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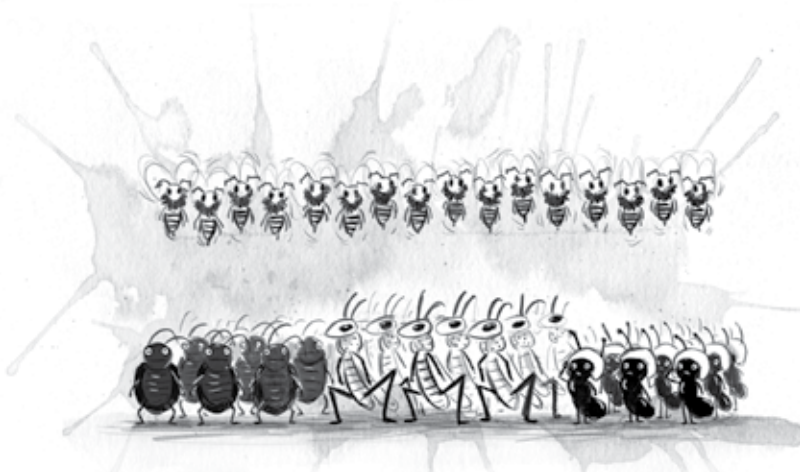
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For Olly, Tommy and Benny - MC  
To Paige, latest member of the Collins Clan - PC  
To my brother, Özgün - AT



## Tilly, the Sad Dinosaur

When Tilly was little she was found in a shoebox. Have you ever seen a dinosaur in a shoebox? Not many people have.

Nobody knew who Tilly's parents were. There'd been a helpful note

on the box, though. It said:  
*Matildasaurus*. Or Tilly for short.

Tilly was sent to live in an orphanage with horrible curtains. They made her feel sad and lonely.

School should have been fun, but it wasn't. The other children made fun of her. By this time, she was the size of a car, with a long tail and feet like fins that made her terribly clumsy.

Poor Tilly couldn't walk down a school corridor without breaking something. She squashed the



lockers, cracked the floor, broke the windows and stomped on several students, who yelled, 'Ouch!' and 'Get off my foot, you great big dino-dingbat!'

Imagine your family car charging down the main corridor of your school and you'll know what it was like. There were lots of noises like: **CRACK! POP! SNAP! BAM!** and *ARRRGHH!*

*I'm running away on Friday, Tilly decided on the day she turned seven. I'm going to be a pirate. She*

had read that pirates didn't have to do homework. They didn't have to wash, unless they fell in the sea. And best of all, pirates didn't have to say they were sorry if they broke a doorframe or squashed someone by accident.

On Friday, after leaving the orphanage, Tilly pretended to go to school. Instead, she went straight to the harbour, where all the ships sat rocking in the water. Tilly loved the smell of the sea.

She saw a big boat that had

'FERRY' written on its side. 'That looks like a pirate ship,' she said to herself. 'Perfect!'

She bought a ticket with her pocket money and climbed aboard.

'Whoa!' cried Tilly, who by now was the size of a school bus. Even though it was big, Tilly's weight made the boat rock. People stared and pointed. Some grabbed their children and backed away in fear.

'Well, that's not very nice,' muttered Tilly. 'How would they feel if I gawked at *them*?'

Her face brightened when she saw an ice-cream stand.

'Awesome!' she said. 'I'll have triple chocolate!'

Soon she was licking and slurping her ice-cream and leaning over the rail of the boat (which by now was leaning over quite a bit in the water).

But Tilly was too busy enjoying herself to notice. 'I like being a pirate,' she informed another passenger. Then a loud noise made her jump. Her head snapped around just in time to see Mr Thrasher and