

TWIG AND TURTLE

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Quiet Please!



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Illustrated by Paula Franco

Quiet Please!

READ MORE ADVENTURES ABOUT TWIG AND TURTLE!

1: Big Move to a Tiny House

2: Toy Store Trouble

4: Make New Friends, But Keep the Old



Jennifer Richard Jacobson

Illustrated by Paula Franco

For Dian, Laya, and Kerry



CHAPTER 1

PIXEL+INK

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SMACK!

I look up from my book for the umpteenth time. “Turtle, can’t you go somewhere else and do that?” I ask. I’m sitting on the couch and she’s right beside me, chomping on a giant wad of gum and practicing blowing bubbles.

“I can’t!” she says. “Mom won’t let me chew gum in the loft.”

True. The last time Turtle chewed gum in our loft, it stuck our sleeping bags together.

“Then at least sit on a stool,” I say.

The stools are not much farther away from me. My family lives in a tiny house, which basically means one big room with two lofts overhead. The only room in the house that has a door is the bathroom.



Turtle gets up and takes the five steps to the stools. She slides up on one and resumes her practicing.

SMACK!

It is so annoying. All mouth noises are annoying. The only time I can stand mouth noises is when I’m eating too. Then I don’t notice them.

BAM!

That’s Dad jumping down from my parents’ loft. “I have to lose weight,” he says as he slides next to me on the couch.

“I have to keep reading,” I tell him.



“What are you reading now?” he asks, probably just to get me riled.

I place my finger on the page so I won’t lose my place and show him the cover: *Mystery of the Haunted Barn*.

“That looks scary!”

he says. “Is it?”

“Not really,” I tell him.

“But this series is easy to read, so I can keep up my stamina!” Our school is having a read-a-thon. The class that reads the most hours gets to go bowling right in the middle of a school day!

And my class is counting on me. As my friend David said, “Twig McKay”—that’s me—“is the most voracious reader I know.” I suppose that might be true. I do gobble up books.

“How many hours have you read?” Turtle asks, pulling the gum mass out of her mouth and leaving it on the counter.



“Seventy-three,” I say. “And there’s only one week left.”

I turn back to the story. I’m reading about some kids who hear a ghost going, “*Whooooo.*” Why do ghosts always make that sound in books? Ghosts can talk, right? Why don’t they say something like “I’m warning you to leave now or I’ll grab you with my ghostly fingers!” That would be sooooo much scarier.

Dad reaches for the TV remote. Turtle immediately jumps down and says, “Let’s do *Dance Like a Flamingo!*”

“Not now,” I say. “I’m trying to read!”

“You can go up to the loft,” Turtle says.

Dad looks at me. “I’d move the TV if I could.”

“But I can still hear you!”

“You can wear the headphones up there,” Dad

says, reaching for our only pair.

“But I can still feel the jumping.” (The whole house actually wobbles. It’s not easy to concentrate when you’re bouncing.)

“Go to the studio,” Turtle says.

My parents have a studio next door in the back of Sudsy’s Laundromat. Mom is there now. She’s a photographer and even though it’s Sunday, she has a deadline. (That means she has to send very artsy photos by the end of the day.) When Mom or Dad have deadlines, no one else is allowed in the studio. I remind Turtle of that. And the fact that it’s too cold to sit in one place outside—or in the car—and read.

“Can’t you guys dance later?” I ask.

“But you’re *always* reading!” Turtle says.

I guess she’s right. Normally, I read a lot. This past week, I’ve been reading every single minute I can.

I huff and get up from my seat. I grab a pillow and take it with me into the bathroom. At least I can get some peace and quiet in there. I’ll probably still feel the bouncing, but I won’t worry that it will cause me to come crashing down seven feet.

I pull the pocket door shut and look for a place to sit. It’s not easy. My friend Angela’s house has three bathrooms and they’re all ginormous! In her parents’ bathroom, there’s a tub and a shower—and they’re separate from one another! I could lie down in the middle of her guest bathroom with my arms and legs flapping like a snow angel and not touch anything.

Our bathroom is tiny just like the rest of the house. I can sit on the toilet and brush my teeth over the sink. We have a combination tub and shower, but the tub isn’t a normal size. It’s square, and I need to pull my knees into my chest to take a bath.

But it might work for reading.

I place the pillow at one end, step into the tub,
and pull the curtain shut to make a cool reading fort.



Then I place my feet up the opposite wall.

I can still hear faint music, but it's sort of like
reading at the beach, where you can hear noise, but

it doesn't interrupt your reading.

Back to the story:

Whooooooo!

*Diego and Amira race into the old barn and
slide the door shut.*

The ghostly sound follows them.

It gets louder . . .

And louder . . .

I stop reading.

I hear a sound. It's coming closer. Is it a ghost? A
hand reaches behind the curtain and . . . turns on the
shower! *ACK!!!*

"Mom!" I yell. "What are you doing?!"

"What are you doing in the shower?" Mom asks,
handing me a towel to dry off my head and face.