

Sometimes when I am tucked into my crisp packet,
I look up at all the cosy windows
and wonder what it would be like to live with creature comforts.
To belong to somebody.

To be an actual
pet.



The FUNNY TOUCHING TALE
of how a pesky street rat
finds home sweet home.

£5.99

ISBN 1-84121-276-8



9 781841 212760

From the creator of the Clarice Bean books

and "I will not ever
NEVER eat a Tomato"

Winner of the Kate Greenaway Medal
and the Norfolk Children's Book Award

"Lauren Child is so good it's exhilarating"

THE INDEPENDENT

that pesky rat

Illustrated by Lauren Child

Written by Lauren Child

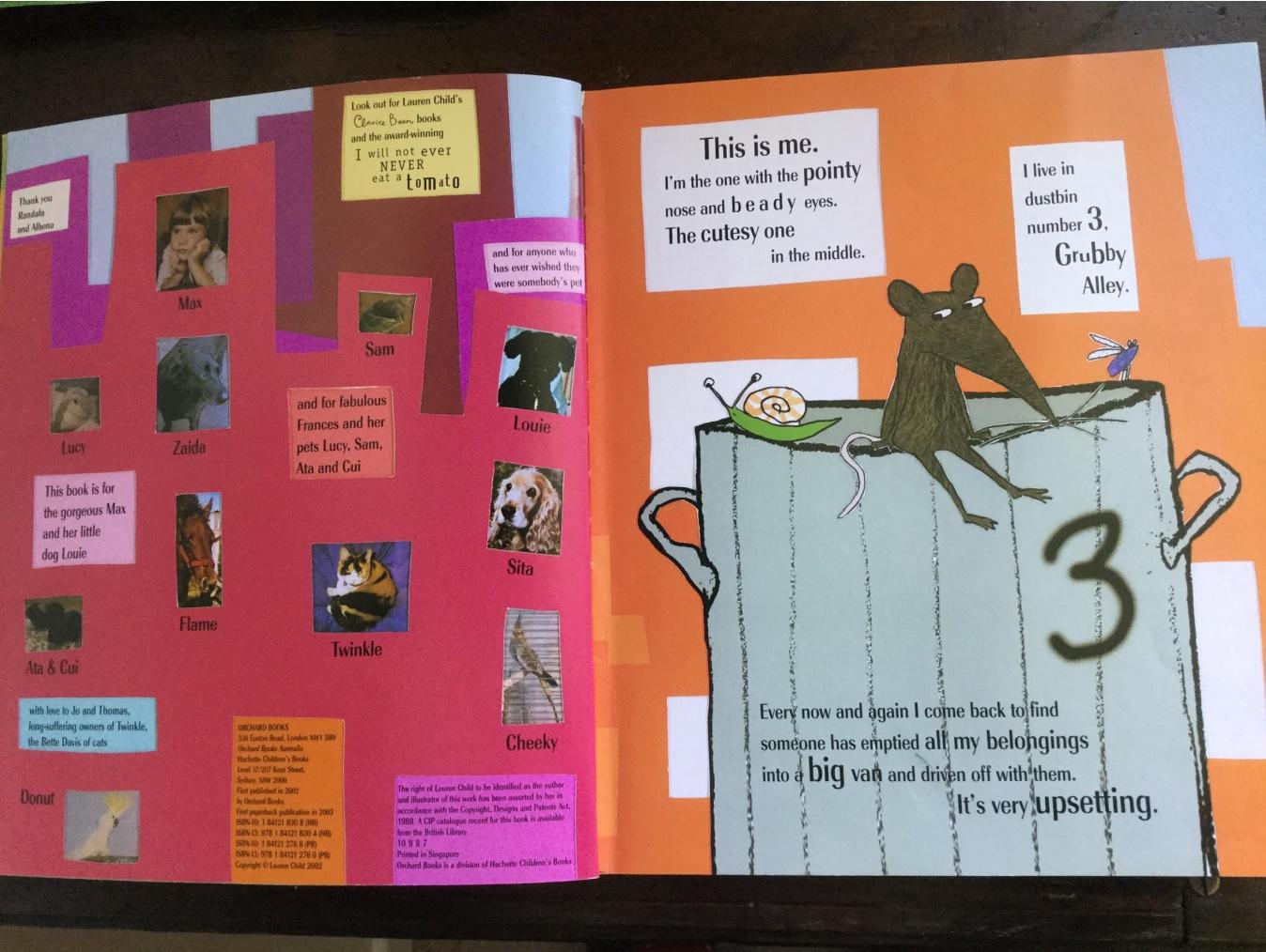
Published by Scholastic

lauren child

Gold Winner of the Smarties Book Prize 2002

www.scholastic.co.uk





with love to and Thomas,
long-suffering owners of Twinkle,
the Bette Davis of cats

Donut



OXFORD BOOKS
350 Lenton Road, London NW1 3BP
Orchard Books Australia
Harcourt Children's Books
Level 17/207 Kent Street,
Sydney, NSW 2000
For further information call 1300 364 300
© Orchard Books
First paperback publication in 2003
ISBN 10: 1 84121 030 8 (HB)
ISBN 13: 978 1 84121 030 4 (HB)
ISBN 10: 1 84121 270 9 (PB)
ISBN 13: 978 1 84121 270 0 (PB)
Copyright © Lauren Child 2002

The right of Lauren Child to be identified as the author and illustrator of this work has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988. A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library
10 9 8 7 6
Printed in Singapore
Orchard Books is a division of Hachette Children's Books

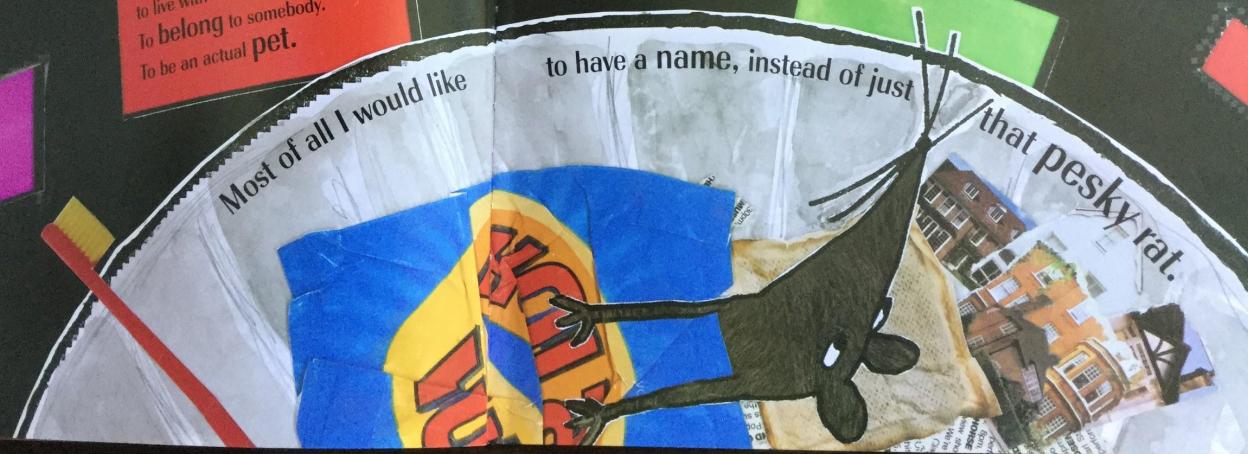
I'm a brown rat, a street rat.
But people call me that **pesky rat**.
I don't know why.
They say I smell,
but that's not my fault, it's the dirt.

Sometimes when I am tucked into
my crisp packet,
I look up at all the **COSY** windows
and wonder what it would be like
to live with creature comforts.
To belong to somebody.
To be an actual **pet**.

Most of all I would like

to have a **name**, instead of just

that pesky rat.



*My friend Pierre,
who is a chinchilla,
is looked after by a rich lady called Madame Fifi.
He has a very glamorous life.*

He lives in the lap of luxury.



*I say,
"I would quite like to
live in a fashionable apartment
and be fed
chocolates
while I sit on a
feather cushion."*





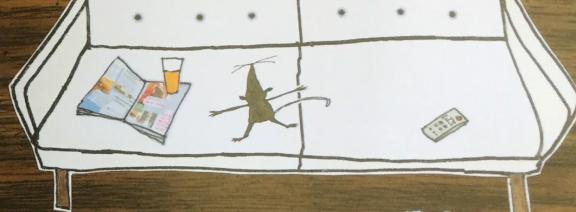


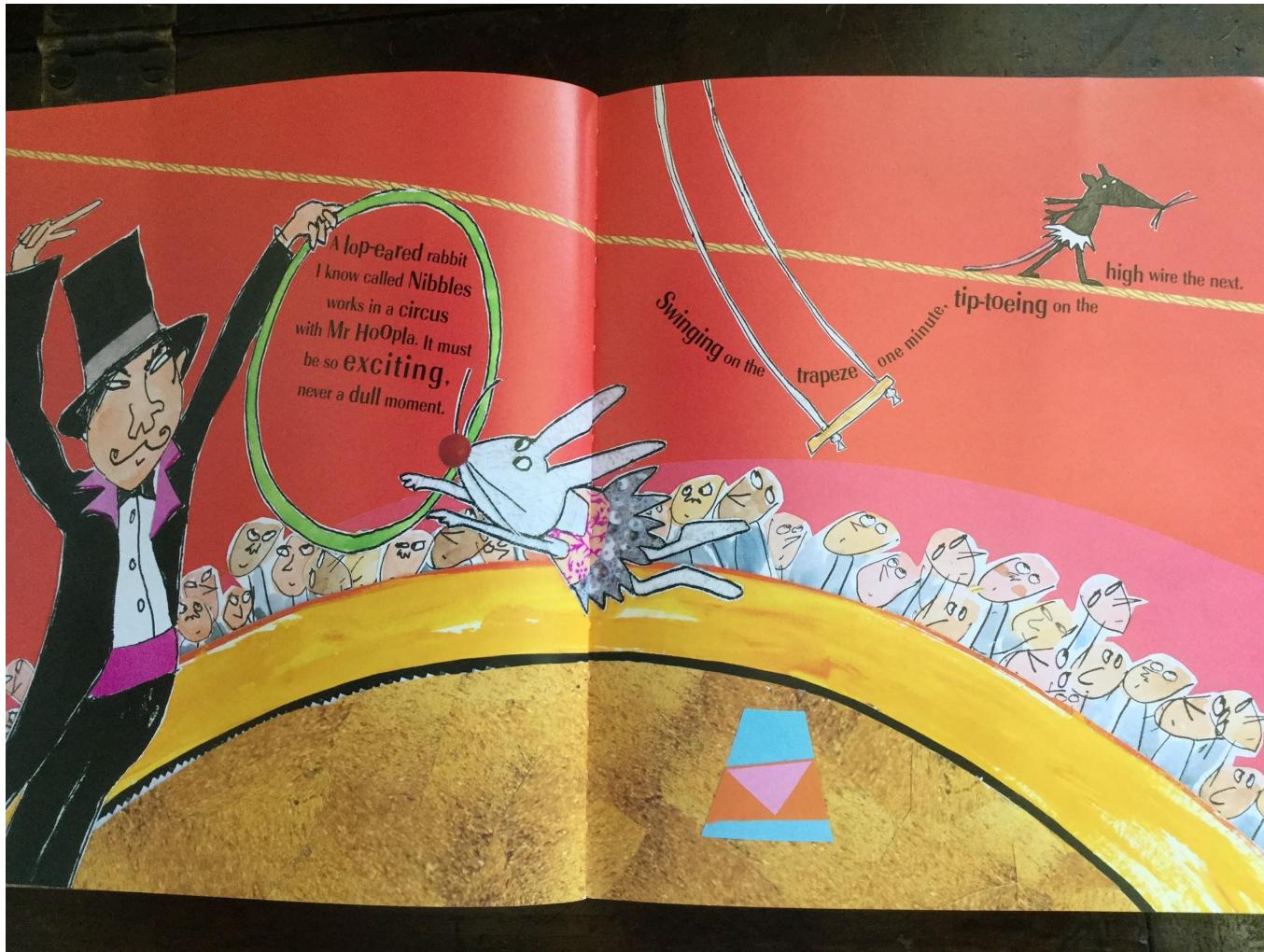
Oscar says,

"Doing whatever you want can get
tiring after a while. I sometimes get a bit
bored watching the same old shows on TV."



I'm quite good in the kitchen





Nibbles says,
"it is fun hopping through hoops in a tutu."

But sometimes

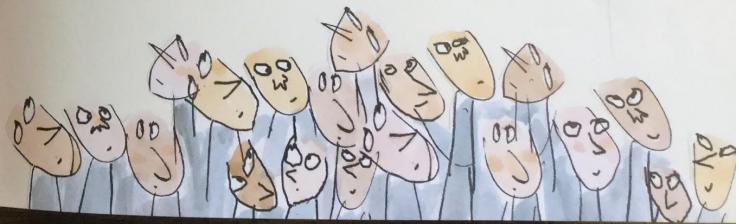
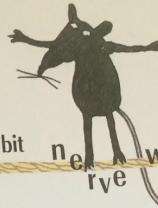
I could do with
taking
off

the
clown's
nose

and putting my feet up."



Maybe it's all a bit nerve wracking for me.



I think I'd quite like one of those owners
who do lots of sitting about
like Miss StClair.

Her Scottie dog, Andrew, is always sitting by the

fire, having supper on a tray and they spend the evenings doing

puzzles

together.



Andrew says,

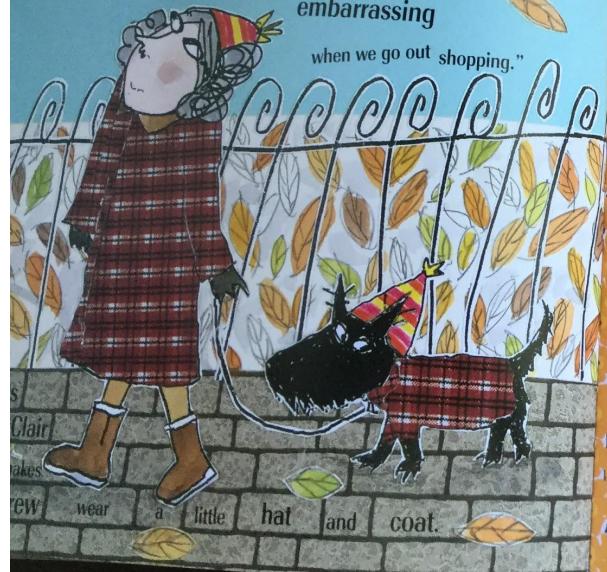
"On the whole I feel
very well
looked after.

And

Miss StClair
is good company.

But it's rather
embarrassing

when we go out shopping."



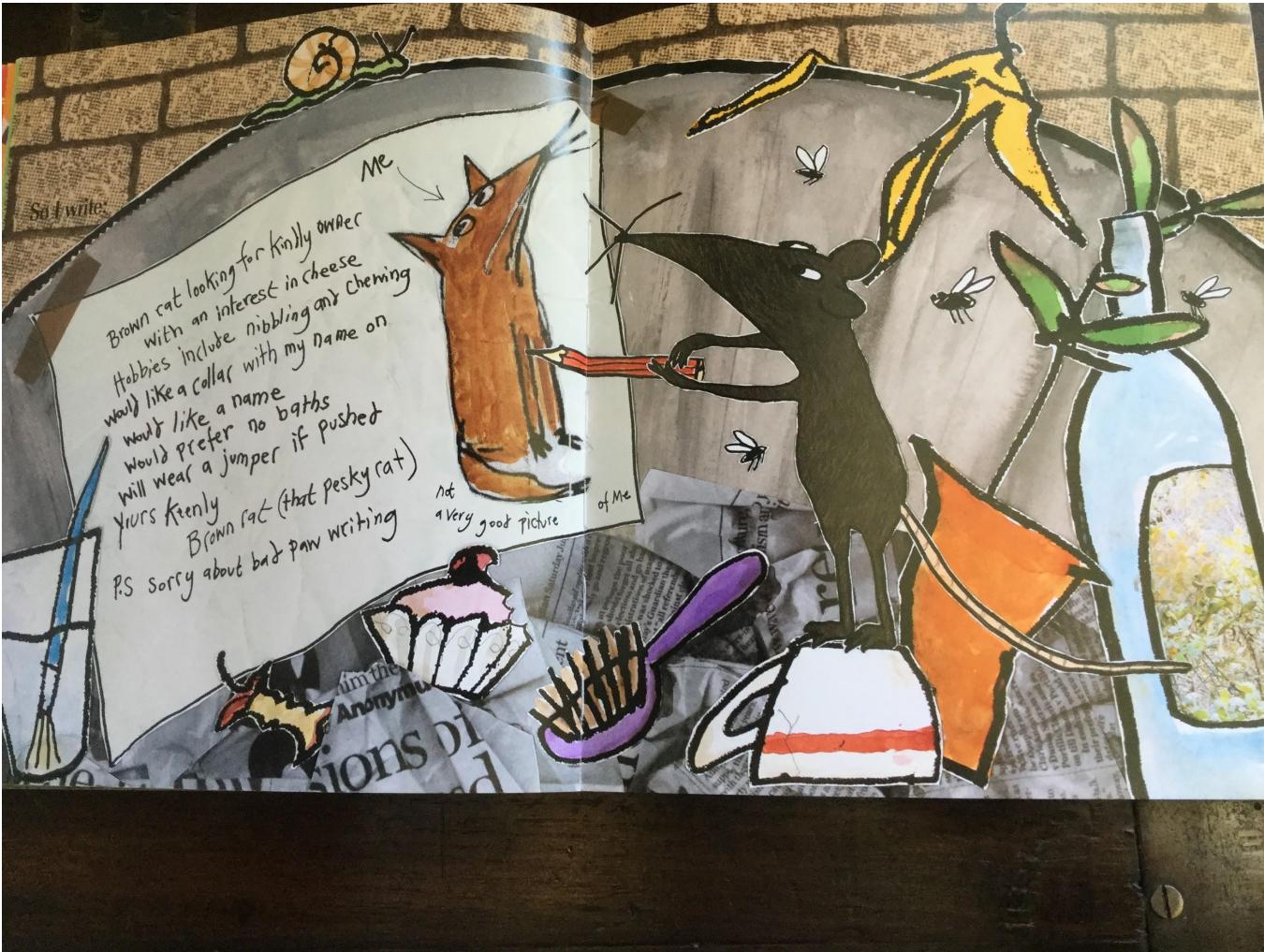
S
Clair
akes
ew
wear
a
little
hat
and
coat.

I don't think
clothes
would suit
me.

But
I would do
anything to be
somebody's pet.









... on Tuesday old Mr Fortesque is passing
and he stops to look at my notice.

He has to really **squint** because he
has such **bad** eyesight.

Then he looks at me and says,

"My,
haven't you
got a pointy nose
and, goodness me,
what a long tail, and such
unusual beady eyes . . .

I'll take him."

I can't
believe my luck,
nor can Mrs Trill.

Mrs Trill says,
"Are you **sure**?"

And Mr Fortesque says,
"Oh yes, I've been looking for a brown **cat**
as nice as this one for **ages**."

Mrs Trill looks at **me** and I look at Mrs Trill,
and we **both** look at my notice,

but neither of us
says a **word**.

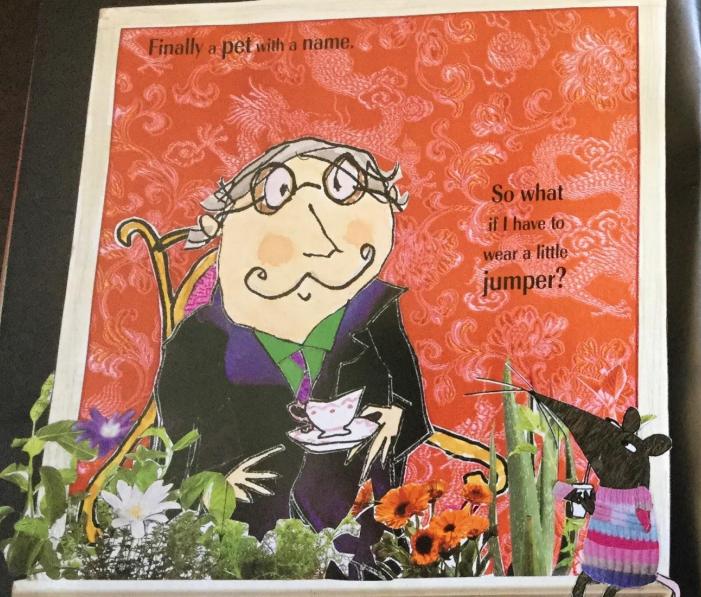




So here I am.

Finally a pet with a name.

So what
if I have to
wear a little
jumper?



Mr Fortesque says, "Well, Tiddles, who's a pretty kittycat?"
And I squeak, "I am!"

