps, and because a map makes you look as if you know where you're going.



The stars aren't on the way.



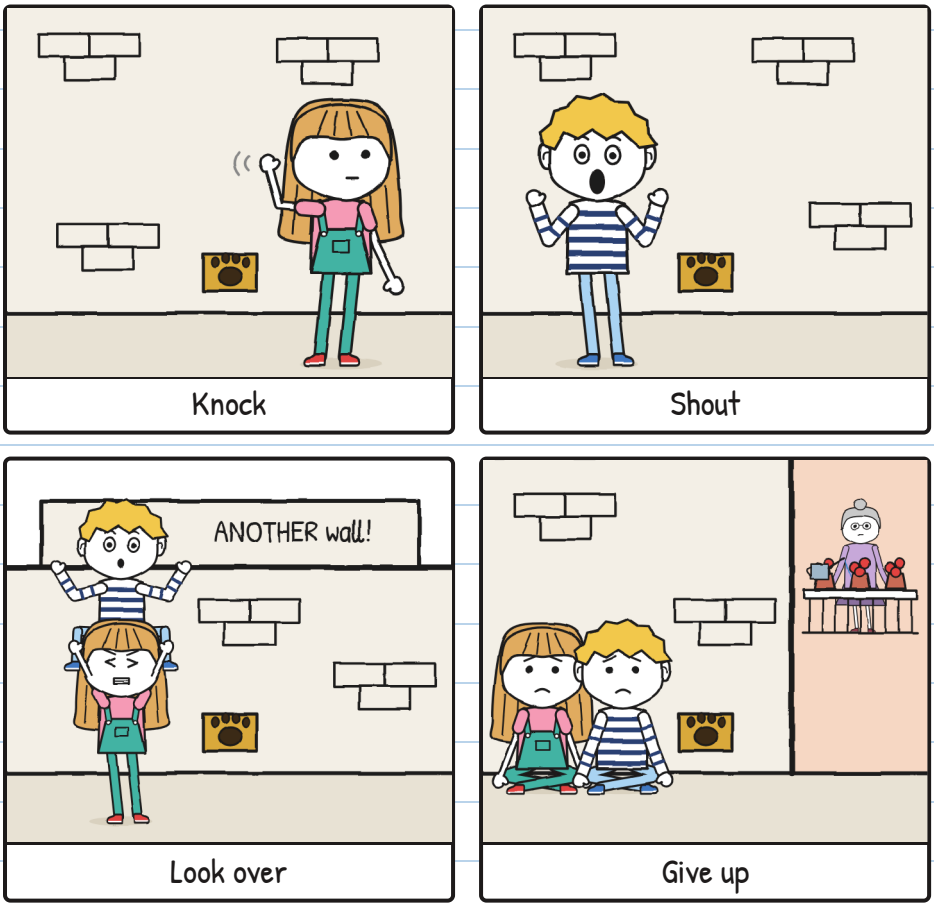
7 Canal Street wasn't a house. It was a wall.

A smooth, blank wall, cold to the touch, with no doors and no windows. All it had was a brass plate with an oddly shaped hole in it, like a keyhole waiting for a very strange key. The plate sat so low that it almost touched the ground, at just the right height for something very small.


brass plate

"Maybe it's a mail slot," I said hopefully. The package didn't fit.

We tried everything you can possibly do to a wall:

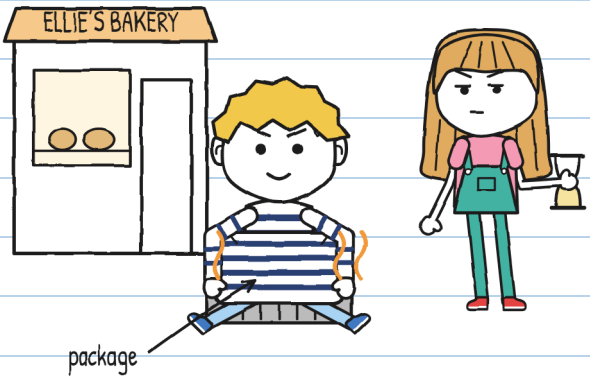


A lady watering her geraniums had been watching us from the balcony of the house next door. "That package has been showing up for years," she said, "and it always leaves exactly as it came."

It was cold, the kind of cold that creeps in under your sweater. Julie read the label again: "'Keep warm.' It's spent years on a freezing shelf."

I'm new, and new people still take instructions literally: when something says "keep warm," I keep it warm.

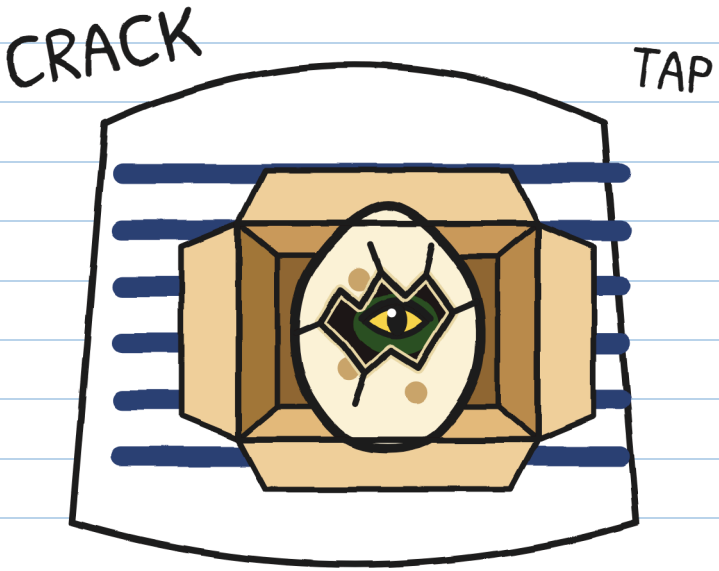
So I stuffed the package under my sweater, we went back over the Big Bridge, and I sat on the grate outside Ellie's bakery, where the hot air from the oven comes out smelling of crusts.



You look like a pregnant mailbox.

We sat like that for ages, breathing in the smell of warm bread. I was just starting to sweat when something tapped me on the belly. TAP.

"Was that your stomach?" asked Julie.
"My stomach doesn't go TAP."



And the package looked at me.

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I sneezed a normal sneeze, but she sneezed a tiny flame that burned the corner of the label. Then she ate the burned corner.

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