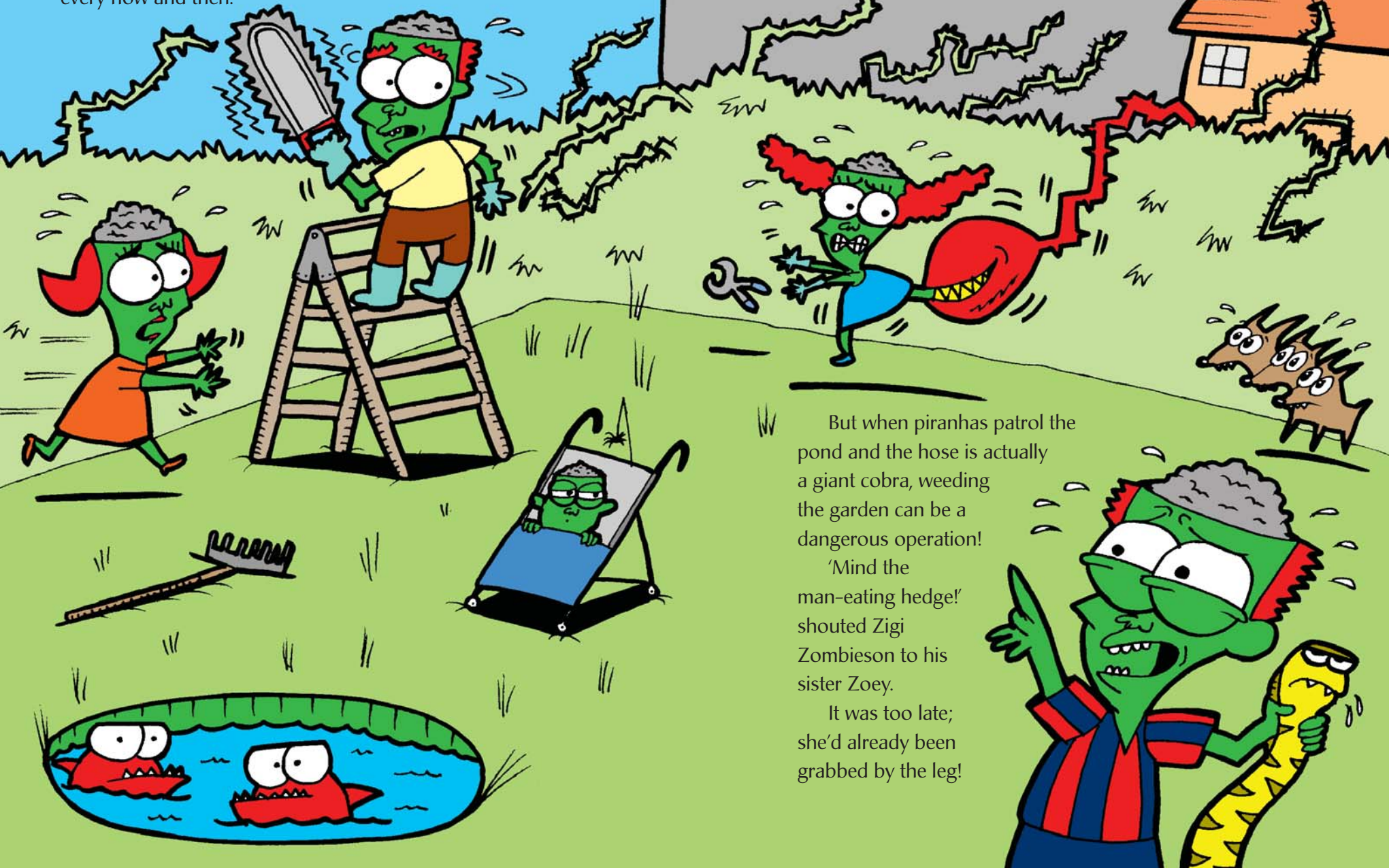


CHAPTER 1

Although the Zombiesons liked to keep their house looking as creepy as possible, even they had to do some gardening every now and then.



But when piranhas patrol the pond and the hose is actually a giant cobra, weeding the garden can be a dangerous operation!

'Mind the man-eating hedge!' shouted Zigi Zombieson to his sister Zoey.

It was too late; she'd already been grabbed by the leg!

'I feel sick,' cried Mr Zombieson.

'This could get nasty,' wailed Mrs Zombieson.

Both Mr and Mrs Zombieson shared one particularly unfortunate trait for zombies—they were both squeamish! 'Grab her and pull!' shouted Zigi. 'Hasn't this plant been fed already?'



If you didn't feed the man-eating hedge regularly it would sink its teeth into anything! After all, being a *man-eating* hedge is a hard habit to break.

In just the last couple of weeks the plant had eaten the newspaper delivery boy's bag, torn a patch out of the postman's pants and badly bitten the bottoms of several Freak Street cats!

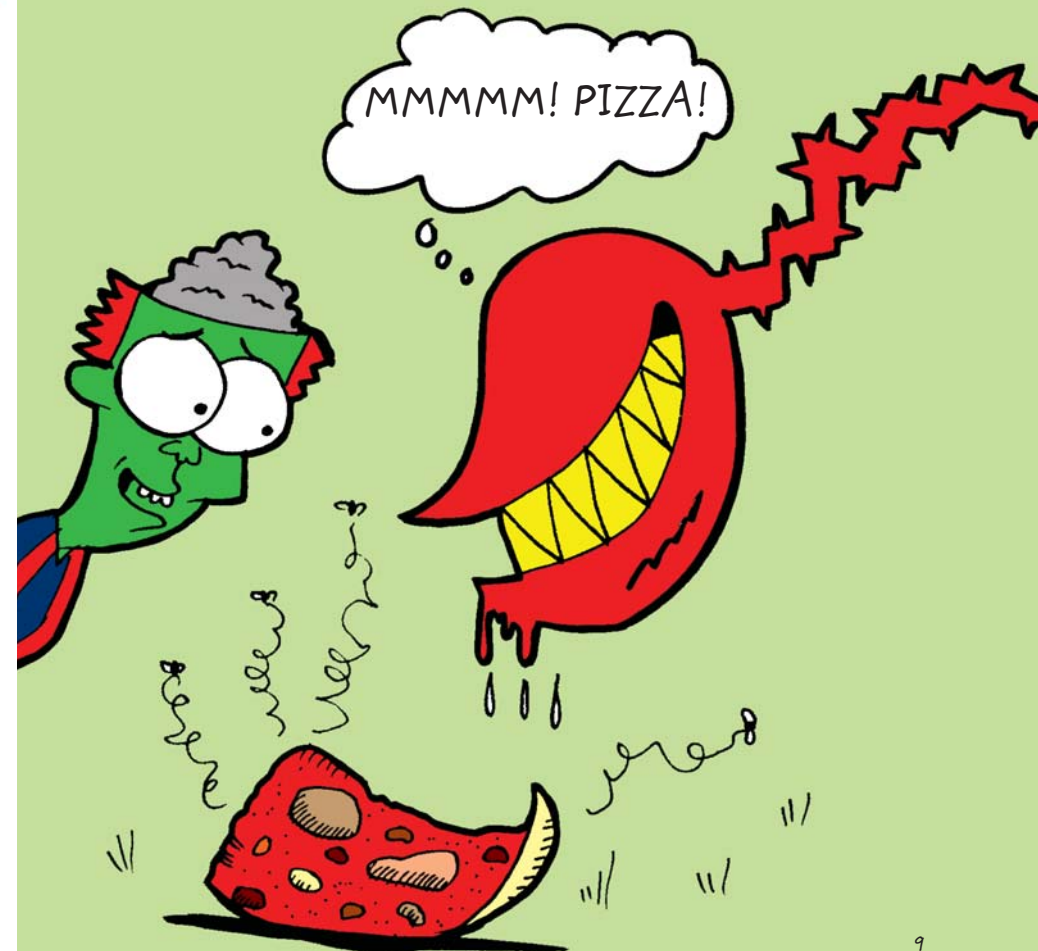
'I'm tugging as hard as I can,' said Mrs Zombieson. 'I don't want to mess up my hair!'

The whole family pulled at Zoey, but the hedge was winning the tug-of-war.

'There's only one thing for it,' said Zigi. 'Pizza!'

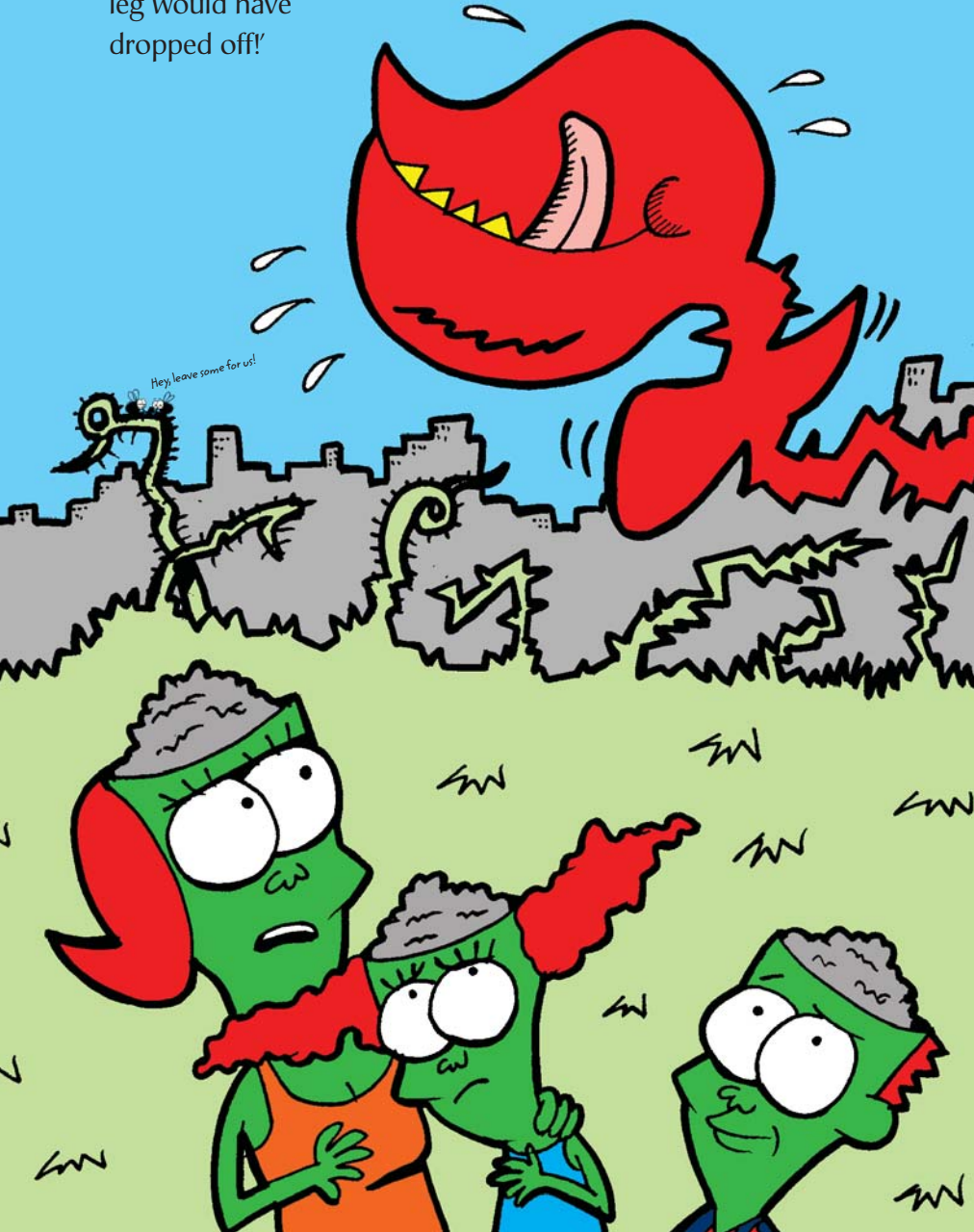
Stale, and preferably mouldy, pizza was the man-eating plant's favourite food. The most reliable place to find that kind of pizza was in Zlobba's dog bowl. (Although Zlobba looked quite scary, his three heads really only meant three times the slobber.)

Zigi threw a pizza slice towards the plant. It immediately began to sniff the air.



In one movement the plant released Zoey and snapped up the pizza. There was a loud gurgling noise as it gobbled up the slice.

'That was close,' said Zoey. 'Any longer and I think my leg would have dropped off!'



'Back to work, everyone,' said Mrs Zombieson. 'Our special guest is arriving any minute.'

And so the Zombiesons got back to tidying up the garden, although, of course, keeping a safe distance from the man-eating hedge!