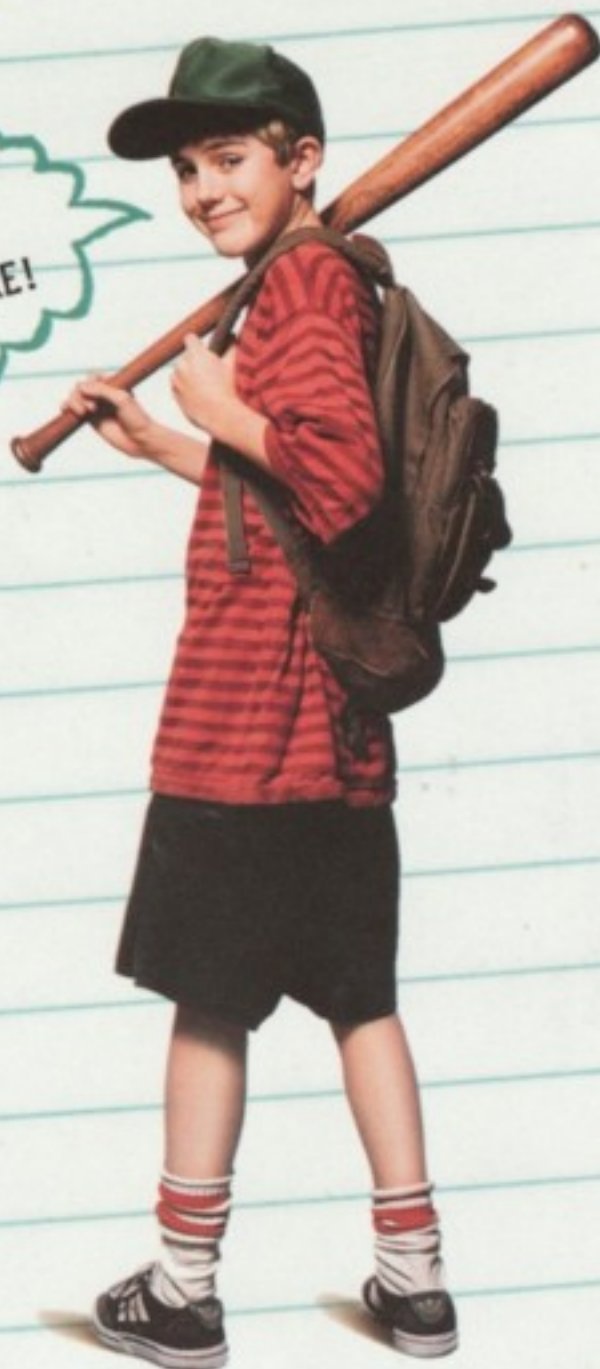


Barbara Park



# SKINNY- BONES

Big game  
plus big mouth  
equals BIG MISTAKE!





## chapter one

# ME AND THE KID WITH THE WOODEN NOSE

MY CAT EATS KITTY FRITTERS BECAUSE...

*If she didn't eat Kitty Fritters, she would die of starvation.*

*Kitty Fritters is the only cat food my mother will buy. She buys it because she says it's cheap. She says she doesn't care how it tastes, or what it's made out of. My mother is not the kind of person who believes that an animal is a member of the family. She is one of those people who thinks a cat is just a cat.*

*I have an aunt who thinks that her cat is a real person. Every time we go over there, she has the cat dressed up in this little sweater that says PRINCESS KITTY on the front.*

*This aunt of mine wouldn't be caught dead giv-*



*ing her cat Kitty Fritters. She says that Kitty Fritters taste like rubber. I'd hate to think that my aunt has actually tasted Kitty Fritters herself, but how else would she know? My mother says that my aunt has a screw loose somewhere.*

*Anyway, I think you should keep on making Kitty Fritters as long as there are people like my mother, who don't think cats mind eating rubber.*

*THE END*

After I finished writing my comments, I went to the closet and took the bag of Kitty Fritters off the bottom shelf. I turned to the back of the bag and read the rest of the directions. It said:

COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE:

MY CAT EATS KITTY FRITTERS BECAUSE...

Then print your name and address on the entry blank enclosed in this bag. Mail your entry to:

KITTY FRITTERS TV CONTEST

P.O. Box 2343

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

I dug down into the bag, trying to find the entry blank, but I couldn't feel it anywhere. I tried again, reaching into the other side this time. But still no luck.

Finally, I got so frustrated, I dumped the entire twenty-five-pound bag of cat food out onto the kitchen floor. Even then, I must have sifted through about a million fritters before I found the stupid thing.

At last, I put it on the table and began to fill it out.

NAME: Alex Frankovitch

ADDRESS: 2567 Delaney Street

CITY: Phoenix STATE: Arizona ZIP: 85000

Just as I finished up, I heard the cat scratching at the door. I figured she had probably smelled the odor of fritters all the way down the block.

“Go away, Fluffy!” I shouted. “You can’t eat right now. I’m busy!”

I had to get the cat food mess cleaned up before my mother got home.

“Alex Frankovitch! You open this door!” shouted Fluffy.

Fluffy? Fluffy was *talking* now?

No...wait! It was my *mother*!

I hurried to let her in.

“Why were you scratching?” I asked as she hurried past me.

It was a stupid question. She was carrying two bags of groceries.



# PLAY BALL?

**“I**’ve played Little League baseball for six years now. But to tell you the truth, I’m not exactly what you’d call a real good athlete. Actually, I’m not even real okay. Basically, what I’m trying to say here is, I stink.”

For the smallest kid on the baseball team, Alex “Skinnybones” Frankovitch has a major-league big mouth! But even Alex knows he’s gone too far when he brags his way into a pitching contest with T. J. Stoner, the best baseball player—and the biggest creep—in the entire school. What a mistake! This might be one mess that not even Alex can talk his way out of. . . .

**“Park is one of the funniest writers around . . . *Skinnybones* equals tickled funny bones.” —Booklist**

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