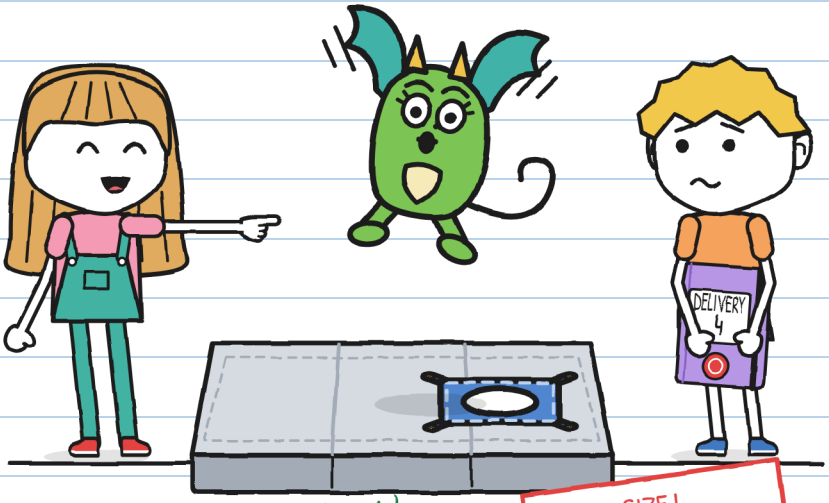
IMPOSSIBLE DELIVERIES · 4

Not Here, Crumb!

Lui Eriksson



(Gus's notebook)

SIZE L
Advanced level · 11+

IMPOSSIBLE DELIVERIES · 4

Not Here, Crumb!

Text and illustrations: Lui Eriksson

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US English version: LinguAula

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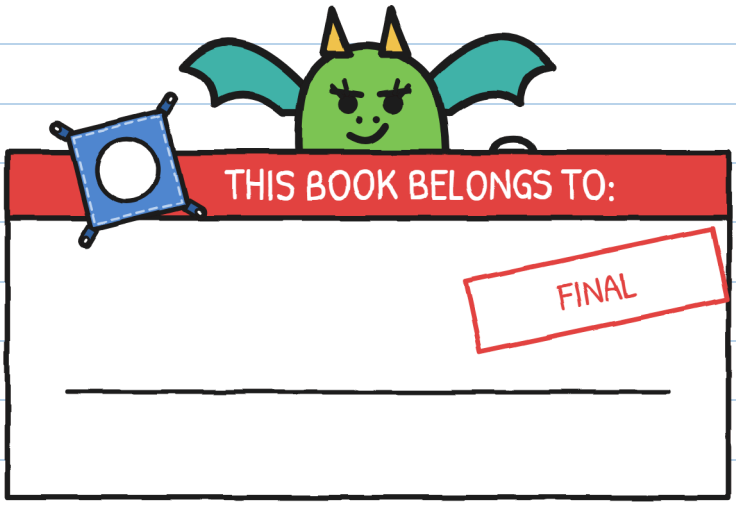
Free to photocopy, for class and for home.

Fourth book in the series. Earlier: "This Package Bites," "Do Not Open Before Thunder" and "Return to Sender, Please."

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No dragon was harmed in the writing of this book. One helmet, a little. —J.



I read it first. Then we'll see. —J.

If you find it, return it. Not here: to its owner.

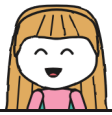


This stamp marks what only happens in the story: real dragons don't exist and packages don't fly back. To play in a real yard, see page 76. —J.

WHO'S WHO



Gus. Saturday courier. This notebook is his. He wants Crumb to come to him.



Julie. Writes in green and signs J. Always has a better idea. Even when nobody asks.



Tony. Delivers for LIGHTNING, in ten minutes or it's free. Since this week, he knows how to wait too.



Mara. Owner of Impossible Deliveries. Wears a witch's hat. Knows more than she says.



Vera. Looks after the dragons at the Dragon House. Sets the conditions.



Crumb. A dragon hatchling. She can take off now. Coming down is the hard part.



Package No. 4. Flat and wide. The label says: OPEN ON THE FLOOR.



R. Sends the packages nobody can deliver. Nobody says R.'s name.

DELIVERY NOTEBOOK 4
by Gus

FINAL.



Notebook 3 ended with a little bell. This one is lilac, and it has the shop's stamp too.

This time I was the first to write in it. Julie waited with her marker uncapped until I handed it over.
"Ready?" she asked.
"Ready."

"Final" means I read it first. Then we'll see. —J.

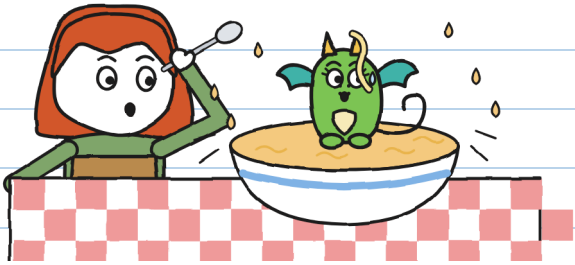
CHAPTER 1

Four Corners

In Mara's shop there's a shelf with the packages nobody has managed to deliver. There were twenty. Julie and I have delivered three: a dragon egg, some seeds that ran, and a little bell. Seventeen are left.

The egg was Crumb. Crumb can take off now. What she can't do is work out where to come down. Yesterday she came down in Vera's soup.

VERA'S SOUP (yesterday)



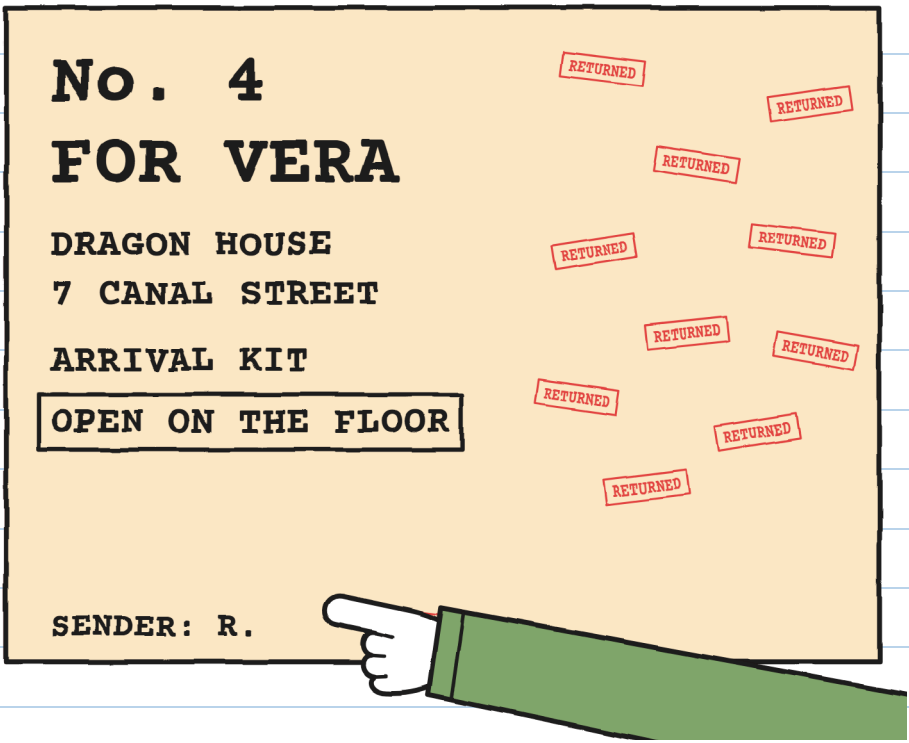
Noodle soup. With dragon. —J.

Vera had come to ask for help and Tony had offered it. But first he had a delivery. He came back in nine and a half minutes, left his bike at the door and sat on his crate.
"I already know how to wait," he said. "But I didn't need to start today."

Then Mara took a package down from the top shelf and put it on the counter.
"Vera. This is yours."



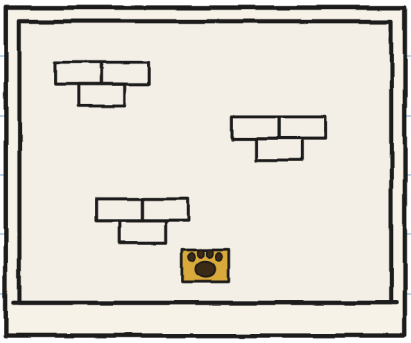
The label on No. 4 says a lot more than Tonykins's did. This one even comes with instructions.



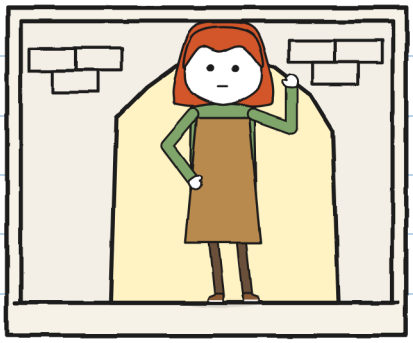
Vera read it with her finger, line by line. At the R., her finger stopped.

"Eleven times?" asked Julie, who had already counted the stamps.
"Nine times, at 7 Canal Street, it was just a wall," said Mara.
"And why didn't we take it with the egg?" asked Julie.
"I took it later, twice," said Mara. "And both times the wall opened."
"And both times I said 'not yet'," said Vera. "Crumb couldn't fly yet; I didn't need it."
"And today?" asked Mara.
"Yesterday Crumb chose my soup."

MARA'S ELEVEN ATTEMPTS



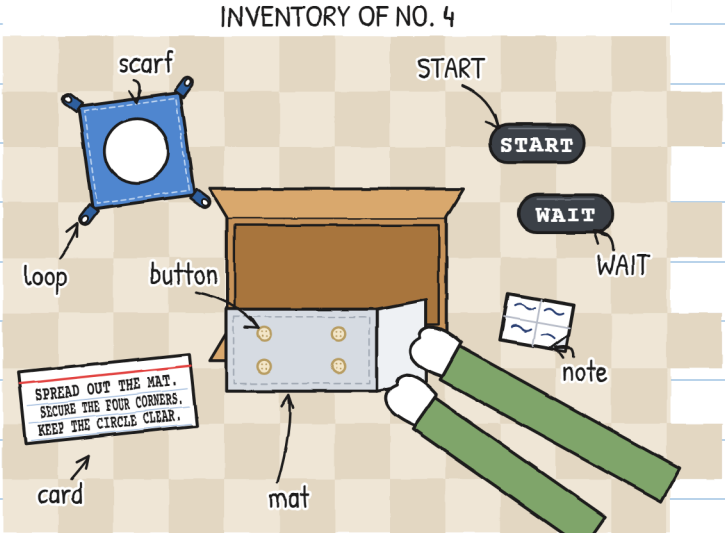
the wall: 9 times



Vera: "not yet," 2 times

"Opening it or trying it out isn't receiving it," said Mara. "If Vera doesn't sign the label in ink that doesn't come off, it goes back at dawn."
"I know," said Vera. "I just want to see if it works."

The label said OPEN ON THE FLOOR, so Vera knelt on the shop floor and opened it right there. Tony crouched beside her and counted the pieces out loud. It was the first time I'd heard him count anything that wasn't minutes.

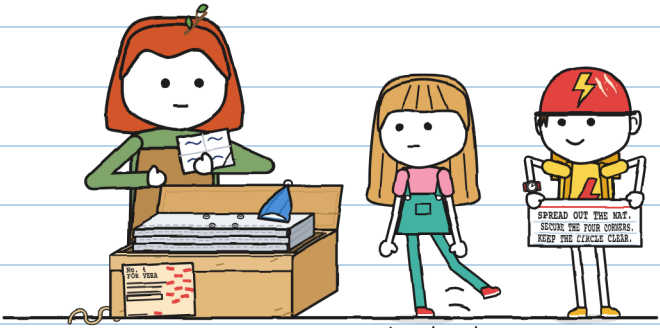


"Five things," said Tony. "And a note."

The card had three lines, typed on a typewriter:

1. SPREAD OUT THE MAT.
2. SECURE THE FOUR CORNERS.
3. KEEP THE CIRCLE CLEAR.

The note was shorter. Vera unfolded it, read it and folded it back into four. She didn't read it aloud. "For the yard," she said. And she put it away inside the box.



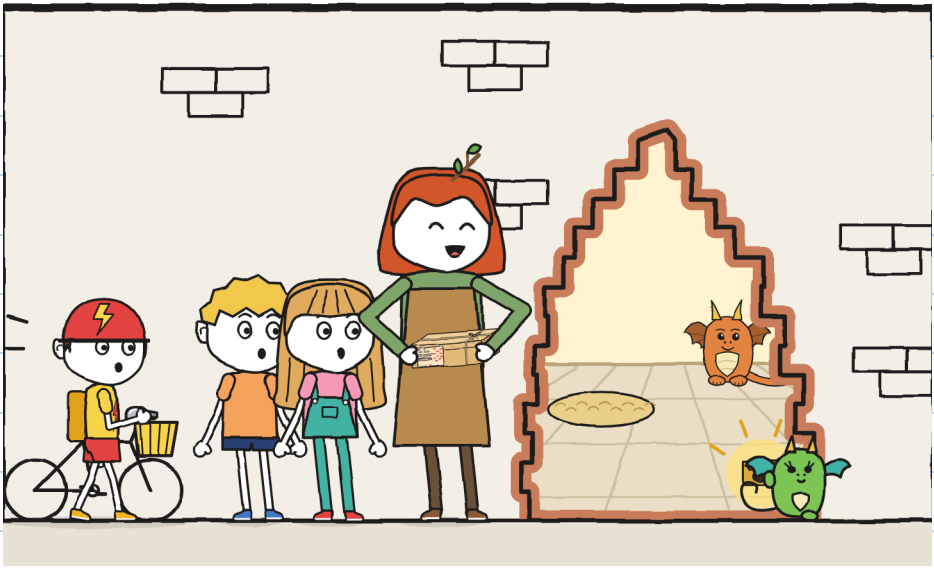
tap, tap, tap

I saw Julie's questions lining up. And her foot.

Questions I didn't ask: six. I'm improving. —J.

Mara set her usual conditions: the kit leaves with Vera, comes back inside its box, and the label stays on.

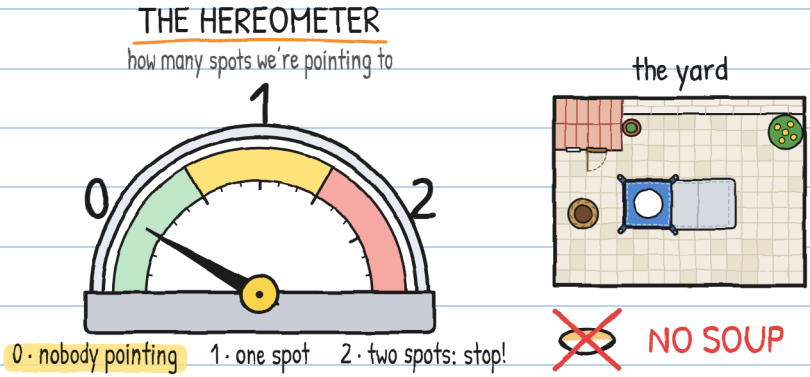
We all went to 7 Canal Street. In front of the wall, Crumb climbed down from Vera's arms and rested her paw on the brass plate.
The wall opened.



Tony took a step back with his bike. He'd seen it open once before, but at night. In daylight it's more impressive: you can see everything.

In the yard, Vera put the box on the ground and lined the three of us up.
"My conditions. One: we practice only with me watching. Two: there's only one arrival spot. Three: when I say 'enough', it's enough."

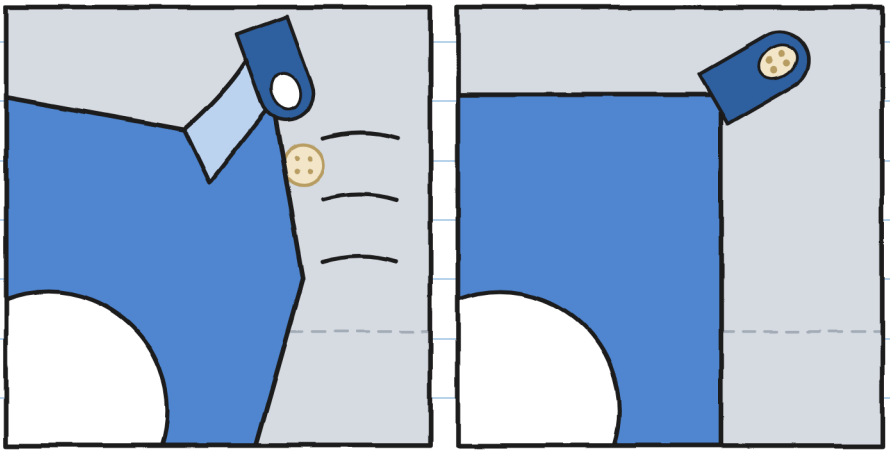
I wrote it down. And underneath I drew a gadget to measure it. In one corner of the plan I drew a bowl of soup with a cross through it: NO SOUP. You never know.



A machine for counting up to two. Very nice. —J.

We spread the mat out in the middle of the yard. Julie put the scarf on top and fastened two loops.
"Done."
"Look at the edge," said Vera.

A little air blew past and the loose corner of the scarf lifted, like an ear. Julie fastened the other two without a word.



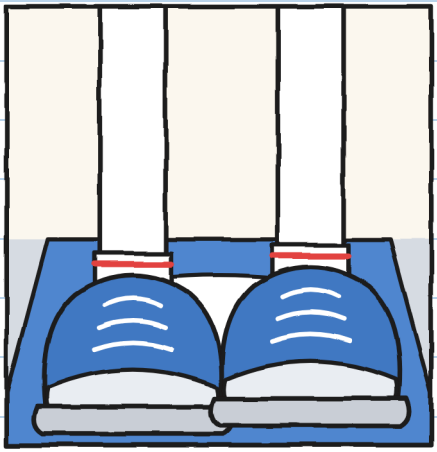
BEFORE AFTER

I was going to do it. The wind got there first. —J.

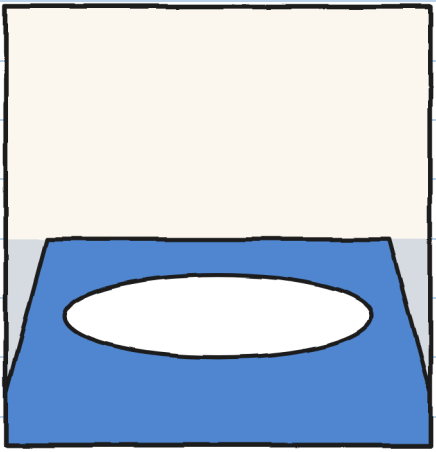
Then I wanted to help. I stood in the white circle.
"Crumb, here. Here!"

Crumb came walking over, very pleased, and sat on my sneaker.
"You're showing her your sneakers," said Vera.

I stepped out of the circle. Crumb looked at the empty circle. She sniffed it. She went in and sat down in the middle.



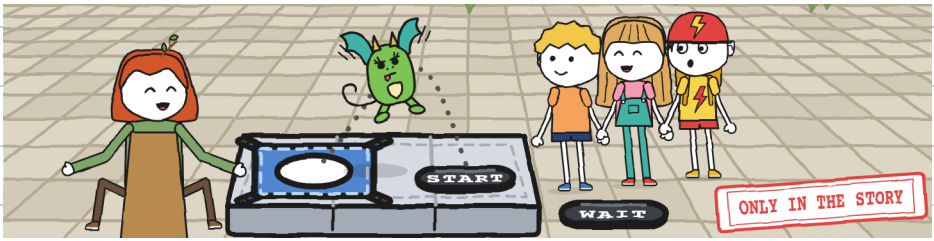
1. What Crumb saw



2. What she saw next

Vera put Crumb on the START mark, at one end of the mat, one meter twenty from the center of the circle. She put us behind the WAIT mark.
"One small jump. Just one."

Crumb beat her wings, rose a handspan and, two seconds later, came down with all four paws inside the circle.
"Enough. For today, enough."



I wrote down: "She came to me." Then Julie unfastened the four loops and lifted the scarf to fold it. Crumb turned her head and followed it with her eyes.

You were behind the mark. She went to the circle. —J.

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JULIE CHECKS THE LOOPS TWICE.

SIZE XS · A1
Julie checked the loops twice. She wanted to check them again. "That's quite enough," said Vera.

SIZE S · A2
Julie checked the four loops. She checked them again. She was going to do it a third time when Vera said: "That's quite enough."

SIZE M · B1
Julie checked the four loops. Then she checked them again. She was starting a third round when Vera said: "That's quite enough."

SIZE L · B2
Julie checked the four loops. Then she checked them again. She was about to start on a third time when Vera said: "That's quite enough."

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One size each. Same circle. —J.

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