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Opening extract from
Utterly Me, Clarice Bean

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Published by
**Orchard Books an imprint of
Hachette Children's Books**

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Friday

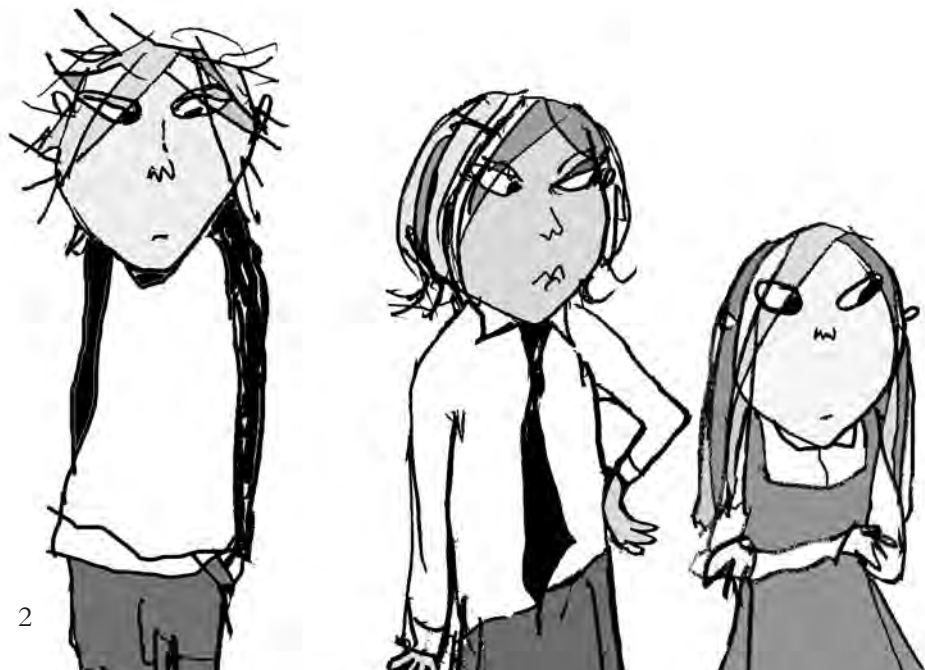
This is me, Clarice Bean.

I am not an only child, but I sometimes wish I was.

My family is six people, which is sometimes too many.

Not always, just sometimes.

Mainly my dad is mostly in an office answering the phone and going, “I can’t talk now, I’m up to my ears in it.”



Mum is always gribbling about pants on the floor and shoes on the sofa.

She says, “This house doesn’t clean itself you know.

Who do you think does everything around here?

Mr Nobody?

I don’t get paid to pick up your smelly socks! If I did I’d be a rich woman.” etc etc non-non-stop.

I am the third oldest and I think it would have been a good idea if I was the youngest too.

I am not quite sure why my mum and dad wanted to have more children after me.

They don’t need another one and it’s a shame because he is spoiling it for everyone else.

He is called Minal Cricket and he tends to be utterly a **nuisance**.

He is non-stop whining and causing other people to get themselves in trouble.





You might think
it would be a
relief to come to school,
but if you do,
then obviously you don't know
some of the people in my class.
Naming no names,
i.e. Grace Grapello,
what a show-off.

Sometimes I stare boredly into space,
thinking utterly of
nothing.

This makes Mrs Wilberton very irritated.

I get on her nerves.

I know this because she is always telling me I do.
To be honest, Mrs Wilberton is not my favourite
person on the planet of Earth.

Unfortunately, I am from Earth and she is my
teacher.

Mrs Wilberton says I have got utterly not a speck
of concentration.

I am trying to prove her wrong about this by
trying to remember to concentrate.

I think about it all the time. I am so desperately
trying not to not concentrate and I say to myself,
'Don't drift off like you did yesterday.'

And then I start thinking about how I drifted
off yesterday and how I was thinking I must
listen to Mrs Wilberton and all the things she
is telling me.

And then I am wondering,

*how does all this stuff she is telling me
fit into my head?*

And then I am wondering if I should have a clear out
of the stuff I don't need anymore –
you know,

like when my dad cleared out the attic,

except we all decided

we needed

everything

and he just had to put it all back again.

*But maybe valuable space is being taken up in
my head*

with not the important things and

that

is why

I can't

c o n c e n t r a t e

because all my concentration space

has been used up

on things like,

'Elbows off the table',

and,

'Don't pinch your brother',

and

pointless

not needed

things

which

don't matter.

“CLARICE BEAN!

Will
you

please

come

back

down

to

Earth

this instant!”

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It's Mrs Wilberton.

You
can
tell
by
her
honking
goose
voice.



She says,

“Clarice Bean,
you are **utterly** lacking in the
concentration department.

A common housefly  has got
more ability to **apply** itself!”

And I want to say,

“You are **utterly** lacking in the
manners department, Mrs Wilberton,
and a rhinoceros has got more
politeness than you.”