

The school secretary's voice came in over the intercom: "Mac Barnett, please report to the office. Mac Barnett to the office."



"Oooooooooooooohhhhhhhh," Derek Lafoy said.
"Busted."

But I knew I wasn't in trouble. When I was a kid, I didn't get in trouble at school. I stood up and went to the office.

Mrs. Planter, the school secretary, smiled when she saw me. "Your mom is on the phone," she said. "She has to pick you up early today."



I frowned.



“But I’m supposed to go to my dad’s this weekend.”

Mrs. Planter shrugged. She pointed to the phone on her desk.

While I reached to pick up the receiver, Mrs. Planter said, “I didn’t know your mom wasn’t from here.”

“What?” I said.

“She has a British accent,” Mrs. Planter said. “It’s so cute!”

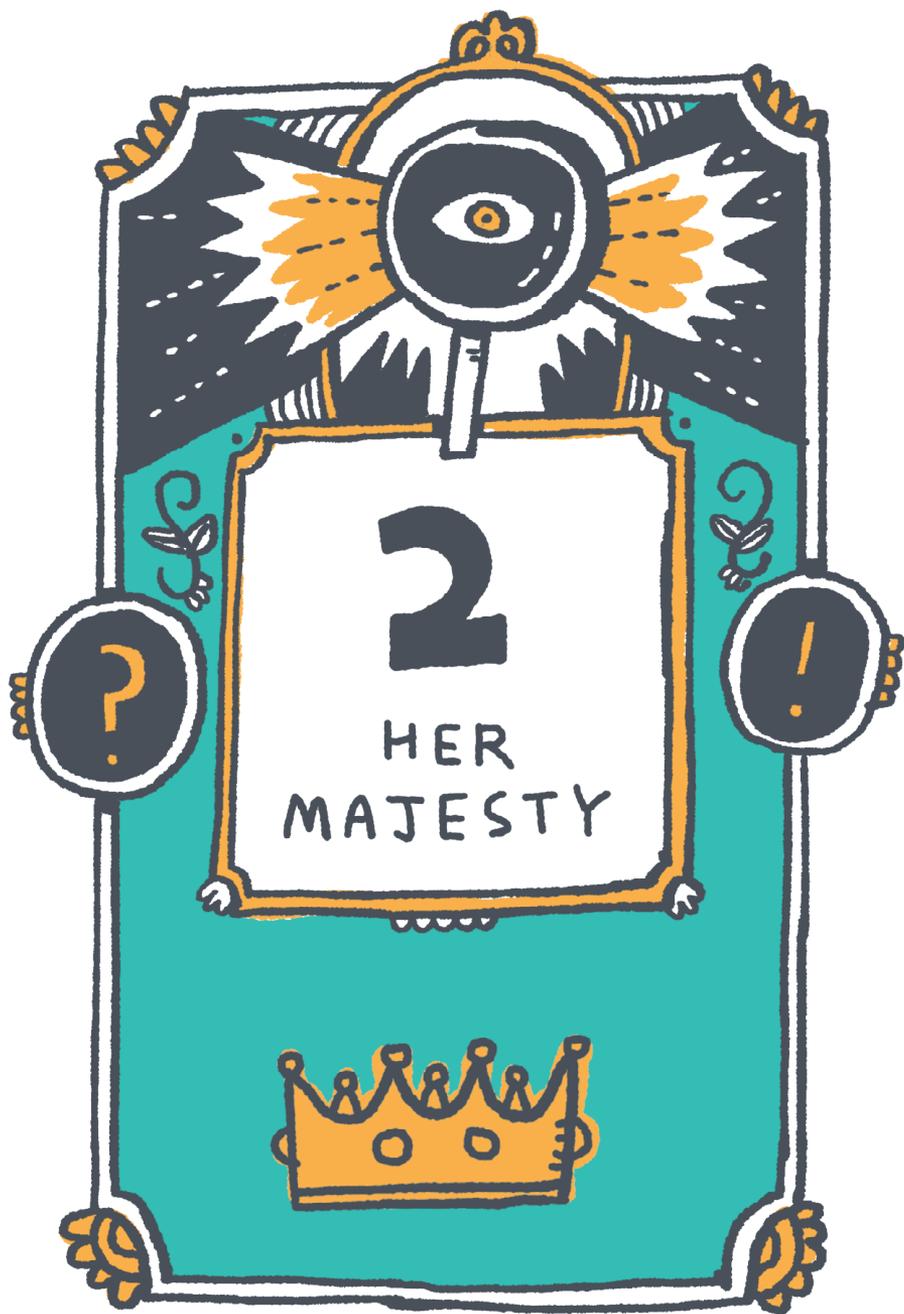
“Oh!” I said. “Yeah. I forget sometimes, because she’s my mom. She does have a cute British accent.”

My mom did not have a cute British accent.

I knew then that it wasn’t my mom on the phone.

It was the Queen of England.







“Hello?” I said.

“Hullo!” said the Queen of England. “It’s me, the Queen of England!”

“I know,” I said.

“Mac,” said the Queen, “today I am acting like an undercover spy myself. I told the woman who picked up the phone I was your mother! So you mustn’t say anything to me that you wouldn’t also say to your mother. For instance, do not call me ‘Your Majesty.’ Unless you also call your mother ‘Your Majesty.’”

“OK,” I said.

“Do you call your mother ‘Your Majesty?’” asked the Queen.

“No,” I said.

“Well, perhaps you should. She would probably enjoy it,” said the Queen. “Oh, this is so much fun! I fooled your school secretary with my American accent! Would you like to hear it?”

“OK,” I said.

The Queen of England cleared her throat. “I would like to eat Doritos while I watch television all day, misterrrrrrr.” She really hit the “r’s” hard. It wasn’t a great accent.



“That’s great!” I said.

“I know!” said the Queen. “As I understand it, Doritos are a kind of corn chip. Is that right? How do you make a chip out of corn? Oh! Yes, of course, what you Americans call ‘chips,’ we Britons call ‘crisps’! A corn crisp! But how do you make a crisp out of corn? Anyway! It is important that you come to London immediately. I have a mission for you, Mac.”