

# THE **MINOR** MIRACLE

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF NOAH MINOR



**SNEAK  
PEEK**

SAMPLE ONLY



WRITTEN BY  
**MEREDITH DAVIS**

ILLUSTRATED BY  
**BILLY YONG**



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**TO MY OWN PERSONAL SUPERHERO,  
MY HUSBAND, CLAY DAVIS**

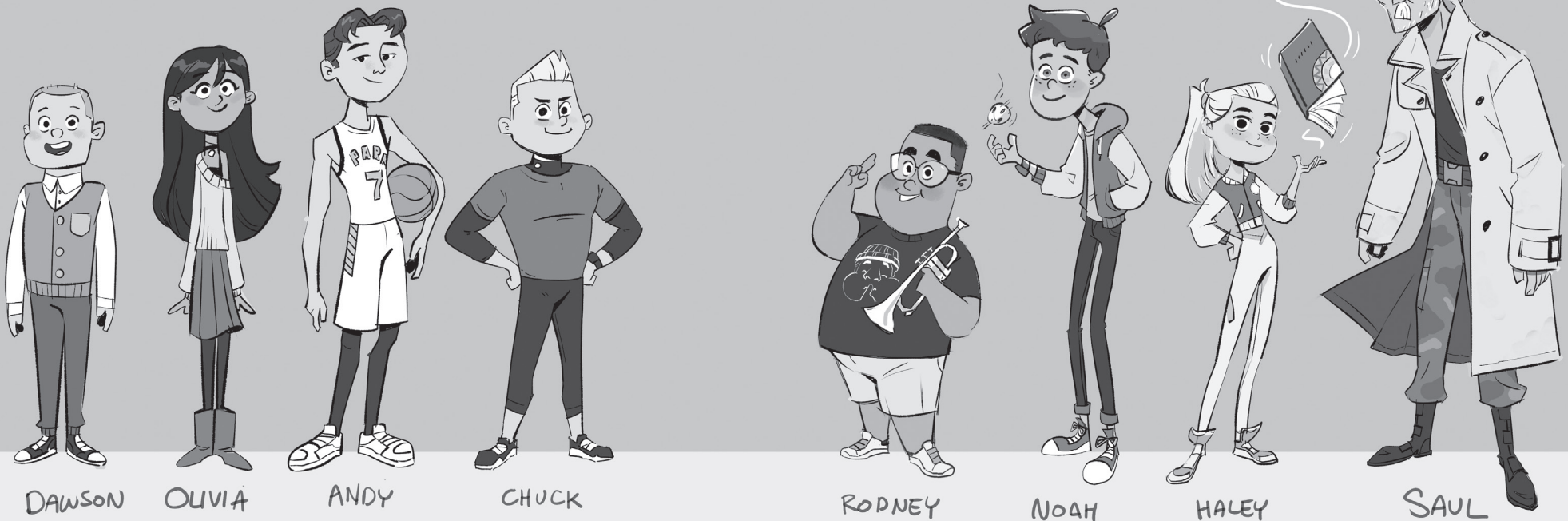
# THE MINOR MIRACLE CAST LINEUP

**WITH GREAT POWER THERE MUST  
ALSO COME—GREAT RESPONSIBILITY!**

—*Amazing Fantasy* #15

**GREATER LOVE HAS NO ONE THAN THIS: TO LAY  
DOWN ONE'S LIFE FOR ONE'S FRIENDS.**

—*John 15:13*





## PROLOGUE

A reporter, covering the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade preparations, sits on a bench, taking notes.

*A behemoth beagle, a supersized  
sponge guy, and a colossal clown  
loom over the crowds in Central Park  
who've come to watch the annual  
inflating of parade balloons.*

As he gazes up, he notices a man standing on a balcony, illuminated by the full moon. The man locks eyes with the reporter, then extends his arms over the rail.

The reporter's pencil hangs frozen over his notepad.  
*Could it be? No.*

*Yes, the man is holding a baby!*

"Hey!" the reporter yells. His shout is easily drowned out by the chatter of the crowd, the churn of generators pushing air into balloons, and the honking of cars.

It takes a second for the reporter to register what he sees next. He breaks into a sprint, knowing he'll be too

late, but he runs anyway, panicked. His eyes stay on the baby falling belly up, with legs and feet churning. It's as if everything is in slow motion, but the reporter still can't move fast enough.

He knocks down a metal barricade, which clangs to the ground, dashes across the street, and scoops up the crying infant from the sidewalk. There's not a scratch on the baby's tender, pale skin, but he continues to cry, his arms reaching to the night sky where the full moon hangs, reflected in his light blue eyes. Everyone is talking at once when a woman runs out of the building, screaming.

"Move over! Let me through!" The woman takes the baby from the reporter and holds him tight. "Oh, Noah, Noah," she croons.

The man from the balcony breaks through the crowd, his eyes filled with tears too. They're light blue, just like the baby's.

"You dropped him! I saw you!" accuses the reporter.

"I'd never!" the man insists. "I'm his great-uncle. I love him like my own son! I turned my eyes for one second, checked my phone, and when I looked up, Noah was crawling through the rails."

A stylish older woman joins the throng. "It's all my fault! It's an old building . . . not up to code. I should have—"

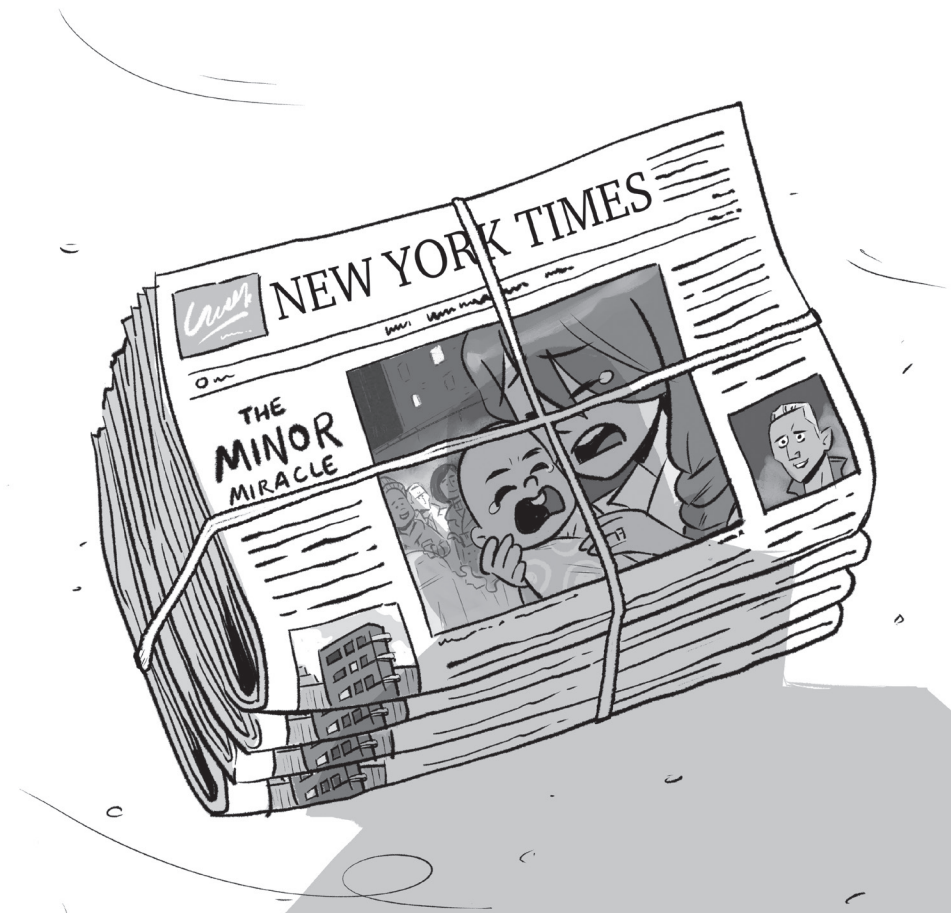
"That's not important now," says the great-uncle.

"What we need to be asking is, How did he survive?"

As the reporter watches and listens, he begins to doubt what he saw . . . because, really, who would drop a baby off a balcony? By the time his headline runs, the only thing the reporter is sure of is that something mysterious and amazing happened in the park that night.

### A "Minor" Miracle in Central Park?

*Nine-Month-Old Noah Minor  
Mysteriously Survives Sixteen-Story Fall*





# 1

I have always loved comic books, but if my life were a comic, it would have only one panel: me falling sixteen stories and surviving.

When I was little, I thought I might be a superhero. I was all about capes and trying to fly. **ZAP! BOOM! THWACK!—THE MINOR MIRACLE SAVES THE DAY!** But I'm twelve years old now, too old to keep pretending. Superheroes are for comic books, not real life.

Most of the seventh graders at Rim Rock Middle School don't even know about my miraculous survival. To them, I'm nothing special. I'm just an average kid standing outside the library with my two extraordinary friends, Haley and Rodney, waiting in line to have our vision tested. Does it bother me? Yes. But I've got a plan that should earn me a spot among the gifted and talented at our school.

“Check out the dance flyers.” Haley points to a flyer on the wall with glittery letters.



“I came up with the theme at our student council meeting.” She gives her ponytail a tug, keeping her straight light hair neat and tidy and under control, like everything in her life. She makes straight As, spikes volleyballs for our best team, and serves as our seventh-grade student council representative. Basically, Haley is perfect.

“Hey, maybe I can put a band together to play at the dance,” says Rodney. He plays trumpet in our school band, *and* he’s cool. Pretty extraordinary for Rim Rock, where those two things don’t usually go together. Especially since most days he also has a circle imprint on his lips from doing his cheek-stretching exercises. His goal

is to have cheeks that inflate as big and round as his jazz trumpet idol, Dizzy Gillespie, so he keeps a mouthpiece in his pocket for practicing.

“Thanks, Rodney, but we’re getting a DJ.” Haley flips open her planner. That’s right—she brought her planner to the annual vision testing. It’s like a security blanket for her, except less soft. She loves to fill all the boxes on the calendar with things to do and then draw little lines through them when they’re completed. Volleyball practices, karate twice a week at her dad’s studio, student council meetings, homework, chores. She records it all.

“December 17 gives people ten weeks to ask a date. If they want to.” She counts the boxes on the calendar.

Rodney makes googly eyes at us.

“Stop it, Rodney,” we say in unison, and then I fist-bump with Haley. He loves to tease us about being a couple someday, but Haley is more like a sister than anything. We’ve known each other since we were in diapers.

“The three of us are going together like last year, right?” I ask.

“I’m down,” says Rodney, but Haley is too busy looking at her planner to respond.

“Noah, you’ve got your first basketball practice tomorrow.” Yes, she even puts *my* activities in her planner.



"I know. I got this," I tell her, and myself. Rodney and Haley know about my big goal to be seen as more than ordinary. I'll make headlines again. Maybe not *The New York Times*, but I'd settle for the *Rim Rock Roundup*, our school newspaper. This week I found out that I made the A team as a seventh grader, so I'm on my way. It's usually only eighth graders on our school's best team, but Andy Kho did it last year, and it made him pretty famous. At least at Rim Rock Middle School.

"Hey, Noah," says Rodney, pushing his dark-framed glasses up his nose. They have no prescription, but he thinks they make him look more like Dizzy. "Maybe I could play at your games!" Out comes his mouthpiece, and Rodney blows a buzzy sound with his own signature swagger, his cheeks inflating like he's squeezing two Ping-Pong balls. Up and down the line, kids grin at him. It's like a middle school superpower, the way Rodney can make people happy.

Suddenly, the door to the boys' bathroom down the hall bangs open and The Tormentor, aka Chuck Gal-



lusky, steps out. He's an eighth-grade bully who walks around the school like he's a god, just because he plays football and basketball and runs track. He's one of the few kids at school who shaves, and he wears tight shirts so everyone will notice his big muscles. Oh yeah, and he's my new teammate.

I look for the teacher who's supposed to be watching us in the hall, but she's nowhere to be found.

Rodney is still *buzz, buzz, buzzing* on his mouthpiece.

"Rodney, cut it out!" I mutter. Chuck loves to torment all sorts of kids, but band kids are an especially favorite target.

Rodney plays louder. *Buzz, buzz, buzzbuzz, BUZZ!*

I yank on his arm, which pulls his mouthpiece away from his lips. "It's Chuck."

"The Tormentor?"

I cringe at Rodney's loud voice. I told him never to use our name for Chuck in public! I cringe harder when Rodney turns and they almost collide.

"Nice lip ring," Chuck says.

"Thanks." Rodney touches the indented circle. "These lips are solid gold."

Chuck glances around and then grabs Rodney's mouthpiece, holding it above his head.

*What an insufferable clod*, I think. Some of my best insults are inspired by my comic books, but I don't say them out loud as much anymore.

“Dude!” Rodney tries to leap up and grab his mouth-piece, but he’s too short.

I’m not. I’ve grown six inches already this year. I reach to grab it, but before I can get a hand on it, Chuck backs into me, knocking me off-balance. Hot anger rises in me, fast and explosive, and I feel like a shook-up soda ready to explode. I take a step to keep from falling, and Chuck never even turns around.

*Villain! Scoundrel! Scourge of the earth!*

More heat floods my body, cheeks to toes, and suddenly I feel squeezed.

Trapped.



My clothes are tight and uncomfortable, sticking to me like I have static electricity.

It’s The Cling. It sometimes happens when I get walloped with a surge of emotion. It’s unpredictable, and nobody really understands it. The doctors never even came up with a name for it, but they deduced a strong emotion, like anger or fear, triggers it. I could have told them that.

Chuck is focused on Rodney and doesn’t notice. “You must be in dorkestra!” he taunts.

Haley taps Chuck on the shoulder. “He’s in band, not orchestra,” she says.

“Yeah.” I try to sound as confident and cool as Haley while I pull at my clinging clothes. Mistake.

Chuck ignores Haley and zeroes in on me, his eyes locking on the way my clothes cling tightly to my body. “What are you? Some kind of freak?” he asks.

**OOF!**

A few kids giggle. “He’s so weird.” “What’s wrong with him?” I hear their whispers. Everyone is now staring at my stupid clothes... and my red-hot face.

“No, I’m your teammate.” I wish I had a cleverer comeback.

“Oh yeah? I don’t remember seeing you,” Chuck sneers.

That’s impossible. We tried out together, and we’re on the same team. He must have seen my name on the

roster. "I'm Noah." My voice cracks. I clear my throat and try again. "Noah Minor."

Chuck is at least three inches shorter than I am, but I feel like he's growing stronger and more powerful by the second as he harnesses all the dark forces of middle school. "Well, Minor sounds like the perfect name for a nobody," he says with a villainous grin.

"Ha!" Someone behind me laughs.

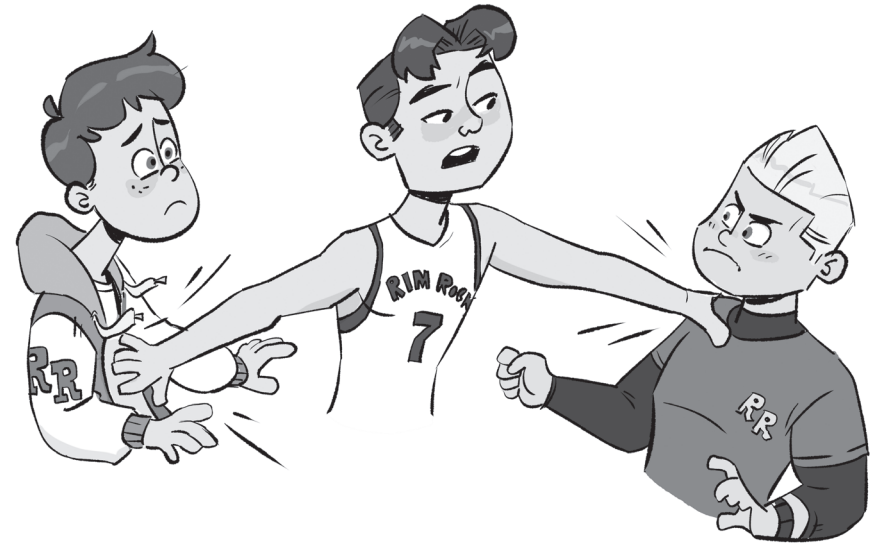
"You've never heard the name Minor?" Rodney jumps in. "Noah's dad was Ted Minor. There's still a bunch of trophies by the gym with his name on them, and there are even some downtown at the university."

It's nice that Rodney has my back, but I kind of hate that he threw my dad's name out there.

Chuck raises his eyebrows, looks me up and down, and says, "Well, he didn't pass on his genes, because if you were that good, I'd know who you were. Why don't you buy some clothes that fit and stay out of this." He gives me a shove. It doesn't matter that he needs to reach up to do it. He is still filled with a stupid amount of confidence, and he makes me feel like a little kid.

I'm still trying to think of a clever retort when a familiar voice says, "Comin' through," and Andy Kho parts the small crowd like God parting the Red Sea. "Hey, Noah."

At least *he* remembers my name.



Andy grabs Chuck's arm. "Dude, you can't be fighting in the hall. Coach will kill you if you get a detention and miss practice."

Chuck gives Rodney and me a final glare but allows himself to be led down the hall and around the corner. I swing between relief and humiliation.

"Back in line!" says the teacher, who finally appears when she's no longer needed.

"I really think student council needs to do an anti-bullying campaign," says Haley.

"What a jerk," mutters Rodney. "He still has my mouthpiece."

"What a feckless dolt."

"Good one!" Rodney loves my comic book insults. He lowers his voice and asks, "What's with The Cling?"

Why is it still”—he pulls at my shirt, releases it, and watches it stick to my skin again—“clinging? It’s lasting a lot longer than usual.”

When I was little, The Cling ran through me fast, like a shiver or gasp, and was gone in seconds. Rodney came up with our name for it. He says it sounds like a cool villain name, as in **THE CLING ATTACKS AGAIN!** But there’s nothing cool about my clothes sucking to me like they just came out of the dryer. And lately it’s been happening more frequently and lasting longer too.

“It’s getting worse.”

“I wonder if it’s because of”—Rodney glances at Haley, then whispers a little too loud—“puberty?”

I push him away from me, and Rodney laughs. Haley studies her dance poster like she has no interest in discussing puberty in the hall either.

Rodney comes close and lowers his voice. “Don’t let The Tormentor bother you, man. Just calm down. Relax.”

I take a deep breath, and The Cling slowly fades. My clothes gradually peel off my skin as the heat drains out of my face.

“Hey, band dude!” calls Andy from down the hall.

Everyone, including the teacher, turns to look at him.

“Yeah?” says Rodney.

“Catch!” Andy tosses Rodney’s mouthpiece like he’s shooting a three-pointer. A shot so perfect that all Rodney has to do is open his hands and catch it.

“Andy is such a good guy.” Haley hugs her planner to her chest as he disappears around the corner again. If this were a comic book, the speech bubble coming out of her mouth would say, **MY HERO!**



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