

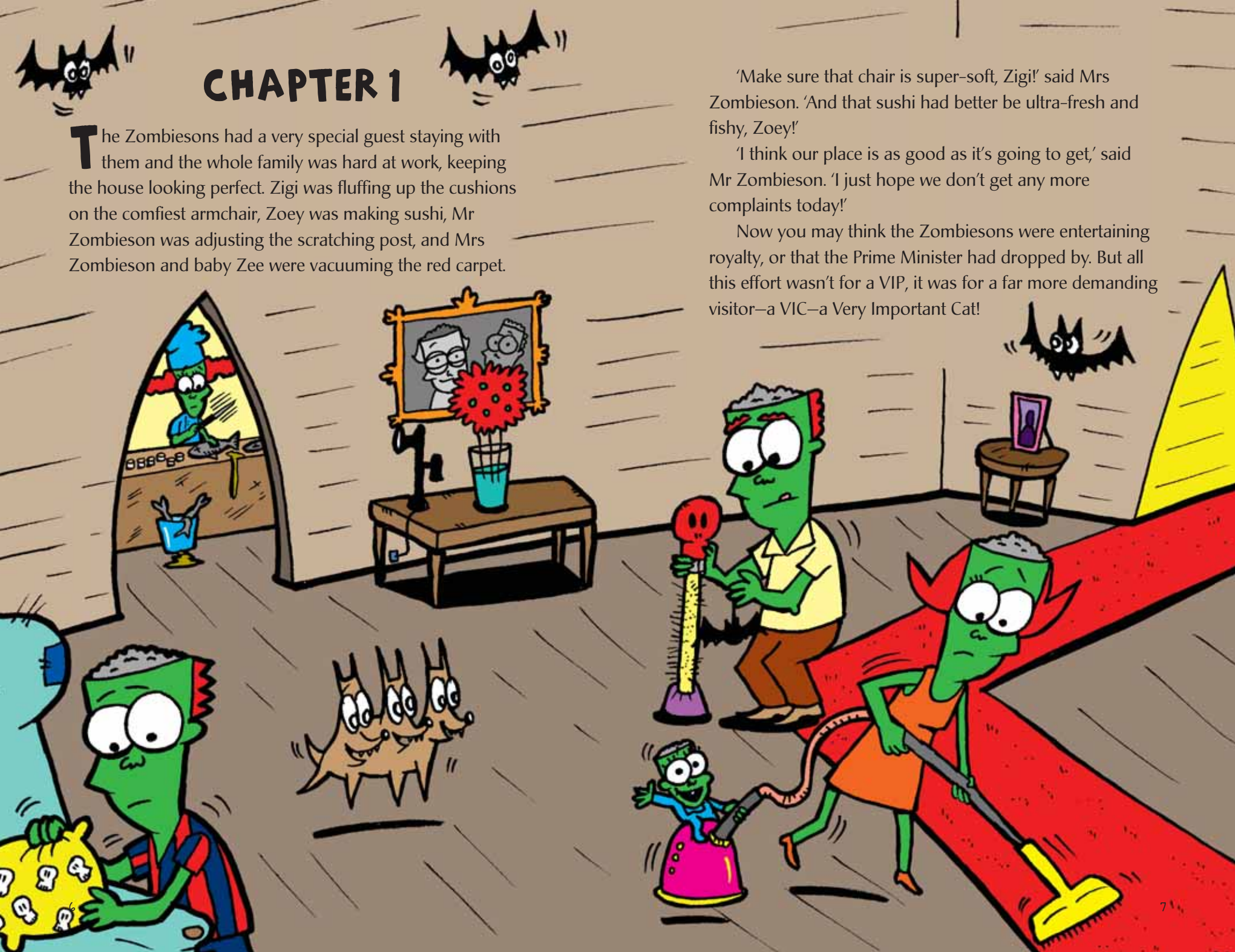
# CHAPTER 1

The Zombiesons had a very special guest staying with them and the whole family was hard at work, keeping the house looking perfect. Zigi was fluffing up the cushions on the comfiest armchair, Zoey was making sushi, Mr Zombieson was adjusting the scratching post, and Mrs Zombieson and baby Zee were vacuuming the red carpet.

'Make sure that chair is super-soft, Zigi!' said Mrs Zombieson. 'And that sushi had better be ultra-fresh and fishy, Zoey!'

'I think our place is as good as it's going to get,' said Mr Zombieson. 'I just hope we don't get any more complaints today!'

Now you may think the Zombiesons were entertaining royalty, or that the Prime Minister had dropped by. But all this effort wasn't for a VIP, it was for a far more demanding visitor—a VIC—a Very Important Cat!



Cleocatra, the adored pet of Granny Zombieson's old friend King Tut, was staying!

'I don't know why we agreed to look after her,' said Zigi, as the prized cat, complete with her Egyptian crown and jewel-encrusted collar, emerged from a morning nap. 'Nothing we do is ever good enough.'

'She keeps sending my sushi back,' complained Zoey. 'It's too tough, it's too tender. Why can't she just eat a tin of cat food like every other cat?'

'You both know how important little Cleo is to Tut,' said Mrs Zombieson. 'And you both know how important Tut is to Granny. It's only for a few more days.'



The Zombiesons had been pampering the cat since the moment she'd arrived on Freak Street . . .

*Cleocatra had a tiny golden bell by her basket that she would ring at all hours to demand warm milk or a quick crown polish.*



*She had first dibs on the bathroom every morning and took ages preening herself in front of the mirror.*



*And then she'd spend the whole day lounging around on the couch, hogging the remote watching the Cat Channel.*



'Just remember that we're helping out Granny,' said Mr Zombieson, even though Cleo was driving him mad, too. 'I just wish she wouldn't keep jumping out at us, it's really frightening!'

You should know that despite being zombies, Mr and Mrs Zombieson were really squeamish and easily spooked.

'Granny and Tut have been looking forward to their trip to Las Baygas for ages,' said Mrs Zombieson, 'and they knew Cleocatra would be bored by the extreme skateboarding.'

Granny Zombieson wasn't like most grannies. Although she was 500 years old, she was still young at heart. In fact, she had gone to Las Baygas with King Tut, her trainer, to compete in the World Skateboarding Games. The winner got a shot at breaking a world record—jumping over the tallest hotel in Las Baygas—Humungo's Palace!



Mr Zombieson glared at his favourite armchair. It was covered in a thick layer of cat fur and occupied by a very smug Cleocatra.

'Meow,' she purred contentedly.

'If I have to watch one more episode of that soap opera *Cats in Love . . .*' muttered Zoey. 'Those smooching moggies are really getting on my nerves. Not to mention *Purrfect Match, Kitty Court* and *The Feline Fashion Show*.'

'Why don't we have some lunch?' suggested Mrs Zombieson.

