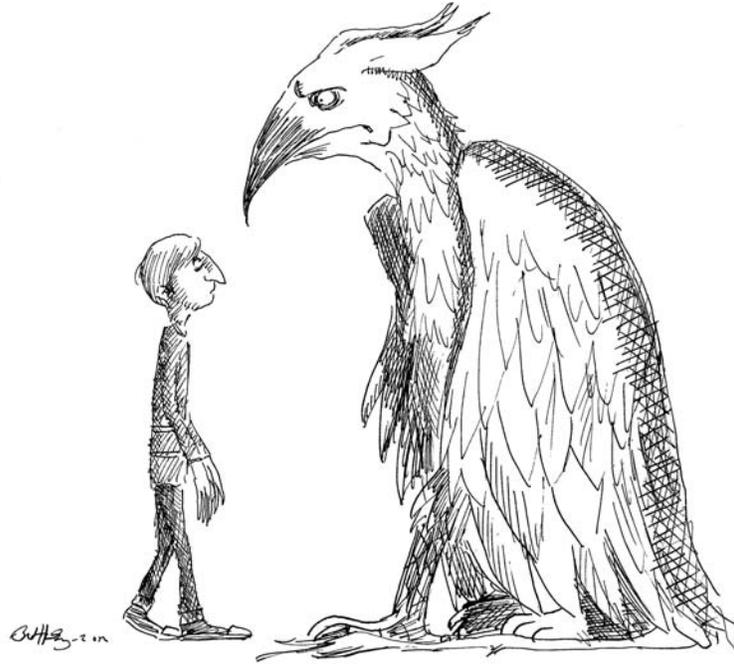


Loogie

The Booger Genie

A VERY NASTY COLD



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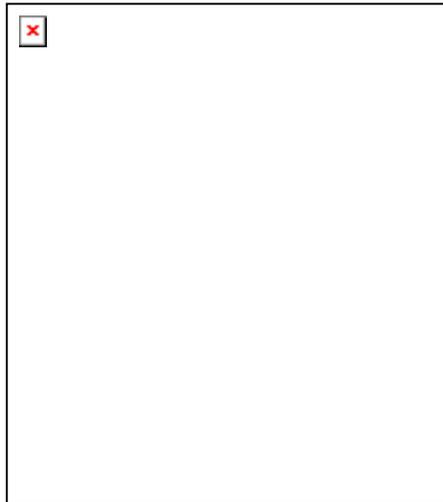
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1.

Play Day

One Saturday morning a ray of sunlight slid across Charlie's eyes. It woke him from a pretty cool dream. He was learning to turn frogs into cats and cats into lizards. Loogie had been teaching him. It was lots of fun, but it was just a dream. Only Loogie could do magic.



Charlie Simms was eight years old. He was just like every other third grader, except that his closest friend, Loogie, was a genie—and a prince. Charlie had found Prince Loogar's bottle in the

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ruins of old Garoth Castle in England. A cranky old wizard had turned the prince into a genie and trapped him in his bottle 805 years earlier.

Unfortunately, Charlie had managed to get Loogar's bottle stuck in his nose (it was a very tiny bottle). Charlie had tried everything to pull the bottle out, but it was no use. Loogar's bottle was stuck by magic.

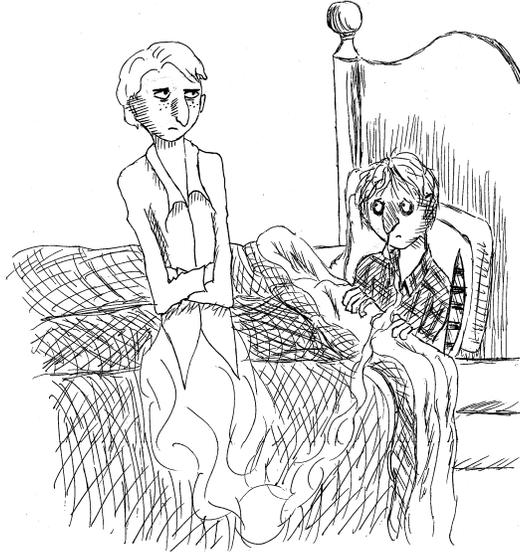
Saturdays were Charlie's favorite day. Unfortunately, on this Saturday, his throat was dry and scratchy. He drank some water, but it didn't help much. His nose tickled and his eyes watered. Charlie thought the tickle might be Loogar—he tickled Charlie's nose when he wanted to come out.

Charlie rubbed his nose. The genie whooshed out in a puff of smoke. He rolled his eyes and smirked.

"Today is Saturday, right?" Loogar asked snobbishly. "I suppose you will wish me to play some silly game." He flew over to the window. His tether, a thin wisp of smoke that prevented him

from flying much more than a few feet from Charlie's nose, tightened and yanked Charlie off his bed. "Oh, do keep up, peasant," he sighed.

"Yes, it's play day. Keep quiet so Mom and Dad don't hear you. They think I'm always talking to myself," Charlie said with a snuffle.



"I am a prince. I will speak as I choose to speak," Loogar huffed.

"Fine, just do it quietly!" Charlie retorted.

"Charlie! Breakfast is ready," his mother called from downstairs.

"Shhh. Get back in my nose," Charlie said, and Loogar was instantly sucked back into his nostril. Charlie winced. It felt like a baseball had been stuffed into his nose. He sniffled and

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hurried downstairs.

Charlie drank his hot chocolate (he loved hot chocolate with Saturday breakfast). His mom had made him chocolate chip pancakes too.



Suddenly his nose itched. Charlie scratched it once and continued with his breakfast. Soon his nose itched again, so Charlie scratched twice. He was careful to only scratch once or twice. Whenever he scratched or rubbed

his nose, he rubbed the genie bottle. Rubbing the genie bottle three times at once called Loogar out.

Charlie took a big bite of pancake and his nose tickled again. "Stop it!" he whispered.

Suddenly he sneezed once, then twice. He

nearly spewed pancake across the table. Charlie swallowed his pancake quickly—just in time to sneeze again.

He finished his breakfast quickly and excused himself. He hurried to his bedroom and closed the door. Charlie rubbed his nose several times and Loogar appeared.

“Hey, I was enjoying my breakfast. Why did you tickle my nose?” Charlie asked the genie prince.

“I did no such thing,” Loogar said. “Though I do think you were taking far too long to eat your breakfast. We do have games to play—even if they are peasant games that are hardly fit for a prince.”

“But I haven't played with my friends on a Saturday in three weeks,” Charlie said.

Loogar huffed. “But you have said that I am your friend. You should be honored to have a prince as your friend, peasant.”

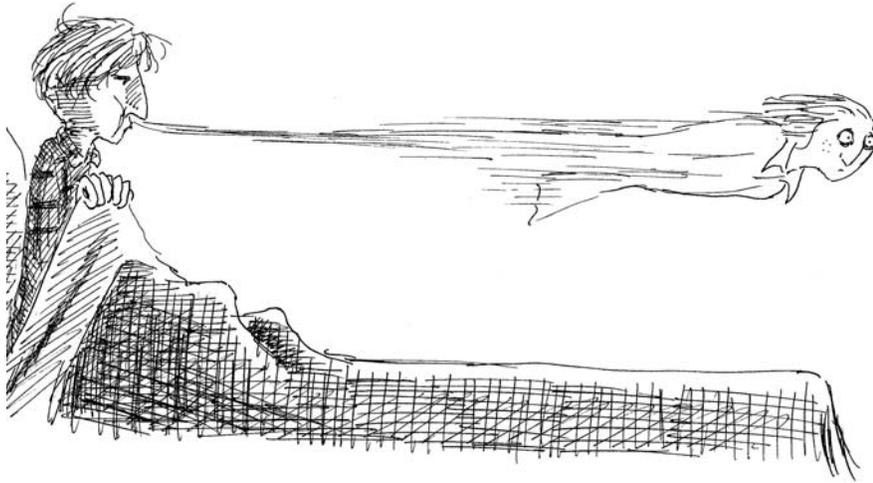
“You ARE my friend, Loogie, but I have other friends too. I told Katie I would play with her this

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morning. She'll be over soon. You have to go back in your bottle."

Katie was one of Charlie's best friends. She was a tomboy in pink. She was as tough as any boy, but definitely a girl.

Loogar sulked, then darted into Charlie's nose. But when the genie was halfway into his



nostril, Charlie sneezed. He sneezed so hard that Loogar shot out of his nose and bounced off of the bed. The wisp of smoke connecting him to Charlie acted like a rubber band and snapped Loogar back into his nose. Charlie sneezed again and shot the genie across the room. When he

bounced back, he hit Charlie squarely in the face and knocked him to the floor.

“What are you DOING, peasant?” Loogar screamed.

“Sneezing. I think I have a cold,” Charlie sniffled.

“What is a cold?” Loogar asked. He clapped a hand over Charlie’s mouth and nose before he could sneeze again.

“It’s a virus that makes you cough and sneeze a lot. Haven’t you ever had a cold?” Charlie asked.

Loogar turned up his nose. “Nonsense! A prince is above these peasantries. The wizard makes certain the royal family is always well.”

“That’s cool,” Charlie replied. “But without magic, anybody can get a cold. Well, anybody except maybe a genie. Can you get sick?”

“Never!” Loogar scoffed.

“Lucky for you,” Charlie said. “But when I’m sick, Mom lets me watch cartoons and makes me chicken soup.”

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“Chicken soup is for peasants,” Loogar sneered.

“Well, then I'm glad to be a peasant, because I LOVE Mom's chicken soup.”

Charlie sneezed again. This time he covered his mouth and nose so Loogar didn't get shot across the room.

“I'll take some cold medicine,” Charlie sniffled. “It's downstairs. You'd better go back into my nose while I go get it.”

“You'd better not sneeze again, and do keep QUIET. Your breathing is DREADFULLY loud!” Loogar warned. He darted cautiously up Charlie's nose and disappeared. Charlie sneezed three more times.

Charlie wanted to go out and play, but his mother wouldn't let him go outside if he wasn't feeling well. If he could stop sneezing, though, she wouldn't know he was sick.

He ran downstairs to the medicine cabinet. The cherry cold syrup was on the top shelf, just beyond his reach. He climbed noisily onto the

counter.

His mother's voice came from right outside the bathroom door. "Charlie, are you all right?"

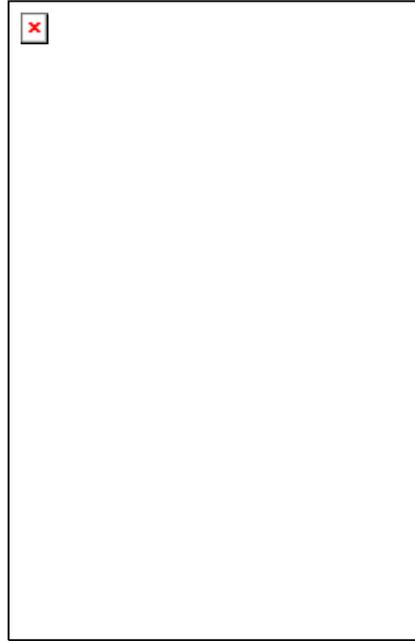
"Yes, Mom."

"I thought I heard you sneezing."

"Just a couple of times, but I'm OK," Charlie lied.

"Why don't you go outside and play?"

"OK." Charlie measured out the cherry syrup the way his mother had taught him and drank it.



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2.

The Boy-Shaped Booger

It was chilly outside. Charlie shivered and zipped up his jacket.

Katie lived just down the street. She waved to him from her house, then rode over on her bike. She wore a bright pink jacket that was the same shade as her bike. Katie loved pink.

"You want to race around your house?" she asked.

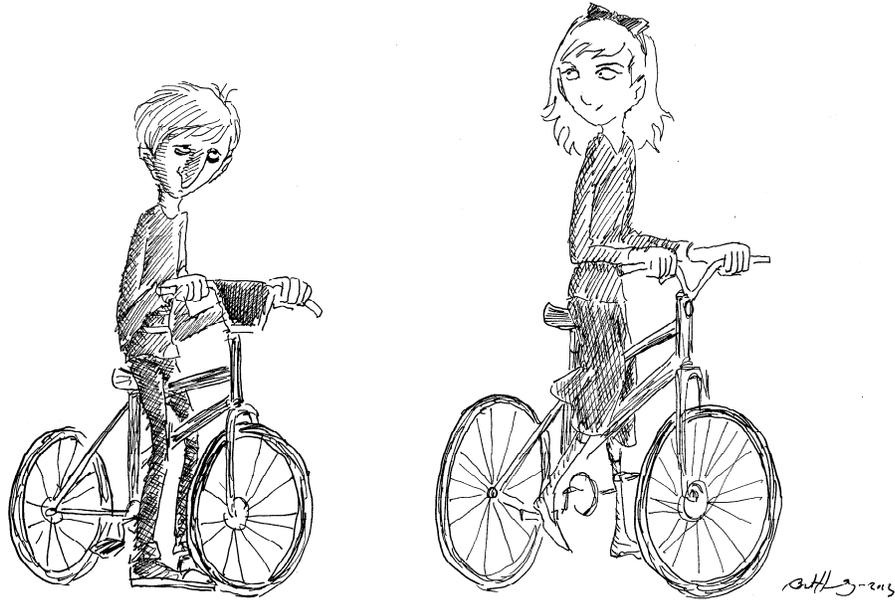
"Sure," Charlie answered. They often raced their bikes. Charlie won most of the time, but today he wasn't as fast as usual. His cold made him tired. He pedaled fast, but Katie won the race by a whole ten feet.

"Want to go again?" Katie asked.

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"Sure!" Charlie replied, and took off riding. Katie started late, several feet behind Charlie, but soon she caught up to him. She grinned at him, then pedaled past to win again.

"You're slow today," Katie said. "You should quit being nice. I can beat you on my own."



"I'm not being nice. I have a cold. I guess it has made me a little tired," Charlie said. His nose tickled and he sneezed at Katie.

"Ew!" Katie said as she backed up. "You sneezed on me."

"Sorry," Charlie said.

"Don't sneeze on me. I don't want to catch your cold."

"I'll try not to," Charlie said. "You want to play on the swings?" Charlie had two swings in his backyard. Actually, he had a whole play structure with a slide, a fort, and even a rock-climbing wall. The swings were his favorite part.

"Sure," Katie said.

Charlie's nose tickled and he scratched once. They climbed onto the swings. Soon they were racing to see who could swing the highest. Katie pushed Charlie sideways to slow him down. She swung higher and higher.

"Watch this!" Katie said. She jumped off when the swing was high in the air.

"I can beat that." Charlie pumped his swing higher and jumped off. He landed a foot beyond Katie's landing.

Charlie's nose suddenly tickled a LOT. The tickling made his eyes water. He rubbed his nose hard. Once, twice, three times he rubbed. Too

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late, he realized what he had done.

Loogar whooshed out of his nose. The genie nearly knocked Katie over.

“Do you want to play NOW, peasant?” Loogar demanded.

Charlie froze where he stood. He looked at Katie sheepishly.

“Charlie Simms! Who is that?” Katie shrieked.

“Ummm...it’s Loogie,” Charlie replied. His cheeks turned bright red and he shrugged. He shoved his hands in his pockets.

Katie was shocked a moment. Then she burst out laughing. “You have a boy in your nose?”

“Don’t laugh,” Charlie said.

“I can’t help it. You have a boy-shaped booger!”



"I am NOT a booger," Loogar huffed. "I am a PRINCE."

"This is Loogie," Charlie said. "Loogie is a genie."

"PRINCE Loogar," he corrected. "Who is your maiden friend?" He gave Katie a princely smile.

"Katie," she answered. "Your name is Loogie?"

"My nanny, Miss Bellediddy, calls me Loogie," he said. "Your peasant friend does as well. But my name is Prince Loogar."

Katie laughed harder.

"What is funny?" Loogar asked.

"Sorry," she said. Katie bit her lip to stop laughing. She saw that Loogar didn't know—a loogie is a very large booger. If she were mean, she would have told him. But Katie wasn't a bully.

"How did you end up in Charlie's nose?" she asked.

Loogar told her how he had played a prank on Wizard Hendrick and how the wizard had turned him into a genie as punishment. He scowled as he

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explained that only good deeds could set him free. He had to right his wrongs. At least that was what Hendrick had told him.

The sky began to spit rain. The wind picked up.

“Let’s go inside,” Charlie said. “Loogie, you have to go back in your bottle.”

Katie’s eyes opened wide. She screeched as Loogar disappeared into Charlie’s nose. It was a horrible thing to watch.



3.

Be Careful What You Wish

Inside the house they took off their coats and shoes. The air was warm after the chilly rain. Charlie sneezed several times.

"Charlie, do you have a cold?" his mother asked. "Would you like some hot chocolate and buttered toast? That should warm you both up." She disappeared into the kitchen.

Charlie and Katie sat down at the table. In a few minutes Mrs. Simms set two steaming mugs of cocoa in front of them, along with toast and jelly. "I'm going to the store," she said. "I'll be back in half an hour." They thanked her as she left.



Charlie dunked the buttered toast in his hot chocolate and nibbled off the chocolaty ends. It was one of his favorite treats.

"You're weird, Charlie Simms," Katie said as she watched him. "You're supposed to eat toast with jelly." She spread a glob of jelly across her toast. "What happened to Loogie?"

"He's in my nose," Charlie replied.

"He lives there?" she asked. Charlie nodded. "Can he hear what we say?" He nodded again. "That's too weird."

Charlie's nose tickled, so he rubbed it. Loogie whooshed out with a scowl on his face.

"Do you have ANY idea how loud your sneezing is inside your nose?" the prince demanded. Charlie shook his head. "It is very loud. I do NOT wish to be stuck in your nose while you

sneeze. Have you no idea what it is like to live in that bottle?"

Charlie shook his head.

"It's not a room for a prince, anyway. There is nowhere to sit, there is no light. It is a terrible space," Loogar complained.

"Oh," Charlie sniffled. And before he knew what he was doing, he said, "I wish I could see the inside of your bottle."

Genies can grant almost any wish, whether you really want what you wished for or not. Charlie's nose began to burn and hurt worse than ever! Even Loogar's comings and goings didn't hurt like this. He opened his mouth to scream. Then suddenly everything was dark.

Loogar stood beside him. Yes—Loogar was beside him! He was not a wisp of snot attached to Charlie's nose. He was standing on his own two feet.

"Wow! You're out of my nose," Charlie said. "You're out of your bottle!"

Loogar snorted with laughter. "No. I do

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believe we are now BOTH in your nose. We are both in my bottle," he corrected.

"That's impossible," Charlie said. "I can't be inside my own nose."

"It seems that it IS possible," Loogar said. "My magic is quite powerful. You should be glad my bottle has no mirror."



"What do you mean? What do I look like?" Charlie put his hands to his face. What his hands touched was not his face at all. It was slimy, drippy, and gross. He was touching the inside of his own nose.

Charlie screamed.
"Yikes! I wish I was back to normal!"

Instantly he was standing next to Katie. She looked pale. She would have looked better if she

had seen a ghost.

Charlie's nose really hurt! He rubbed it gently. Loogar eased out slowly, wearing a very malicious grin.

"That must have hurt," he taunted. He folded his arms and snickered at Charlie.

"Please don't EVER do that again," Katie told Loogar. "That was the most horrible thing I have ever seen. Ugh!" She shuddered. She could not forget the image. She buried her face in her hands and shook her head, trying really hard to forget.

"A genie can grant any wish," Loogar said, "even horrible wishes. I must grant the wish that I hear. I even grant wishes that I do not like. But this wish was quite fun." He smirked.

"It wasn't fun for me. Now my nose really hurts," Charlie said.

"A small price to entertain your prince," Loogar sneered.

"You should be nicer to your friends," Katie scolded.

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“Perhaps,” Loogie sighed.

“We could have more fun if I felt better,” Charlie groaned

“Your sneezing is quite annoying. A wish might help,” Loogie suggested.

“Really? OK, then I wish I wasn’t sick,” Charlie said.

Instantly his nose cleared. He felt well again. “Wow! That worked!” He breathed deeply through his nose. “Thank you, Loogie!”

“I suppose you are welcome. You must tell Wizard Hendrick that I have done this good deed for you. A peasant hardly deserves such kindness,” Loogar scoffed. “Certainly this will speed me to my freedom from your nose.”

