



The Phantom Film House

Adam loves the tatty old Film House where his grandma works. Unfortunately it's going to be knocked down and turned into a car park! During a final showing of a spooky old black-and-white film, Adam's popcorn starts flying around. Could the cinema be haunted? And if so, could this be a spine-chilling way to bring the old film house back to life?



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'The Phantom Film House'

An original concept by Jenny Moore

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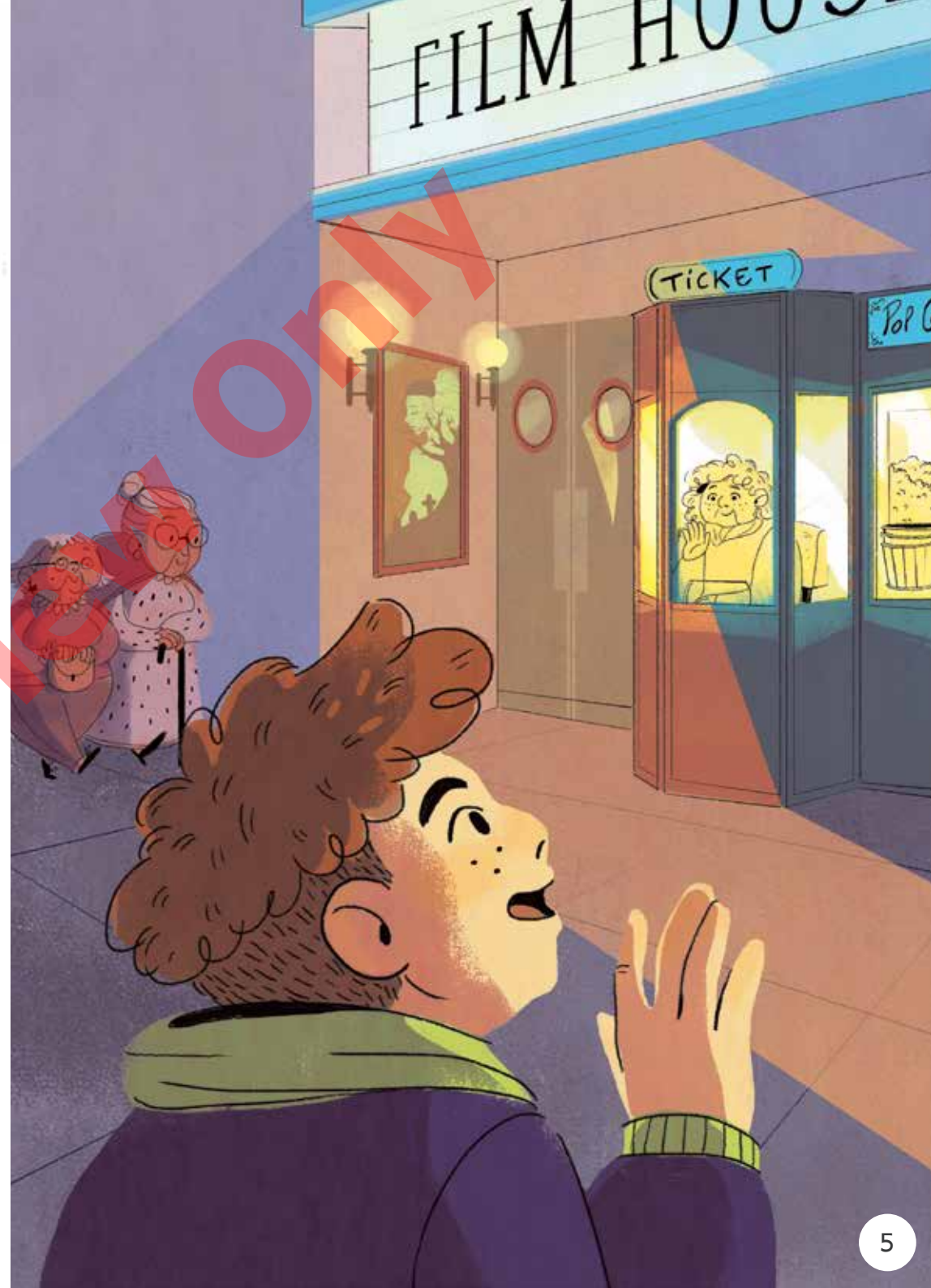




Chapter 1

Adam loved Saturday movies at the old Film House. It was faded and tatty compared to the new 10-screen cinema on the other side of town, but Adam didn't mind. He liked the musty smell and the worn patches on the velvet seats. He liked the small screen and the crackling sound system. He liked the noise of old ladies crinkling their toffee wrappers and whispering loudly. He even liked the old movies. They weren't as good as the *Star Raider* films but they were still fun to watch.

The best thing of all about the Film House was the lady who sold the tickets and popcorn—Adam's grandma! The popcorn was a bit on the stale side, but Grandma always





gave him an extra big scoop to make up for it.

This Saturday was different though. Grandma was there as usual, but she wasn't smiling her usual smile. She didn't even look up when Adam came in.

"Grandma? Are you alright?" he asked.

"Oh, hello Adam. I'm sorry, dear. I didn't see you there. I've just had a bit of bad news."

Adam's eyes grew wide with worry. "What's happened? Is it Grandad? Is he hurt?"

Grandma shook her head. "Oh no, dear. Nothing like

that. Grandad's fine. It's the Film House. Mr Cheng says the owner has decided to sell it. Ticket numbers have been down since the big new cinema opened and he can't afford to run this place anymore."

Adam liked Mr Cheng, the Film House manager. His daughter, Lin, was in the year above Adam at school. She often came to the Saturday showings too but she always sat at the back of the cinema. Adam preferred to sit in the front row so he could stretch his legs out. The seating might change if the Film House was sold though.

Adam wondered if the new owner would keep the old velvet seats, with their lovely worn patches? Or would he rip them all out and put in ugly new reclining seats instead? Adam felt sad just thinking about it.

But then Adam had an even worse thought. What if the new owner wanted to change everything about the cinema, including the staff?

“What about you and Mr Cheng?” he asked. “Will you be able to keep your jobs?”

“I’m afraid not,” said Grandma. “The owners of the hotel next door have offered to buy the place. They want to knock it down and turn it into a car park.”

“A car park?” Adam repeated. “That’s terrible. The cinema’s *always* been here. They can’t just knock it down.”

Grandma sighed. “There’s nothing we can do, I’m afraid. The owner’s given Mr Cheng one more week to try and improve sales, but I’m not holding out much hope. Next Saturday’s our last chance.”

Adam was quiet as Grandma scooped out his popcorn—

an extra-*extra* big scoop to try and cheer him up. He was thinking hard. There had to be *something* he could do to help save the Film House. Maybe if he got everyone from school to come to the final showing that would be enough to convince the owner. But convincing his classmates was going to be the tricky bit.