

# Glubbslyme

Jacqueline Wilson

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## **Contents**

Cover

About the Book

Title Page

Introduction

Chapter One

Chapter Two

Chapter Three

Chapter Four

Chapter Five

Chapter Six

Chapter Seven

Chapter Eight

Chapter Nine

Chapter Ten

Chapter Eleven

About the Author

Also by Jacqueline Wilson

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## About the Book

*'Glubbslyme. You're magic!'*

When Rebecca wades into the witch's pond after a row with her best friend Sarah, she meets a very unusual new friend – a huge, warty toad! And Glubbslyme is no ordinary toad. Hundreds of years old, he can talk and – best of all – he can work magic. Can he help Rebecca be best friends with Sarah again?

A light-hearted tale of friendship and magic from best-selling Jacqueline Wilson – now with a brand-new introduction from the author!

# Jacqueline Wilson



Cover illustrated by Nick Sharratt  
Illustrated by Jane Cope

*Glubbslyme* is a little bit different from most of my other books. It's a story about Rebecca and her amazing magical toad, Glubbslyme – but Rebecca herself doesn't tell the story. The illustrations inside aren't done by Nick Sharratt simply because I didn't know him long ago when I wrote the book. He's now given it this lovely new cover so that it matches all my other titles.

I'll tell you how I came up with the story. I used to take my daughter Emma for walks in Richmond Park, and near the Kingston entrance there is a place called the witches pond. We used to circle this pond every day and I'd make up stories about the witches who were tipped into the pond long ago. We made up a seventeenth century witch called Rebecca. She had a very bossy, opinionated pet toad called Glubbslyme who helped her with all her black magic spells.

They became such real characters that we wouldn't have been surprised if Glubbslyme had come leaping out of the water and sat on our welly boots. In my story Glubbslyme does exactly that – and Rebecca's life is never going to be the same again.

I had great fun wondering how a seventeenth century toad would react to modern inventions like cars, television – and toilets! I also loved making up Glubbslyme's magic spells. All the herbs and potions come from a real seventeenth century herbal book – but I don't really think they'd be magic. I wonder what *you'd* ask for if Glubbslyme granted you a magic wish.

*Jacqueline Wilson*



'MY DAD SAYS this is a witch's pond,' said Rebecca.

Sarah didn't say anything. Rebecca wasn't sure she was listening. She was too busy experimenting with Mandy's lipstick. She drew a shiny pink smile on her face. Mandy had a shiny pink smile too.



'Can I have a go with your lipstick, Mandy?' asked Rebecca.

'No, use your own,' said Mandy.

Rebecca didn't have any lipstick. She had only ever used red ice lollies or red Smarties, and the results weren't very successful. She longed to try Mandy's real lipstick.

'You let Sarah borrow it, so why won't you let me?' said Rebecca, although she knew why.

'Sarah's my best friend,' said Mandy, and her shiny pink smile stretched.

Rebecca had always thought *she* was Sarah's best friend. They went round together at playtimes and passed little

notes in lessons and got the giggles and told each other secrets. But that was at school. Now it was the holidays and Sarah seemed to want to spend most of her time with Mandy, just because they lived next door to each other.

Rebecca couldn't stand Mandy. Mandy didn't seem to think much of her either.

'Sarah's my best friend too,' said Rebecca. 'Sarah, did you hear, my Dad says this is a witch's pond.'

'What are you on about?' said Mandy. 'What are you, some sort of baby? Do you believe in big bad naughty witches then, little diddums?'

'No, of course I don't,' said Rebecca, going as pink as the lipstick. 'But there did used to be witches and my Dad says they used to duck them in this pond.'

'My Dad says. My Dad says. You don't half go on about your Dad. Who cares what your Dad says?' said Mandy.

Rebecca cared. She loved her Dad more than anyone in the whole world. She didn't have a Mum any more so Dad was especially important. She loved him even when he was cross because the shopping and the washing and the cooking needed doing and she didn't always feel like helping. She loved him even more when he was cheerful and they played daft games of noughts and crosses and made up stories and sang silly songs. She loved him most of all when they had a special day out together. They had once had a lovely jam sandwich picnic in the park, by the pond. Dad had told her all about the witches and Rebecca had been very interested.

Sarah and Mandy didn't seem at all interested.

'They weren't daft story-book witches with pointed hats and broomsticks,' said Rebecca. 'They were often just lonely or a bit loopy.'

'Like you, you mean,' said Mandy, and Sarah giggled.

'And people picked on them and accused them of witchcraft and tortured them,' said Rebecca.

‘What did they do to them then?’ asked Mandy, brushing Sarah’s short hair into a very modern style.

Dad hadn’t gone into the torture part, but Rebecca invented a great deal because they were listening properly at last. Rebecca was very good at making up disgusting tortures and even Mandy looked impressed. Sarah kept making sick noises and perhaps it was no wonder her hair was now standing on end.

‘So what happened to them?’ Sarah asked. ‘Did they die after all that torture?’

‘No, I *told* you. I knew you weren’t listening,’ said Rebecca. ‘They took them to this pond and then they did the water test. They tied their left thumb to their right big toe and their right thumb to their left big toe—’ Rebecca tried to demonstrate. She overbalanced on the grass and Mandy cackled, but she still had Sarah’s attention. ‘They tied them up in this sort of knot thing and then they threw them in the pond – splosh!’ said Rebecca. ‘And if they sank they were innocent. If they bobbed up again then they were guilty and they were taken away and *burned*.’

Sarah and Mandy sat still, blinking.

‘You’ve got that wrong,’ said Mandy.

‘No I haven’t,’ said Rebecca.

‘But that wouldn’t be fair,’ said Sarah. ‘If you were innocent you’d sink and so you’d drown anyway.’

‘I know. That’s the point,’ said Rebecca. ‘That’s why it was so awful to be a witch.’

‘I wonder how many witches drowned in this very pond then?’ said Sarah, leaning forward and staring at the murky water. She scratched her head worriedly and destroyed her new hairstyle.

‘Look what you’ve done, you’ve mucked it up,’ said Mandy, sighing. ‘Come here and I’ll do it again for you.’

‘No, it’s all right, I didn’t think much of it actually,’ said Sarah. ‘Here, Becky, do you think they’re still down there? All those witch bodies?’



‘You bet,’ said Rebecca, peering too. ‘Here, what’s that long whitish thing out in the middle? You don’t think it’s a *bone*, do you?’

Sarah shrieked and clutched Rebecca. Mandy sighed. She gave herself another lipstick smile but it looked strained.

‘I’m getting fed up with this park and its silly old pond,’ she said. ‘Let’s go home, Sarah. Come over to my place and we can try out all my make-up. My Mum’s given me heaps of eye stuff and I’ve got my own Pretty Peach perfume.’

‘I quite like it here,’ said Sarah. ‘You know, it *could* be a bone, and those little bits at the end – they’re the fingers.’

‘Yes! She probably died reaching out desperately, screaming for help.’ Rebecca screamed too, waving her arms around violently.

‘Watch out, you clumsy twit. And how could she wave her arms around? You said they were all tied up to her toes,’ Mandy pointed out. ‘You’re just making it up, Rebecca. It’s all fibs and lies.’

‘No, it’s not! Look, my Dad says—’

‘My Dad says, my Dad says. She’s starting to sound like a parrot. Can’t you play another record, Parrot Face?’

‘Don’t call Becky silly names, Mandy, it gets on my nerves,’ said Sarah.

Rebecca smiled. Sarah smiled back at her. Mandy stood up. She wasn’t smiling. She glared at the pond. She went on glaring at it. And then she smiled after all.

‘They couldn’t have ever drowned witches in this pond,’ she said triumphantly. ‘It’s not deep enough.’

‘Yes it is,’ said Rebecca.

‘Yes it is,’ said Sarah, but she sounded uncertain.

‘It *isn’t*. You look.’ Mandy picked up a long stick, walked to the pond’s edge, leaned right out and stuck the stick in the water. She banged it up and down on the bottom of the pond. A great deal of the twig stayed above water.

‘There! It would barely come up to your knees. Are you sure it was witches? Sure it wasn’t fairies? Fairy *stories*,