

THE WINDOW CLEANERS

A Wobble & Magoo Adventure — Book 3

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 BUSINESS OF GREAT HEIGHTS

In which two respectable gentlemen discover that going up is considerably easier than coming down.

Thursday morning arrived with a gentle breeze, a cloudless blue sky and the promise of a perfectly pleasant day.

Mr Magoo McGhee was standing outside his workshop.

He wore his charcoal-grey pinstripe suit, his slightly battered waistcoat and his favourite

bowler hat.

His spectacles were perched on top of his head.

And he was staring at a ladder.

It was a very long ladder.

An extraordinarily long ladder.

The sort of ladder that made you wonder whether its previous owner had been employed to clean the windows of the moon.

Magoo looked up.

And up.

And up.

Then he swallowed.

"Wobble."

"Yes, Magoo?"

"How long is that ladder?"

M.C. Wobble stood beside him in his brown checked suit, red spotted bow tie and enormous boots.

He examined the ladder proudly.

"Twenty-eight feet!"

Magoo blinked.

"Twenty-eight?"

"Yes!"

"Feet?"

"All of them!"

Magoo stared.

"Why do we need a twenty-eight-foot ladder?"

Wobble smiled.

"Because we're window cleaners!"

Magoo looked towards the little two-storey house opposite.

"But the windows are only fifteen feet up."

Wobble nodded.

"Exactly!"

Magoo frowned.

"Then why twenty-eight feet?"

Wobble grinned.

"Plenty of spare!"

Magoo closed his eyes.

He had a terrible feeling that today was going to be another very long day.



CHAPTER 2

THE LADY AT NUMBER TWENTY-THREE

Their first customer was Miss Prudence Puddington.

She lived at number twenty-three, Primrose Terrace.

Miss Puddington was a respectable lady.

A very respectable lady.

She wore respectable dresses.

She drank respectable tea.

She owned a respectable little dog named Wellington.

And she expected her windows to be cleaned in a respectable manner.

She opened the front door.

Wobble lifted his bowler hat.

"GOOD MORNING, MADAM!"

Magoo bowed.

"Good morning."

Miss Puddington examined them.

"Are you the window cleaners?"

Wobble beamed.

"The very gentlemen!"

"Have you experience?"

Magoo opened his mouth.

Wobble answered first.

"CONSIDERABLE!"

Magoo slowly turned towards him.

Miss Puddington smiled.

"Excellent."

She pointed towards the upstairs bedroom.

"Those windows haven't been cleaned properly for years."

Wobble looked up.

"Not a problem!"

Magoo looked up.

The upstairs window seemed terribly high.

He swallowed.

Miss Puddington continued.

"I shall expect a spotless finish."

"Naturally!" said Wobble.

"And no mess."

"Of course!"

"And no unnecessary noise."

"Absolutely!"

Miss Puddington smiled.

"Very good."

She closed the door.

Magoo waited.

Then turned towards Wobble.

"Considerable experience?"

Wobble nodded.

"Yes."

"Doing what?"

Wobble thought.

"Looking through windows."

Magoo stared.

Wobble smiled.

"Done it all my life!"

Magoo took off his bowler hat.

He looked inside it.

Then put it back on.

"Wonderful."



CHAPTER 3

THE FIRST ASCENT

They carried the enormous ladder into the front garden.

Or rather, Magoo carried one end.

Wobble carried the other.

Unfortunately, Wobble was looking backwards.

"Left a bit!" called Magoo.

Wobble moved right.

"NO! YOUR OTHER LEFT!"

Wobble moved left.

The ladder swung sideways.

CLANG!

It struck the garden gate.

Magoo winced.

"Careful!"

Wobble nodded.

"Careful!"

They continued.

"Straight ahead!" said Magoo.

Wobble walked backwards.

The ladder struck a birdbath.

BONK!

A stone bird fell off.

PLOP!

Magoo sighed.

"Watch where you're going!"

Wobble turned around.

The ladder swung again.

CRASH!

A flowerpot shattered.

Magoo stared.

Wobble smiled.

"Nearly there!"

Finally, they positioned the ladder beneath the upstairs window.

Magoo stood back.

He looked up.

The ladder seemed to disappear into the clouds.

He swallowed.

"Right."

Wobble nodded.

"Right!"

Magoo straightened his waistcoat.

"One of us must climb."

"Absolutely!"

"And the other must hold the ladder."

"Correct!"

Magoo looked at Wobble.

Wobble looked at Magoo.

There was a long silence.

Then both gentlemen pointed at each other.

"YOU!"

Another silence.

Magoo cleared his throat.

"Well, Wobble, since you're the one with the experience—"

Wobble grinned.

"Very well!"

He placed one enormous boot on the first rung.

Then another.

Then another.

And began climbing.

CLUNK.

CLUNK.

CLUNK.

Magoo held the ladder.

"Carefully!"

"Of course!"

"Don't lean!"

"Certainly!"

"Don't wobble!"

Wobble stopped.

He looked down.

"Magoo."

"Yes?"

"My name is Wobble."

"I KNOW!"

Wobble grinned.

"Can't make any promises!"

He continued climbing.

Higher.

Higher.

Higher.

Until he reached the upstairs window.

He waved.

"HELLO DOWN THERE!"

Magoo looked up.

"STOP WAVING!"

Wobble smiled.

"Lovely view!"

Then he noticed something.

A small brown spider was sitting on the window ledge.

Wobble leaned closer.

"Morning!"

The spider waved one leg.

Wobble waved back.

"Friendly little chap!"

Magoo shouted:

"WOBBLE! CLEAN THE WINDOW!"

"Right you are!"

Wobble dipped his sponge into the bucket hanging from the ladder.

He squeezed it.

SQUELCH!

Then began cleaning.

SWISH!

SWASH!

SWISH!

Beautiful.

The glass sparkled.

Wobble smiled.

"Easy!"

And then—

The spider jumped onto his nose.

Wobble froze.

His eyes crossed.

He stared at the tiny creature.

"Hello."

The spider moved.

Wobble sneezed.

AAAAAAAH...

Magoo looked up.

"Wobble?"

AAAAAAAH...

"WOBBLE?"

CHOOOOOOOOOOO!

Wobble jerked backwards.

The ladder wobbled.

Magoo grabbed it.

"STEADY!"

Wobble grabbed the window ledge.

The sponge flew out of his hand.

It sailed through the air.

And landed directly on Magoo's face.

SPLAT!

Magoo staggered backwards.

His spectacles slipped.

His bowler hat fell.

And the ladder began sliding sideways.

"WOBBLE!"

Wobble looked down.

"MAGOO!"

The ladder moved.

Slowly.

Very slowly.

Then stopped.

Wobble sighed.

"Phew!"

Magoo wiped his face.

"That was close."

Then the ladder moved again.

CREEEEEEAK.

Both men froze.

And the ladder began travelling sideways along the wall.

With Wobble still at the top.



CHAPTER 4

THE TRAVELLING LADDER

The ladder slid past the bedroom window.

Then the bathroom window.

Then the little round attic window.

Wobble held on.

Magoo ran beneath it.

"STOP!"

Wobble shouted:

"I'M TRYING!"

The ladder continued.

SCRAAAAAPE!

It passed the drainpipe.

CLANG!

It struck a hanging basket.

BONK!

The basket swung.

A small watering can fell.

PLOP!

It landed on Magoo's head.

Magoo stumbled.

The ladder continued sliding.

"WOBBLE!"

"MAGOO!"

The ladder reached the corner of the house.

It paused.

Then slowly began turning.

Like the hands of an enormous clock.

Magoo stared.

"Oh, no."

Wobble looked down.

"Oh, dear."

The ladder swung around the corner.

SWOOOOOOOSH!

Wobble disappeared from view.

Magoo ran after him.

But the ladder was now leaning against the next house.

Number twenty-five.

And Wobble was hanging outside an upstairs bedroom window.

Inside, an elderly gentleman was getting dressed.

He wore a long nightshirt.

Striped socks.

And a magnificent pair of purple slippers.

He turned towards the window.

And found himself staring directly into the smiling face of M.C. Wobble.

Wobble lifted his bowler hat.

"Morning!"

The gentleman screamed.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!"

Wobble screamed.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!"

The gentleman grabbed a pillow.

Wobble grabbed the ladder.

And Magoo arrived beneath them.

"WHAT'S HAPPENING?"

The gentleman threw the pillow.

FWUMP!

It struck Wobble in the face.

Wobble lost his grip.

He slid down the ladder.

CLUNK-CLUNK-CLUNK-CLUNK!

Straight into Magoo.

CRAAAAASH!

Both gentlemen landed in a flowerbed.

A cloud of soil rose around them.

Silence.

Then Wobble's head appeared.

His bowler hat was full of flowers.

He looked at Magoo.

Magoo looked at Wobble.

Wobble smiled.

"Well."

Magoo closed his eyes.

"Don't."

"That's the first window done."



CHAPTER 5

MAGOO TAKES CHARGE

At eleven o'clock, Magoo decided that enough was enough.

"Wobble."

"Yes?"

"I'm taking over."

Wobble smiled.

"Excellent!"

Magoo straightened his jacket.

"I shall climb the ladder."

"Right!"

"And you shall hold it."

"Certainly!"

"Firmly."

"Absolutely!"

"Without moving."

"Of course!"

"And without talking to spiders."

Wobble nodded.

"Understood."

Magoo approached the ladder.

He looked up.

The upstairs window seemed even higher than before.

He swallowed.

Then placed one foot on the first rung.

CLUNK.

Another.

CLUNK.

And another.

CLUNK.

He climbed slowly.

Very slowly.

Painfully slowly.

At the fifth rung, he stopped.

He looked down.

Wobble waved.

"HELLO!"

Magoo gasped.

"Don't wave!"

"Sorry!"

Magoo climbed another rung.

Then another.

At the tenth rung, he stopped again.

He looked down.

The ground seemed terribly far away.

His knees began trembling.

"Wobble?"

"Yes, Magoo?"

"I don't think I like heights."

Wobble looked surprised.

"Really?"

"No."

"Well, don't look down!"

Magoo nodded.

"Good idea."

He looked up.

Unfortunately, a pigeon was sitting on the windowsill.

It looked at Magoo.

Magoo looked at the pigeon.

The pigeon cooed.

COOOOO.

Magoo smiled nervously.

"Hello."

The pigeon tilted its head.

Magoo climbed another rung.

The pigeon flapped its wings.

FLAP-FLAP!

Magoo froze.

"Steady."

The pigeon took off.

Straight towards him.

WHOOOOOSH!

Magoo ducked.

His bowler hat flew off.

He grabbed for it.

Missed.

And found himself clinging to the ladder with both arms.

"WOBBLE!"

Wobble looked up.

"Yes?"

"I'M STUCK!"

Wobble frowned.

"Stuck?"

"YES!"

"Where?"

"ON THE LADDER!"

Wobble thought.

Then smiled.

"Well, that's where you're supposed to be!"

Magoo closed his eyes.

He wished he had stayed in bed.



CHAPTER 6

THE BUCKET PROBLEM

Wobble decided Magoo needed encouragement.

He looked around.

Then spotted the bucket of soapy water.

He smiled.

"Ah!"

He lifted it.

"COMING UP, MAGOO!"

Magoo looked down.

"What?"

"YOUR WATER!"

"NO!"

Wobble began climbing the ladder.

Magoo stared.

"WOBBLE!"

"Yes?"

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"

"Bringing your bucket!"

"BUT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HOLDING THE
LADDER!"

Wobble stopped.

He looked down.

Then up.

Then down again.

"Oh."

There was a pause.

Magoo swallowed.

"Wobble?"

"Yes?"

"Who's holding the ladder?"

Wobble looked at the empty space beneath him.

Then smiled nervously.

"Nobody."

The ladder began moving.

CREEEEEEAK.

Magoo's eyes widened.

"WOBBLE!"

"MAGOO!"

The ladder tilted away from the wall.

Slowly.

Very slowly.

Both gentlemen clung to it.

The ladder continued tipping.

Further.

Further.

Until—

THUD!

It landed against a large apple tree.

Wobble and Magoo found themselves hanging among the branches.

Magoo opened one eye.

He looked around.

Apples.

Leaves.

Birds.

And Wobble.

Wobble smiled.

"Well!"

Magoo stared.

"Well WHAT?"

"Nice tree."

Magoo closed his eyes.

Then an apple fell.

BONK!

It struck his bowler hat.

Another apple fell.

BONK!

Then another.

BONK!

Magoo looked up.

A squirrel was sitting on a branch.

It was throwing apples at him.

Wobble smiled.

"Friendly little chap!"

The squirrel threw another.

BONK!

Magoo sighed.

"Of course."



CHAPTER 7

THE GREAT ESCAPE

The ladder was now balanced between the apple tree and the house.

Wobble stood on one rung.

Magoo stood on another.

Neither dared move.

Below them was Miss Puddington's garden.

Her little dog Wellington was watching.

He barked.

YAP! YAP! YAP!

Magoo looked down.

"Wobble?"

"Yes?"

"How are we going to get down?"

Wobble thought.

Then smiled.

"I've got an idea!"

Magoo's eyes widened.

"NO!"

"Trust me!"

"ABSOLUTELY NOT!"

Wobble pointed towards the washing line stretched across the garden.

"We could slide down that!"

Magoo stared.

"The washing line?"

"Yes!"

"With what?"

Wobble looked around.

Then smiled.

"Your braces!"

Magoo blinked.

"My WHAT?"

Before Magoo could object, Wobble had unfastened one end of his braces.

Magoo grabbed his trousers.

"WOBBLE!"

"Don't worry!"

"My trousers!"

"Perfectly safe!"

Wobble looped the braces over the washing line.

Then attached them to the ladder.

He grinned.

"Right!"

Magoo stared.

"What now?"

Wobble smiled.

"We slide!"

Magoo opened his mouth.

But before he could speak—

TWANG!

The braces snapped tight.

The ladder moved.

Both gentlemen shot along the washing line.

WHOOOOOOOOOOOSH!

They flew across the garden.

Past the apple tree.

Past the greenhouse.

Past the vegetable patch.

Magoo screamed.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!"

Wobble laughed.

"THIS IS BRILLIANT!"

They reached the end of the line.

BOING!

The braces stretched.

Then sprang backwards.

Both gentlemen flew in the opposite direction.

WHOOOOOOOOOOOSH!

They passed the greenhouse again.

Then the apple tree.

Then the vegetable patch.

Magoo screamed louder.

"WOBBLE!"

Wobble grinned.

"YES?"

"MAKE IT STOP!"

Wobble looked around.

Then spotted the garden pond.

He smiled.

"AH!"

Magoo followed his gaze.

His eyes widened.

"NO!"

Wobble shouted:

"BRACE YOURSELF!"

Magoo stared.

"WHAT?"

Wobble grinned.

"GET IT? BRACES!"

Magoo didn't laugh.

Because at that precise moment—

TWANG!

The braces snapped.

The ladder flew into the air.

Wobble flew one way.

Magoo flew the other.

And both gentlemen landed—

SPLOOOOOOOOOOOOOSH!

Straight into the garden pond.

Silence.

A frog jumped onto Magoo's head.

RIBBIT.

Wobble emerged from the water.

His bowler hat floated beside him.

He looked at Magoo.

Magoo looked at Wobble.

Wobble smiled.

"Well."

Magoo closed his eyes.

"Don't."

"At least we're clean."



CHAPTER 8

THE UNEXPECTED INSPECTION

At half past twelve, Miss Puddington came outside.

She looked at the garden.

The broken flowerpots.

The fallen ladder.

The scattered apples.

The washing line hanging in pieces.

And the two gentlemen standing in her pond.

She stared.

"GENTLEMEN!"

Wobble lifted his soaking bowler hat.

"Good afternoon, madam!"

Magoo bowed.

Water poured from his jacket.

Miss Puddington pointed towards the house.

"WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?"

Wobble smiled.

"Window cleaning!"

Miss Puddington stared.

"WINDOW CLEANING?"

"Yes!"

She looked up.

The upstairs windows were still filthy.

Except one.

One tiny corner of one window sparkled beautifully.

Miss Puddington narrowed her eyes.

"YOU HAVE CLEANED APPROXIMATELY SIX INCHES OF GLASS!"

Wobble looked up.

Then nodded.

"Very thoroughly, though."

Miss Puddington's face turned purple.

Magoo swallowed.

"Madam, perhaps if we were allowed another hour—"

"ANOTHER HOUR?"

Wobble smiled.

"Or two!"

Miss Puddington pointed towards the gate.

"OUT!"

Magoo nodded.

"Certainly."

"OUT!"

Wobble picked up his bucket.

"Immediately."

"OUT!"

The two gentlemen hurried towards the gate.

But then Miss Puddington stopped.

"WAIT!"

They froze.

She looked towards the upstairs window.

Then the garden.

Then the ladder.

And suddenly smiled.

"Actually."

Wobble turned.

"Yes, madam?"

Miss Puddington pointed at the sparkling corner.

"That little bit you've cleaned is rather lovely."

Wobble beamed.

"Thank you!"

She nodded.

"I suppose I should pay you for that."

Magoo's eyes widened.

"Payment?"

Miss Puddington reached into her purse.

She produced a small silver coin.

Then handed it to Magoo.

"For the six inches."

Magoo stared.

Wobble grinned.

"Much obliged, madam!"

They hurried away before she could change her mind.

CHAPTER 9

THE LAST WINDOW

That afternoon, Wobble and Magoo sat outside the workshop.

Their suits were drying.

Their hats were drying.

Their shoes were drying.

And Magoo's spectacles were sitting in a saucer of water.

Wobble counted their earnings.

One silver coin.

He smiled.

"Not bad!"

Magoo stared.

"Not bad?"

"Could be worse!"

Magoo looked at his ruined trousers.

His torn braces.

His muddy shoes.

And the enormous bruise forming on his elbow.

"Wobble."

"Yes?"

"We are never cleaning windows again."

Wobble nodded.

"Right you are."

"Never."

"Absolutely."

"Not even ground-floor windows."

"Certainly."

Magoo sighed.

"Good."

He leaned back in his chair.

At last.

Peace.

Quiet.

A perfectly ordinary afternoon.

Then Wobble reached into his jacket.

"Funny you should say that."

Magoo opened one eye.

"Oh, no."

Wobble produced another advertisement.

Magoo stared.

"Wobble."

"Yes?"

"What is that?"

Wobble grinned.

"Our next job!"

Magoo slowly unfolded the paper.

It read:

TWO RELIABLE GENTLEMEN REQUIRED.

SMALL RAILWAY MAINTENANCE JOB.

EXCELLENT PAYMENT.

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY.

ASK FOR LADY LOCOMOTION.

Magoo looked up.

"Railway maintenance?"

Wobble nodded.

"Yes!"

"With trains?"

"Yes!"

"Big trains?"

"Very big!"

Magoo stared.

Then slowly smiled.

"Well."

Wobble blinked.

"Well what?"

Magoo folded the advertisement.

"At least trains stay on the ground."

Wobble laughed.

"EXACTLY!"

They shook hands.

Then sat back in their chairs.

Neither noticed the distant whistle.

Neither noticed the faint vibration beneath
their feet.

And neither noticed the enormous steam

locomotive approaching along the old railway line behind the workshop.

Until—

TOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOT!

Wobble jumped.

Magoo jumped.

Their chairs tipped backwards.

CRAAAAASH!

And Lady Locomotion's enormous brass face appeared above the garden fence.

"GOOD AFTERNOON, GENTLEMEN!"

Wobble stared.

Magoo stared.

Lady Locomotion smiled.

"I HEAR YOU'RE LOOKING FOR WORK!"

Magoo slowly closed his eyes.

"Oh, no."

Wobble grinned.

"Oh, YES!"

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

PLONK!

THE END

Coming next: Book 4 — The Runaway Railway

In which Wobble discovers the controls of a steam locomotive, Magoo discovers the emergency brake, and Lady Locomotion discovers that hiring two gentlemen with absolutely no railway experience may have been a terrible mistake.

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

MEET THE CHARACTERS

M.C. WOBBLE



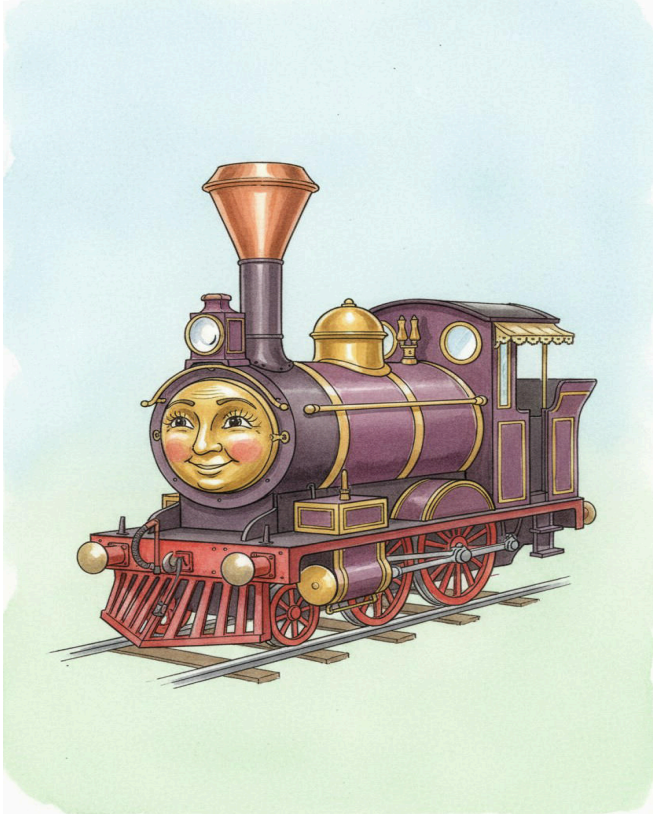
*Slim, cheerful inventor whose brilliant
ideas always end in disaster*

MR MAGOO MCGHEE



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

LADY LOCOMOTION



*Booming, friendly, ticklish steam
locomotive with a brass face*

MISS PRUDENCE PUDDINGTON



Very respectable lady at number
twenty-three, with her dog Wellington

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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