

THE ROBOZONIC SERIES  
BY CALINE TAN IS NOW  
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# DRAGONFLY RESCUE

WRITTEN & ILLUSTRATED BY  
CALINE TAN

# CHAPTER 1

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12:10pm

“Excuse me! Excuse me! Excuse me!”

Mabel weaved her way speedily through the crowd in the canteen. Destination – the toilet located at the other end. Her stomach had been *churning* since she stepped out of the house in the morning. To make matters worse, it had been raining cats and dogs. She had to hold the umbrella in one hand and hug her bag

*churning:*  
producing strong  
motion



with the other to prevent it from getting wet. At the same time, she had to try to stop herself from pooping in her pants.

It was probably the expired chocolate that she had eaten earlier. Her mother stored the chocolates, sweets and biscuits from birthday goodie bags for her and her brother in the kitchen cabinet. They were only allowed to eat the goodies occasionally, so they usually ended up not finishing them all.

Mabel's mother was clearing the cabinet in the morning and had asked her to throw away a bar of expired chocolate. But Mabel had thought it would be such a waste, so she secretly brought it to her room and devoured the whole bar by herself.

Now, she totally regretted it.

Her stomach was hurting like mad. She felt an urge to fart. She made an effort to control herself but her rumbling tummy refused to

cooperate. She let out a silent fart. A strong **pungent** odour reached her nose. She sped away from the “danger” zone.

At last, she charged into the toilet, entered the nearest cubicle and slammed the door shut. It was only when she sat on the toilet bowl that her muscles finally relaxed.



“Can you smell that, Robozonic?” Mabel asked.

“Luckily, I can’t,” Robozonic replied.

Robozonic was a special gadget from the future that Mabel had found on her way to school one day. It could communicate with all living things – humans, animals and even plants!



“Can you taste things?” she asked again.

“No, I can’t,” Robozonic said. “Why are you chatting with me in a toilet full of poo? Please hurry. Even though I can’t smell anything, I know what you are doing and it’s disgusting.”

“Fine, fine,” Mabel said as her hands reached for the toilet paper. But she was only grasping at air. There was no paper!

“Robozonic, there’s no toilet paper in this cubicle!” she cried exasperatedly.

“Did you check properly?” Robozonic replied.

“What’s there to check? The toilet roll is empty!”

“Don’t you have tissue with you?”

“I don’t carry tissue with me.”

“Why not? You should. You never know when you might need tissue. Like now.”

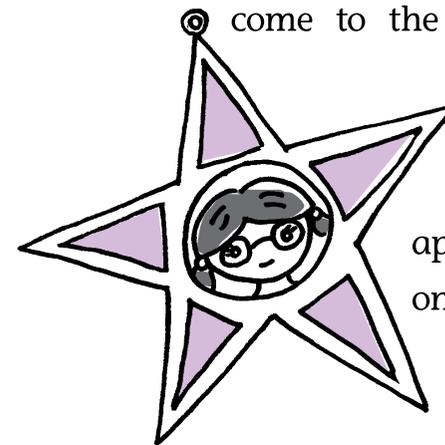
“Robozonic, I’m desperate here. I don’t think now’s a good time for one of your mini-lectures.”

“Sorry, I can’t help it. Well, why don’t you use your Robostar to ask Julie for help?”

“Oh, yes!”

Robostar was a mini-communicator that Robozonic had given Mabel. It worked just like a walkie-talkie. Julie, Mabel’s best friend, also had one so Mabel would be able to talk to Julie using her Robostar.

She took out the Robostar, which was attached to a ribbon that she wore around her neck whenever she was in school. She pressed the button on her Robostar and said, “Julie,



come to the toilet now! IT’S AN EMERGENCY!”

A split second later, Julie’s face appeared on the screen on Mabel’s Robostar.

“Shhhhhhh!” Julie said. “Not so

loud. I'm in the library. Which toilet are you at?"

"The canteen toilet!" Mabel replied.

"Coming!"

While Mabel sat on the toilet bowl waiting for Julie, she heard a buzzing sound.

"Robozonic, did you hear that?" she asked.

"What?" Robozonic replied.

"There's a buzzing sound in the toilet. But it doesn't sound like a bee."

"Let me see... oh, I know, it's a dragonfly!"

"What's a dragonfly doing in the toilet?"

"I don't know. Let me ask."

Mabel waited impatiently as Robozonic spoke with the dragonfly. She was feeling uncomfortable on the toilet seat. She wriggled her toes. She scratched her back. She twiddled her thumbs. And she had to hold her breath several times to stop herself from inhaling the foul air.

Finally, Robozonic said, "The dragonfly says it flew into the toilet to escape the heavy rain."

"Where is it? Can you let me talk to it too?" Mabel asked.

Robozonic not only could communicate with plants and animals, he could also tune the sound waves to enable Mabel and Julie to talk to them too. Recently, a squirrel in the park near Mabel's home had told them that the tree it lived in was about to be cut down. Luckily, they managed to help save its home.

Before Robozonic could reply, Julie scooted into the toilet.

"My gosh! Did you just bomb? The smell could probably kill an elephant!"

Julie exclaimed.

"Julie! My saviour!" Mabel cried. "There's no toilet paper in this cubicle.

Can you check the other cubicles?"

saviour  
someone who rescues  
another from danger  
or difficulty



Julie went to another cubicle and found some toilet paper. She pulled several pieces out of the dispenser and passed them to Mabel through the gap below the partition wall.

“Thank you for coming to my rescue, Julie!” Mabel said when she came out of the toilet. She jumped forward to give Julie a hug. Julie ducked and cried out, “Wash your hands, please!”

“Oh, yes!” Mabel hurried to the basin to wash her hands. “Luckily we have Robostars. Otherwise I’d be stuck in the toilet cubicle.”

“What’s that buzzing sound?” Julie asked.

“Oh, it’s a dragonfly. It told Robozonic that it flew into the toilet to take shelter from the rain,” Mabel said.

“Can we talk to it?” Julie asked.

“Sure,” Robozonic replied. “It’s in the last cubicle. Go ahead and talk to it. I’ve tuned the sound waves so it can understand you.”

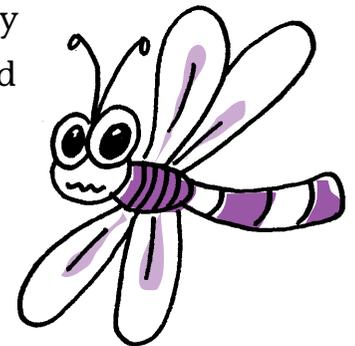
Mabel and Julie walked to the last cubicle in the toilet. The buzzing sound was louder than before. The door was ajar. Mabel gave it a gentle nudge and it opened wide. They saw a beautiful blue dragonfly fluttering its wings, flying from one corner of the cubicle to another.

“Hello, little blue dragonfly,” Mabel said. “I’m Mabel and this is Julie. Do you need help?”

“Hello, Mabel and Julie,” the blue dragonfly said. “I’m just staying here to wait for the rain to stop. But it looks like it might be a while before it does.”

The blue dragonfly stopped flying and rested on the floor.

“Yeah, I don’t think the rain will stop any time



soon,” Julie said, agreeing. “It might even continue raining heavily until tomorrow. But it’s dangerous for you to stay here for too long. You could get eaten by a lizard or something.”

“I know,” the blue dragonfly said, “especially when I can’t fly now because of the wet weather. I need the sun to warm up my wings so I can fly fast.”

“We can look after you and keep you in a safe place until the rain stops,” Julie said. She was an animal lover and hated to see any animal in **distress**.



“Thank you so much!” the blue dragonfly said.

Julie stretched out her hand towards the blue dragonfly. It flew and landed on her hand. The two children then walked out of the toilet to their classroom.

Mrs Lim, their form teacher, was not in class yet. They proceeded straight to Julie’s seat. Julie placed the dragonfly **GINGERLY** on her desk. Then she took out her lunch box and emptied the biscuits inside onto a piece of tissue. She used another piece of tissue to clean the lunch box and deposited the dragonfly in the lunch box.



“You can stay here while we have our lessons,” Julie said. “But don’t make any noise. If not, the teacher will not let me keep you here.”

“Thank you, Julie,” said the blue dragonfly, “I won’t make a single sound.”