

# ACE AGENT SPYCAT



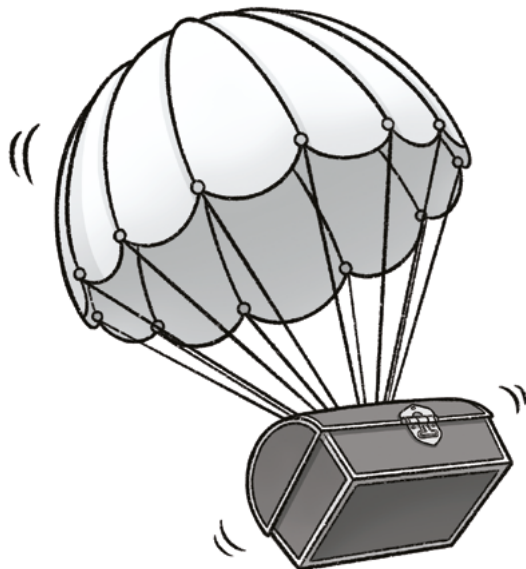
and the *Mayonnaise Mayhem*



**DARREN LIM**

# ACE AGENT SPYCAT

*and the Mayonnaise Mayhem*

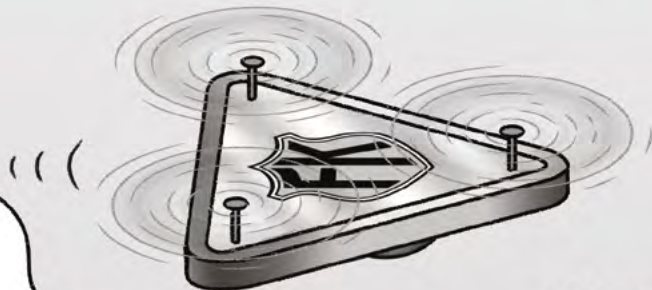
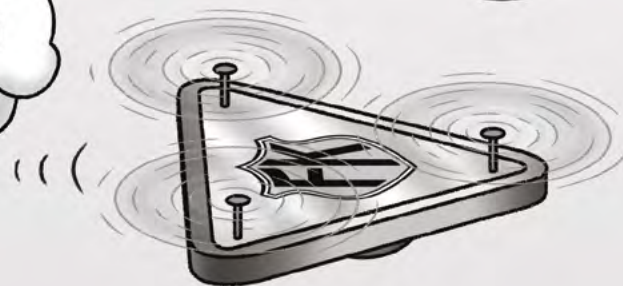
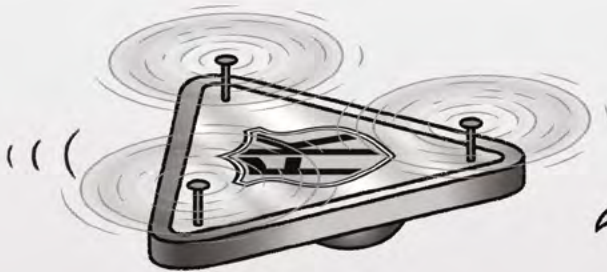
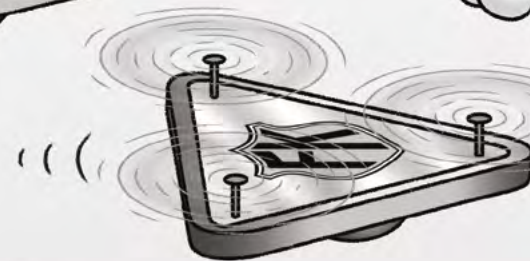
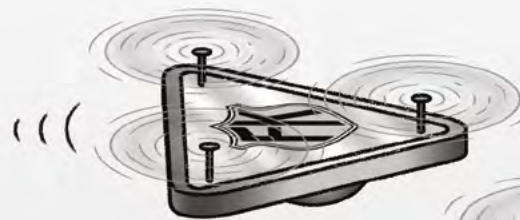
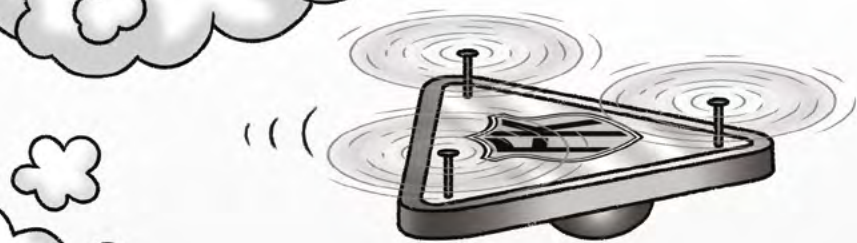


WRITTEN BY  
**DARREN LIM**

ILLUSTRATED BY  
**LAI HUI LI**

# ACE AGENT SPYCAT

and the *Mayonnaise* Mayhem



EPIGRAM



For lovers and haters of mayonnaise

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Illustrations by Lai Hui Li

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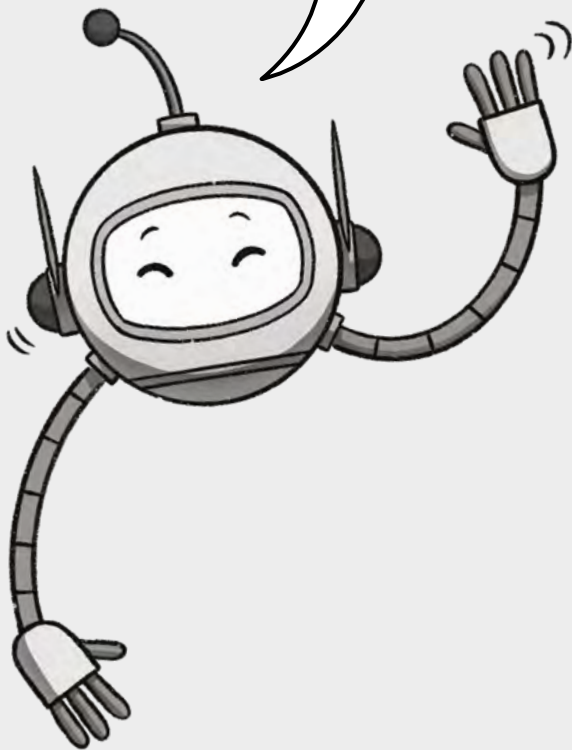
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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

First edition, April 2021.

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 four 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

# BOSSCAT



Bosscat is the Chief of FELINE.  
He expects only the best from his agents.

**NAME** Billi Singh  
**RANK** Chief  
**COUNTRY** India  
**BIRTHDAY** 1 May  
**HOBBY** Karaoke



Invented in Japan, **karaoke** is a type of entertainment in which you sing into a microphone along to pre-recorded music playing on a screen.

# 1

Deep inside FELINE Headquarters in London, fourteen floors below street level, lay Room B14-2A—a dusty, untidy storeroom filled with old gadgets and forgotten furniture.

But it wasn't just *any* storeroom. It was also the location of Junior Agent Rockcat's workshop. He had permission from Honeycat, the Deputy Chief of FELINE, to invent and make things here in his free time.

But Honeycat didn't like Rockcat working in a messy storeroom. So, on her order, the junior agent was spending the weekend sorting and clearing B14-2A's clutter.



Ace Agent Spycat, FELINE’s number one agent, was in the storeroom too, lending a helping paw. Unfortunately, the supposed great clean-up wasn’t going quite as planned.

“Oi!” Spycat exclaimed as a broken radio was snatched out of his paws by Rockcat.

“I wouldn’t trash this,” the junior agent said, putting the radio into a crate labelled **STUFF I WANNA KEEP**. The crate was jam-packed with odds and ends, and it was close to bursting.

“That radio doesn’t work anymore!” Spycat cried, his arms **akimbo**. “Can I remind you that none of these things you’re saving are even yours to begin with?”



Put your hands on your hips with your elbows pointing outwards. In this body position, you can say that your arms are **akimbo**.

“I know,” Rockcat said, grinning cheerfully. “But I can’t bear to discard such cool machines!”



Spycat sighed. “Let’s just carry on, shall we?”

The ace agent reached into the cardboard box that he and Rockcat were sifting through and picked up a book with pages falling out of it. It was a copy of *1001 Unfunny Jokes* by someone named Kent Laff.

“I don’t know who put this here or why it was ever written,” Spycat said. “I’ll dump it in the recycling bin.”

“Nope,” Rockcat said, grabbing the book from Spycat. “It looks like a decent read.”

Spycat flung his paws up in the air. “You’re barely letting anything go!” he complained. “Honeycat didn’t ask you to start the Rockcat Museum of Junk! She wanted you to spruce this place up, remember?”

“Of course I remember,” Rockcat said, wearing a smile broader than his face. “And my workshop’s so much neater and tidier than before! I couldn’t have done it without you.”

Spycat blinked in surprise and glanced around him. The clutter had hardly reduced one bit since the clean-up began. “This is neat and tidy to you?” the ace agent asked with a resigned laugh. “Where are we, Upside-Down Land?”

Rockcat was one unusual cat. The agents met just two months ago, when Honeycat assigned them to be partners and sent them on a mission together. They had since become good friends.

## **BEEP-BEEP-BEEP!**

Spycat’s ball-shaped robot assistant, Catcom, floated into the storeroom, carrying an envelope and a package. “Special delivery for Ace Agent Spycat and Junior Agent Rockcat!” the robot announced.

“Back at last,” Spycat said. “What took you so long? We sent you to pick up our mail ages ago!”

“The **FELINE Post Room**’s computer system is down, so I had to manually hunt for your mail,” Catcom answered. “I’d offer you my heartfelt apologies for the delay, but I don’t have a heart.”



All incoming and outgoing mail at FELINE Headquarters passes through the **FELINE Post Room** on Level 2.

“You’ve been waiting for the right moment to say that, haven’t you?” Spycat said, beaming at Catcom.

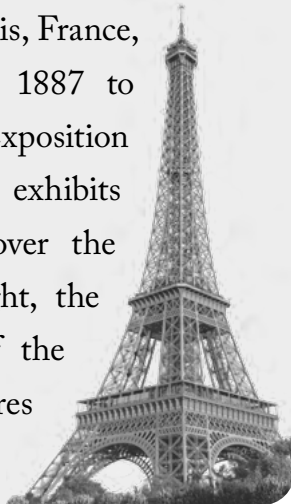
“You know I have,” Catcom said. The robot emitted a few electronic giggles before handing the agents their mail.

Rockcat opened his envelope and pulled out a glossy magazine. “Yeah!” the junior agent squealed. “It’s this month’s issue of my favourite inventor’s magazine, *Gadgets & Gizmos Galore!*”

Spycat turned his package this way and that, but he couldn’t find any information about its contents or sender. However, the postmark on the **Eiffel Tower** stamps showed that the package had been posted from **Paris** yesterday.



The **Eiffel Tower** in Paris, France, was constructed from 1887 to 1889 as the entrance to the Exposition Universelle—a fair featuring exhibits and performances from all over the world. At 324 metres in height, the wrought-iron tower is one of the world’s most recognised structures and a must-see if you visit Paris.



**Paris**, the capital of France, is situated in the north of the country, along a river called the Seine. The city’s nickname, the City of Light, comes from its historical importance as a centre of ideas and learning, and its being one of the first cities with street lighting.

“Well, there’s only one way to learn what’s inside,” Spycat said. He set the package down on Rockcat’s workbench and tore into its brown wrapper with gusto.

**RIP- RIP- RIP!**

Spycat grimaced when he saw what lay beneath the wrapper. “No!” the ace agent screamed. “No, no, *no!* Not *again!*”

## 2

Spycat stared at a small wooden box in front of him. Engraved into the box's lid were the initials FK.



Rockcat peered over Spycat's shoulder. "What is it, Spycat, what is it?" he asked excitedly.

Catcom hovered above the ace agent's other shoulder. "It's them, isn't it?" the robot said, annoyed.

"Them?" Rockcat asked, curious. "Who's *them*?"

Spycat sighed. "Watch this."

The ace agent opened the box and a bright light shone out of it. An image of the initials FK floated in the light, rotating slowly. The box was projecting a **hologram**!



A **hologram** is a three-dimensional image projected by a light source. An object that is three-dimensional has length, width and depth.

"Ooh..." Rockcat said. Mesmerised by the sight before him, he couldn't help but put his paw into the light. As his fingers touched the hologram, it distorted and made a faint **BZZT** sound. The effect amused the junior agent so much so that he started sticking his paw in and out of the hologram repeatedly.

**BZZT- BZZT-  
BZZT-  
BZZT- BZZT-  
BZZT- BZZT...**

“Ahem!” Spycat cleared his throat and gave Rockcat a stern glare.

“Sorry,” Rockcat said, stuffing his paws into his pockets.

Suddenly, the initials faded away. Then, another holographic image appeared. This one was of two raccoons standing as still as statues.

One of the raccoons wore a red jacket, a black-and-white striped shirt, black jeans frayed at the knees and black boots. The other sported a white bow, a frilly red dress, black-and-white striped leggings and black shoes.

Without warning, the box began to play a funky beat. The raccoons sprang to life and started to rap and dance.



**We're the Finders Keepers**  
**Whatever we find we keep**  
**We pilfer, pinch and plunder**  
**And we'll rob you in your sleep**  
**I'm Mac! (He's Mac!)**  
**I'm Cheese! (She's Cheese!)**  
**They call us double trouble**  
**And when we come around**  
**We're gonna burst your bubble!**

“That’s catchy,” Rockcat said, bopping his head along to the beat.

“I wish I had a theme song,” Catcom commented.

Spycat rolled his eyes. He was all too familiar with the Finders Keepers’ routine.

The raccoons ended their performance and addressed the unimpressed ace agent. “We’re *ba-ack*, Ace Agent Spycat!” they sang. “And we have a new game for you!”

“This time, we’re out to steal ten of the world’s most famous landmarks,” Mac declared.

“But which ones will they be?” Cheese teased.

“We start really soon, so you’d better be ready,” Mac said, waving his fist threateningly.

Cheese blew a kiss. “It’s playtime, Ace Agent Spycat. ***Ohhhhhh-ho-ho-ho-ho-ho!***”

Spycat and Rockcat winced as Cheese’s shrill laughter filled the storeroom. Then the hologram disappeared, and the box clicked shut.

“Who *were* they?” Rockcat asked, massaging his ringing ears.

“You heard them,” Spycat answered with exasperation. “They’re Mac and Cheese, better known as the Finders Keepers, and they’re up to their old tricks again. Catcom, bring up their criminal profile.”

“Coming right up,” Catcom said. In a flash, the Finders Keepers’ **mugshots** and information showed up on the robot’s screen.



A **mugshot** is a photo of a person who has been arrested. Mugshots feature the front and side views of a person's face and are taken by the police for their records.

“The Finders Keepers are twins and master thieves,” Spycat said, pointing to the photos. “They steal solely for the thrill of it, and when they steal, they steal *big*.”

“So, the Finders Keepers seriously plan on taking ten famous landmarks?” Rockcat asked.

“Yup,” Spycat replied. “The Finders Keepers have a peculiar **modus operandi**. They always have a list of ten things to steal, and this time, it's famous landmarks.”



A **modus operandi** is the pattern or particular way in which a criminal carries out his or her crimes.

“Cheese mentioned a game,” Rockcat said, scratching his head. “What did she mean?”

“Ever since the Finders Keepers met me, they've treated every stealing spree as a competition,” Spycat explained. “Before each theft, the Finders Keepers leave me a clue to what they're after. I have to quickly solve the clue and get to wherever they're going fast enough to stop them. Their goal is to stay ahead of me and successfully steal their target.”

“So they're challenging you...and also themselves?” Rockcat asked.

“Correct,” Spycat confirmed. “And the cycle continues until I nab the Finders Keepers or they finish stealing everything on their list. Luckily, I've never failed to put them behind bars. I'm also the only one ever to have caught them! **Twice**, as a matter of fact.”



Spycat has stopped the Finders Keepers **twice** before: once from stealing precious artworks, and on another occasion, from stealing secret recipes of famous foods.

“Really?” Rockcat exclaimed. “Wow!”

“Unfortunately, they’re such skilled thieves that both times they escaped by stealing the prison they were locked in,” Spycat added.

Rockcat looked astonished. “What?” he cried. “How’d they do that?”

Spycat chuckled. “You’ll be amazed what the Finders Keepers can do with a food tray, a plastic spoon and a single peeled orange.”

Before Rockcat could press Spycat for details, Honeycat rushed through the storeroom’s open door.

“Put a hold on your cleaning,” the FELINE deputy chief said in a smooth, commanding voice. “You’ve got a bigger mess to take care of. Catcom, show us Paris.”

Catcom’s screen switched from the Finders Keepers’ criminal profile to a sweeping view of Paris. The city was its usual enchanting self, but a well-known structure was missing.

“Fried fishballs!” Spycat yelled. “Where’s the Eiffel Tower?!”

Honeycat shook her head. “The Finders Keepers are at it again,” she said.

“Mac wasn’t kidding about starting soon,” Rockcat remarked.

A look of realisation crossed Spycat’s face and he picked up the shredded wrapper from underneath the Finders Keepers box. “The Eiffel Tower stamps were the first clue!” he shouted.

“Brush up on your **French**, agents,” Honeycat said, folding her arms. “You’re needed in Paris immediately.”



The **French** language is spoken in France and many former French colonies. There are also French-speaking parts of Belgium, Canada and Switzerland. A person who speaks French as a main language is called a francophone.



## 3

Spycat and Rockcat flew to Paris in Spycat's personal aircraft, the Catjet. Before long, they were standing in the office of Claude Poulet, the president of France. President Poulet, a rooster in a grey suit and glasses, was glad to see the agents.

“**Bonjour!**” Spycat greeted the French president. “I’m Ace Agent Spycat from FELINE, and this is Junior Agent Rockcat, my partner. We’re here about the Eiffel Tower.”



**Bonjour** is French for good day or hello.

“Thank you for coming at such short notice,” President Poulet said, shaking Spycat’s and Rockcat’s paws. “This way, please.”

The French president led the agents to his desk. A laptop was there, along with three steaming cups of coffee and a plate of bite-size prawn pastries.

“Help yourselves,” President Poulet said. He gestured to the food and drink with an outstretched wing as he and the agents took their seats.

Rockcat didn’t need to be invited twice. He picked up a pastry and popped it in his mouth. “Mmm...” he said. “This is delish! Try one, Spycat.”

Spycat reached for a pastry, but before he could take one, he drew back his paw. He squirmed in his chair and looked uneasy.

“Don’t you want any?” Rockcat asked with his mouth full.

“Um...no thanks,” Spycat replied, giving Rockcat a forced smile. “I’m, uh, not hungry.”

“Oh, okay,” Rockcat said. “More for me then!”

The junior agent shovelled the rest of the pastries into his mouth without another thought. Once the plate was cleared, Spycat seemed to relax.

“Let’s get down to business,” President Poulet said after taking a sip of his coffee. “The French police have obtained footage of the thieves in action. I’ll show it to you.”



The French president went on to play a video on his laptop. It showed the Eiffel Tower shrouded in thick smoke and people coughing and crying as they fled from the massive monument.

Circling the top of the Eiffel Tower was an aircraft. Inside it, Mac was smirking, while Cheese was laughing her head off.

“See that contraption the Finders Keepers are flying in?” Spycat whispered to Rockcat. “They call it the Peapod.”

“Why the Peapod?” Rockcat asked, looking confused.

“Well, the Finders Keepers are twins, right?” Spycat answered. “And twins are as alike...as two peas in a pod.”

Rockcat groaned and slapped his paw against his forehead. “That’s so corny!” he exclaimed.

“What happens next will astound both of you,” President Poulet cut in.

The French president wasn't exaggerating. Spycat and Rockcat did a **double take** as the video showed a swarm of **drones** descending from the clouds. The drones were orange and triangular in shape, and there were thousands of them. It was as if a bag of gigantic tortilla chips had been emptied over the Eiffel Tower!



Have you ever glanced at someone or something so surprising that you quickly took a second look? This action is called a **double take**.



A **drone** is an aircraft without a pilot that is guided by remote control or computers.

== **ZOOT!**  
 == **ZOOT!**  
 == **ZOOT!**

The drones surrounded the tower and shot out metal cables that hooked onto it.

**CREAK-  
 EEE-  
 CRACKLE-  
 CRUNCH!**

With one mighty heave, the drones ripped the tower out of the ground and lifted it into the air!

"That was *epic!*" Rockcat screamed, clapping his paws on his cheeks.

Spycat leaned close to the laptop's screen as the Peapod and drones whisked the Eiffel Tower away. "Look," he said. "There's a Finders Keepers box tied to a tiny parachute, floating down from the Peapod."

"I have that box right here with me," President Poulet said. He removed it from one of the desk's drawers and set it down in front of the agents.

Spycat opened the box's lid gingerly. Inside was a card with words that didn't make sense:

AIRSPONGE GOTAN ANGRANITE  
 ISITUNA GURUAYU HOTAPEI  
 MONA DINFLAN GUMBOXRULE  
 NICELAD SODABARB DUORACE  
 USAIRS HANDTAIL MEENY

“These words are the clue to the Finders Keepers’ next theft,” Spycat said, his eyes narrowing.

“Their *next* theft?” President Poulet clucked with concern. “Are you telling me these crooks are going to strike again?”

“Not if we get to them first,” Spycat said, punching his palm with his fist.

Rockcat examined the words on the card and stroked his chin. “Interesting,” he said. “*Veeeeery* interesting.”

Spycat raised an eyebrow. “You have no idea what the words mean, do you?” he said to the junior agent.

“Not a clue,” Rockcat said with a goofy grin.

Spycat looked hard at the card, and the wheels in his head turned. Then something clicked. “Hey!” the ace agent hollered. “The first word unscrambles to form the country I’m from—**Singapore!**”



**Singapore** is a small city-state in Southeast Asia. Its name has roots in the Malay and Sanskrit languages and means Lion City. The country is made up of many tiny islands, but almost everyone lives on the largest one—the main Singapore island. Singapore is an important port city and one of the busiest in the world.

“You’re right!” Rockcat cried.

“I bet the other words are jumbled up country names too,” Spycat continued. “Let’s see...”



Can you unscramble the other country names? When you’re done, turn the page to check if you got them correct!

Spycat dug into his trouser pocket and took out a tablet computer. It was Catcom, who was in portable mode to save energy. “Engage standard mode,” the ace agent ordered the robot.

Catcom flew up into the air and transformed into its regular ball shape. “How may I be of service?” the robot asked.

Spycat pointed to the card. “Could you rearrange these mixed-up country names for us, please?” he asked.

“Certainly,” Catcom said. Straight away, the robot displayed the corrected country names.



SINGAPORE TONGA ARGENTINA  
TUNISIA URUGUAY ETHIOPIA  
OMAN FINLAND LUXEMBOURG  
ICELAND BARBADOS ECUADOR  
RUSSIA THAILAND YEMEN

Rockcat’s eyes ran across Catcom’s screen. “Could these be countries the Finders Keepers want to steal famous landmarks from?” he asked.

“I doubt it,” Spycat said, counting the country names. “The Finders Keepers told us they’d steal ten famous landmarks. That means there should be a maximum of ten countries here, not fifteen. What’s more, this clue is supposed to lead us to the second famous landmark on the Finders Keepers’ list, not to all of them. And have you noticed that France isn’t one of the countries, even though the Eiffel Tower’s been stolen?”

President Poulet looked upset. “I can’t understand why the Finders Keepers have to make matters so complicated,” he said. “Why don’t they just spell out what they want?”

Spycat leapt up from his chair as if he had been pricked by a pin. “I got it!” he yelled. “Look at the first letter of each country name. What do they *spell* out?”

Rockcat and President Poulet glanced back at the country names on Catcom's screen. Almost instantly, they shouted the answer in unison.

**“Statue of Liberty!”**



The **Statue of Liberty** is a gift of friendship from the people of France to the people of the United States of America. Since 1886, the statue has stood on Liberty Island in New York City. Originally brown as its outer layer is made of copper sheets, the statue eventually tarnished to the signature green colour we see today.



“Thank you for your time,” Spycat said to President Poulet. “We’re sorry to have to leave so soon. I promise we’ll get to the bottom of things and bring back the Eiffel Tower.”

Then the ace agent beckoned Rockcat and Catcom to follow him. “We depart for **New York City!**”



**New York City** is the most populous city in the United States of America. It is sometimes called The Big Apple or The City That Never Sleeps, and is a major global centre for business, culture, media and politics. Did you know that as many as eight hundred languages are spoken in New York City?

## 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. He is the author of *Ace Agent Spycat and the Flying Sidekick*, published by Epigram in 2020. 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.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

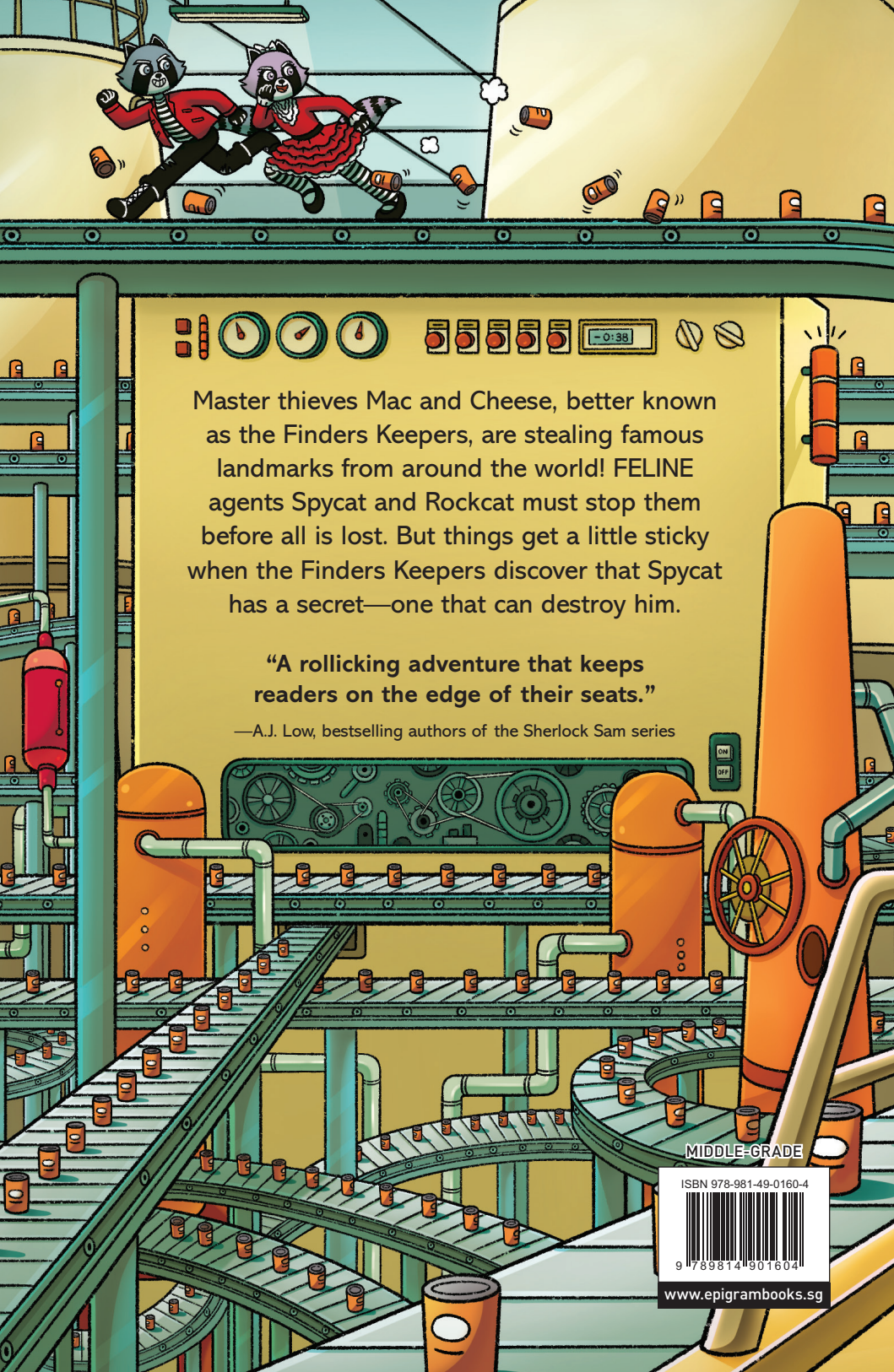
Lai Hui Li is currently a full-time illustrator at a local animation studio where she focuses on developing concepts, illustrations and storyboards for projects. Digital is her main medium, and she occasionally works in other mediums too. She is the illustrator for *Savitri: The Task for the Mighty Demon*,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

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

**ACE AGENT  
SPYCAT**   
*and the Nameless Note*

All is not as it seems with Roman Ratrocius, the charming owner and host of a popular TV shopping channel. After discovering a mysterious note pleading for help inside one of Ratrocius' products, Spycat and Rockcat set out to investigate. But dangers and secrets lurk everywhere the FELINE agents go...





Master thieves Mac and Cheese, better known as the Finders Keepers, are stealing famous landmarks from around the world! FELINE agents Spycat and Rockcat must stop them before all is lost. But things get a little sticky when the Finders Keepers discover that Spycat has a secret—one that can destroy him.

**“A rollicking adventure that keeps readers on the edge of their seats.”**

—A.J. Low, bestselling authors of the Sherlock Sam series

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