

## Chapter 1

# Film club

‘I can’t see the picture,’ says Angus. ‘I can only see the back of your head, Marnie. Move.’

I move over, near Ava.

‘Now I can’t see,’ says Lily. ‘Marnie, your head is too big.’

We are watching a film. There’s me, Lily, Ava, Angus, Ray and Joel. And my dad.

On Friday nights, we have a film club. Tonight we’re watching a film from the 1950s, *The 5000 Fingers of Dr T*.

We like old films. Sometimes we laugh at them. Sometimes they’re very good.

My dad has hundreds of old films. He collects them. He collects old film projectors too. But my mum doesn’t like them. ‘I don’t want those dusty things in my house,’ she says. Dad keeps them in the garden shed – with the garden tools, flower pots, old shoes, bicycles ... We have to watch the films in the shed too. That’s okay for Dad and me. But now my friends come to the Film Club, and the shed is too small.

‘Your head is too big, Marnie,’ Lily says to me again.

‘No, it’s not,’ I say. ‘This shed is too small.’

‘Yeah,’ says Angus. ‘We need a bigger shed. With nice chairs. And carpet on the floor. And popcorn to eat and –’

‘Isn’t that a cinema?’ asks Dad.

‘Oh, yeah,’ says Angus and everyone laughs.

‘We need a proper little cinema,’ says Ava. ‘Nice and clean. With no flower pots or old shoes in it.’



‘Maybe it’s not a bad idea,’ says Dad.

I look at Ava and she looks at me.

‘Yeah,’ says Ava. ‘Maybe it’s a *good* idea.’

‘Huh?’ says Angus.

Everyone stops watching the film.

‘Maybe it’s a *great* idea,’ I say. ‘We can put nice chairs in it and give it a name and –’

‘We can watch your films there too,’ says Ava.

I like making short films. Ava always wants to be in them. She does karate and wants to be an action star.

‘Yeah, let’s do it,’ says Lily. ‘Let’s make a proper cinema.’

‘Yeah,’ I say. I love the idea.

‘But where?’ asks Joel. ‘We don’t have a place.’

‘Maybe you can ask Mr Sims,’ says Dad. ‘Maybe he has an empty building.’

Old Mr Sims lives down the road from us. He has a lot of old houses and shops in our town. But he’s not very nice.

‘I’m not going to see Mr Sims,’ says Lily. ‘I don’t like his house – it’s creepy.’

‘Yeah,’ says Ray. ‘I’m not going. He always shouts at me.’

‘I’ll go,’ I say.

‘And I’ll go,’ says Angus. He jumps up. ‘A proper cinema. What a great idea! *My* great idea! Yeah – “The Angus McTavish Cinema”.’

Joel throws an old shoe at him and everyone laughs.

On Saturday morning, Angus and I go to see Mr Sims. He doesn’t want to talk to us.

He throws open a window and shouts at us. ‘What do you want?’

'Er ... hello, Mr Sims,' I say. 'Um ... I'm Marnie ... from down the road.'

'Yes, yes, yes. What do you want?'

'We have a film club and ... um ... we want to ask you ... um –'

'You have ten seconds,' says Mr Sims.

'Talk quickly!' Angus says to me.

'Can you help us? We have a film club and we have to watch the films in my garden shed, and it's very small, and we want a cinema, and –'

'I don't have a cinema,' says Mr Sims.

'No,' I say. 'We want to *make* a cinema. Do you have an empty building?'

'You want one of my buildings?'

'Only a small one,' says Angus.

'To watch films?'

'Yes!' says Angus.

Mr Sims shuts the window – BANG!

'The films are very good,' Angus shouts at the window. '*Animal Farm*, um ... *Superman and the Mole Men*, *The 5000 Fingers of Dr T* –'

The window opens again and Mr Sims puts his head out.

'*The 5000 Fingers of Dr T*?' he says. 'I remember that film. I remember the cinema on Saturday mornings ... with my brother ... I remember seeing that film. It's old.'

'We like old films,' I say.

'Humph ...' Mr Sims looks at us. 'There is an empty shop, down on Moorbrook Street.' He puts his hands up to close the window. 'Stay there, I have to look for the key.'

This is the German version of **The Little Roxy Cinema**

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