

“BOYS AND GIRLS,” a voice suddenly boomed through the speakers. “PLEASE COME TO THE DANCE FLOOR. WE HAVE AN IMPORTANT VISITOR.”



I looked around. Everyone was running to the dance floor excitedly, spilling fruit juice as they went.

“Emmy? Tabby? What’s going on?”

I whispered into the headset.

I heard Tabby gasp. “Ash, we’re too late. It’s the mayor – he’s here!”

4

MANIAC MAYOR

I had seen the mayor before: he was a short, bald man. But the man on the stage looked ... different. He was wearing a big, black pyramid-shaped helmet that covered his face, black metal gloves and a long, black robe that dragged along the floor behind him.

“What a great costume!” said a girl behind me. “He looks just like an alien invader.”

The mayor stepped up to the microphone.

“Greetings, children of Finney Island,” he boomed.

“I have something important to show you!”

A teacher stepped up beside him, carrying a large, black box. Emmy gasped.

“That must be the machine! Tabby, quick – pull the fire alarm!”

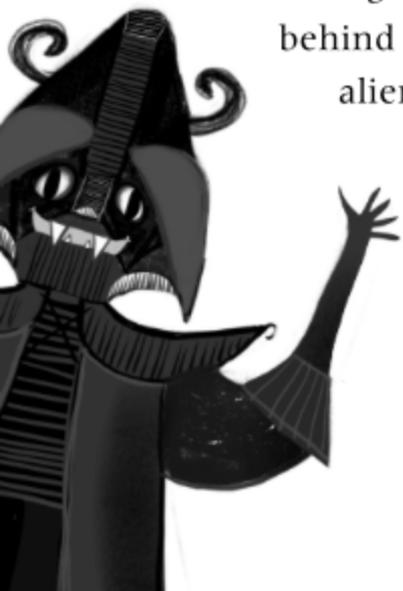
Tabby was already at the wall, pulling the alarm handle down ... but nothing happened.

“It’s been disconnected!” she cried. “Ash, you have to find a way to stop him!”

My heart pounded. There was no time to think. I only had seconds to get the attention of everyone in the room before the mayor opened that box!

Quick as a flash, I ran over to the food table, grabbed every slice of pizza I could find, and charged to the centre of the dance floor.

“EVERYONE, LOOK AT ME!” I bellowed. “I’M THE PIZZA MONSTER!”



I stuck the pizza slices all over my face, body, arms and legs, and waved my arms above my head. Then I started breakdancing, squashing cheese and tomato sauce all over the floor. It was working! No one was looking at the mayor anymore. They were all staring at me instead – in stunned amazement.

The mayor cleared his throat, opened the black box ... and lifted out a small, silver trophy.

“How odd,” he said. “I just wanted to give this trophy to the winner of the costume competition.”

I stopped dancing. The entire room stared at me in silence. A pizza slice slid off my face and hit the floor with a squelch. I had never been so embarrassed in my life.



BAM!

The door to the sports hall slammed open. Standing there was an angry-looking teacher in his socks.

“THAT DJ IS A FAKE!” he shouted, pointing at Emmy. “She pushed me in the broom cupboard and stole my costume.”

Everyone turned to Emmy. Quick as a flash, she pulled the head off her costume and grabbed the microphone from the mayor.

“This mayor is a fake, too! He’s really an alien invader trying to take over Finney Island. He’s turned all your teachers and parents into mindless robots, and he’s going to do the same to you! We have to stop him!”

All the children just stared at the stage in silence, their eyes wide and their mouths hanging open. The mayor looked at Emmy ... and laughed.