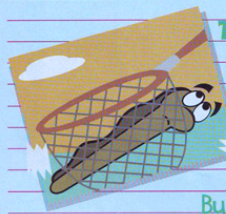
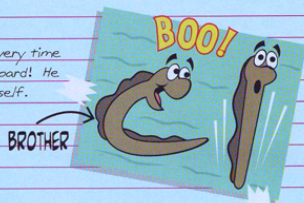


Diary of a French Eel

More eels are caught in France than any country in Europe. Restaurants keep them alive until the very last moment before the chef cooks them.

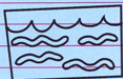
MONDAY

My brother won't stop teasing me. Every time I get scared, I go rigid. Stiff as a board! He thinks it's funny but I can't stop myself. No other eel does it.



TUESDAY

My brother and I were swimming in the river. Suddenly, a net scooped us up! I was terrified. I froze stiff! My brother wriggled free but I couldn't move! I couldn't save myself! A fisherman threw me into a water tank with lots of other eels.



By Bren MacDibble
Illustrated by Bob Harper

WEDNESDAY

The tank bumped and jiggled in the night. This morning, a man in a big white hat looked in and licked his lips. I don't like that man. He came back later and took two other eels away. They didn't return.



THURSDAY

The tank lid was slightly open. I poked my head out. All was quiet. I slid out onto a bench. Footsteps sounded. The man in the white hat came back. I was so surprised I not only went rigid, I shot into the air!

My fins tangled on some large sausages and I hung there! I don't know why, but the man didn't see me. Very odd! When he left, I dropped and slithered into a drain.



FRIDAY

The drain was safe and cool but I missed my river. I wriggled into the street. I was just sliding over a bicycle, when it began to move! I went rigid and stuck to it. A girl peddled on as if I wasn't there. I fell off further down the road and hid in tall grass near a park. I can't believe she didn't see me.

SATURDAY

I woke to the sound of shouting and feet thudding. I froze. Children ran through the park, picking up sticks. One picked me up! He squealed, threw me away and wiped his hands on his shirt. I spun through the air and landed in a shopping bag. I was still rigid with shock. The woman carrying the bag didn't notice me. She walked on to her house. I hid amongst the bread. I don't think humans can see very well.

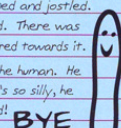


SUNDAY

The house was creepy. I saw a bag that smelled delicious. I climbed in and discovered breakfast. I ate even though the bag bumped and jostled.

It stopped and the bag opened. There was my river! I leapt out and slithered towards it.

My brother saw me fleeing the human. He thought I was very brave. He's so silly, he doesn't know that humans are almost blind!



BYE