

**JAMIE
MCFLAIR**
VS THE
ULTIMATE BRAIN HACK

LUKE & SEAN
FRANKS THORNE

ILLUSTRATED BY DAVIDE ORTU



HODDER CHILDREN'S BOOKS

First published in Great Britain in 2022 by Hodder & Stoughton

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Text copyright © Luke Franks & Sean Thorne, 2022

Illustrations copyright © Davide Ortu, 2022

The moral rights of the authors and illustrator have been asserted.

All characters and events in this publication, other than those clearly in the public domain, are fictitious and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978 1 444 95604 7

Typeset by Avon DataSet Ltd, Arden Court, Alcester, Warwickshire

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

The paper and board used in this book are made from wood from responsible sources.



Hodder Children's Books
An imprint of
Hachette Children's Group
Part of Hodder & Stoughton Limited
Carmelite House
50 Victoria Embankment
London EC4Y 0DZ

An Hachette UK Company
www.hachette.co.uk

www.hachettechildrens.co.uk

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO YOU! YES YOU!
THE FACT YOU'VE COME BACK TO JOIN JAMIE FOR
A SECOND ADVENTURE GENUINELY MEANS THE WORLD
TO US AND WE HOPE YOU HAVE A LOVELY TIME!

CHAPTER 1

THE ROFLCOPTER

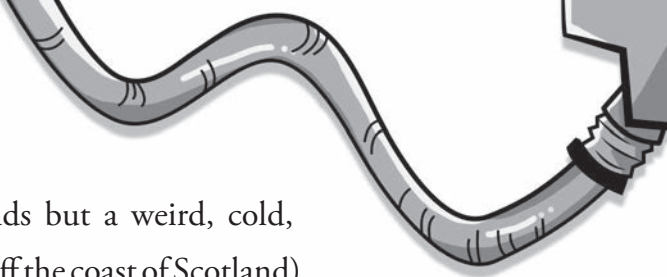
It was 11 a.m. on a cold February morning when Barry Bigtime's alarm began to screech. Once upon a time, Barry would have woken up in a luxurious four-poster bed but now he was crammed into the back of a small helicopter with his undesirable roommates, Slottapuss and Flobster. The helicopter brimmed with sad smells. As Barry opened his eyes, Flobster's ghastly face was only inches away from his own. He sat up with a start. If you've ever been annoyed at sharing a bedroom with a brother or sister, Barry Bigtime could assure you things could be **MUCH WORSE**. You could be sleeping alongside a six-foot rodent with human limbs and a half-man, half-lobster who smelt as bad as he looked.

Only three months ago, Barry had been one of the most influential and affluent men not only in the

world of music, but in the whole world of humans. He'd wake up in his beautiful mansion where fresh, deep-fried penguin wings would be served to him by one of his many household staff, fuelling him for a day of dominating the music industry.

Barry's life came crashing down around him when he created a boyband (in his *Boyband Generator*) that turned into a **MONSTER AT A MUSIC FESTIVAL**. Barry had been on the run with his two henchthings ever since. The whole sordid affair is documented in a book called *Jamie McFlair vs The Boyband Generator*. It really is a **WILD** tale.

As Barry struggled to sit up, he locked eyes with a photograph of Jamie McFlair that he'd torn out of a newspaper and nailed to a dartboard. Her smiling face was peppered with tiny holes. In Barry's mind, his niece had been solely responsible for the downfall of his music empire. It was her fault that he now had to live in a helicopter with rat-people and lobster-men. It was her fault he'd had to spend the last month hiding from Detective Lansdown on a deserted island (which, we hasten to add, wasn't one of those tropical



deserted islands but a weird, cold, blustery one off the coast of Scotland).

It was her fault that Barry Bigtime had lost . . . well, essentially everything. **‘She will pay!’** Barry snarled. With no more darts to hand, he picked up a shrivelled easy-peeler orange and hurled it at the dartboard. It jammed on to a dart and sprayed a sleeping Slottapuss with orange goo.

Slottapuss’s long, rat-like muzzle crinkled. He shuffled under the blanket he’d fashioned out of papers covered with Barry’s crazy drawings and mad plans. **‘GET UP, YOU TWO. TODAY IS THE DAY,’** Barry shouted with unnecessary volume. He switched the lights on (they weren’t really lights but four torches gaffer-taped together). The beams shone directly into Flobster’s eyes. His antennae twitched with shock, his long human arms waggled and his under-the-sea claws clicked as he writhed in the nest he’d made out of newspaper.

Barry was already on his feet and whipped away Slottapuss’s blanket of plans. The former showbiz



kingpin shuffled awkwardly to the front of the helicopter and spread the papers over the cockpit.

As well as being a musical genius, Barry was also an **ACTUAL GENIUS**. Some would say he was also an evil

genius. A tri-genius, if you will. His Boyband Generator could infuse superstar talent into human brains. You might think that Barry created this to make some great music, but, while some of his creations did make some toe-tapping tunes, the *real* reason Barry built the Boyband Generator was for fame, fortune and, most importantly, **POWER.**

With all of that now in the past and in the papers, Barry had been frantically designing a new machine. One that made the Boyband Generator look like one of those old phones that only had one game.

Barry's crazed eyes studied the plans one last time.

'DID YOU GET THE BIRTHDAY CARD LIKE I ASKED?' he yelled.

'Yes,' grumbled Slottapuss. 'I got it when I bought those oranges and almost scared the lady half to death, remember?'

The island they'd been hiding on was completely deserted, apart from one village that felt like it had been frozen sixty years in the past. The islanders hadn't discovered the internet, 5G, or even national

newspapers, so nobody knew who Barry was. Which was ideal, because his face was **PLASTERED ON THE FRONT OF HIS HELICOPTER.**

‘Are there any oranges left?’ asked Flobster. ‘I’m starving.’

‘You can eat when I’ve got the funds I need to build our **new machine,**’ barked Barry. ‘And all the other delights that our plan requires . . .’ *What a plan this is*, he thought. If this new machine design worked, Barry could become more powerful than ever. It would make him rich again. It would restore his besmirched name. Best of all, it would also **DEAL WITH THAT BRAT, JAMIE MCFLAIR.**