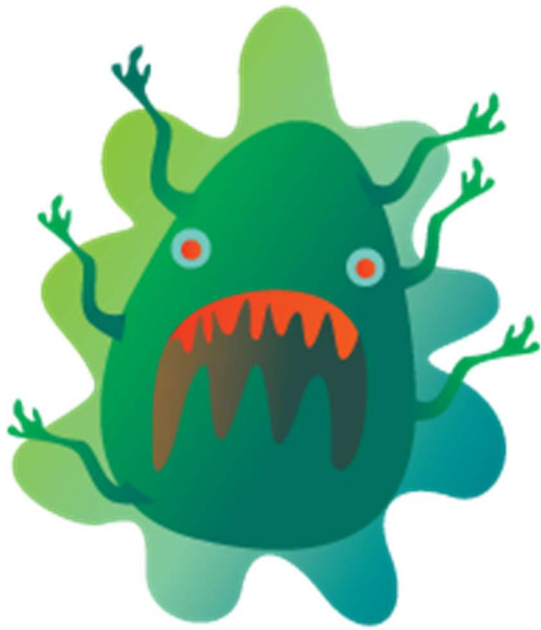


Gerry the Germ

Floods Chennai

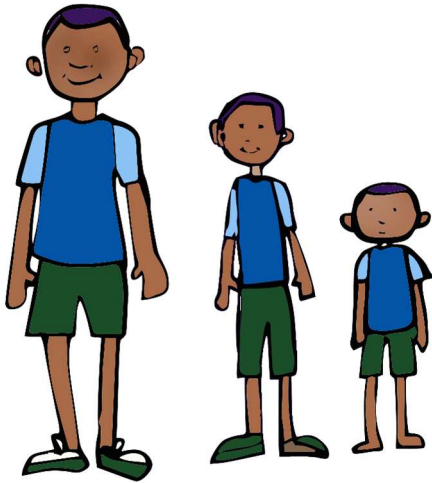
by David I. Levine

illustrated by Jennifer Kotler
& others



I am Gerry the Germ—the
best germ in the world

You know why I'm the best? Well, this week I'm going to make three brothers sick.



Their family is the healthiest in the world.

Millions of germs have attacked them, but none have succeeded.

It's because of their mean parents. They only drink water after it has been filtered, boiled or treated with chlorine. What sort of family drinks safe water *every* time?

Every germ I know hates them.

But now Chennai has a terrible flood.



There are seven million people in Chennai. And with this flooding, all their **number 2** is getting washed from the sewers into the flood.

And do you know who rides around in their **number 2**?
Me, Gerry the Germ!

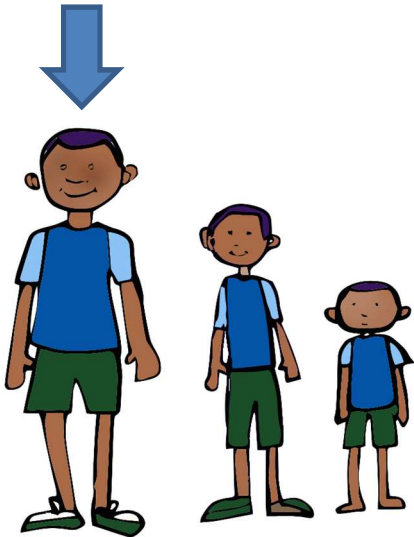


Each boy is trapped at a friend's home.

I will *finally* have a chance to get them! Soon, I will be the most famous germ in the world!

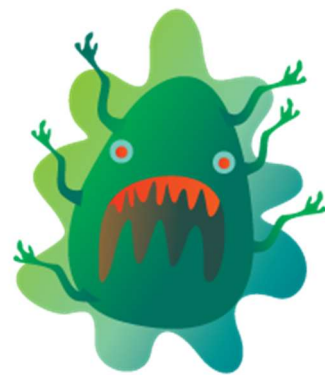
Chapter 1: Anant

My first target was Anant, the oldest brother.



Anant was staying with his friends when the flooding started.

They were surrounded by water to drink – and with that water comes me, Gerry the Germ!



But before his friends could drink the floodwater, Anant said: “There is **number 2** and germs in the floodwater. We need to drink bottled water.”

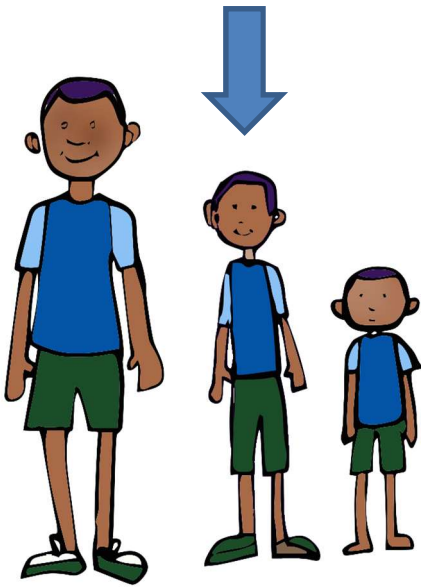


And that family had *lots* of bottled water.

AARGH! That Anant is pretty smart for a human.

But his little brothers will not out-smart me!

Chapter 2: Bharat



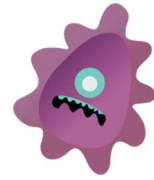
The next brother was Bharat. He was also stuck at a friend's home. But this family did not have bottled water.

I knew the family would be drinking water with filth soon. And with that filth, they would drink me, Gerry the Germ!

But before the family could drink the floodwater, Bharat warned them:



“There are germs in the water. We have to boil it.”



“But it looks clean,” his friend replied.



“Germs are too small to see,” Bharat explained.



I *hate* that kid. Somehow he knew that each sip of flood water had thousands of me and my friends!



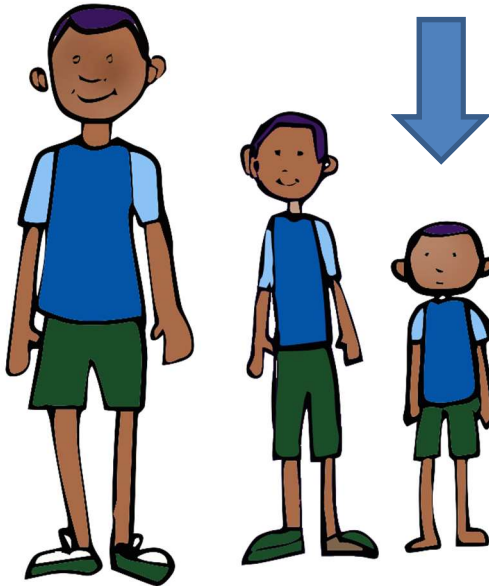
Bharat carried a pot of the flood water upstairs and put it on the gas stove.

AARGH! I *hate* boiled water!



But the youngest brother is left, and he will not be so lucky!

Chapter 3: Gautam



Gautam was trapped at the home of his best friend. This time I knew I had him.

Their RO filter and their stove both needed electricity. But the flood meant no more electricity to filter or boil water!

Soon I would get Gautam. I would be the most famous germ in the world!

But Gautam was as mean as his brothers. When he gathered water, he also got a bottle of bleach.

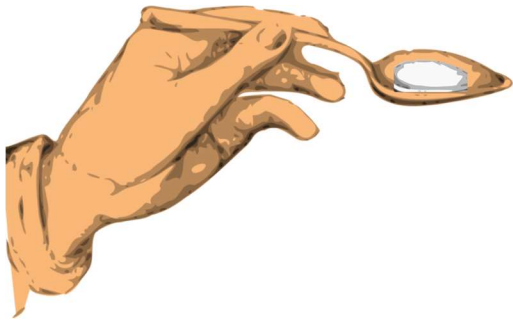


The water was cloudy, so he let it settle and filled a bottle with the clear water off the top.

He put two drops of bleach in each litre bottle of water.



The family also had a big empty bottle that held 24 litres.
He put in a third of a small spoon of bleach – just 2 ml –
in that big bottle.



After he added bleach to each bottle, he waited 30 minutes. Gautam knew chlorine could kill me. He was trying to *poison* me!



Aaargh! Defeated again.

When the flood waters left, everyone remembered the lessons of the three brothers.

They drank filtered water,



bottled water,

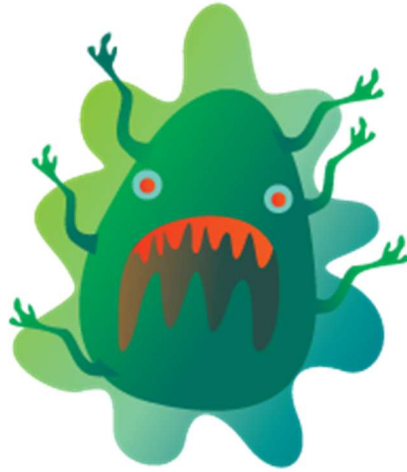
boiled water or



water with chlorine.



I never got anyone sick again.



This is the saddest story *ever*.

We gratefully acknowledge support from MAGIC at the Rochester Institute of Technology and feedback from numerous readers. Based on a story coauthored with Benji Levine.

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