



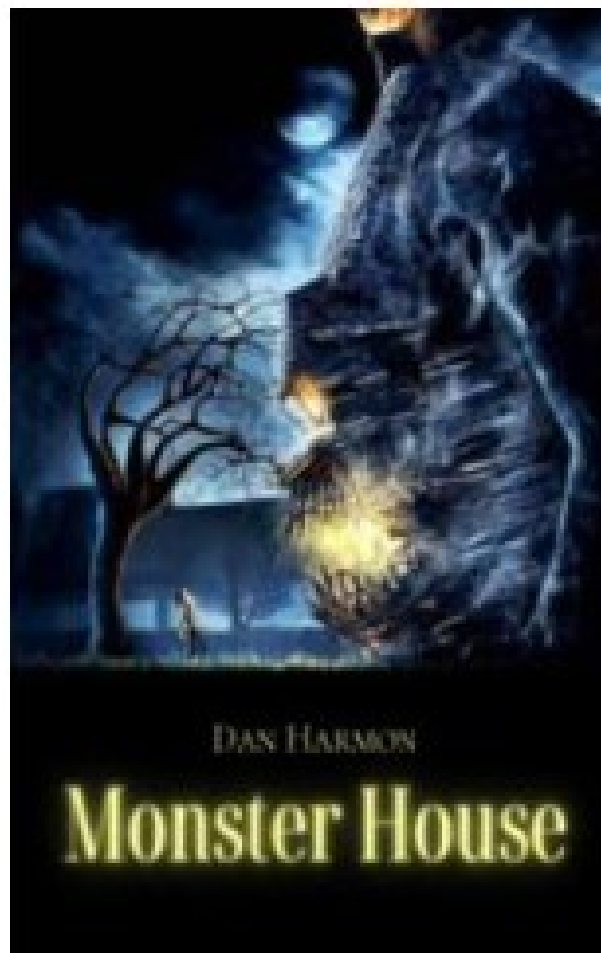
Learn English Through Stories

A1 Stories

Elementary Level

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DAS HAUS

Monster House

Monster House

By Dan Harmon

CHAPTER ONE

Do you want to die?

It was the afternoon before Halloween.

A little girl was on her bike in Oak Street in Mayville. She went happily between the trees and the lovely gardens. But then her bike went onto a front lawn and she stopped.

There was a strange sound and she looked up. The lawn was in front of a big old house. There were two windows over the front door. The windows looked down at her angrily.

There was a loud shout and an old man came out of the house. It was Mr. Nebbercracker. 'Get off my lawn!' he shouted, 'Do you want to die?'

The little girl was frightened and she ran away. Mr. Nebbercracker walked across the lawn and took the bike. 'And don't come back!'

'These children!' he said. 'They never listen.' The sound came again. It was louder and then it stopped. Mr. Nebbercracker went into his house and closed the door.

DJ Walters lived opposite Mr. Nebbercracker's house. DJ saw everything and wrote about it in his book. There was a lot of writing in the book. Today he wrote: '30th October. N. took bike.'

'DJ!' his mom called.

'I'm coming!' DJ looked at the pictures on the walls of his bedroom. They were photos of Mr. Nebbercracker's house. 'DJ!' she called again.

DJ ran out of his house. His mom and dad were in the car. 'Mom!' said DJ. 'He took a bike again!'

'DJ,' she said. 'You can't stay in your room for hours to watch an old man.'

'But there's something wrong with that house!'

'We're going,' said his dad. 'Zee is coming soon. She's staying with you tonight.'

'We love you,' called his mom, and they drove away.

Then a boy with a ball came across the street. It was Chowder, DJ's best friend.

'It's Halloween soon,' said Chowder. 'What are you going to wear?'

'I'm not going trick-or-treating this year,' said DJ.

'But we always do.'

'We're too old now.'

Chowder tried to throw his ball into the basket on the wall. He turned and looked at DJ.

'Be careful!' shouted DJ. Chowder turned back and the ball hit him.

'Aghhh!' Chowder put his hand on his nose.

'Are you OK?' asked DJ. Then he saw the ball. 'Oh no!' It was on Mr. Nebbercracker's nice lawn.

'You're older, DJ. You get it,' said Chowder.

'No!' said DJ.

'But it was expensive!'

'Maybe Mr. Nebbercracker is sleeping.' DJ looked at the house. 'OK.' He put one foot on the lawn. The ball was close. He ran to it.

Suddenly the door opened and Mr. Nebbercracker came out. 'You!'

DJ moved quickly. His shoe pulled out a bit of the lawn.

'I'm sorry,' cried DJ. He wanted to run, but Mr. Nebbercracker held his shirt.

'Do you want to die?' shouted Mr. Nebbercracker.

'No. I love life!'

Mr. Nebbercracker pulled DJ's shirt. 'This is my house,' he shouted. 'Stay away!' The old man's face was very red and his eyes went big. Suddenly he fell on top of DJ on the lawn. The old man didn't move.

'Uh-oh,' said Chowder.

Then there was a cold wind, and the door closed loudly.

CHAPTER TWO

Come in!

Some people came and took Mr. Nebbercracker away. 'He's dead because of me!' DJ said to Chowder. 'I feel terrible!'

Just then Zee arrived in her car. She took her bag into DJ's house.

'Hi!' she smiled. 'We're going to have a very good time.'

'Mom and dad aren't here,' said DJ.

Zee stopped smiling. 'OK,' she said. 'In the house at nine o'clock. In your room at eleven. No games.'

'I'm not a child!'

Zee just looked at him angrily.

Later, DJ was in his room. He looked at the house across the street. The house looked at him. He saw some smoke - it came out of the top of the house. Then there was a cold wind again and he closed his window.

DJ went to sleep. He had a bad dream about the house. The house came into his room. It was big and dark. Then the dark was a hand. It wanted to...

Suddenly the phone woke him up. DJ looked at the number. He was frightened. The call was from Mr. Nebbercracker's house. Who was it? Then someone was in his room. 'Boo!'

It was Bones, Zee's boyfriend. Bones laughed at DJ. Zee was there, too.

'It isn't funny!' shouted DJ. 'Mr. Nebbercracker's dead and someone is in his house.'

'Oooh!' said Zee and Bones. They didn't believe him. They laughed and left his room.

DJ looked at the house. One of the windows opened, like an eye! DJ's heart went faster. The window closed again. DJ used his phone.

'Police,' answered Chowder.

'The Danger Zone,' said DJ. 'Now!'

Bones told Zee the story of his beautiful red kite. He was ten and he loved that kite more than anything. Bones looked happy, but then his face

changed. One day the kite was high in the sky. But then it came down behind the houses. He found it on Mr. Nebbercracker's lawn.

The old man shouted at him and took the kite.

'He's a terrible old man,' said Zee.

'Yeah,' said Bones. 'And he's strange. He talked to the house. People say his wife died in that house. Did he eat her?!' He laughed, but Zee was angry. She said, 'Go home, Bones.'

Bones went out of DJ's house. He looked at Mr. Nebbercracker's house. He threw a trainer onto the lawn. Nothing happened. Then he walked on the lawn. He waited. Nothing. He danced on the lawn. 'You are dead!' he shouted. 'Look at me. I'm on your lawn. What are you going to do?'

Suddenly the door opened and Bones saw his lovely red kite. Bones followed it. The door closed and there was a terrible sound. Then it was quiet again.

The Danger Zone was DJ and Chowder's special place. There was a very big crane and a digger and a lot of holes.

'Mr. Nebbercracker is back from the dead,' said DJ. 'He wants to find me! I need your help, Chowder.'

The two boys left the Danger Zone and soon they were in front of Mr. Nebbercracker's house. They saw a trainer on the lawn. The house watched them. Two windows opened slowly. Then nothing.

'This is boring,' said Chowder and he went onto the lawn.

'Don't!' shouted DJ.

Suddenly there was a terrible sound. The door opened and the windows moved. They looked down angrily.

Then the floor opened like teeth in a mouth. There was a big, red open throat. And then the carpet came out of the door like a tongue. The boys ran.

CHAPTER THREE

We don't believe you!

The next morning a young girl came to the door. It was Jenny Bennet.

'You need some treats for tonight,' she said. 'I'm selling chocolates.'

'It's not my house,' said Zee.

'OK,' said Jenny. 'I'm sure the mom and dad left you some money for the trick-or-treaters. You give me \$20 for some chocolates. I say you gave me \$30. You keep \$10 and you can have the chocolates, too.'

'Hey, you're good!' Zee gave Jenny the money.

Zee went to DJ's room. 'What are you doing?' she asked.

'Something in that house tried to eat us,' said DJ. 'We stayed up all night to watch.'

'You're so strange,' said Zee. 'Do you know where Bones is? He left last night and didn't come back.'

'Didn't come back?' said Chowder. 'Zee. I'm sorry, but...'

'The house took your boyfriend,' said DJ.

Zee didn't believe them. She closed her eyes. 'Pleeease!'

She threw some chocolates to DJ. 'Breakfast,' she said and left the room.

Chowder looked out of the window again. 'Oh,' he said.

DJ looked. It was Jenny. The boys watched her. They liked her red hair. They also liked her little nose and big, clever eyes.

Chowder looked at DJ. 'I saw her first!'

'You can't say that!' said DJ.

'Oh yes, I can!'

Jenny started to go to Mr. Nebbercracker's door with her chocolates.

The boys ran out. 'No!' they shouted.

Jenny looked at them.

'Do you have a problem?' she asked.

Suddenly the windows opened. They were red and angry. Then a terrible cry came from the house and the lawn moved up and down. The door opened and the kids saw the mouth and the teeth. The carpet tongue came out and lifted Jenny up and down. It took the chocolates, but the boys pulled Jenny back.

'Hey!' It was Zee. The lawn and the house went quiet. The door closed. The eyes were windows again.

'I'm going to find Bones.' And she went off.

'What's happening?' asked Jenny.

The boys told Jenny about the house.

'I'm very busy,' said Jenny. 'But that house took my chocolates and tried to eat me... I can give you one hour.'

They all looked at the house. It was quiet now. Then they saw a dog. It walked onto the lawn. The door opened and the tongue came out. It took the dog. It was very quick.

'Call the police,' said Jenny.

Suddenly DJ remembered. 'It's Halloween. Tonight there are going to be a lot of children at that door trick-or-treating! They're all going to die!'

Then the door opened and there was Chowder's ball. Suddenly the ball changed. Now it was a Halloween monster face.

'It's laughing at us,' said Jenny.

Then the police arrived.

There were two policemen. Landers was fat and had a pink face. 'OK. What's happening?' Landers asked.

The other policeman, Lister, was tall. He shouted at them. 'All of you! Next to the car. Now!'

'He's new,' said Landers.

'There's something very bad in that house,' Jenny told them.

'Someone died,' said DJ.

'A dog died, too,' said Chowder.

Landers smiled, but Lister shouted into the police radio, 'Dead dog! Dead dog! We have a problem here!'

Landers took the radio away from him. 'OK, you three. It's Halloween. We're busy.'

DJ tried again. 'Please believe us. The house has a mouth. It pulls things in and eats them!'

'See you later,' said Landers.

'Look!' DJ walked onto the lawn. Nothing. He danced on the lawn. Nothing.

'OK,' said Landers, 'We're going. Leave this house now. I'm going to give you ten. One, two, three...'

'But we need your help,' cried Jenny.

'Four, five, six...'

The three kids looked at the policemen. They weren't going to help. DJ, Chowder and Jenny walked away.

'What can we do now?' asked Chowder.

'I have an idea,' said DJ. 'Let's ask a very clever person.'

CHAPTER FOUR

Domus Mactabilis

The Pizza Freek was a cheap restaurant with a lot of computer games. A big man was playing one. His shirt and Pizza Freek hat were dirty.

'This is Skull,' said DJ importantly. 'He knows everything.'

'Let's talk to him,' said Jenny and she walked over to Skull.

He turned. His face was very white and his eyes were red and tired. 'What? I'm busy.'

DJ was quick, 'There's a monster in Mr. Nebbercracker's house. It must die before it eats us.'

'OK, man!' Skull played his game. His hands moved very quickly. 'Sometimes a person loves his house very much. Then he dies. That dead person can live in the house. It's in the walls and the floor. It's called Domus Mactabilis.'

'That means Monster House,' said Jenny.

'I knew that,' said Chowder.

'Can we stop it?' asked DJ.

'Find the heart of the house. The heart must die.'

'So, where's the heart?' asked Chowder. No one answered.

Then DJ remembered. 'Smoke comes from the house. The heart of the house must be the fire. We must stop the fire!'

'We don't have much time,' said Jenny. 'We must find a way to get in.'

'I've got an idea!' said DJ. 'First let's make something. It must be like a person. We put Sleep Easy drink in it. The house eats the "person" and goes to sleep. Then we go in and find the fire!'

'That's a very stupid plan,' said Chowder. 'I don't want to go into a monster.'

Jenny looked at DJ. 'It's good. Let's do it.'

'OK,' said Chowder quickly. 'Let's do it.'

DJ found an old carpet cleaner, and Jenny put some clothes on it. It was like a Halloween monster. They put some Sleep Easy drink into the cleaner. They were ready.

It was evening. The tops of the houses were red in the sun.

‘Trick or treat?’ Chowder called to the house.

The windows opened and looked at the carpet cleaner. There was hate in the eyes.

‘Start the cleaner,’ said DJ quietly.

The carpet cleaner started to move. It went to the front door. The door opened, and there were the teeth. Ready. Waiting. DJ, Chowder and Jenny smiled.

Suddenly they heard the sound of a police car. The house’s eyes and mouth closed, and the carpet cleaner stopped in front of the door.

Landers saw the carpet cleaner. ‘What’s this?’ He looked at it and found the Sleep Easy drink. ‘OK. You’re going to the police station.’

Lister shouted, ‘Right! In the car!’

‘Listen to us!’ shouted DJ. ‘The house is a monster!’

The policemen put the three kids into the car. ‘And don’t try to open the doors, because you can’t,’ said Lister.

Suddenly a terrible sound came from the house. ‘What’s that?’ Lister walked to the door. Landers followed him.

‘No! Get away from the house!’ shouted DJ. He and Jenny tried to open the car doors.

‘He’s right,’ said Jenny. ‘We can’t get out!’

CHAPTER FIVE

Constance the Giantess

Lister ran onto the lawn. It moved. A tree near him started to move, too. He tried to run, but the tree pulled him back. Suddenly he was high in the sky.

‘Help!’ he called.

Landers tried to run to the car. But the carpet tongue came through the door and pulled him in. Then the tree threw Lister into the house after him.

The kids didn’t want to look. The tree took the car and held it high over the lawn. The front door mouth was bigger now.

‘I’m only here because of you, DJ!’ shouted Chowder.

‘No, you’re not. You’re here because of her!’ cried DJ. The car was closer to the mouth.

‘Be quiet!’ said Jenny. ‘We’ve got a big problem!’

The tree threw the car into the house. The teeth closed on the front of the car. The three kids looked down the red throat. There were teeth all the way down.

‘Quick! Move!’ shouted DJ. The back window of the car was open. They went through it. Then the door of the house closed and the car went down the throat.

Everything went quiet. The carpet sat quietly on the stairs. The walls and the floors were in the right places.

'It doesn't know we're here,' said DJ quietly. 'Now we must find the fire and put water on it.'

'I don't think that's a good idea,' said Chowder.

'Do you want to die?' asked DJ.

'OK. OK. Let's look for the heart,' Chowder said.

'Be careful,' said DJ. 'And stay together...' Suddenly DJ fell through the floor. There was a loud, breaking sound, and Jenny and Chowder fell through after him into the dark.

They were in a big room. There were a lot of children's things there.

'Look at this,' said DJ. It was an old circus caravan. The colours were now old and dark. It was in two parts. On one part of the caravan were some words: 'Constance the Giantess.' The kids looked at it quietly.

'This was beautiful a long time ago,' said DJ. 'Let's look in it.'

'Let's not,' said Chowder.

DJ went in. There were pictures on the walls.

Then he saw something in the cement floor. It looked like a big body.

Suddenly the floor moved. 'The floor's breaking!' shouted DJ. Then there was a strong wind.

'It's Constance,' cried Jenny. 'She's angry. She doesn't like people near her.'

Everything in the room started to move and break. The sounds were terrible. Constance knew they were there.

The wind threw the three kids out of the room.

'Run!' shouted DJ.

Chowder was at the top of the stairs. The throat opened. Suddenly the stairs went down the throat. The throat pulled at Chowder, too. The house gave a terrible cry, but Chowder didn't fall. He held one of the teeth. DJ tried to pull him up. Then the carpet tongue came out quickly and threw DJ down the throat.

'No!' cried Jenny. The house moved up and down.

Then she saw something red at the back of the throat. She pulled on it hard. The house moved up and down again.

'I can't hold...,' she shouted and fell down the red throat. But there was someone close. It was DJ. Jenny held onto his legs. DJ held onto Chowder's legs. Then a strong wind and a lot of water came up the throat. It threw the three kids out of the open door. DJ ran into the street as a car stopped in front of the house.

CHAPTER SIX

Mr. Nebbercracker's story

It was Mr. Nebbercracker. He was very white.

'No!' cried Chowder.

'You're dead. Go away!'

'You go away,' said Mr. Nebbercracker angrily.

'He's not dead,' said DJ happily.

'Of course I'm not dead. Is it Halloween today? Go away or you're going to die!' Mr. Nebbercracker turned to the house. 'I'm home, my love.' The house started to cry.

'Look at your windows and your walls,' he said quietly.

'But it isn't a problem.

We can make it better. We're going to have a nice, quiet evening. Like every year. No children - only us.'

'It's her,' said DJ. 'The house is her. Mr. Nebbercracker, I know about Constance. I saw her.'

There was a surprised sound from the house.

'Were you in my house?' cried Mr. Nebbercracker.

'I know she died,' said DJ.

'I loved her,' said Mr. Nebbercracker sadly. He told them Constance's story. The kids saw the pictures in their heads...

They were in Constance's caravan at the circus. There was happy music and circus sounds. People looked at Constance the Giantess in her caravan. They laughed and threw things at her. She was sad and alone. She looked at the floor and tried to forget the people.

One day a boy threw old vegetables at her. Constance was very angry and she shouted at the boy. A young man came and held the boy's arm. It was Mr. Nebbercracker. That night he went to Constance's caravan and they talked. He thought she was beautiful. Mr. Nebbercracker took Constance's caravan away from the circus. They found a place to build a home.

Mr. Nebbercracker started to build a lovely house and made a big hole for the cement. The cement was almost ready. He decided to break Constance's caravan. Then something terrible happened. He heard a loud cry. It was Halloween and some young children came to trick-or-treat. When they saw Constance, they started to throw things at her.

'Go away!' shouted Mr. Nebbercracker.

Some of the things hit Constance. The children just laughed.

'It's always going to be like this,' cried Constance.

She shouted at the children. She tried to run, but she fell into the big hole and the cement fell on top of her. There was a terrible cry, and Constance the Giantess died.

'So, I finished the house,' Mr. Nebbercracker said to DJ. 'She died, but she didn't leave. She hates children and she's often angry at them. I try to stop her. At Halloween it's very hard.'

The house started to make loud sounds.

'I'm coming, my love,' said Mr. Nebbercracker. 'And you children must go.'

But DJ held his arm. 'No, Mr. Nebbercracker. You have your life. It's time to leave Constance.'

'She's all I have,' said Mr. Nebbercracker sadly.

'No,' said DJ. 'You have me, too. I'm your friend.' He took Mr. Nebbercracker's hand and they walked away.

Mr. Nebbercracker was happy, but the house wasn't. It was very, very angry. Suddenly there was a terrible sound. DJ and Mr. Nebbercracker looked back. The house was moving again!

CHAPTER SEVEN

Goodbye, Constance!

Mr. Nebbercracker and the three kids ran to the Danger Zone. The house was behind them. It was angry. It was strong. And it was close! Mr. Nebbercracker threw hard bits of cement at the house. 'Stay away from them!' he shouted.

Constance saw Mr. Nebbercracker and stopped. She was quiet.

'You were a bad girl,' said Mr. Nebbercracker. 'I must do this.' He carefully took some dynamite from his bag.

Constance saw it and gave an angry cry. Suddenly there were lights and a loud sound. It was the big digger, and Chowder was the driver.

'How did you learn to drive this?' Jenny asked Chowder.

'I didn't!' answered Chowder.

DJ ran to Mr. Nebbercracker. He gave DJ the dynamite. 'Take this,' he said. 'I started it. You finish it. The dynamite's ready. You have three minutes and eighteen seconds.'

DJ looked at the house. 'Where do I throw it?' he thought. Then he saw the smoke and remembered the fire - the heart.

The digger and the house were now face to face. Then DJ saw the tall crane, high over the Danger Zone.

'Chowder,' he shouted. 'Try to move the house under the crane!'

Suddenly the digger turned and moved to the crane.

The house tried to turn but it fell. There was a loud sound. The house started to break. There were parts of the house all over the Danger Zone.

DJ and Jenny went up in the crane. But where was Chowder?

Then they heard him. 'Hey,' shouted Chowder. 'I did it. Me! The house is dead!'

But it wasn't dead. All the parts of the house came back together again to make a new house. This time it was a worse monster than before. It looked terrible.

Chowder drove the digger quickly to the crane. The new monster house followed. The door opened and the mouth closed on the arm of the digger. It took the digger up high. Chowder fell out and then the tongue took the digger. Chowder ran. The house followed.

DJ looked down the arm of the crane. He was frightened. 'I can't do it!' he said.

'You can,' said Jenny and she smiled at him.

'Yes,' he thought, 'I can.' He moved to the end of the arm.

DJ looked down. There was the house. There was the smoke. DJ threw the dynamite into the smoke - into the heart of the house.

Everything was very quiet. The house didn't move. It didn't look like a monster house now. It looked clean and quiet like before. The kids waited. Was it over? Did DJ throw the dynamite in the right place?

Little sounds started to come from the house. Then they were bigger and louder. Suddenly there was a great white light and the house was a ball of fire. Cement, windows, walls and floor rained down from the sky.

The kids shouted and danced. 'We did it. The house is dead!'

Then something happened. A strong wind came and moved all the parts of the house. They all came together in the sky. It was Constance, big and beautiful again. 'Constance,' said DJ quietly.

Mr. Nebbercracker looked up. 'My love, goodbye,' he cried.

Constance smiled. She put her arms around Mr. Nebbercracker. Then the wind came again, and there was only the sky.

'I'm sorry about your... house... erm... wife,' said DJ. 'Constance is happy now,' said Mr. Nebbercracker.

There was a light in his eyes. 'And I can live my life. Thank you.'

It was Halloween night. There were trick-or-treaters on Mr. Nebbercracker's lawn. They came to get their things. There were bikes, basketballs, footballs and kites.

DJ gave the bike back to the little girl.

'Thank you,' she said and smiled. Then she went between the trees and the lovely gardens of Oak Street.

Jenny put her arms around the boys. 'We must do something together again soon,' she said. Then she left with her mom.

'We are too old for treat-or-treating,' said Chowder.

'Yes,' said DJ.

‘But we had a very difficult evening.’

‘Yes,’ said DJ.

‘Time for treats?’

‘Yeah. Time for treats!’ And the boys ran down the road.

Some people came out of the big hole in Mr. Nebbercracker’s garden. Bones was first. He looked very surprised. Then the two policemen came out. Bones looked at them. ‘Happy Halloween,’ he said and smiled. He held his red kite in his hands.

‘You, too,’ said Landers. ‘Happy Halloween!’

- THE END -