

ACE AGENT SPYCAT

and the Flying Sidekick



“Cat-chy and pawsome!
A fun read.”

—Monica Lim, co-author of the
bestselling Secrets of Singapore series

DARREN LIM

ACE AGENT SPYCAT

and the Flying Sidekick



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WRITTEN BY
DARREN LIM

ILLUSTRATED BY
LAI HUI LI



EPIGRAM
SINGAPORE • LONDON



To all sidekicks

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Illustrations by Lai Hui Li

Published in Singapore by Epigram Books
www.epigrambooks.sg

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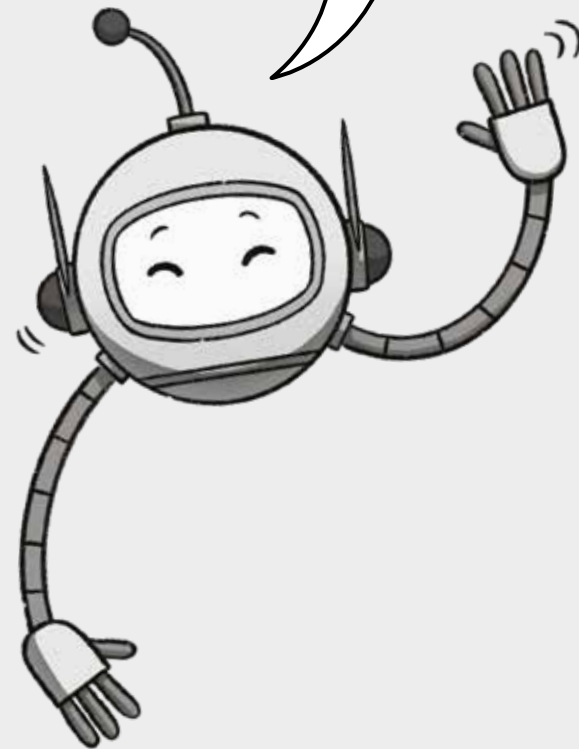
**National Library Board, Singapore
Cataloguing-in-Publication Data**

Names: Lim, Darren, 1986- | Lai, Hui Li, illustrator.
Title: Ace agent Spycat and the flying sidekick / written by Darren Lim ; illustrated by Lai Hui Li.
Description: Singapore : Epigram Books, 2020. | Series: Ace agent Spycat.
Identifiers: OCN 1153927418 | ISBN 978-981-49-0106-2 (paperback) | 978-981-49-0107-9 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Cats—Juvenile fiction. | Crime investigation—Juvenile fiction. | Spy stories.
Classification: DDC S823—dc23

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

First edition, July 2020.

Hi there! My name is Catcom.
I am Ace Agent Spycat's robot
assistant. Look out for me as you turn
the pages of this book. I'll be giving
you fun facts and helpful information
throughout the story.
Happy reading!





Have you heard of FELINE: the First Enforcement League for Inter-National Emergencies? It is a crime-fighting organisation and its mission is to protect the world from vile villains and lawless lawbreakers everywhere.

The League's brave agents come from all corners of the globe. No task is too big or too difficult for the agents of FELINE!

Here are three FELINE agents you will meet in this book.

SPYCAT



Say hello to Spycat, ace agent extraordinaire!
He is FELINE's number one agent.

NAME	Tom Tan Tong Kiat
RANK	Ace Agent
COUNTRY	Singapore
BIRTHDAY	29 February
HOBBY	Playing the keytar



A **keytar** is an electronic musical instrument. It has keys like a piano and is held like a guitar.

HONEYCAT



Honeycat is the Deputy Chief of FELINE.
She is in charge of FELINE missions.

NAME Catherine Melissa Catford
RANK Deputy Chief
COUNTRY United Kingdom
BIRTHDAY 31 December
HOBBY Photography

ROCKCAT



Rockcat is FELINE's newest agent.
He is a tech whiz and budding inventor.

NAME Ricky Felix Petrelli
RANK Junior Agent
COUNTRY United States of America
BIRTHDAY 4 July
HOBBY Inventing and making things

1

The city of **Munich** was shivering through its coldest winter's night in years. It was the sort of night best spent at home, bundled up in something warm and with something hot to drink.

And that's exactly what Professor Maximilian Wolff, a famous inventor and scientist, was doing in his cosy apartment. He was seated in his living room armchair, wrapped in a blanket and sipping



Munich is a city in Germany and the capital of the German state of Bavaria. In the German language, Munich is called München.

from a mug of hot chocolate. He was also reading a book, just like you right now.

The professor was halfway through an exciting chapter when out of the blue, a soft knock came from the front door.

TOCK. TOCK. TOCK.

Professor Wolff looked up from his book. He pushed his black plastic glasses up his nose and stared at the door. All was silent. Thinking he had imagined the sound, he returned to his reading.

TOCK-TOCK-TOCK-TOCK-TOCK!

The knocking at the door came again, louder and more impatient. This time there was no mistaking it. Professor Wolff set his book and mug down on the coffee table before him and frowned. He wasn't expecting any guests. He glanced at the clock on his living room wall. It was five minutes to midnight—much too late for anyone to visit.

The professor got up from his armchair. He straightened his sweater and dusted off his trousers. Then, just as he was about to make his way to the door, it violently swung open!

KA-BLAM!

The surprised professor stumbled backwards and bumped into his coffee table. His mug tipped over, sending hot chocolate spilling everywhere—onto his book, coffee table, armchair and floor.

But there was no time to worry about the mess, for a short, egg-shaped penguin was standing at the doorway! He had a grey uniform on and a **monocle** over his left eye. And his beak was twisted into a nasty grin.



A **monocle** is a round piece of glass worn over one eye to help the wearer see more clearly. Monocles were very fashionable in the nineteenth century. You rarely see anyone wear one today.

Before Professor Wolff could utter a word, the egg-shaped penguin waddled into the apartment. Following closely behind him were two penguins in thick coats and fur hats who weren't as short. They unrolled a long red carpet through the doorway and onto Professor Wolff's living room floor.

Moments later, a towering penguin appeared at the entrance. The penguin was decked out in velvety purple robes, and a tiny gold crown sat on his head. His left flipper gripped a large **sceptre** firmly.

The royal-looking penguin strutted into the apartment on the red carpet. He stopped at the end of the carpet, an arm's length away from Professor Wolff.



A **sceptre** is a staff with jewels and ornaments that is carried by a king or queen as a symbol of royal power. Don't mix up the word "sceptre" with "spectre". A spectre is a ghost!

"Presenting His Majesty, King Blackwing!" the egg-shaped penguin squawked squeakily. "Ruler of **Antarctica** and Emperor of the Penguins!"



Antarctica is a continent, which is a very large mass of land. Antarctica is almost entirely covered in ice and is extremely cold. The South Pole, which is the southernmost point on earth, is located in Antarctica. Many penguins live on Antarctica's shores.

The penguin king Blackwing puffed out his chest proudly. "That was a marvellous introduction, Squabble," he said in a deep, booming voice to the egg-shaped penguin.

"Thank you, Your Majesty," Squabble said, bowing.

Blackwing raised his sceptre in the air with a flourish. Immediately, ten penguin guards stormed into Professor Wolff's home!

They had coats and fur hats on too and carried sharp spears in their flippers.

“Tear the place apart if you have to!” Squabble commanded the guards. “We’re not leaving until we find what we came for!”

The guards spread out to search Professor Wolff’s apartment. They ransacked rooms and flung furniture about. They basically turned the apartment upside down and inside out!

Professor Wolff, who was watching everything happen in horror, finally found his tongue. “Halt!” he shrieked, waving his arms about like windscreen wipers on a car. “What is the meaning of this?”

“Dear me, where are my manners?” Blackwing said, pretending he had just noticed Professor Wolff. “Do forgive us for dropping by uninvited, Professor. We’ll try to make this as painless as possible.”

“Your Majesty! We’ve got them!” a guard yelled.

He scuttled out of Professor Wolff’s study holding a roll of papers and a notebook.

Professor Wolff gasped. “Those are the plans and notes for an important invention of mine!” he exclaimed. “You can’t have them!”

“You won’t miss them one bit, Professor,” Blackwing said as he received the papers and notebook from the guard. “You’re coming along with us too.”

“I beg your pardon?” Professor Wolff responded breathlessly.

Blackwing leafed through the papers and smirked. “You heard me,” he said to the professor. “I’ll need your help to build the wonderful invention you’ve designed in these plans.”

The normally mild-mannered Professor Wolff grew angry. “No!” he growled, his nostrils flaring wide. “I’m not going anywhere, and I’m *not* building my invention for you!”

“Let’s try this again, shall we?” Blackwing said calmly. He signalled to two guards near the door and gave them an order. “Snowstorm! Bad-Egg! Bring her in!”

The guards quickly waddled out of the apartment. Seconds later, they returned with a little wolf girl dressed in winter clothing. She was



Professor Wolff’s three-year-old granddaughter, Anneliese. A cloth gag over her mouth muffled her screams, and her arms were bound to her sides with rope. No matter how much she squirmed and kicked to try to break free, the guards held on to her tightly.

“Anneliese!” Professor Wolff cried. He scrambled towards his granddaughter but was quickly restrained by another pair of guards.



Blackwing cackled like a monster. “Go with us quietly, and your precious granddaughter will come to no harm,” he said to the professor.

Professor Wolff knew he had no choice but to give in. He stopped struggling, and after putting on warmer clothing, he let the guards lead him and Anneliese out the apartment. “You won’t get away with this,” the professor warned Blackwing.

“But I already have!” Blackwing screeched, swishing his cape triumphantly.

Then, as swiftly as they had come, the penguins departed with their captives and disappeared into the night.

2

A week afterwards in **London**, Ace Agent Spycat dashed down the corridors of **FELINE Headquarters** like a bolt of lightning. Honeycat, the Deputy Chief of FELINE, had called him in for an urgent mission.



London is the bustling capital city of England and the United Kingdom. It is situated along the banks of the River Thames in southeastern England. Over two thousand years ago, the city was founded by the ancient Romans as a settlement called Londinium.



FELINE Headquarters, located in London, is FELINE's main centre of operations. While looking like a normal brick building from the street, FELINE Headquarters is actually a vast complex stretching deep underground. A FELINE agent often receives mission orders at FELINE Headquarters.

"I wonder what the mission is about," Spycat said to himself. "Honeycat sounded really serious over the phone."

Seconds later, Spycat stopped outside a wooden office door. The door's silver **DEPUTY CHIEF** sign was so shiny that Spycat could see his black-and-white fur and red FELINE uniform reflected clearly in the metal.

TAK! TAK! TAK!

The ace agent rapped his knuckles against the door.

"Enter!" came a buttery voice from the other side.

Spycat opened the door. Behind it was a small office with green wallpaper, lovely old furniture and potted plants everywhere. A ginger cat in a cream trench coat sat at a desk, typing away on a computer.

"Good morning, Honeycat!" Spycat greeted. "I came as quickly as I could."

Honeycat looked up from her computer and smiled at Spycat. "And not a moment too soon," she said. "Come in, and have a seat."

Spycat stepped into the office and closed the door behind him. He then plopped himself down on a swivel chair and twirled one round on it before rolling up to Honeycat's desk.

"Tell me what you know about the island of **Boracay**," Honeycat said.



Boracay is pronounced boh-rah-kai. You can learn more about the island on the next page.

“**Boracay** is one of over seven thousand islands that make up **the Philippines**,” the ace agent answered. “It’s a popular tropical holiday destination with beautiful beaches.”

“Not anymore, I’m afraid,” Honeycat said, flipping her computer around so Spycat could see its screen. “Have a look at this video of Boracay. It was shot a few hours ago.”



There are many stories of how **Boracay** got its name. One says the name comes from the local word borac, which means cotton, and is a reference to the island’s white, soft sand. Another story says that the name is a combination of the local words bora (bubbles) and bocay (white).



The Philippines is a Southeast Asian country and an archipelago, which is a group of many islands. Its people are called Filipinos, and its capital is Manila. Apart from the national language Filipino, more than 170 native languages and dialects are spoken in the Philippines.

The video playing on the computer showed Boracay, but it wasn’t the Boracay Spycat knew. It was snowing heavily there, and the island’s beaches were buried under snow so thick that the sand could no longer be seen. Icicles dangled from coconut trees, ready to drop at the slightest touch. Thin sheets of ice lined the shore, resembling glass tiles. To put it simply, Boracay had frozen over!

Spycat was so shocked by the video that he sprang up from his chair and nearly knocked Honeycat’s favourite potted plant off her desk.

“Fried fishballs!” Spycat exclaimed. “It can’t be! Boracay’s weather is too warm for snow!”

“Astonishing, isn’t it?” Honeycat said, folding her arms. “No one on Boracay was prepared for snow like that. Thankfully, the **Philippine Navy** has evacuated the people on the island to safety.”



Founded in 1898, the **Philippine Navy** patrols and protects the waters of the Philippines.



Indeed, there wasn't a single soul in sight in the video. What's more, everyone had clearly fled in a hurry. Vehicles had been abandoned in the middle of the streets. Boats drifted in the sea, unattended. Homes and shops had been left with their doors wide open. Restaurant and café tables were strewn with half-eaten meals. It was as if a wizard had waved a magic wand over the island to make every last person disappear.

"What caused this sudden bout of weird weather?" Spycat said, settling back into his chair.

"I'm glad you asked," Honeycat said with a wink. "Keep watching."

The video went on to show a castle of ice floating in the sea just off Boracay! The castle had been carved from a tremendous **iceberg**, and it looked as majestic as it was sinister.



An **iceberg** is a large mass of ice that floats in open water. Icebergs can be as tall as a building and as big as a small country.

Spycat's jaw dropped. "Is that a castle made out of ice?" he asked. "And wait a minute, what's the castle doing?"

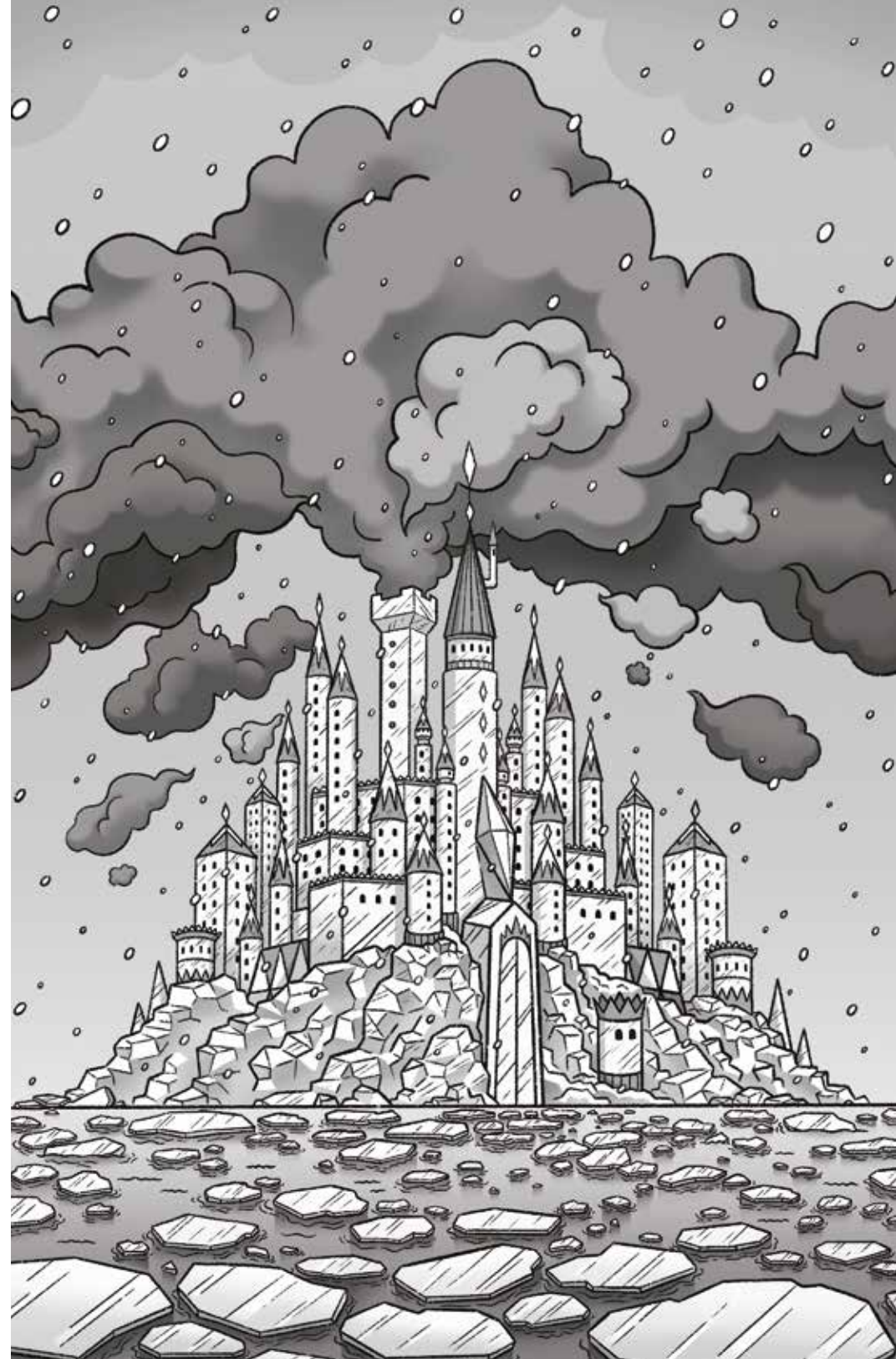
A great chimney in the centre of the castle was spewing out an inky blue gas. The gas plume rose high into the sky, forming dark clouds above Boracay. From these clouds, fluffy flakes of snow swirled down onto the island in dense flurries.

"This castle sailed into Boracay's waters earlier today," Honeycat informed Spycat. "Since it appeared, the castle has been churning out a gas that makes snow!"

Spycat leaned forward in his chair. "Has anyone gone up to the castle to tell whoever's inside to stop making snow?" he asked.

"Yes, but without success," Honeycat said with a sigh. "Any attempt to approach the castle is met by an attack of cannonballs."

Spycat's eyes grew large. "Did you say *cannonballs*?"



At that point, the video on Honeycat's computer showed cannons stationed atop many of the castle's walls and towers.

BOOM! **BOOM!** **BOOM!**
BOOM! **BOOM!** **BOOM!**

The cannons shot out cannonballs and were so loud that Honeycat's computer shook with each **BOOM**. The video then showed a close-up of one of the cannons, revealing it to be operated by penguins in coats and fur hats.

"Penguins?" Spycat said, blinking in surprise. "Who owns the castle, Honeycat?"

"The castle belongs to a penguin by the name of Blackwing," Honeycat replied. She tapped a key on her computer's keyboard, and a criminal profile popped up on the screen. It featured a photo of Blackwing as well as some details about him.

"Blackwing claims to be Ruler of Antarctica and Emperor of the Penguins," Spycat said, reading off the criminal profile. "Interesting."

"Nobody recognises these titles except Blackwing himself and a bunch of his followers," Honeycat added helpfully.

"Boracay is a long, long way from Antarctica," Spycat said, thinking hard. "Just what is Blackwing's purpose in Boracay, anyway? And why has he put the island under a cold spell? And how is he doing it?"

"That's for you to find out," Honeycat said, pointing at Spycat. "Go to Boracay this instant, get into the castle and uncover what Blackwing is up to. Most importantly, shut down whatever is producing that snow-making gas!"

Spycat was already on his feet and heading for the door. "Leave it to me!" he cried. "FELINE's number one agent will save the day faster than you can say—"

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Darren Lim is an animator, illustrator and writer who enjoys telling stories. Over the course of his creative career, he has done everything from writing scripts for animated television series to making YouTube videos. The Ace Agent Spycat series is inspired by his award-winning animated short film, *Spycat and the Paper Chase*, which has been enjoyed by children in thirty-three countries over five continents. *Ace Agent Spycat and the Flying Sidekick* is his debut novel.

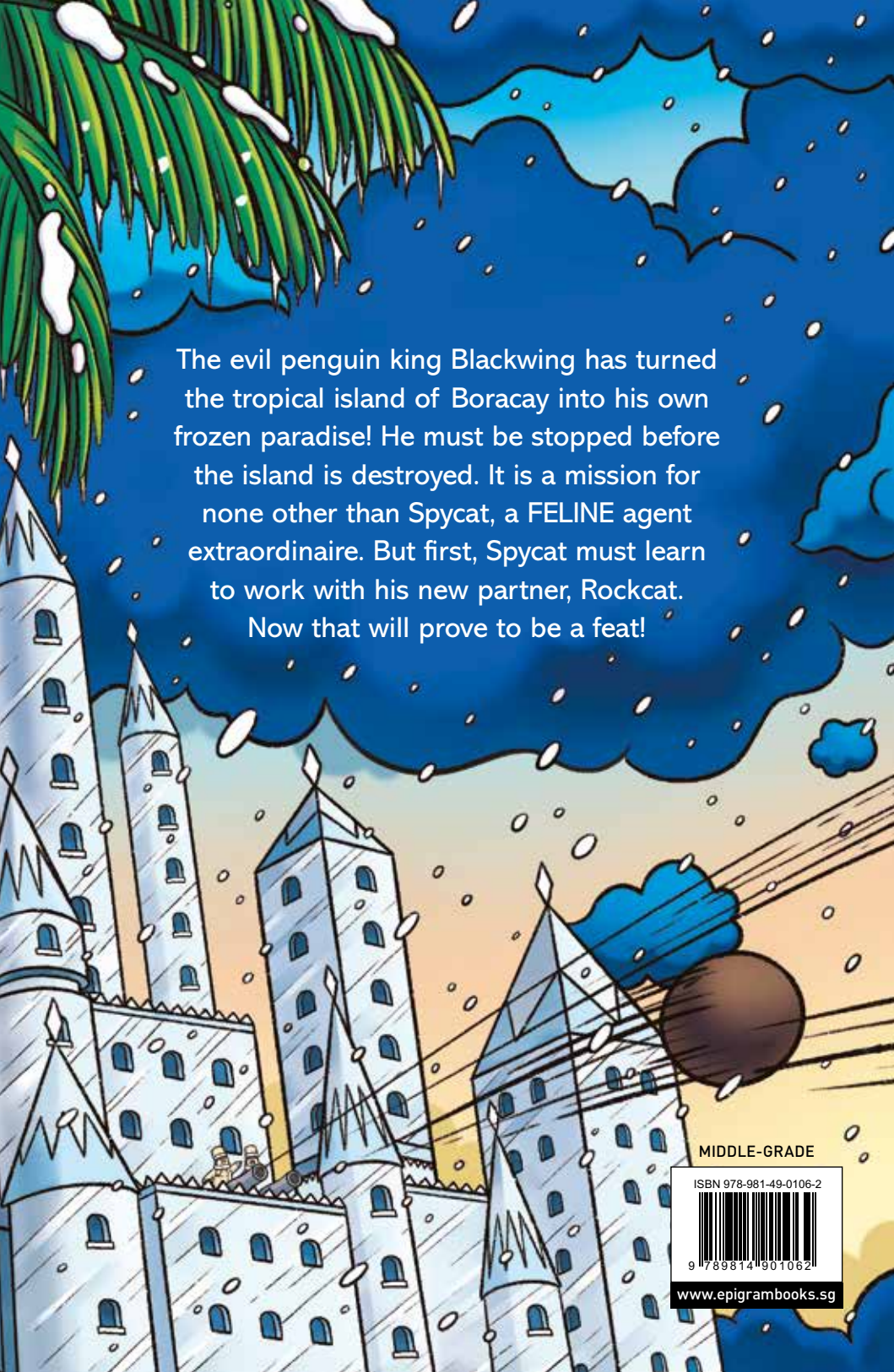
ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Lai Hui Li is currently a full-time illustrator at a local animation studio where she focuses on developing concepts, illustrations and storyboards for projects. Digital is her main medium and she occasionally works in other mediums too. She is the illustrator for *Savitri: The Task for the Mighty Demon* and *Dream Island: The Mad, Mad World of Philip Yeo*.

**FOLLOW SPYCAT AND ROCKCAT ON THEIR NEXT
ADVENTURE IN...**

**ACE AGENT
SPYCAT** 
and the Mayonnaise Mayhem

The Finders Keepers, master thieves and twins, are on their biggest stealing spree yet! This time, they have their eyes on famous landmarks from around the world. They will not stop till they have taken every landmark on their list. FELINE agents Spycat and Rockcat immediately get on the trail of the thieves. But it's not going to be an easy mission. Things get a little sticky when the Finders Keepers discover that Spycat has a dark secret.



The evil penguin king Blackwing has turned the tropical island of Boracay into his own frozen paradise! He must be stopped before the island is destroyed. It is a mission for none other than Spycat, a FELINE agent extraordinaire. But first, Spycat must learn to work with his new partner, Rockcat. Now that will prove to be a feat!

MIDDLE-GRADE

ISBN 978-981-49-0106-2



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