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Macmillan Children's Publishing Group Signs Massive Publishing Deal with Juggernaut Author Aaron Blabey

Eight-Figure, Multi-Continent Deal to Span Two Brand-New Series

New York, NY (March XX, 2025)—Internationally bestselling author Aaron Blabey has signed an eight-figure deal with Macmillan Children's Publishing Group. The major global deal encompasses seven titles in two brand-new middle grade series, to be published simultaneously by Macmillan UK and Macmillan Australia. In the US, the titles will be published by Odd Dot, an imprint of MCPG known for publishing joyful books for curious minds.

Blabey is a #1 *New York Times*–bestselling author with approximately fifty-five million books in print, including the groundbreaking The Bad Guys series (adapted for film by DreamWorks Animation), *Pig the Pug*, and the beloved Thelma the Unicorn duology (adapted for film by Netflix). Blabey served as an executive producer on both film adaptations.

The first of Blabey's new series, Game of Pets, is expected to debut in Fall 2026 and poses the important question: What if life on Earth is merely a board game being played by giant animals whose avatars happen to be . . . our beloved pets? Hilarious and action-packed, Game of Pets is *The Truman Show* meets *The Secret Life of Pets*, all told in Blabey's inimitable style. In the second of Blabey's new series, The Awfuls, readers are introduced to a top secret, experimental weapon—a "passive-aggressive" weapon that is so formidable it has the power to make your enemy feel badly about themselves and give up. What could go wrong when this weapon falls into a middle schooler's hands?

"Aaron's talents are myriad and extraordinary—and among his greatest gifts is his affection for what it means to be a young reader. This deep knowing shows up in his books' every hilarious joke; in every complicated character with a wish just outside their reach; and in every illustration and plot twist, so exciting they leap right off the page and into young readers' hearts and minds," said Jen Besser, President and Publisher, MCPG. "What a dream it is to work with Aaron, whose work I've admired for so long, and what a thrill to make a publishing home for him at Macmillan."

"In June 2023, I completed the final Bad Guys book—my fortieth title in ten years—and genuinely felt it might be time to retire. I mean, that's a lot of books!" said Blabey. "However, the infectious enthusiasm of everyone at Macmillan for a pair of new ideas (that I had quietly tucked away) has made me think perhaps all I needed was a holiday and a shot of new positive energy. I am very excited to get back to work. Here's to a new chapter with the gang at Macmillan."

Besser negotiated the deal with Patrick Hughes at Foundation Media for World Rights at auction.

NOTE TO THE PRESS:

Macmillan Children's Publishing Group is comprised of eleven imprints: Balzer + Bray, Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, Feiwel and Friends, First Second, Godwin Books, Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, Odd Dot, Neon Squid, Priddy Books, Roaring Brook Press, and Square Fish. These imprints are home to award-winning, *New York Times*–bestselling authors, including Madeleine L'Engle, Natalie Babbitt, Leigh Bardugo, Gene Luen Yang, Tomi Adeyemi, Marissa Meyer, Eric Carle, Nick Bruel, Loren Long, Angeline Boulley, Nancy Tillman, John Patrick Green, George M. Johnson, Eoin Colfer, and hundreds more popular authors and illustrators. Macmillan Children's Publishing Group is proud to publish many of the classics of children's literature, including *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Tuck Everlasting*, *The Black Cauldron*, and *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See*?; numerous modern classic titles, including *Speak*, *On the Night You Were Born*, and *We Are Water Protectors*; and series including Bad Kitty, InvestiGators, and Leigh Bardugo's Grishaverse novels.

About Aaron Blabey:

Aaron Blabey is a #1 *New York Times*–bestselling author with more than fifty-five million books in print. His various series, including The Bad Guys, Pig the Pug, Thelma the Unicorn, and Cat on the Run, have been translated into several languages and are beloved around the world. Aaron is also an executive producer of the DreamWorks hit animated movie *The Bad Guys*, its upcoming sequel, and Netflix's delightful musical adaptation of *Thelma the Unicorn*.