

Even Ghosts Want Friends





My name is Pip, and I am the most friendly ghost you will ever meet. I know what you think when you see me. Green skin. Fangs. Spooky dark forest. But I have been in this spot all day with my **biggest** grin, and not one person has stopped to say hello. That could be a forest problem. Or it could be a ghost problem.

It is a monster problem.
See those three? The
big furry one, the bony
one, and the pale one?
Scaring people is their
best thing. They hide,
they wait, and then
they jump out and roar.
People **scatter** and run.
The monsters love it. I
think it is rude.





I float up to the treetops to get away from all that roaring. And that is when I spot something stunning. Kids! Playing in a park! Running, yelling, having the **funnest** time. 'They are going to love me,' I say to myself. I put on my **biggest** smile and zoom right down.

'Hi, kids! I am Pip! Who wants to be best friends?' I bounce down the tree trunk, grinning my **biggest** grin. I think it is a grand hello. Jay, Kim, and Ben do not think it is a grand hello. They scream. They run. They do not even look back. Well, Ben looks back, which only makes him run faster.





'Wait! Come back! I am friendly! I will not do any haunting!' But they are gone. What a **bummer**. Even a little dog sprints away with them, legs spinning like wheels. I float there, all alone, watching the dust settle on the path. Dropping out of a tree and shouting at kids is not the best plan. What I need is a new look.

I follow them to the market and squeeze into a pile of coconuts. The perfect cover! But I am the only coconut with a face. Ben runs right past. Too green. Too odd. Time for Plan B. I puff up **bigger** and float into a bunch of balloons. Red ones, yellow ones, blue ones, and one very odd green one with a cheeky grin. Much better.





I drift over to the kids, bobbing along like any other balloon.

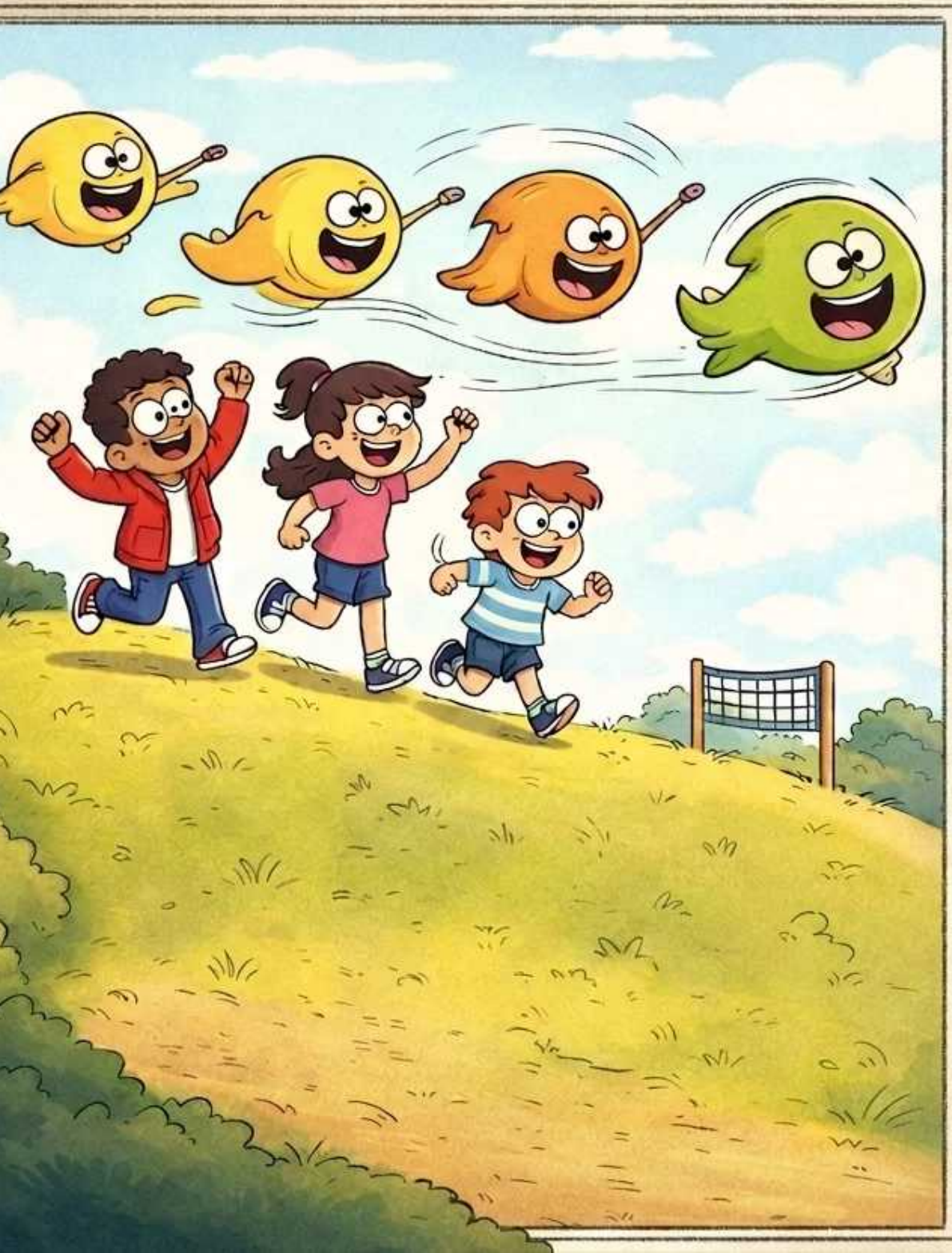
'Hi! Who wants to play? I am just a balloon! Balloons **chatter** all the time!' Jay, Kim, and Ben huddle together, squinting up at me. They do not run, but they do not smile. Then I hear the worst sound in the world.

Meow.



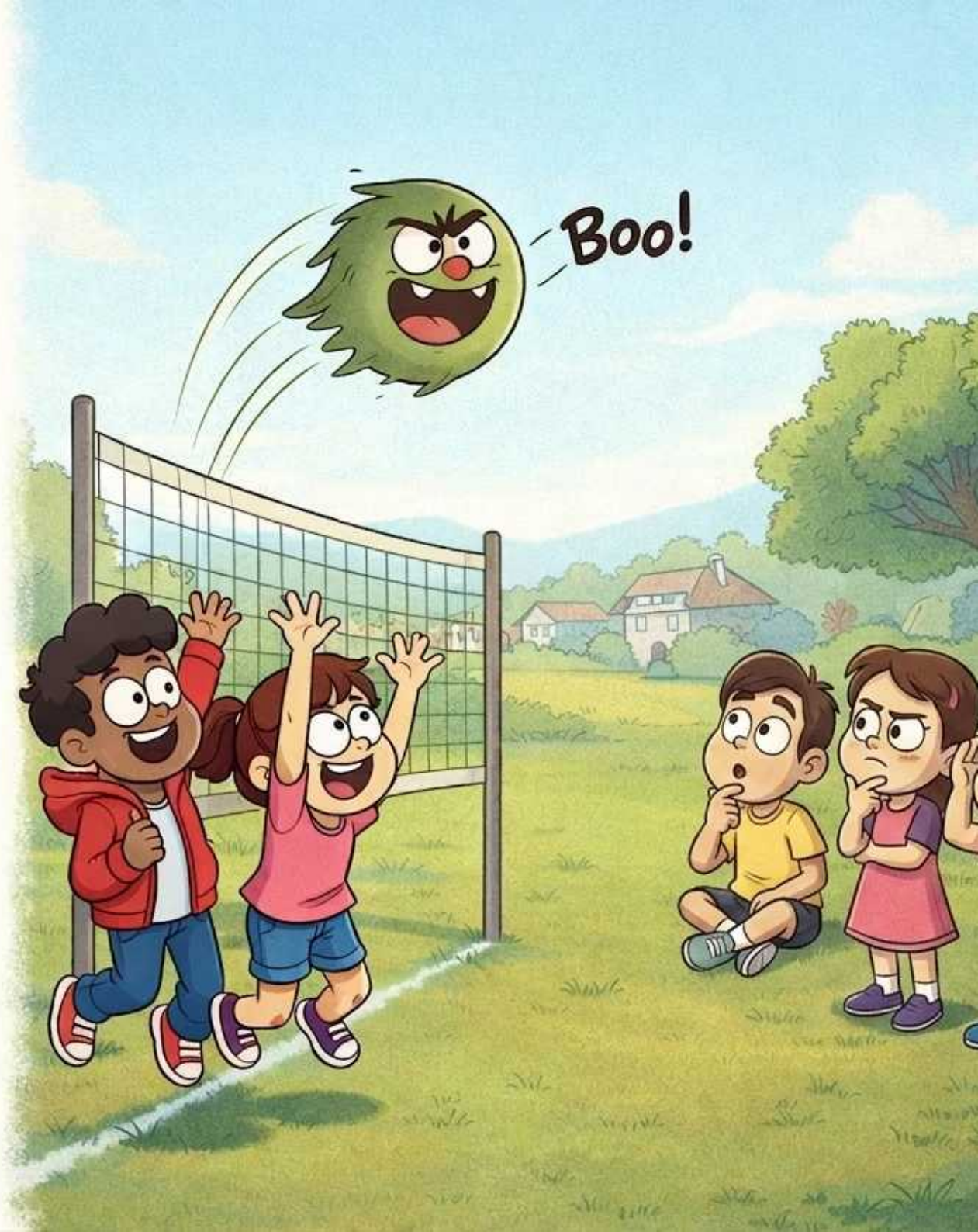
A cat! Leaping right at me with its claws out! I dodge left. I squish flat. I stretch long. The cat swipes and misses, swipes and misses, then flops on the grass. I pull the **funnest** face I can, and the cat just sits there, stumped. The kids crack up. 'Not scary at all!' Jay says, giggling. 'That is the **funnest** ghost ever! Come play with us!'





'Yes! Yes! Yes!' I whizz
around their heads. I puff
up big, then squeeze down
tiny. I turn pink, then gold,
then back to green,
because green is my best
shade. Jay is the best
grabber of the three, but I
am too fast. Then I see
where we are heading. A
volleyball net. And Jay, Kim,
and Ben have a very
sneaky look on their faces.

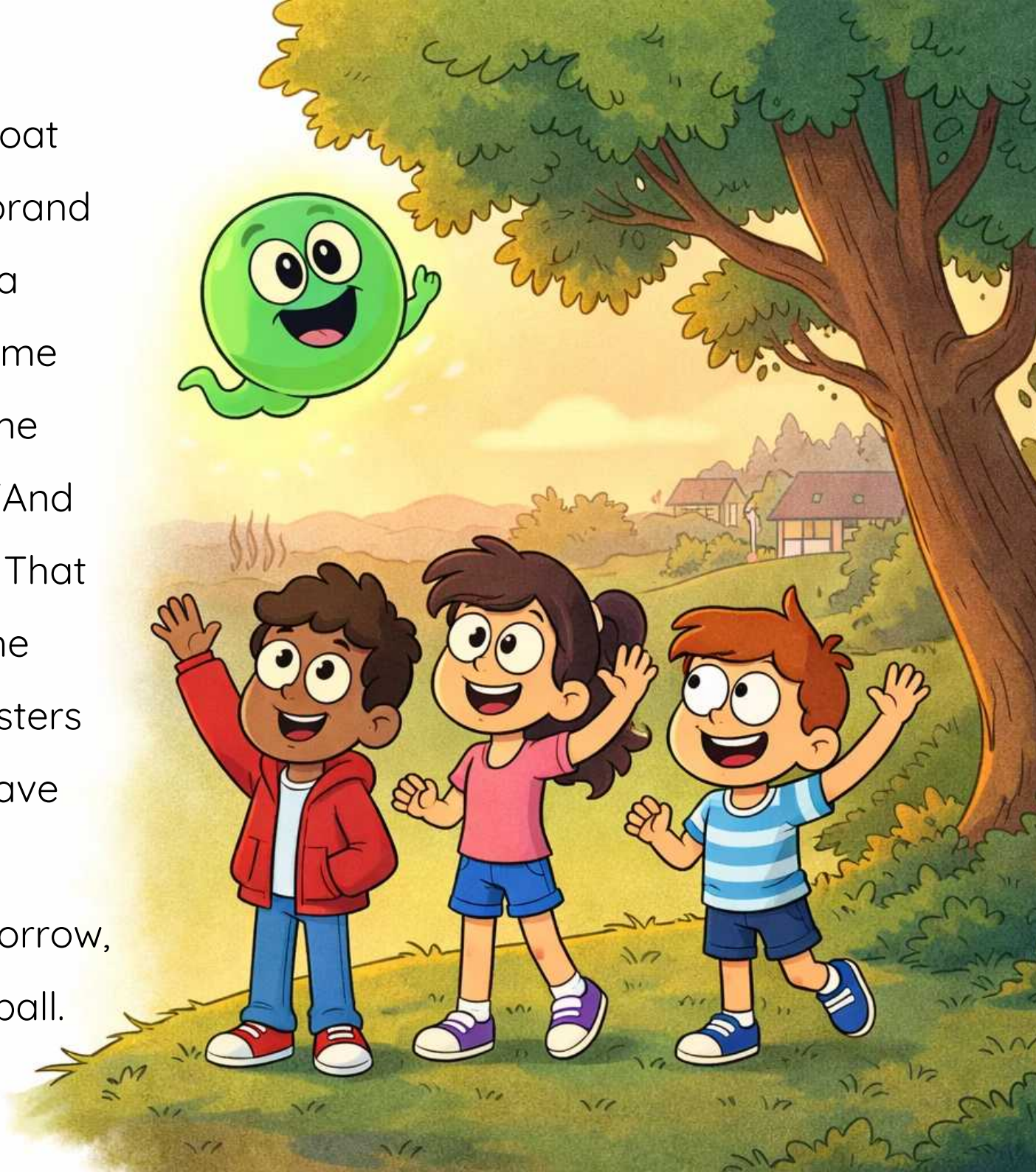
'Pip,' they say. 'Want to be the ball?' I puff up into a round shape and grin. 'I am ready!' The other team does not know a thing. Their best **hitter** stretches his arms and bounces on his toes. Jay tosses me up into the sky, and at the very top, I look down at the other team and yell, 'Boo!' They are so scared they all freeze. Every single one.



I am the best ball ever. They try to serve me. I bounce the wrong way. Their best **hitter** tries to hit me. I fly right past his hands! They try to spike me. I go flat and slide right under the net. 'That is not right!' the other team yells. My team just grins and high-fives. We are the winners.



As the sun goes down, I float up and look back at my brand new friends waving. What a **stunner** of a day! 'Same time tomorrow?' I call. 'Same time tomorrow!' they call back. 'And bring that coconut get-up! That was the worst!' I grin all the way home. The other monsters can keep their roaring. I have something better. I have a team. And tomorrow? Tomorrow, I am going to be the football.





Even Ghosts Want Friends

Pip has been waiting all day in the spooky forest for a friend, but every kid who sees a ghost just screams and runs. Even a coconut disguise doesn't fool anyone! Can Pip find a way to prove that a ghost can be the funnest playmate around? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 108: Doubling Rule -er, -est), this book practises words like 'bigger', 'funnest', 'bummer', 'chatter', 'winner'.

Phonics Focus: Doubling Rule -er/-est

bigger, biggest, bummer, chatter, funnest, grabber, hitter, scatter, stunner, winner

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