

THE GRAND PIANO

A Wobble & Magoo Adventure — Book 1

By

M.C. WOBBLE

WOBBLE BOOKS

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DEDICATION

For anyone who has ever carried a piano up
the wrong staircase with their best friend —
and laughed all the way back down.



CHAPTER 1

A PERFECTLY ORDINARY TUESDAY

In which two respectable gentlemen undertake a simple delivery, and a staircase lives to regret it.

It was nine o'clock on a perfectly ordinary Tuesday morning.

The birds were singing.

The sun was shining.

And Mr Magoo McGhee was enjoying a perfectly ordinary cup of tea.

He sat outside his little workshop, wearing his charcoal-grey pinstripe suit, slightly battered waistcoat and polished shoes.

Well, mostly polished.

His spectacles rested on top of his head.

His bowler hat rested on the table.

And his feet rested on an old wooden box.

Magoo sighed happily.

"Ahhh. Peace and quiet."

He closed his eyes.

A gentle breeze rustled the newspaper.

Somewhere in the distance, a dog barked.

Then—

CRAAAAAAAAAASH!

Magoo opened one eye.

A dustbin rolled past.

Then a bicycle wheel.

Then a black bowler hat.

And finally, a short, cheerful gentleman in a brown checked suit came wobbling around the corner.

"MAGOO!"

Magoo closed his eye again.

"Oh, no."

"MAGOO! I'VE HAD A BRILLIANT IDEA!"

Magoo slowly lowered his newspaper.

Standing before him was M.C. Wobble.

Bald head.

Bright blue eyes.

Neatly trimmed grey beard.

Red spotted bow tie.

An enormous pair of brown boots.

And the happiest expression ever worn by a man who had just collided with three dustbins.

Wobble lifted his bowler hat.

"Morning, old chap!"

Magoo stared at him.

"Wobble."

"Magoo!"

"What have you done?"

"Nothing!"

Magoo looked towards the rolling dustbins.

"Nothing?"

"Absolutely nothing!"

A bicycle wheel rolled past.

CLANG!

Wobble watched it disappear.

"Well, almost nothing."

Magoo sighed.

Then took another sip of tea.

"Goodbye, Wobble."

Wobble smiled.

"Funny you should say that."

He produced a folded piece of paper from his jacket.

"I've found us a job!"

Magoo stopped drinking.

"A job?"

"Yes!"

"A proper job?"

"Absolutely!"

"With money?"

Wobble beamed.

"Actual money!"

Magoo lowered his cup.

"How much?"

"Five pounds!"

Magoo's eyes widened.

"Five pounds?"

"Each!"

Magoo stood.

"Well, why didn't you say so?"

Wobble unfolded the paper.

It was a handwritten advertisement.

**TWO STRONG GENTLEMEN REQUIRED TO MOVE
A GRAND PIANO.**

EXCELLENT PAYMENT.

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY.

ASK FOR MRS CRUMPET.

Magoo read it.

Then read it again.

He looked at Wobble.

"Wobble."

"Yes, Magoo?"

"Have you ever moved a piano?"

Wobble thought carefully.

"No."

"Neither have I."

Wobble grinned.

"Then we're equally qualified!"

Magoo stared.

There was a very long silence.

A sparrow chirped.

Wobble smiled.

Magoo sighed.

"Fetch your hat."



CHAPTER 2

MRS CRUMPET'S VERY EXPENSIVE PIANO

Mrs Crumpet lived at number seventeen,
Primrose Terrace.

It was a beautiful house.

With beautiful windows.

Beautiful curtains.

Beautiful flowerpots.

And a beautiful front door.

Everything about Mrs Crumpet's house was beautiful.

And absolutely nothing was allowed to get dirty.

Not the carpets.

Not the furniture.

Not the curtains.

And certainly not the enormous grand piano standing in her hallway.

Mrs Crumpet opened the door.

She looked at Wobble.

Then Magoo.

Then Wobble again.

"Are you the removal gentlemen?"

Wobble lifted his bowler hat.

"At your service, madam!"

Magoo bowed politely.

"Good morning."

Mrs Crumpet looked them up and down.

Her eyes settled on Wobble's enormous boots.

"Are those clean?"

Wobble looked down.

He rubbed one boot against his trouser leg.

A small cloud of dust appeared.

"Spotless!"

Mrs Crumpet frowned.

"Very well."

She stepped aside.

The two gentlemen entered.

And there it stood.

The piano.

It was enormous.

Black.

Shiny.

With three beautiful legs.

A magnificent keyboard.

And a polished lid that reflected the entire hallway.

Magoo stared.

Wobble stared.

The piano seemed to stare back.

Magoo whispered:

"That's rather large."

Wobble nodded.

"Lovely colour, though."

Mrs Crumpet pointed towards the staircase.

"I should like it moved to the upstairs music

room."

Magoo looked at the stairs.

Then at the piano.

Then at the stairs again.

"Upstairs?"

"Yes."

"All the way upstairs?"

"Naturally."

Magoo swallowed.

Wobble smiled.

"Not a problem, madam!"

Magoo slowly turned towards him.

It was a very special look.

A look that said:

Please stop talking before you get us both killed.

Wobble ignored it.

"Leave everything to us!"

Mrs Crumpet smiled.

"Wonderful. I shall make some tea."

She disappeared into the kitchen.

Magoo waited until she was gone.

Then turned towards Wobble.

"HOW?"

Wobble looked puzzled.

"How what?"

"HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THAT THING UP
THOSE STAIRS?"

Wobble examined the piano.

He walked around it.

He tapped one leg.

He opened the lid.

PLINK!

He pressed a key.

PLONK!

Then another.

PLINK-PLONK!

Wobble smiled.

"Lovely instrument."

"WOBBLE!"

"Yes?"

"The stairs!"

Wobble looked towards them.

Then smiled.

"Simple."

Magoo narrowed his eyes.

"Go on."

"You push."

"Yes?"

"I pull."

Magoo thought about this.

It sounded reasonable.

Suspiciously reasonable.

"All right."

Wobble clapped his hands.

"Excellent!"

And that was where the trouble began.



CHAPTER 3

THE FIRST STEP

Magoo positioned himself behind the piano.

Wobble stood at the front.

They had placed a sturdy moving strap beneath the instrument.

Magoo gripped one end.

Wobble gripped the other.

"Ready?" asked Wobble.

"Ready," said Magoo.

"One!"

"Two!"

"THREE!"

They lifted.

Nothing happened.

They lifted harder.

Still nothing.

Magoo's face turned pink.

Wobble's bow tie began trembling.

"HEEEEEAVE!"

The piano moved.

Approximately half an inch.

Magoo gasped.

"It's moving!"

Wobble grinned.

"Told you!"

They heaved again.

The piano rolled towards the staircase.

Slowly.

Carefully.

Beautifully.

And then—

BONK!

One piano leg struck the bottom step.

Wobble stumbled backwards.

Magoo stumbled forwards.

The piano tilted.

Both men froze.

For a moment, nothing happened.

Then one piano key played.

PLINK!

Magoo looked at Wobble.

Wobble looked at Magoo.

The piano slowly settled.

THUD.

Magoo exhaled.

"Right."

Wobble smiled.

"Easy!"

Magoo wiped his forehead.

"That was the first step."

Wobble nodded.

"Only thirteen more!"

Magoo looked up the staircase.

He counted.

One.

Two.

Three.

Four.

Five.

Six.

Seven.

Eight.

Nine.

Ten.

Eleven.

Twelve.

Thirteen.

Fourteen.

Fifteen.

Sixteen.

Seventeen.

Eighteen.

Nineteen.

Twenty.

He turned slowly towards Wobble.

"Twenty."

Wobble blinked.

"Twenty what?"

"TWENTY STEPS!"

Wobble looked up.

"Oh."

He thought for a moment.

Then smiled.

"Well, we're already one-twentieth of the way there!"

Magoo closed his eyes.



CHAPTER 4

THE GREAT PIANO CLIMB

By half past ten, the piano had reached the fourth step.

By eleven, it had reached the sixth.

By eleven fifteen, it had returned to the fourth.

And by eleven thirty, Magoo was beginning to question several important decisions he had made in life.

"Wobble!"

"Yes?"

"Are you holding it?"

"Yes!"

"Properly?"

"Yes!"

"With both hands?"

Wobble looked down.

One hand held the moving strap.

The other held a chocolate digestive.

"Mostly!"

Magoo stared.

"IS THAT A BISCUIT?"

Wobble looked surprised.

"Would you like one?"

"WOBBLE!"

"Only I've got another."

Magoo shut his eyes.

"Put the biscuit away."

Wobble nodded.

"Right you are."

He slipped the biscuit into his pocket.

Unfortunately, he also let go of the strap.

The piano moved.

Just a little.

CREEEEEEAK.

Magoo's eyes widened.

"Wobble?"

"Yes?"

"WHY IS IT MOVING?"

Wobble looked down.

"Oh."

The piano began rolling backwards.

Slowly.

Then faster.

Then much faster.

"WOBBLE!"

"MAGOO!"

The piano thundered down the staircase.

THUD!

THUD!

THUD!

THUD!

Wobble jumped aside.

Magoo leapt onto the banister.

The piano flew past.

CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!

It struck the hallway floor.

The lid sprang open.

The keyboard rattled.

And every single note played at once.

PLING-PLANG-PLONG-BWAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!

Silence.

Dust floated through the air.

A picture fell from the wall.

TINK!

Magoo slowly slid down the banister.

His jacket had caught on a wooden ornament.

His trousers were twisted.

His spectacles hung from one ear.

He landed beside Wobble.

PLOP.

For several seconds, neither spoke.

Then Wobble smiled.

"Well."

Magoo stared at him.

"Well WHAT?"

Wobble pointed at the piano.

"At least we know it works."

Magoo slowly removed his spectacles.

He cleaned them.

Put them back on.

And gave Wobble The Look.

The longest Look in the history of looks.

Wobble smiled innocently.

From the kitchen came Mrs Crumpet's voice.

"EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, GENTLEMEN?"

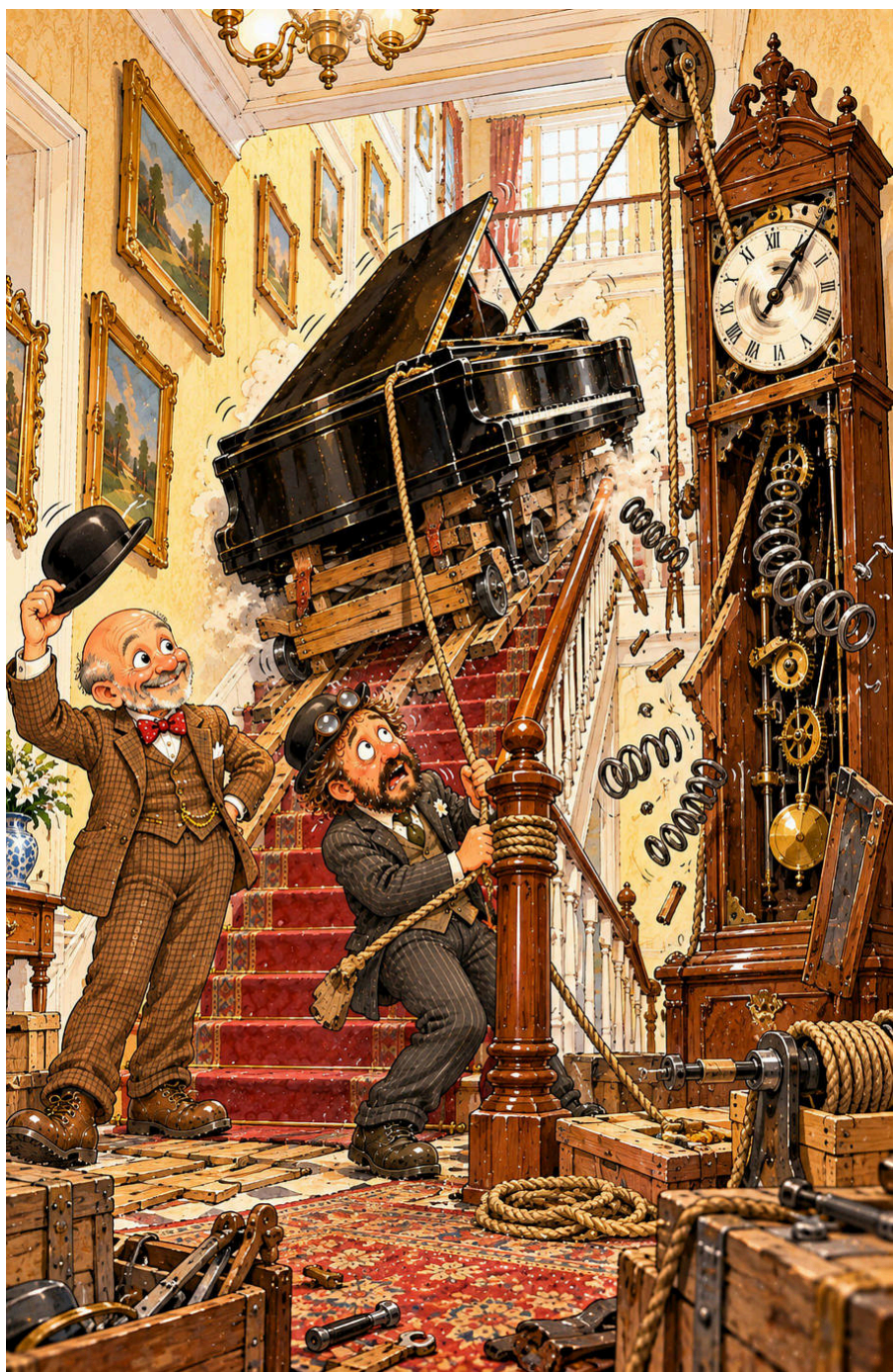
Wobble shouted back:

"ABSOLUTELY, MADAM!"

Magoo stared at the enormous dent in the wallpaper.

Wobble added:

"JUST TUNING IT!"



CHAPTER 5

WOBBLE'S BRILLIANT INVENTION

At twelve o'clock, Magoo sat on the bottom step.

His bowler hat was crooked.

His tie was loose.

And his dignity had gone missing somewhere near the seventh stair.

Wobble paced up and down.

"Now, Magoo."

Magoo said nothing.

"I've been thinking."

Magoo covered his face.

"Oh, no."

"What we need is a machine!"

Magoo slowly looked up.

"A machine?"

"Yes!"

Wobble pointed towards the staircase.

"A mechanical piano-moving apparatus!"

Magoo blinked.

"A what?"

"A contraption!"

"Made from what?"

Wobble looked around.

His eyes settled on an old wooden trolley.

Then a coil of rope.

Then a broom.

Then Mrs Crumpet's enormous grandfather clock.

Wobble smiled.

Magoo followed his gaze.

His face changed.

"No."

Wobble grinned.

"Yes!"

"No, Wobble."

"Trust me!"

"ABSOLUTELY NOT!"

Five minutes later, they had built something extraordinary.

The piano sat on the wooden trolley.

A rope ran from the trolley up the staircase.

Around the banister.

Through a pulley.

Across the hallway.

And finally into the mechanism of Mrs
Crumpet's grandfather clock.

Magoo stared at it.

"That will never work."

Wobble folded his arms.

"Have a little faith!"

Magoo examined the rope.

Then the clock.

Then the piano.

"Wobble."

"Yes?"

"Why is the rope attached to the clock?"

Wobble smiled proudly.

"Mechanical advantage!"

Magoo blinked.

"Do you know what that means?"

Wobble hesitated.

"Not entirely."

Magoo sighed.

Wobble pulled the lever.

CLICK!

Nothing happened.

Wobble frowned.

He pulled harder.

CLUNK!

Still nothing.

He kicked the trolley.

THWACK!

Suddenly—

TICK!

The grandfather clock began moving.

TOCK!

The rope tightened.

TICK!

The piano rolled forwards.

TOCK!

And began climbing the staircase.

Magoo's mouth fell open.

"It's working!"

Wobble grinned.

"COURSE IT IS!"

The piano climbed.

One step.

Two steps.

Three steps.

Four.

Five.

Six.

Magoo cheered.

"WOBBLE! YOU'VE DONE IT!"

Wobble lifted his bowler hat.

"THANK YOU!"

The piano climbed higher.

Seven.

Eight.

Nine.

Ten.

Then—

BOOOOOOING!

A spring shot out of the grandfather clock.

The hands began spinning.

The pendulum flew sideways.

And the clock struck twelve.

DONG!

DONG!

DONG!

DONG!

It continued.

Thirteen.

Fourteen.

Fifteen.

Sixteen.

Magoo stared.

"Wobble?"

"Yes?"

"Why's it still ringing?"

Wobble frowned.

"Not sure."

The piano began moving faster.

Much faster.

"WHY'S IT MOVING FASTER?"

Wobble looked at the clock.

Then the rope.

Then the piano.

"Oh dear."

Magoo's eyes widened.

"OH DEAR WHAT?"

The piano shot up the staircase.

THUD-THUD-THUD-THUD!

It reached the top.

Rolled across the landing.

Struck the upstairs door.

CRAAAAAAASH!

And disappeared into the music room.

Silence.

The rope went slack.

The clock stopped.

A small cloud of dust drifted downstairs.

Wobble and Magoo stared at one another.

Then Magoo slowly smiled.

"Wobble."

"Yes?"

"We've done it."

Wobble grinned.

"We have!"

Magoo laughed.

"WE'VE ACTUALLY DONE IT!"

The two gentlemen shook hands.

Then hugged.

Then danced a little jig.

Wobble's boots stamped.

BOOM-BOOM!

Magoo's shoes tapped.

TAP-TAP!

Wobble stamped again.

BOOM-BOOM!

Magoo finished.

TAP!

And somewhere upstairs—

CREEEEEEEEEEAK.

Both men stopped dancing.

They looked up.

The ceiling trembled.

A little plaster fell.

PLOP.

Magoo swallowed.

"Wobble?"

"Yes?"

"What's that noise?"

Wobble looked thoughtful.

"Probably settling."

A second crack appeared.

CRRRRRRRRRRRK!

Magoo's eyes widened.

"SETTLING?"

Wobble smiled nervously.

"Quite a lot of settling."

Then—

CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!

The piano came straight through the ceiling.

It landed in the hallway.

Exactly where it had started.

The chandelier fell.

The grandfather clock exploded.

And an enormous cloud of plaster filled the house.

Silence.

Absolute silence.

Then one piano key played.

PLINK.



CHAPTER 6

MRS CRUMPET RETURNS

Mrs Crumpet entered the hallway carrying a silver tea tray.

"Now then, gentlemen, would you care for—"

She stopped.

The tray trembled.

The teacups rattled.

Her eyes moved slowly around the room.

The broken ceiling.

The smashed clock.

The ruined chandelier.

The piano sitting in the middle of the
wreckage.

Wobble standing beneath a cloud of plaster.

Magoo wearing half a lampshade.

Mrs Crumpet opened her mouth.

Then closed it.

Then opened it again.

"GENTLEMEN."

Wobble lifted his bowler hat.

"Afternoon, madam!"

Mrs Crumpet stared.

"WHAT."

She pointed at the ceiling.

"ON."

She pointed at the clock.

"EARTH."

She pointed at the piano.

"HAVE."

She pointed at Magoo.

"YOU."

She pointed at Wobble.

"DONE?"

Wobble smiled.

"Well, madam."

He cleared his throat.

"We have successfully tested the structural integrity of your staircase."

Magoo closed his eyes.

Mrs Crumpet's face turned purple.

"GET OUT!"

Wobble nodded.

"Of course."

"OUT!"

"Immediately."

"OUT!"

Wobble grabbed his hat.

Magoo grabbed his spectacles.

And the two gentlemen hurried towards the door.

But just as they reached it—

"WAIT!"

They froze.

Mrs Crumpet stood beside the piano.

She looked at the instrument.

Then the staircase.

Then the enormous hole in the ceiling.

And suddenly—

She smiled.

"Actually."

Wobble turned.

"Yes, madam?"

Mrs Crumpet looked thoughtful.

"I've just remembered something."

Magoo swallowed.

"What?"

Mrs Crumpet smiled sweetly.

"I wanted the piano downstairs after all."

There was a very long silence.

Wobble blinked.

Magoo blinked.

Mrs Crumpet continued.

"I was going to ask you to bring it back down."

Wobble looked at the piano.

Then at the ceiling.

Then at Magoo.

Then he grinned.

"Well!"

He lifted his bowler hat.

"THERE WE ARE!"

Magoo slowly turned towards him.

His eyes narrowed.

His moustache twitched.

His entire face seemed to fold inwards.

And he whispered:

"Wobble."

"Yes, Magoo?"

"Don't."

"Don't what?"

"Say."

"Say what?"

"ANOTHER."

"Another what?"

"WORD."

Wobble nodded.

"Right you are."

There was a pause.

Then Wobble added:

"Do you think she'll still pay us?"

Magoo fainted.

THUD.



CHAPTER 7

THE FINAL NOTE

That evening, Wobble and Magoo walked home.

Their suits were covered in plaster.

Their hats were battered.

Their shoes were dusty.

And their pockets were empty.

Magoo walked in silence.

Wobble whistled cheerfully.

After a while, Magoo stopped.

"Wobble."

"Yes, Magoo?"

"We didn't get paid."

"No."

"We broke a grandfather clock."

"Yes."

"We destroyed a chandelier."

"Unfortunately."

"We put a piano through a ceiling."

Wobble nodded.

"Quite an achievement, really."

Magoo stared.

"And now we have no money."

Wobble smiled.

"Not entirely true."

Magoo stopped.

"What?"

Wobble reached into his pocket.

He produced a small silver coin.

Magoo's eyes widened.

"Where did you get that?"

Wobble grinned.

"Mrs Crumpet gave it to me."

"Why?"

"For removing the piano from upstairs."

Magoo stared.

Then, very slowly, he began to laugh.

A tiny chuckle.

Then a giggle.

Then a great enormous belly laugh.

"HAHAHAHAHAHA!"

Wobble laughed too.

The two friends stood in the street, laughing until their eyes watered.

Finally, Magoo wiped his face.

"Well, Wobble."

"Yes, Magoo?"

"Perhaps tomorrow will be better."

Wobble smiled.

"Funny you should say that."

Magoo stopped laughing.

"What?"

Wobble reached into his jacket.

And produced another advertisement.

Magoo stared at it.

TWO EXPERIENCED DECORATORS REQUIRED.

WALLPAPERING JOB.

EXCELLENT PAYMENT.

ASK FOR MRS CRUMPET.

Magoo slowly removed his spectacles.

He cleaned them.

Put them back on.

Looked at Wobble.

Looked at the advertisement.

And whispered:

"Oh, no."

Wobble grinned.

"Oh, YES!"

And somewhere in the distance, a piano played one final note.

PLONK!

THE END

Coming next: Book 2 — The Decorating Disaster

In which Wobble discovers wallpaper paste, Magoo becomes part of the furniture, and Mrs Crumpet makes the terrible mistake of giving them a second chance.

BOOM-BOOM. TAP-TAP. BOOM-BOOM. TAP!

MEET THE CHARACTERS

M.C. WOBBLE



*Slim, cheerful inventor whose brilliant
ideas always end in disaster*

MR MAGOO MCGHEE



Stocky, scruffy, long-suffering gentleman
who always says 'Oh, no'

MRS E. CRUMPET



*Fussy, house-proud widow at number
seventeen, Primrose Terrace*

ABOUT M.C. WOBBLE

M.C. Wobble writes books about the sort of characters nobody ever puts in books — blobs, beasts, and things made entirely of baked goods. The stories are silly on the outside and surprisingly warm on the inside.

Every Wobble Book is designed with dyslexic readers in mind — not as an afterthought, but from the first word. Because every child deserves a book that feels like it was made for them.

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wobblebooks.com

