

CHAPTER ONE

Madame
Wigglesworth
didn't always hate
the humans.

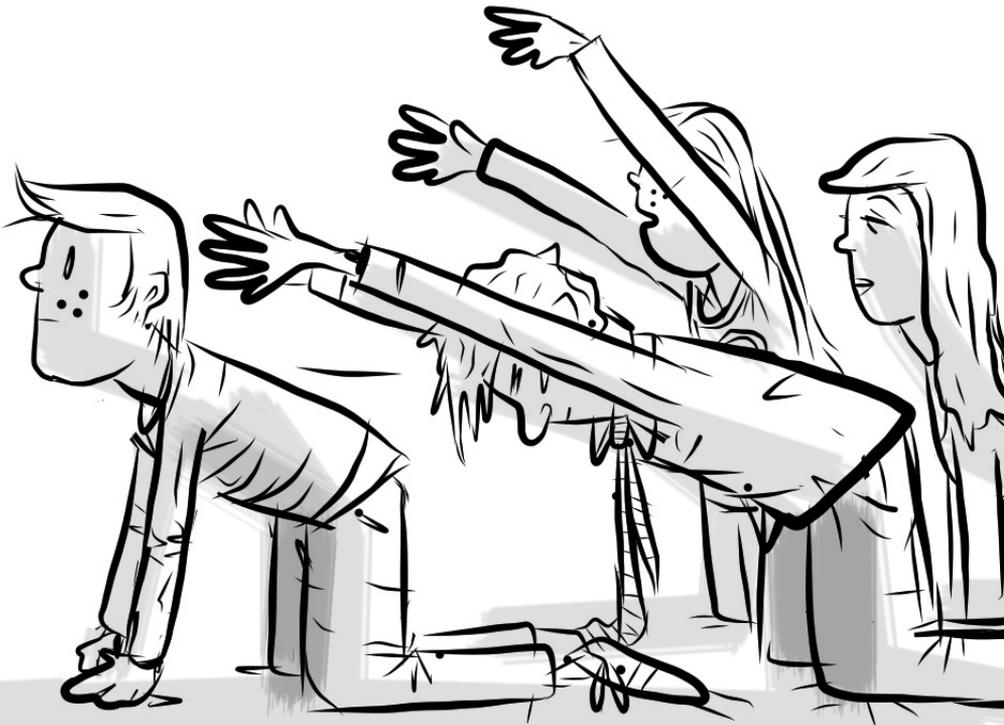




She actually almost tolerated the Finkleblurts when they treated her properly: like the queen she knew she was.

They worshipped her from afar.

Just the way a queen likes it.





But one day the unthinkable occurred. She got dethroned.

The dethroner was a lovable, dim, and totally insane little pup named Grub.

The very first thing Grub did was eat Madame Wigglesworth's crown. But did he get punished? Hardly.



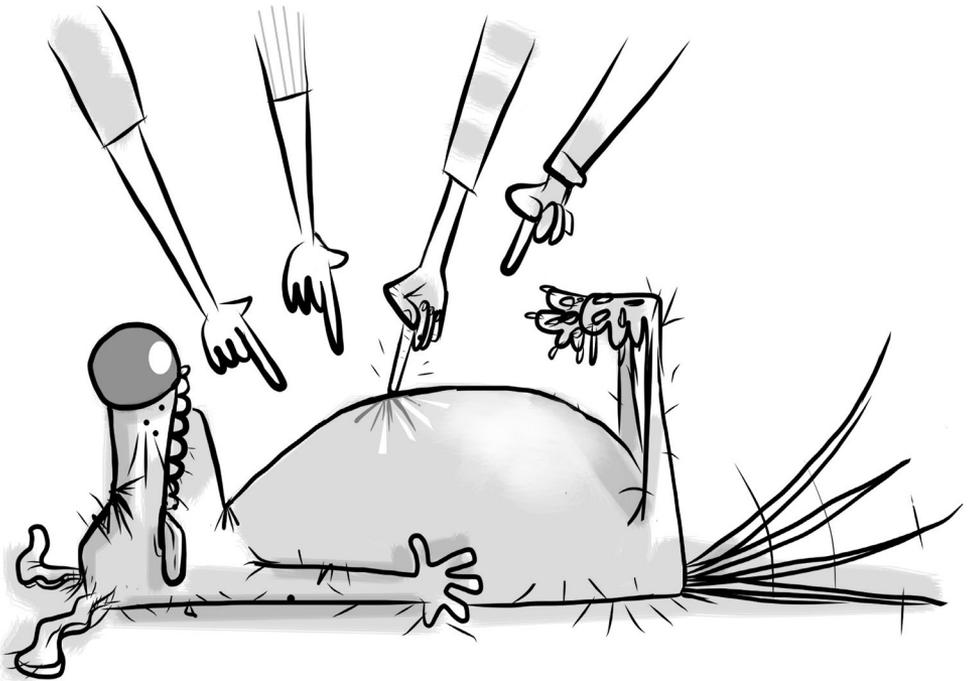
He grew up fast. Every single day, the humans showered him with love, something Madame Wigglesworth found painful to watch. Grub slobbered, they cooed. He messed, they cheered. He did the most basic stuff, like sitting, rolling over, or fetching a spit-soaked ball, and they danced around the room like wacky windup toys.

It's like they're awarding gold medals for breathing, she thought.

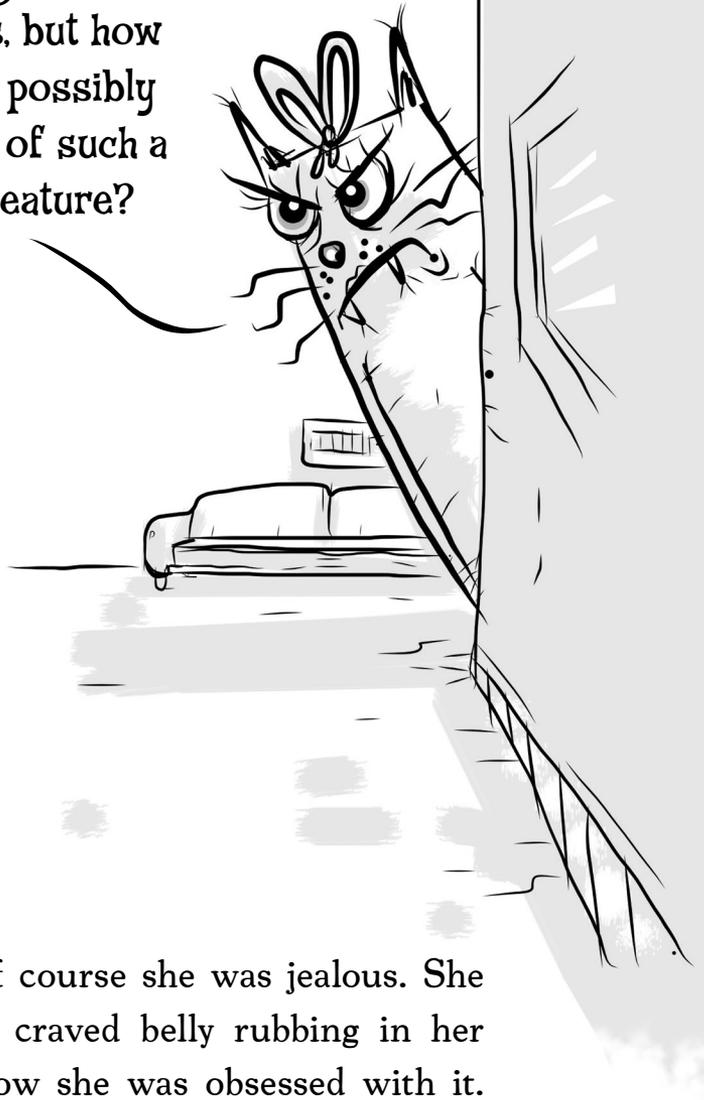


Then there was the endless belly rubbing. The humans seemed to worship that belly, like it had some kind of magical power. Madame Wigglesworth was horrified.

This is deeply embarrassing for everyone involved, she thought. Love and affection are for suckers. Highly developed individuals such as myself do not want or need them.



Some might think I'm jealous, but how could one possibly be jealous of such a pitiful creature?



But of course she was jealous. She had never craved belly rubbing in her life, but now she was obsessed with it. Sometimes you don't want something until you see somebody else getting it.

And Grub was getting it **big-time**.



Halloween was the final straw. The humans dressed the animals in costumes—something pet owners should never, ever, ever do. But at least they put together a super look for Grub.

Madame Wigglesworth's getup was of the decidedly unsuper variety.

This is no accident. They're out to get me. I mean, do I seem like the type to wear a rainbow wig, a rubber nose, and size twenty-seven shoes? Not to mention the hottest, pinkest, ugliest pants this side of Hot-Pink-Pants Uglytown?

Madame Wigglesworth
couldn't take it anymore.

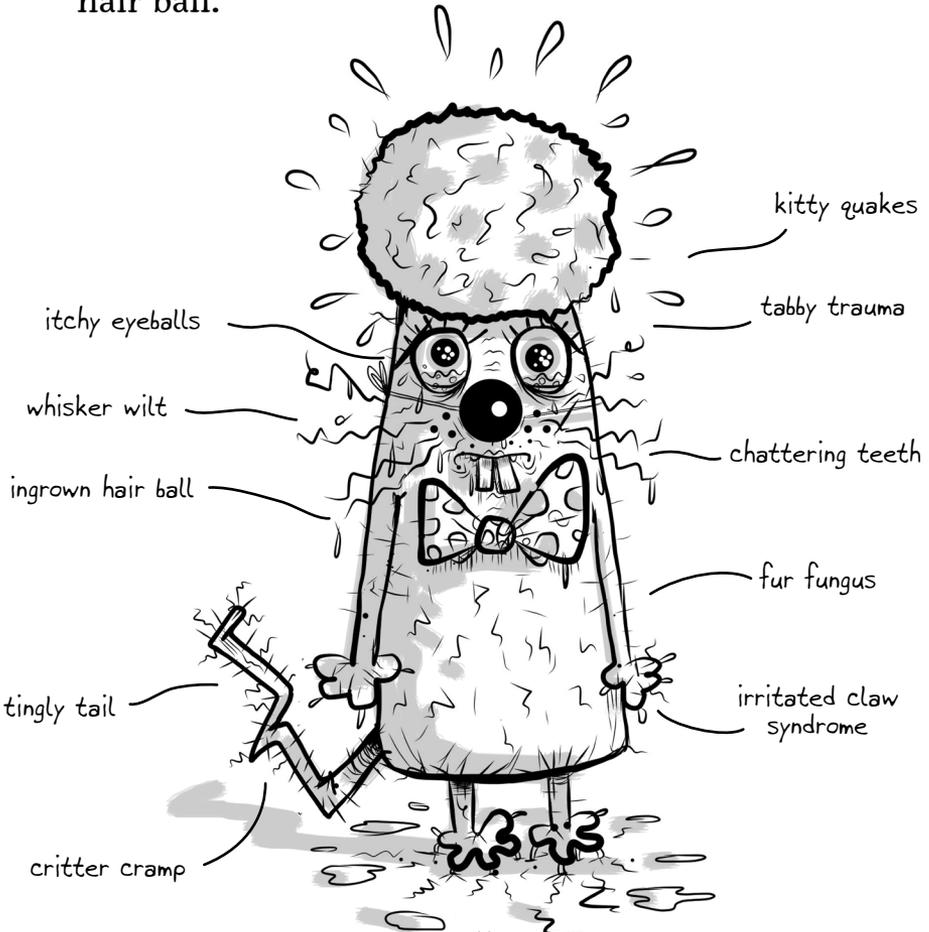


She suffered a little breakdown.

Diagnosis: "stark-raving nutjob-itis."

Second opinion: "Aggravated Wackadoodle Disorder."

Her symptoms were clear: chattering teeth, itchy eyeballs, whisker wilt, fur fungus, tingly tail, critter cramp, tabby trauma, and kitty quakes. Not to mention irritated claw syndrome and an ingrown hair ball.



She was delirious with hurt and hate. She threw herself face-first onto the couch and meowed into the cushion for forty-five minutes. Then came lots of blubbering and sniveling. She cried approximately thirty gallons of tears.

