

# Randy in My Pocket

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# Chapter One

## The Purple Box

**I SAW A PRIZE** inside the cereal box while I was eating breakfast. So I did the only logical thing!

I turned the box upside down and shook it. Cereal flew all over the room! It was magical!

"Harry, what on earth are you doing?" Mom asked as she rushed into the room.

"I'm looking for the prize."

And there it was! A little purple box.

"Look, the prize!" I held it up.

"You'd better clean this mess up right now!" Mom was not happy. She didn't care anything about the prize!

And I've learned that you don't mess with mom when she's mad. So I grabbed the broom and cleaned it up as best I could.

Of course later I saw mom cleaning because of course, she thinks kids never get it completely right.

After she left the room, I opened the little box!

It was filled with fluffy purple paper. And then ... a little man.

"Don't be afraid!" he said quickly as he popped up out of the box.

"Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Randy and I'm from Conectivian."

"From where?"

"It's a planet or two away from yours - a little further down the galaxy!"

"You mean like Mars?"

"I'm not familiar with Mars ..."

"What are you doing here?" I asked.

"I'm a prize in a cereal box!"

"Yeah, I get that. But how did that happen?"

## Randy in My Pocket

And how come you're so small?"

"We're all about this size on my planet."

"Okay ... so tell me, do I get to keep you?"

"Keep? Are you asking me to stay? My answer is that I will stay as long as it works out for both of us."

With that, he flew around the room and then landed on my shoulder.

"So you can fly?"

"Oh, it's not flying. The gravity is just different here. It would be different for you too if you were on Conectivian."

"Would I be able to fly?"

"I don't know, maybe ..."

"So what are you doing here?"

"Sampling ..."

"What do mean? Sampling?"

"I'm checking out your planet to see if it's suitable for me to stay here or even to visit here. My people are getting tired of Conectivian. So we're looking to see what else is out there. Wondering if we could coexist peacefully here on your planet or if we'd have to come down and take over."

"Take over? No!"

"Well, then maybe that wouldn't be necessary. So I'll continue my sampling. Where is your leader?"

"Oh, that would be my mother," I answered with a smile. Just then she walked into the room.

"Who are you talking to?" Mom asked.

"The prize from the cereal box," I answered without even a hint of a smile.

"And what is the prize?"

"A man from Mars ..."

"Oh, some kind of action figure?"

"Yeah, something like that ..." I didn't really feel like explaining it.

So I laid my head down into my arms on the table and continued to talk to the little purple man.

## Randy in My Pocket

"You're small enough, you could fit in my pocket," I said as soon as mom was out of the room.

"Well, I suppose I could. That might help my sampling." And with that he popped into my pants pocket.

"Stop! Stop! That tickles," I said.

"Okay, I'll try not to move around so much. But your pocket would hide me from others and would keep me safe."

Soon it was all quiet and almost like he was gone. But, of course, there was a small lump in my pocket.

And at that moment, I realized I might be late for school. I had missed the bus and mom was rushing to leave so she wouldn't be late for work. She didn't really have time to drop me off!

"No problem!" Randy smiled.

As we stood in the driveway, suddenly a strong wind came up and circled around me, lifting me up in the air.

Safely tucked inside this puff of air (almost like a cloud) I was blown over to the school and was dropped down near the playground.

The children below were all looking up in the air as I arrived - with their mouths wide open.

"How did you do that?" Colin asked.

"Um, magic, I guess ..." I shrugged my shoulders and tried to hide inside the crowd of kids. But it was almost impossible.

Everybody was talking about it and asking me questions.

I was even called up to the principal's office.

Mrs. Chow, the principal, asked me a lot of questions, most of which I answered with "I don't know." I just told her that I was afraid I was going to be late for school and I wished that something would happen so I wouldn't be late.

"So you really don't know?" She had a very puzzled look on her face.

"Well, this wind came up and off I went! I guess I just wished it to happen."

"I'm just glad you were not hurt!" she said, finally sitting down in her chair.

She had the nurse check me out and then I was sent to class.

"I really don't want to ride the school bus today," I told Randy later that day. "Too many kids asking questions. Can we go home in that cloud thing?"

## Randy in My Pocket

"Sure," Randy smiled, as the puff of air came up again all around us and we sailed through the air.

Soon we were out of sight and then back home again!

# Chapter Two

## Snakes in the Lunchroom

**It was a cold day** as I walked to school the next day after having missed the bus again. And Randy couldn't help me. He said the cloud thing doesn't work if it's too cold outside.

I was an hour late and tried to act like nothing had happened as I put my stuff away.

"Why are you so late this morning?" Mrs. Jackson, my teacher asked.

"I missed the bus. I ran after it, but the driver didn't stop and so I had to walk."

"Not a good excuse," she replied. "You need to get to school on time!"

As we lined up for lunch there was a lot of noise out in the hallway!

We noticed kids running like crazy down the hall with their teachers running right after them!

Colin, out of breath, just came into our room. He was back from the bathroom.

"What is going on?" Mrs. Jackson asked.

"There are snakes in the lunchroom!" Colin replied.

"Snakes? What do you mean snakes? Did you see them?"

"No. Alison from Mrs. Williams' class told me about them as she ran past. She told me I'd better get out of the school fast. I decided to come back to class first."

Mrs. Jackson looked cautiously out into the hallway. It was now clear of kids and she didn't see any snakes.

"Everybody wait here," she told us. "I'll be right back."

Then we heard a loud thump as Mrs. Jackson ran back in through the doorway and into our class.

"We need to get out of here fast!" She said gasping for air. Her hands were moving like a police officer directing traffic as she motioned for students to run to the outside door.

I snuck past her, though, and headed the opposite direction down the hall to the lunchroom.

## Randy in My Pocket

"Stop! Stop!" Mrs. Jackson called after me. "Are you crazy?" But I just kept going.

As I looked into the lunchroom, there were the snakes, but these weren't ordinary snakes.

That's when Randy popped his head out to warn me.

"Be very careful," he said.

They were huge snakes swirling around the room with large puffy eyes and flames of fire shooting out of their mouths.

"We'd better leave!" I whispered to Randy.

But Randy didn't seem concerned. "Oh, you'll be all right. Don't worry," he said. "Just don't get too close to the fire!"

"Where did they come from?"

"It's part of the sampling," Randy replied. "They're from my planet. Looks like they followed me here."

"How do we get rid of them?"

"They'll go away eventually," he sighed, "when they get bored."

"I hope our school doesn't burn down in the meantime!" I said, seeing the smoke and the fire coming from their nostrils.

I decided it was best to leave.

When I got back to class, I took Randy out and put him into my desk.

"I want to go back again and see the snakes."

"Very well," Randy answered, as he layed across a bunch of papers in my desk.

"How do you get rid of those snakes anyway?" I asked Randy.

He was deep in thought.

"Water," he finally answered. If there's water, they'll leave immediately. Fire and water don't mix!"

As I was outside, holding a hose, trying to turn on the water, Mrs. Jackson saw me.

"Harry, stop! What do you think you're doing?"

"Watering the snakes," I answered.

"Yeah, right" she mumbled. She pointed to the playground. "Set it down and go!"

## Randy in My Pocket

I had the water on full blast as I opened the door and hit the snakes with a huge blast of water! They immediately flew out the door and high into the sky.

"Problem solved!" I told Randy, as I returned to the classroom.

"Harry!" It was Mrs. Jackson. She had a stern look on her face.

"How did you know that water would get rid of the snakes?"

I just shrugged my shoulders.

Soon it was back to a normal day ... except and until the principal called and wanted me back in her office again!

As I sat in a padded chair near her desk, she smiled, and asked if I knew where the snakes came from.

"Probably from outside," I answered.

"And where from outside?" she asked.

"I think they came from Mars!" I replied.

"Sure! Very funny, young man!"

"And how did you know that water would get rid of them?"

"Water and fire don't mix," I answered.

Her fingers were tapping away on a computer keyboard. She finally sent me back to class, but she had a very puzzled look on her face.

"Strange things are happening," she said as I left the room.



# Chapter Three

## The Substitute Teacher

**On Friday,** Mrs. Jackson was gone!

We had Ms. Dinglebopper.

We wanted to call her Ms. D, but she said no. We had to try to say her name. If we couldn't say it after trying three times, then it was okay to just call her Ms. Bopper.

She had pink and purple hair. Her fingernails were also pink and purple. And she was, of course, wearing a pink top and purple pants.

At first we thought she was really nice. But then during math, she couldn't explain the problems, so we had to do them on our own from the workbook.

"Just do the best you can," she said. She handed out a word search puzzle to those who were totally lost.

When almost the whole class was doing the word search puzzle, she stopped and tried to explain the math again, but it only got us more confused.

Randy, in the meantime, decided to have some fun.

As she was talking, a whiteboard eraser flew around the room.

Ms. Dinglebopper tried to grab it, but it got away. Then she tried to swat it with her hand as it flew by.

We were all laughing now, but Ms. Dinglebopper didn't think it was very funny at all!

It finally bounced up and landed on the top of her head and just stayed there.

She tried and tried to pull it off, but it wouldn't come off.

And then as we were all lined up to go out to recess, all of the balls flew out of the ball basket and stuck to Ms. Dinglebopper! She tried and tried to pull them off, but they wouldn't come off!

And of course we were trying to pull them off too! We didn't want to go out to recess without our playground balls!

Finally Randy let them fall to the ground.

## Randy in My Pocket

"Ohhh," Ms. Dinglebopper slumped in the doorway. "What is happening today?" she sighed, then dropped into her chair.

When we came back in, Ms. Dinglebopper was still sitting at the teacher's desk trying to pull that eraser off her head!

Randy finally let it fall to the ground.

Soon Mr. Johnson came in to teach us an art lesson. That's when things got really weird!

A strong wind blew into our classroom even though all the windows and the door to the room were closed. The wind picked up Ms. Dinglebopper and dropped her into Mr. Johnson's lap as he was sitting in the front of the room. He tried to pull her off and she tried to get off, but they were stuck!

"Let her go," I whispered to Randy.

As soon as she was free, she ran to the other side of the classroom and stayed there while Mr. Johnson taught the class.

He had brought different colored paints with him. Also paint brushes and we had paper on the table in the front of the room.

As he quietly explained how to do the art project, Ms. Dinglebopper pulled up a chair and watched from the back of the room.

"See, with the blue paint you can paint the sky," he said, pushing the blue paint across his paper with the brush.

But suddenly the brush got away and flew across the room and the blue paint jar did too!

"Wait!" He reached out to grab it, but it was gone!

And with that, the brush started painting Ms. Dinglebopper!

Mr. Johnson's mouth dropped open. He didn't know what to do.

And we just stared at Ms. Dinglebopper trying to get away from the paint brush!

Mr. Johnson then opened the red paint container and the same thing happened!

Then he opened the green and yellow paints.

I thought he would stop, but he didn't!

And one after another they flew across the room and painted Ms. Dinglebopper, who could only swat at them with her hands, but it didn't do any good!

Mr. Johnson tried to pull the brushes away, but it was no use! "I'm sorry! I'm so so terribly sorry!"

## Randy in My Pocket

Finally Randy caused the paint containers to fly back into Mr. Johnson's box along with a half dozen paint brushes that had been painting Ms. Dinglebopper!

"That was a very bad thing you did," I whispered to Randy, but he just smiled and winked.

Mr. Johnson next grabbed a book from our classroom library, sat down, and read it to us, to fill the rest of the time.

Then he left.

Ms. Dinglebopper was now pink, purple, green, red, yellow, and blue! Quite a mess!

She went to the sink to try to get the paint off, but it wouldn't come off!

And then taught the science lesson, even though she looked like a science experiment herself!

"Randy!" I said in a stern voice. "That wasn't very nice!"

Randy didn't say a thing. He just hid in my pocket.

Ms. Dinglebopper heard me and walked over.

"Who are you talking to?"

"Talking?" I replied.

"Where is this Randy?" she asked, looking around the room.

"He's in my pocket."

"Would you please take him out!"

I reached in to get Randy, but he was gone.

"There is no Randy," I finally said.

Later out in the hall with Randy back in my pocket, I asked him, "Why did you leave?"

"You must never do that again!" he said in a very angry voice.

"Why?"

"You could land us both in big trouble! My sampling would end, and I don't know what this lady would do with me or with you!"

It was now just about time to go home. Mrs. Chow, the principal happened to look into our classroom and her mouth dropped open when she saw Ms. Dinglebopper.

"What happened to you?" she asked.

"Mr. Johnson's art lesson happened," Ms. Dinglebopper calmly replied.

## Randy in My Pocket

"And he was painting you?"

"No, it was some kind of magic trick. He brought magic brushes that were then suddenly painting. We couldn't get them to stop!"

"Really?" she looked at the kids in our class. "Is that what happened?"

"Yes, it was magic," Judy replied. We all nodded and laughed nervously.

"I'll have to talk to Mr. Johnson about this," Mrs. Chow said, as she left the room.

Then we saw Mrs. Jackson in the doorway. She had come back from her workshop early.

And her mouth was now open.

"What on earth! How did this happen?"

"This class," Ms. Dinglebopper said, "This class happened!"

"They were that bad?"

"Yes," Ms. Dinglebopper answered.

"Tell me more!" she demanded, with a very angry look on her face.

"Trouble all day," Ms. Dinglebopper replied.

"They were that bad?"

Ms. Dinglebopper nodded.

"Class, I think you owe Ms. Dinglebopper an apology."

"Now please tell her you're very very sorry."

"Sorry, Ms. Dinglebopper!" we said with our heads bowed and looking down at the floor.

But Ms. Dinglebopper flipped her hair back and hurried out of the room!

"Never again!" she called back to us.

We watched out the window as her car flew down the street. I think Randy might have helped it fly! But he later told me that he didn't.

"I actually thought she was a very nice lady," Colin told me as we waited for the bell to ring so we could go home, "until she got painted."

# Chapter Four

## Snakes in the Library

**On Tuesday morning** I put my backpack away and took out my books and sat at my desk, doing my morning work while Mrs. Jackson wrote instructions for the day on the white board.

She asked us to put our books in the book basket, then had Anastasia and Jake take them to the library.

It was library day!

At 10 a.m. it was time to go to the library. She nodded to Annabelle, who was the line leader, to take us there.

Halfway down the hall, though, we saw Mrs. Berry, the librarian. Her hair stood straight up in the air! Her eyes were big as watermelons! And her voice was loud and crackly!

I had never seen her like that before! She was usually soft and gentle with a quiet voice.

"There are snakes in the library!" she bellowed. "Run, get out of the building!" Her hands flapped as she spoke.

We flew out of the exit doors and Mrs. Jackson was huffing and puffing right behind us, trying to keep up!

She looked back to see that I was just standing there, looking into the library. I hadn't moved.

"Hurry Harry, we have to get out of here!" She motioned for me to come.

But I didn't move.

As I looked in, there was a big fire in the middle of the room. Shelves were knocked over! And the snakes moved about with flames shooting from their mouths!

"How do we stop this?" I asked Randy. "This whole building is going to go up in flames if we don't do something soon!"

"Watch and see," Randy whispered.

Coming in from nowhere came a big black storm cloud. There was a loud crack of thunder. Then a lightning bolt flashed and struck one of the tables, splitting it in two!

## Randy in My Pocket

And then it was raining!

The snakes looked confused as they turned about and bumped into each other and then flew out the exit doors - going high into the sky!

The whole time Mrs. Berry was frozen in the hallway door frame, her mouth wide open.

"This place is a total disaster!" She began to cry.

I hurried down the hall to our classroom, just as everyone was coming back in from outside to our class.

At lunch I sat with Colin. He kept asking me questions about the library.

"What did the snakes look like? How many were there? How did they make the fire come out of their mouths? Were they like dragons?"

"They were the same ones we saw in the lunchroom the other day, with large puffy eyes and flames shooting from their mouths!" I replied.

"What were you doing in the library? Everyone else was outside?"

"Just watching, trying to help," I answered.

"How would you be able to help?" Colin asked.

"Randy," I answered.

"Oh, yeah, Randy, I forgot about him!"

Colin met Randy when he came to my house last week to play.

Just then there was an announcement over the PA system.

"Harry Anderson, please come to the office!"

"Sounds like you're in big trouble!" Colin called after me.

Mrs. Ostin, the school secretary, quickly escorted me into the principal's office.

"Harry Anderson, what a surprise to see you back in my office again," Mrs. Chow said.

"This is Officer Jensen." She pointed to a tall police officer seated nearby. "He wants to know more about the snakes."

"What can you tell me about the snakes?" he asked, towering over me. He had a loud husky voice.

"They were big with puffy eyes and were shooting fire from their mouths!"

## Randy in My Pocket

"Yes, we know that. Do you know where they came from and why they were in the library?"

"I think they came from Mars and they were sampling," I answered.

He rolled his eyes.

"What?"

"You know, they were trying to get information."

"I see," the officer said with his hand on his chin.

"Can you tell me how you got rid of them?"

"Well, it wasn't me. A storm cloud appeared and there was thunder and lightning ..."

"In the library?"

"Yeah, and it started to rain and they left."

Mrs. Chow and the officer looked at each other.

"Okay, very well," the officer said.

"You're free to go back to class," Mrs. Chow said softly.

Colin followed me around the rest of the day, peppering me with questions.

When I got home, mom asked if I had a good day at school and if anything fun or exciting had happened.

"No, nothing," I replied. "Just some snakes!"

"Snakes?" Mom looked confused.

"Yeah, in the library," I answered.

"You mean a book about snakes?"

"No, they were actual snakes," I replied.

"What were they doing in the library?"

I shrugged my shoulders.

"So how did they get rid of them?"

"Well, it started to rain and then they left."

"In the library?" Mom said, sitting down. "And you imagined all of this?"

## Randy in My Pocket

"No, no, it was real. Wasn't it Colin?"

"Yup. Call the school and you'll find out!" Colin replied.

Dad turned on the tv. It was on the news! And there was Mrs. Chow and the police officer telling about the snakes. And then the reporter asked Mrs. Berry how this all happened.

"Well, we don't really know. These snakes came in and caused all this damage. It took a rain storm to get them out. And now the library is a total disaster!"

I left to go over to Colin's place to play.

Colin was in the backyard bouncing a basketball and shooting hoops when I came.

"So your mom didn't believe you?" he asked.

"Oh, she never does. She still doesn't think Randy exists, even when I tried to show her to Randy. The problem is that Randy goes invisible when he doesn't want to be seen."

"And the principal. What did she say?"

"Not much," I answered. "I told her I didn't make the snakes disappear. Randy did it. And she didn't believe me about Randy either."

"She probably thought you were crazy!"

On Wednesday it was a pretty normal day at school. So when I got home, mom asked again how things went at school.

"It was fine," I answered.

"No snakes at school today?"

"Nope."

Then Randy and I went off to bed.



# Chapter Five

## Snakes in the Bathroom

**On Monday**, you wouldn't believe it, but the snakes were back!

"They're in the boy's bathroom," Colin announced. He had just come back to class and had to use the girl's bathroom because he couldn't get into the boys' bathroom because of the snakes!

Randy suggested we just let the school handle the situation this time, but I had to have a look.

As I opened the door, there they were! I almost let them out into the hallway, but I quickly closed the bathroom door.

Mr. Grover, the janitor, rushed down the hall with a key in his hand to lock the door and put up a warning sign.

"So how do get snakes out of the bathroom?" I asked Randy.

"With water, of course," he answered.

"But how?"

"Oh, I don't know. We can arrange something. There's plenty of water in the bathroom!"

Don't you have water in the bathroom?"

"Yes, but how do you spray it on the snakes?"

"How about water balloons?" I asked.

"Yes, I suppose that would work."

I got Colin and some friends together in the hall after lunch and we started filling up water balloons. Yup the water balloons that Mrs. Jackson was going to use for a game on the last day of school. I found them in the closet behind her desk.

As I opened the door to the bathroom, one of the snakes was right there breathing out his fire! Almost caught my hair on fire!

I threw one of the water balloons right into his mouth! Boom! It exploded and the snake scampered off toward the other end of the bathroom.

## Randy in My Pocket

Then, boom! Colin hit another snake.

We kept doing this until all the water balloons were gone.

We didn't see anymore fire, but the snakes were still there.

I ran to the outside door to open it, but it was locked! I signaled to Mr. Grover, who had just come outside, to open the door.

Once unlocked the outside door, the snakes flew off into the sky.

Kids ran every direction screaming when they saw the snakes and the snakes seemed to enjoy it!

I grabbed the outside hose and turned it on full blast.

At last the snakes were gone!

"Are we going to continue to have problems with the snakes the rest of the school year?" I asked Randy.

"I'm afraid so," he replied. "They won't go away unless I go away."

"What do they want?"

"They want to see what I'm doing. It's all part of the sampling. I'm afraid they're really quite a nuisance!"

# Chapter Six

## Snakes In My Bedroom!

**Randy can be extremely** helpful when it comes to homework. We breezed through my math assignment in less than 4 minutes!

He even showed me how to speed read and I finished the chapter book in about 15 minutes!

Homework was all done in less than half an hour. But mom didn't believe it! She had to check everything and then quiz me on the chapter book.

"How did you get done so fast?" She finally asked me.

"Oh, with help from Randy," I replied.

"You still have this imaginary Randy," mom sighed.

She doesn't believe in Randy. And Randy hasn't allowed me to show him to mom!

"You know, strange things are going on," mom finally said. She put my book down and then left the room.

It was starting to get late, so I headed for my bedroom.

When I tried to open the door, the doorknob was hot. That was my first clue that something wasn't right.

Then when I turned the knob, the door suddenly flew open!

Wouldn't you know it? Inside were the three snakes and Randy didn't even act surprised.

"Why are they in my bedroom?" I asked him.

"Oh, they're here to take me back to Conectivian. We're done sampling. We have to report," Randy answered.

Randy saw the water guns in my closet.

"Grab both of these," he said, "and fill them with water."

"These will keep the snakes back," he said.

## Randy in My Pocket

So we sprayed water into the air over by the snakes. Randy had the little water gun and I had the big one.

"Now get over there into the corner!" He commanded the snakes. All three snakes moved over into the corner by my bed.

One of them, though, let out a flame of fire and it started my bed on fire! I quickly rushed over and put it out.

There was a gray mist forming on the ceiling and suddenly a window opened.

"What's that?" I asked Randy.

"Oh, it's my portal. Time to go back to Conectivian and report."

One of the snakes opened his mouth and to my surprise, Randy climbed in.

"What are you doing?"

"Accepting my ride back to Conectivian," he answered.

"Will I see you again?"

"Maybe ..."

Then the snake snapped his mouth shut and all three snakes flew up to the ceiling and through the window portal and were gone.

The window closed and the mist went away and things returned back to normal, or so it seemed.

Just then there was a knock on the door. It was mom.

"What's that smell? Is the house on fire?"

"No, it's just my bed." I replied.

Mom rushed over and pulled the burned blankets and sheets off the bed.

"How on earth did this happen?"

"Well," I began, "it's a long story."

Mom sat in a chair. "I've got time."

"Well, the snakes followed Randy home. When I went in to go to bed, the snakes were in here."

"They were breathing fire from their mouths."

Mom rolled her eyes. "Yes, of course," she replied.

## Randy in My Pocket

Then she quickly stood up.

"Where are the matches?"

"I don't have any," I replied.

"Harry, you're grounded," she said, slamming the door behind her.

I laid in bed trying to sleep, but it was hard.

My mind was on Randy, the snakes, and would I ever see Randy again?

Just then, the mist returned to the ceiling and the window opened up again.

It was Randy.

"I forgot something." He grabbed the small water gun.

"I think I'll need this for the snakes. I'll borrow it if it's okay."

"Sure," I said.

And the window closed again and the mist was gone.