

# JAMES KING OF ENGLAND

## Chapter 4



The following Saturday afternoon, everyone in the country was tuned in to their TVs. The result of the royal competition was about to be announced. James, Mum, Dad and Millwall were in the sitting room, their eyes glued to the TV screen.

At three o'clock precisely, the beaming face of Sir Cuthbert Snobbish appeared. He looked smug and very pleased with himself.

"Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls," he began. "I am here to tell you that unfortunately none of the competition entries was quite good enough to win the royal contest and, as I explained to you before, that means that it is *I* who will now become..."

But before Sir Cuthbert could finish his sentence, a small figure appeared at his side. It was one of the royal princesses – the one who had taken the piece of paper from the front of James's helicopter. She waved the paper in the air for the nation to see.

"We actually received only ONE entry," she said, eyeing Cuthbert with distrust, "but we all really liked it. So we've sent Trevor to collect the winner."

Sir Cuthbert stared at the princess in shock and fury, as if she were a disgusting grub that had just crawled out of the ground.

"I think there's been some kind of mistake," he snarled, trying to snatch the paper from her hand. But the princess jumped out of the way and said in her loudest voice, "And the winner is..."

But James and his family didn't get to hear the winner's name, because at that second there was a very loud knock on their front door.

Millwall ran to open it.

A smartly dressed chauffeur was standing on the doorstep wearing a dark grey suit and a grey hat. He had a flower in his buttonhole and was holding a large, purple envelope with a gold crown on the front.

"Whatever it is that you're selling, we don't want it!" snapped Millwall, slamming the door in his face.



The chauffeur sighed and pushed the letter box flap open. "I'll be waiting in the car," he called, pushing the letter inside. It landed on the hall floor with a thud.

Millwall picked it up.

It was addressed to Mr King. She walked into the sitting room and threw the envelope at Dad.

He opened it and pulled out a sheet of expensive cream paper with silver lettering.

"What is it?" asked Millwall. "An advert for a cleaning company?"

"Er, not quite," said Dad, reading the words on the letter and reading them again. "It seems that I have won the royal competition and am therefore soon to be crowned the King of England."

"Hooray!" screamed Mum, "I can sing my favourite opera pieces in the gardens of Buckingham Palace!"

But Dad wasn't smiling. "It can't be right," he said.

"Why not?" asked Mum.

"Because I didn't enter."

James grinned and took the letter from his father's hands. "I think that may be for me," he said, trying to contain his excitement.

"It can't be," said Millwall, "it's addressed to 'Mr King'."

"Exactly," said James. "Mr James King. In other words, me."

He quickly scanned the letter. "I'VE ONLY GONE AND DONE IT!" he cried. "I'VE WON THE COMPETITION. I'M GOING TO CHANGE FROM JAMES KING TO KING JAMES! I'VE WON! I'VE WON! I'VE WON!!!"

"What are you saying?" asked Mum. "Have you won?"

"I think he has," said Dad, "I think our boy is about to become king!"

"We have to be at Buckingham Palace by six o'clock tonight!" shouted James, looking down at the letter again.

"I'm not coming!" snarled Millwall, folding her arms frostily. "There won't be any goalposts there."

"I can have some goalposts specially designed for you," said James. "They can be as big as you like."

"Who delivered the letter?" asked Dad.

"Some bloke with a cap," replied Millwall, thinking about her new goalposts. "He's waiting outside in a big, flash car."

"Then get packing, everyone!" shouted James, running towards his bedroom. "Next stop, Buckingham Palace!"