

SCROGGY

SCAREDY?
MONSTERS?

THE MONSTER WHO WAS SCARED OF THE DARK



Michael Salmon

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Written and illustrated by Michael Salmon



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Scroggy was scared of the dark.
He had always been scared of the dark.
He never even played games like Hide and Seek,
or Pin the Tail on the Donkey,
because they were too frightening.

At night, long after a monster's normal bedtime,
Scroggy would stay up and watch
the late, late, late show on television.
He drank mugs of hot chocolate,
to make himself feel warm and safe.

He always locked every door and window in the house,
and closed the curtains very tightly.
'After all,' he said to himself, 'you never know
what might be creeping round . . .
in the dark.'



Scroggy had only just fallen asleep when a strange moaning sound woke him: 'Oooooooooooooooooohhh!'

He pulled a pillow over his head. 'Perhaps I'm having a nightmare,' he thought. 'I'll *really* wake up soon, and I won't hear a thing.'

But the moaning didn't stop. Scroggy knew he was really awake, and he was scared. He crawled further under the bedclothes.

The weird noise was getting louder. Whatever was making the weird noise was getting closer . . .



Slowly he opened the wardrobe doors
and looked inside.

'After all,' he said to himself,
'you never know what might be hiding in there.'
Good. No monsters there tonight.

Next he opened every single drawer
in his chest of drawers.
Good. No monsters there tonight.

Finally he peeped under the bed.
Good. No monsters there, either.

At last he climbed back into bed,
and turned out the light.



When Scroggy did go to bed at last, he sometimes left *all* the lights on. But his electricity bills were so expensive that he usually tried to make do with just the bedside lamp.

On the night of this story, Scroggy did what he did every night. He snuggled down between the sheets, and read a story from one of his favourite books. It made the darkness seem less scary.

And before he finally went to sleep, Scroggy did what he did every night. He got out of bed and switched on his large flashlight.



'It might be a tribe of shaggy pink monsters from deep in the jungle. I've read about them in the newspaper. They've probably heard that I'm scared of the dark, and they want to take me back with them to a place where the sun never shines.'



Maybe it's one of those horrible Martian invaders that I saw on television tonight — the one with the three eyes and the large nippers.

'He's going to capture me, and put me in a zoo on Mars. I don't want to go . . . I don't want to go . . .



'Perhaps it's a giant octopus —
like the one in my storybook.
It has squeezed through the plughole in the bathtub,
and is squirming along the hallway,
looking for things to eat.

'I'll lie very still,
just in case it comes into my room.
Perhaps it won't notice that I'm here.'

Scroggy didn't move for ten minutes.
Then he peeped out slowly from the bottom of the bed.

'Oooooooooohhh!
The noise was getting softer.



'I've got to phone the police,' thought Scroggy.
'They'll know how to deal with Martian invaders,
or slimy octopusses.'

Scroggy slid out of bed, *very slowly*.
Grasping his flashlight, he crept to the door,
and opened it *very gently*.

Then he switched on the flashlight,
and tiptoed down the hall towards the telephone.

Just as he picked it up, the noise started again —
right behind him.
'Oooooooooooooohhh . . .!'

'Aaaaaaargh!' yelled Scroggy.
He dropped the phone and twisted round,
tripping over the rug —
Crash!
Scroggy lay on his stomach in the mess,
still holding his flashlight.



And there in the spotlight,
was the *smallest* monster
Scroggy had ever seen.

'Oh . . .! You gave me *such* a fright,'
squeaked the little monster.
He was holding his toe,
and big tears were rolling down his tiny cheeks.

'*What* are you doing in *my* house?'
demanded Scroggy, as he stood up.



'Please don't be cross,'
sobbed the little monster.
'I was just flying home
when I crashed down your chimney,
and hurt my toe.'

'I thought you might have been
a horrible monster.
I was very frightened —
I'm scared of the dark.'

'That's *silly*,' boasted Scroggy,
trying to look brave.
'I can't imagine how anyone
could be scared of the dark.'



Scroggy helped to bandage the little monster's sore toe. Then they sat in the kitchen, eating cake and sipping mugs of hot chocolate.

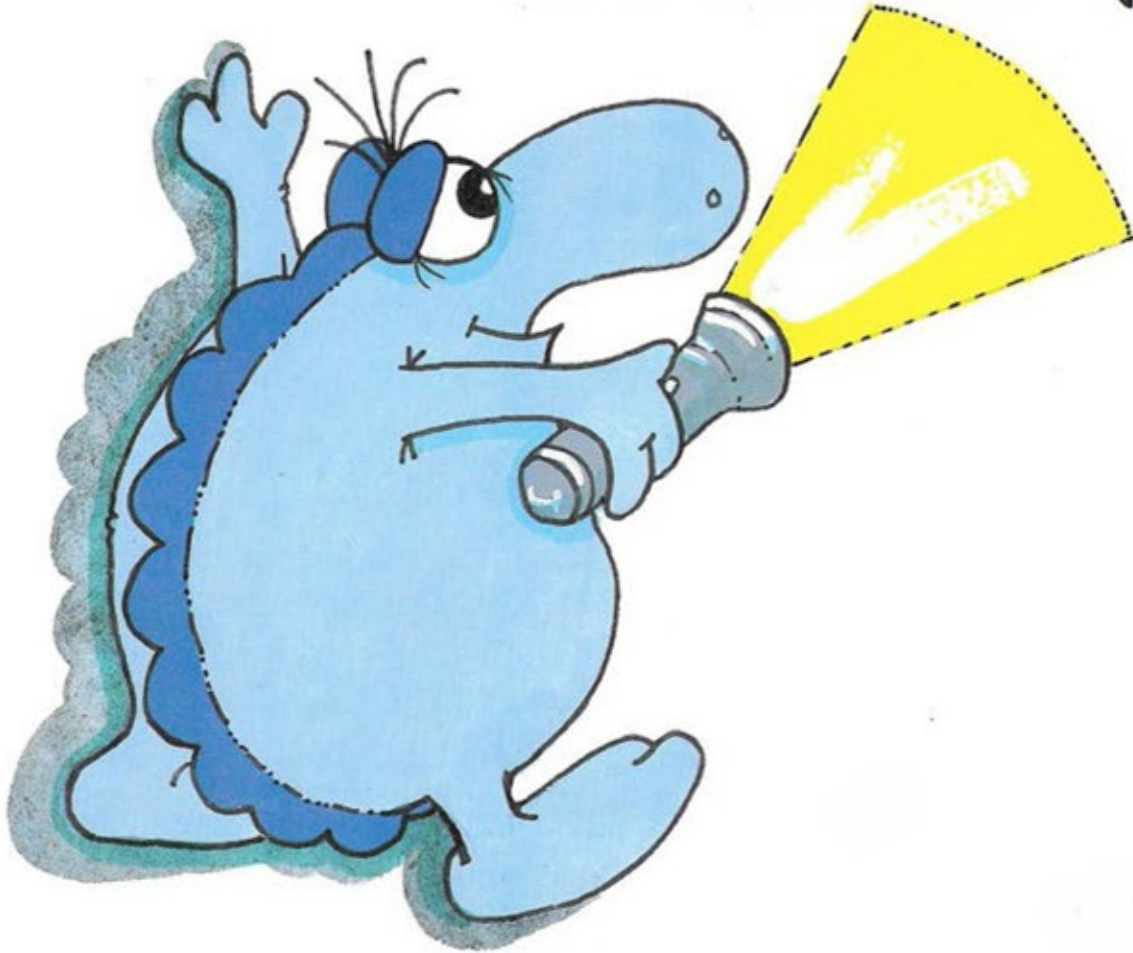
It was nearly sunrise when the little monster left. As he flew out the window, he waved goodbye to Scroggy. 'Remember,' shouted Scroggy, 'When you grow as big as me, you won't be scared of the dark, either!'

He shut the window quickly, as usual, but he left the curtains open just a little bit.

'Well, I don't think I'm as scared as I *used* to be!'



THE END



Michael Salmon



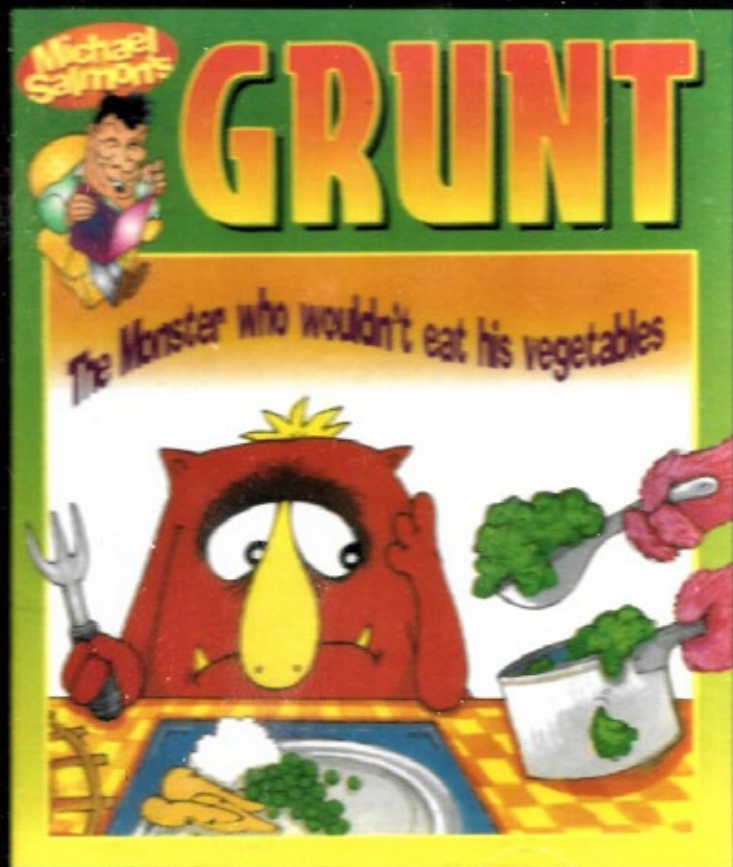
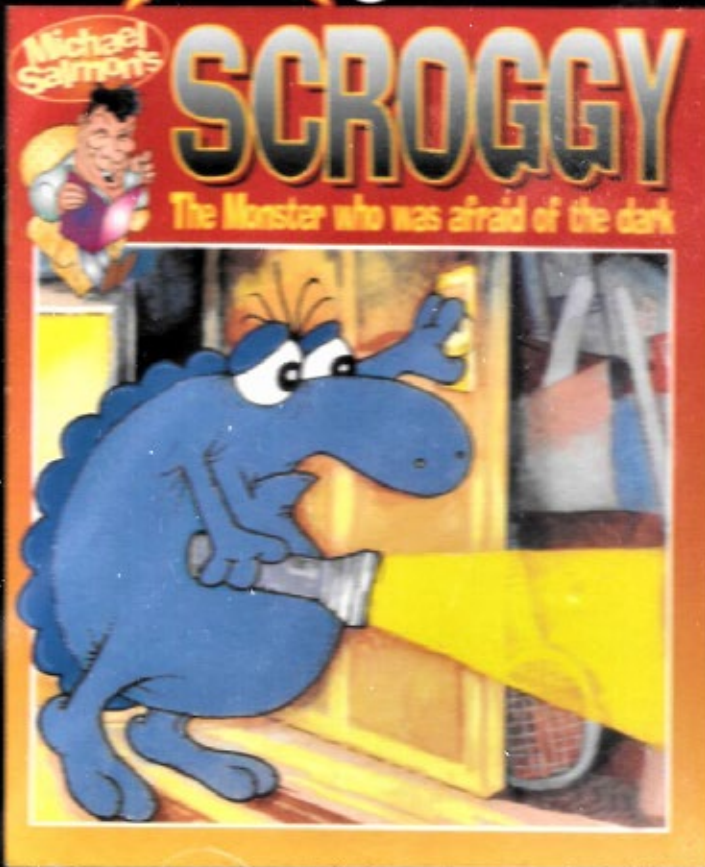
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