

This book is about sweet shops, school days and summer holidays! It is the story of the famous writer Roald Dahl when he was a boy. These tales are exciting, funny and sometimes frightening. All of them are true.

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Boy

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COBISS

| CEFR level | Story word count | Headings |
|------------|------------------|----------|
| S Pre-A1 | 400-600 | 350 |
| 1 A1 | 1,000-1,600 | 550 |
| 2 A1+ | 3,000-5,000 | 700 |
| 3 A2 | 7,000-10,000 | 1,000 |
| 4 A2+ | 11,000-14,000 | 1,200 |
| 5 B1 | 15,000-18,000 | 1,600 |
| 6 B1+ | 18,000-22,000 | 2,000 |
| 7 B2 | 22,000-26,000 | 2,500 |

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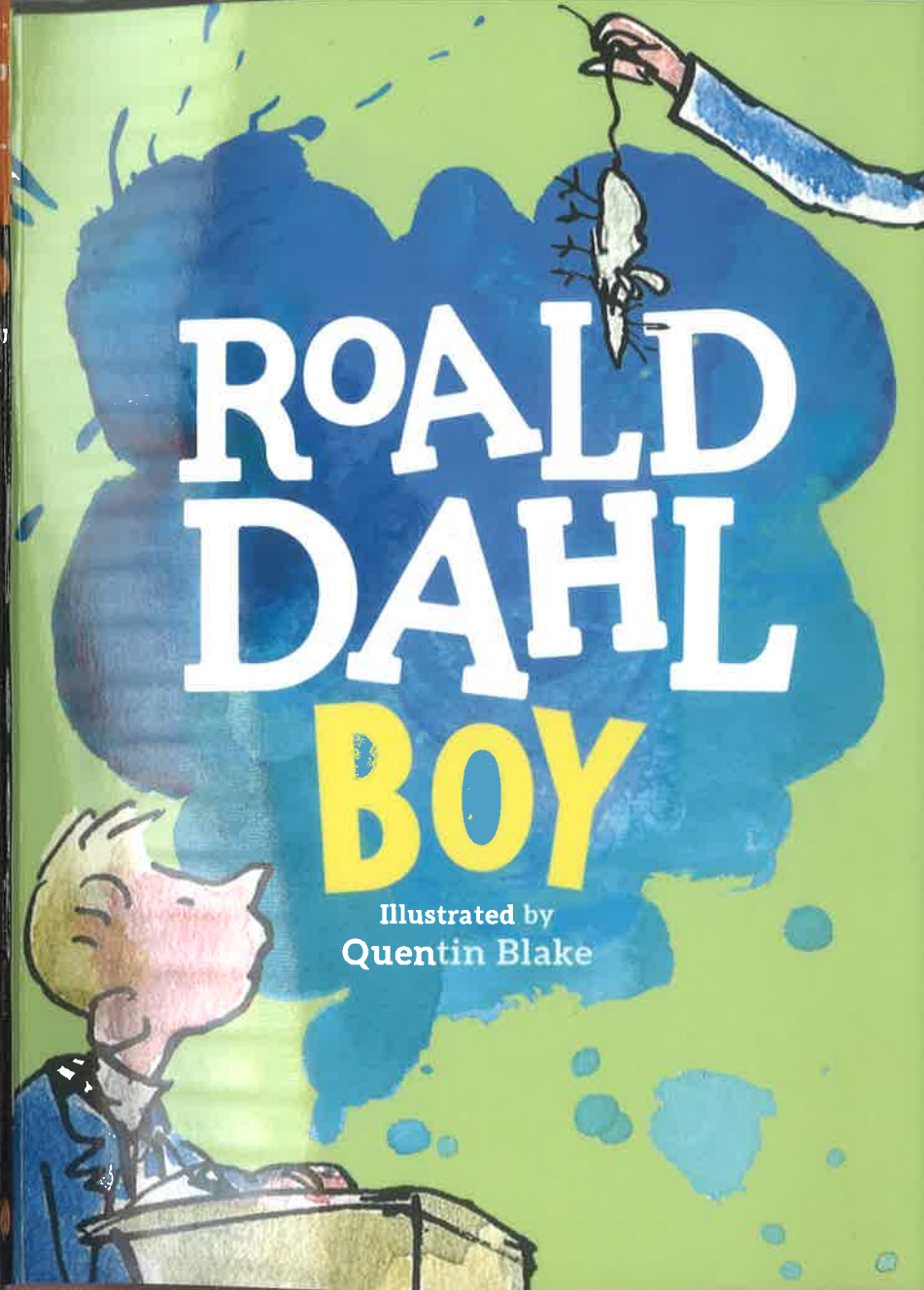
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ROALD DAHL BOY

Illustrated by
Quentin Blake



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008

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Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| People in the story | 4 |
| New words | 5 |
| Note about the story | 6 |
| Before-reading questions | 6 |
| A message from Roald Dahl | 7 |
| Chapter One – The start | 8 |
| Chapter Two – The sweet shop | 15 |
| Chapter Three – Summer holidays | 24 |
| Chapter Four – Boarding school | 30 |
| Chapter Five – A drive in a car | 36 |
| Chapter Six – Goat's tobacco | 41 |
| Chapter Seven – Repton | 45 |
| During-reading questions | 56 |
| After-reading questions | 57 |
| Exercises | 58 |
| Project work | 61 |
| Glossary | 62 |

People in the story



Roald Dahl
(six years old)



Harald Dahl



Sofie Dahl



Mrs Pratchett

New words



cane



coin



jars



pipe



tricycle



wheel

Note about the story

Roald Dahl (1916–1990) is a famous writer, and he loved telling stories. Many of his most famous books – *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *The BFG* and *Matilda* – are for children. You can read his books in more than fifty-seven languages, and many of them are now films. Roald Dahl's life began in Wales in 1916. Life in Britain then was very different from life today. Doctors could not help people as much, and there were not many cars on the roads. At school, teachers often hit children. Today in Britain, teachers cannot hit children. At the age of nine, Roald Dahl left his family to live at **boarding school***. His mother paid for him to go to this school. He then studied at a very expensive and famous school in England called Repton.

Roald Dahl wrote this book about his early life in 1984. In 1986, he wrote a book about his life after school called *Going Solo*. You can read more at www.roalddahl.com.

Before-reading questions

- 1 Do you know any of Roald Dahl's books?
- 2 Roald Dahl was a child in the 1920s. What do you know about life in Britain then? What was life like in your own country in the 1920s?
- 3 At nine years old, Roald Dahl left his family and went away to boarding school. How did he feel about this and how was his life there, do you think?

*Definitions of words in **bold** can be found in the glossary on pages 62–63.

A message from Roald Dahl

Sometimes, a person writes a book all about his or her **life**. These books are normally very **boring**. This is not one of those books. I do not want to write everything about me.

But some things happened to me in my early life, and I did not forget them. They are not important, but I remember them fifty or sixty years later. Some things are funny. Some things are not nice. All of them are true.



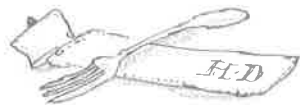
CHAPTER ONE

The start

My father, Harald Dahl, was Norwegian. He came from a small town near Oslo in Norway. His father – my grandfather – had a shop in the town. People went to the shop to buy food and things for their houses. The shop had nearly everything!

At the age of fourteen, my father had an accident and badly **hurt** his arm. A doctor came, but he was not a good doctor. He hurt my father's arm more, and then the arm had to be cut from my father's body.

My father had only one arm, but he learned to do lots of things with it. He made one side of a fork into a knife because he wanted to cut his own food. He took his special fork everywhere with him in a little bag.



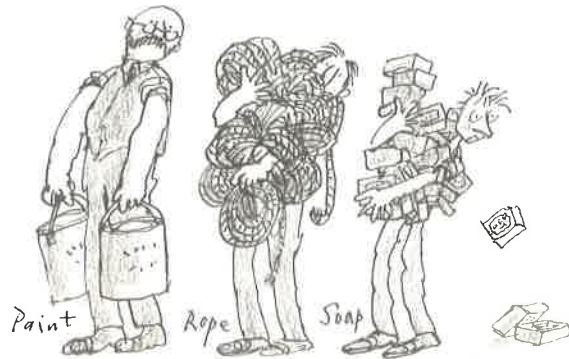
My father's special fork



My father, Harald Dahl

My father lived in a small town, but he wanted to see the world. He finished school and got a job on a ship. It took him to Calais in France. From there, he went to Paris. In Paris, my father met a young woman called Marie and married her.

At that time, many ships travelled across the world, and they needed **fuel**, food and thousands of other things. My father started a **company** that had all these things. The ships bought everything they needed from his company, and my father made a lot of money. He took his family to Wales because Cardiff was an important city for ships. My father and Marie had two children (a girl and a boy), but then Marie sadly died.



My father's company sold many different things.



My mother, Sofie Dahl

My father was sad, and he wanted a new wife. In 1911, he went on holiday to Norway. There, he met a young Norwegian woman called Sofie and married her. They had four more children: two girls, a boy (me, in 1916) and a third girl. Now they had a happy family with six children.



Me at eight months old, in 1917

We all lived together in a big house in Wales, in a village eight **miles** west of Cardiff. We had chickens, cows and horses.



Our house in Wales

Our big family was very happy. But then my sister Astri got an **illness**, and she died. She was only seven years old. My father got a different illness, and he died, too. Maybe he did not fight his illness because he was very sad about Astri. Today, these illnesses do not often kill people. Doctors can give people something to make them better, but, in 1920, doctors could not help my family.

Now my mother had five children, a new baby and no husband. She was a young Norwegian in a strange country, and her family were all in Norway. But my mother stayed in the United Kingdom because my father wanted his children to go to school in England. "English schools are the best schools in the world," he always said.



Me and my mother

I do not remember a lot from my earliest years, but I can remember one thing very well: my **tricycle**. A tricycle is a bike for small children, but it has three **wheels**.

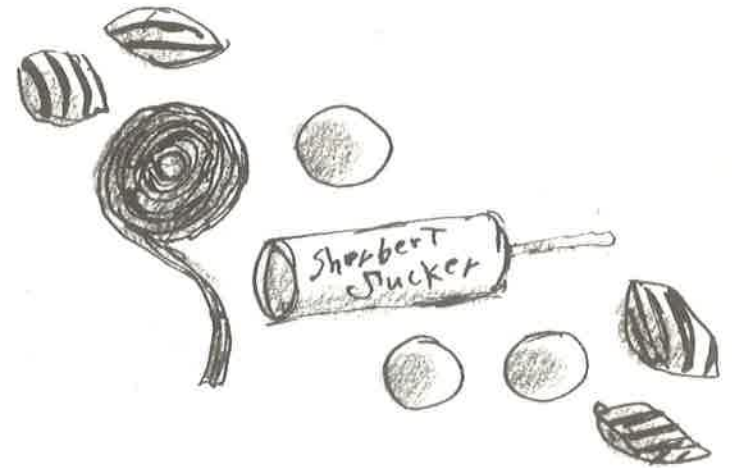
My sister and I loved to ride our tricycles as fast as we could in the middle of the road. It felt good to go very fast. We could ride in the road because there were not many cars in those days.



My wonderful tricycle

CHAPTER TWO The sweet shop

In 1923, I was seven years old, and I started school. Every day, my friends and I walked about a mile to school, and we went past a sweet shop. And, every day, we stopped and looked at all the wonderful sweets in their **jars**. Sometimes we had money, and we could buy some sweets.



Wonderful sweets!

But there was one problem. A bad woman worked in the shop. Her name was Mrs Pratchett.

Mrs Pratchett was a small, ugly old woman. She never smiled, and she was never friendly. She always shouted at us, "I'm watching you!" or "You have to buy something or you must go away!"

She was also very dirty. Her clothes always had egg and bread and tea from her breakfast on them. Her hands were grey and dirty, and her fingers were black. And she put these dirty hands into the jars of sweets!



**Mrs Pratchett put her dirty hands
into the jars of sweets.**

Of course, this did not stop us from buying the sweets. But we did not like Mrs Pratchett.

At school, my friends and I found a small place under the floor. We kept our sweets and other special things in it. One day, we found something new there: a **dead** mouse!

"I have a plan," I said. "Let's put it in one of Mrs Pratchett's sweet jars. She will put her dirty hand in the jar, and she will find a dead mouse!"

"Yes!" my friends said. "We will do it today. You must put the mouse in the jar, because it's your plan."

"I will ask for some yellow sweets," my friend Thwaites said. "They are at the back of the shop. Mrs Pratchett will turn and get them. Then you can quickly put the mouse in the jar with the pink sweets in it. It's the nearest one to us."



We found a dead mouse.

That afternoon, we walked into the shop. We were all very **excited**. Thwaites asked for his sweets, and Mrs Pratchett got them for him. I quickly put the mouse in the jar with the pink sweets.

Then Mrs Pratchett looked at us with her ugly little eyes.

“Only one of you is buying sweets. I don’t want you all in here!” she shouted. “Go away!”

We ran **outside**. “Did you put it in the jar?” asked my friends.



The dead mouse was in the jar with the pink sweets.

“Of course I did!” I said.

I was happy, and my friends were happy, too.

“You were great,” they said.

The next morning, we walked past the shop and saw a message on the door. The shop was closed.



The message on the door

We stopped. The shop was never closed at this time in the morning. We looked through the window. The jar was on the floor, and there was **broken** glass everywhere. The mouse was on the floor, too. But we could not see Mrs Pratchett. Something was very wrong!

“Mrs Pratchett had a **shock**,” Thwaites said. “Shocks can hurt old people. Bad things happen to them.”

“What?” we said. “What happens to them?”

“Their bodies stop, and they die,” Thwaites said. Then he said to me, “You killed her.”

“*Me?*” I said. “Why only *me?*”

“It was *your* plan,” Thwaites said. “And you put the mouse in the jar.”

I was a killer!



Was I a killer?

At school, I felt bad.

“I am only eight years old,” I thought, because I wanted to feel better. “No little boy of eight kills anyone. It’s not possible.”

The teachers sent everyone outside. I waited for the police to come and take me away.

Mr Coombes, the **headmaster**, came outside with a woman. It was Mrs Pratchett! She was not dead! I was not a killer! The old woman looked at all the boys, and she pointed a dirty finger at Thwaites.

“That’s him!” she shouted. “That’s one of them!”

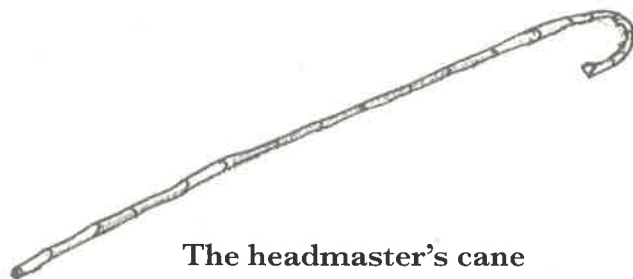
Everyone in the school looked at Thwaites.

“That’s one, too!” she said. She pointed a finger at me. Then she pointed at our three other friends.

My four friends and I went to the headmaster’s room. It **smelled** of **tobacco**. Mr Coombes was a very tall man, and in his hands he held a long,

yellow **cane**. I was very frightened of him and his cane. Mrs Pratchett was in the room, too, because she wanted to watch!

“You,” said Mr Coombes. He pointed the cane at Thwaites. “Come here.”



The headmaster's cane

Thwaites walked very slowly. He put his hands on the floor, and the headmaster hit his **bottom** with the cane. It made a loud noise. Little Thwaites flew in the **air**.

“Ow-w-w-w-w-w-w-w-w-w!” he shouted.

“Harder!” shouted Mrs Pratchett.

The headmaster hit Thwaites four times. We had to watch and wait.

After all the other boys, it was me. I put my hands on the floor. I heard the noise first and felt nothing. Then I felt the cane. My bottom was **on fire**. I **breathed** out very hard, and there was no air left in my body. The second time, the cane hit me in the same place, and it hurt a lot more. After four times, it was time to go, but it was difficult to walk. My bottom was on fire, and I held it with my hands.

“Thank you, Headmaster,” said Mrs Pratchett, happily. “There will not be any more dead mice in my sweet jars now.”



The headmaster hit Thwaites hard with the cane.

CHAPTER THREE

Summer holidays

Summer holidays! What wonderful words. Every summer, from the age of four to seventeen years old, was wonderful. We always went to Norway for our holidays.

Norway was home for us because my family was Norwegian, and we all spoke the language.

We were always a big group of ten or more people. There were my three sisters and my very old **half-sister** (that is four people). There was my **half-brother** and me (that is six). There was my mother (seven) and someone to help (eight). Two or more friends of my very old half-sister came, too.

In those days, there were no planes. It took four days to go to our holiday in Norway. We went by train, taxi, a second train, a second taxi, ship and then in a small boat.

We always went to Oslo first. We stayed one night in a hotel and visited our mother's parents.



Beautiful Norway

My grandmother was a very old woman with white hair. My grandfather was very quiet. He always sat in a chair and **smoked** tobacco from a very long **pipe**.

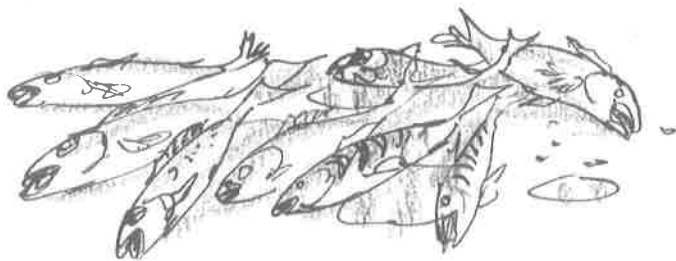


**My grandfather and grandmother
with my sister, Astri**



My two sisters and me with our boat, in 1924

After the visit to my grandparents, we travelled to a little **island**. Its name was Tjöme, and it was the best place on Earth. We went to the beach there. We swam in the sea and lay in the sun. We went to other islands in our little boat and ate fish from the sea. They were wonderful days.



Fish from the sea for dinner

I remember only one bad thing about our holidays in Norway. One year, my mother said, “We are going to the doctor. He wants to look at your nose and mouth.”

“What’s wrong with my nose and mouth?” I asked. I was about eight years old.

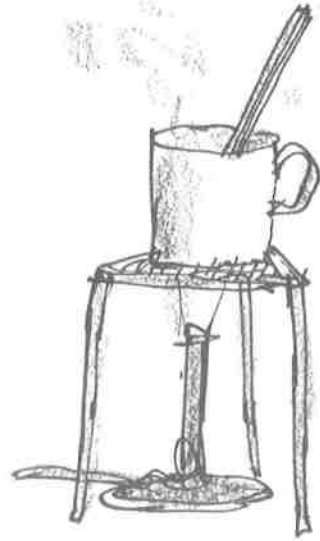
“Not a lot,” my mother said. “But I think you have **adenoids**.”

“What are adenoids?” I asked her.

“Don’t worry,” she said. “It’s nothing.”

The doctor looked up my nose and in my mouth. I did not worry, because I was too young to understand.

Someone held a bowl under my face. The doctor had a very long knife. He put it in hot water over a fire to make it clean.



The knife in hot water over the fire

“Open your mouth,” said the doctor. But I did not want to.

“It will be quick,” he said.

I opened my mouth. The doctor’s knife went into my mouth. It moved very quickly. The doctor turned it four or five times. Something red went from my mouth into the bowl. It was a shock!

“Those are your adenoids,” said the doctor. He pointed at the red things in the bowl.

The top of my mouth was on fire. I held my mother’s hand. How could someone do this to me?

“You will breathe more easily now,” said the doctor.

My mother and I walked home. Yes, I said walk. There was no bus or car. We walked for thirty minutes. We got home to my grandparents’ house, and someone gave me a chair.

“He can rest there for a few minutes,” my grandparents said.

This was in 1924. It was normal to cut a child’s adenoids with no **anaesthetic** in those days!

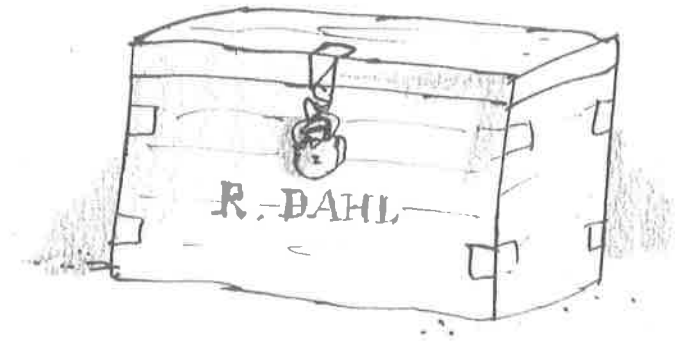
CHAPTER FOUR
Boarding school

In September 1925, I was nine years old, and it was time for me to go to **boarding school**. Children stay the night at boarding school and live there without their families.

St Peter's School in Somerset was the nearest English boarding school to our house in Wales, but it was across fifteen miles of sea. This sea was called the Bristol Channel.

For school, my mother gave me a very special new box. It was called a tuck box. Every child at boarding school has a tuck box. They are always closed with a key, and no teacher can look inside them. Boys keep food, toys and other special things in them. At St Peter's, one boy kept a **frog** in his tuck box!

My mother travelled to St Peter's School with me. We went to Cardiff in a taxi and then across the water by boat. On the English side, we went



My new tuck box with my name on it

in a second taxi to the school. I had a new school **uniform**. All my clothes were new, and everything had my name on it.



Me wearing my St Peter's uniform

St Peter's School was outside the town. It had beds for 150 boys and rooms for the headmaster's family. There was a lot of grass outside for playing sport.



St Peter's School

On the first day, there were many boys and their families in front of the school. The very tall headmaster walked from group to group to meet the parents.

"Goodbye, Mrs Dahl," he said, quickly. "It's time to go. Don't worry; we will look after him."

My mother understood. She said goodbye to me and left in a taxi. The headmaster went to talk to

a different family. I stood there with my new tuck box and began to cry. I was sad because I did not want to live away from my family.

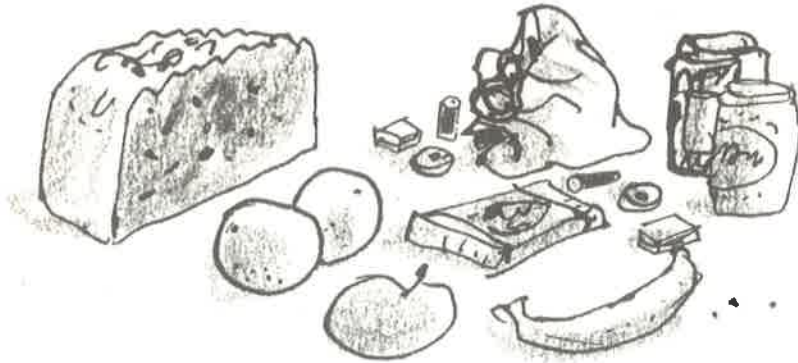
Life at St Peter's School was difficult. The teachers were not friendly, and I was always frightened of the cane. We had to wash in cold water, and the food was bad. I wanted to go home and see my family.

At night in bed, I always thought about my family and tried not to cry. They were across the Bristol Channel, and I could see the sea from my window. I always went to sleep with my face towards my family. I never turned my back towards them in bed.

Mothers sent their hungry sons food every week. This made the headmaster happy, because food was expensive.

"Send food as often as you like! Once a week. Or twice a week!" the headmaster always said. "Your boy gets good food here, but food from home is always more special. You can send them things like

fruit and a big cake. You don't want your child to be the only boy with an empty tuck box."



Food for our tuck boxes

Every Sunday, every boy at St Peter's wrote to his family. We never wrote about the bad things at school. We only told our parents good things, because the headmaster read our letters.

He saw our bad spelling, but we could not change it in the letters. We had to write the words correctly later.

"No teacher has read this letter," our parents thought, "because there is bad spelling in it.

Everything in this letter must be true! My child is happy at school."

I wrote to my mother that first Sunday, and then I wrote to her every week for thirty-two years. Sometimes more than once a week. In 1957, she died, and I found more than 600 of my letters to her. She kept them all.

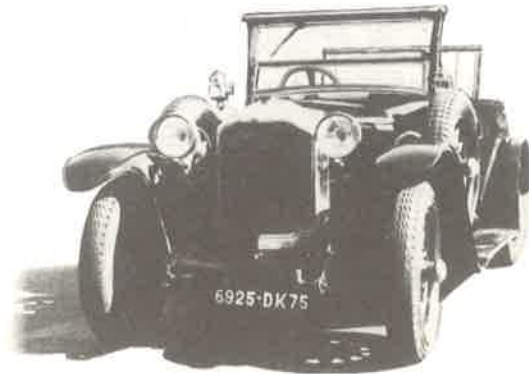


A letter to my mother

CHAPTER FIVE
A drive in a car

After three long months at boarding school, it was time for me to go home for the Christmas holidays. How wonderful to be away from school!

While I was away at St Peter's, my family bought a car. I was very happy to be home with my family, and I was also excited about the car! In 1925, anyone could drive a car. You did not need to learn a lot. My very old half-sister was twenty-one years old. She had two thirty-minute lessons, and then she could drive us in our car.



Our car was a De Dion-Bouton from France.

That day, seven of us sat in the car. In the car were my very old half-sister, my half-brother (eighteen years old), my sister (twelve years old), my mother (forty years old), two small sisters (eight and five years old) and me (nine years old). We were very excited.

“How fast will it go?” we asked our very old half-sister. “Will it go at fifty miles an hour?”

“It can go at sixty miles an hour!” she answered.

“Oh, let's make it go at sixty!” we shouted.

“We will go faster than that,” she said.

My very old half-sister started the car, and we drove slowly through the village. People in the street were excited to see our car.

After five minutes, we left the village.

“You see! I *can* do it!” our very old half-sister said.

“Go faster!” we shouted. “We’re only going at fifteen miles an hour!”

My half-sister began to make the car go at about thirty-five miles an hour. Then we came to a corner in the road.

“Help!” she shouted.

The car went into the side of the road. There was broken glass everywhere. My family were all OK, but I was badly hurt. My nose was nearly cut from my face.

My very old half-sister drove the broken car to the doctor very slowly, at about four miles an hour.

“Wow!” said the doctor. “Look at his nose!”

“It hurts,” I cried.

“Please help him!” said my mother.

“Don’t worry,” said the doctor. “He will keep his nose.”

An hour later, the doctor came to our house. I lay on a table, and someone put something white from a bottle on my face. It smelled very strong.

I tried to stand, but strong hands held me down on the table.

“Good boy,” said the doctor. “Close your eyes and sleep.”



Someone put something white from a bottle on my face.

After eight hours, I woke up, and my nose was back in its place. My mother gave me a **coin**. British coins always have a picture of the king or queen on them. In those days, the king was George V.

“Well done. This is for you,” she said.



A coin with King George V's
head on it

CHAPTER SIX Goat's tobacco

In 1926, my very old half-sister chose to marry an English doctor. He came on holiday with us to Norway. My family always did everything together, but now my half-sister only wanted to be with this man. She was *always* with him, and they did not want to be with us. My other sisters and I were young – I was only nine years old – and we did not understand this.

We did not like the young doctor, because he took our sister from us. But we also did not like him because he smoked a pipe. He always had the pipe in his mouth, and it smelled very bad.

One day on the beach, the young doctor went swimming. He left his pipe with us and did not take it into the sea with him.

Then I saw some **goat droppings** on the ground, and I thought of a plan.

I quickly put some of the goat droppings in the pipe, under the tobacco. The young doctor came back and started smoking his pipe. My half-brother and sisters and I watched him.

“Ah-h-h-h,” he said. “I love to smoke after a swim, and this English tobacco is the best. It’s much better than Norwegian tobacco.”

The sea was blue and the sun was bright. It was a beautiful day.



Our family on holiday. My very old half-sister and the young doctor are at the back.



The young doctor smoked his pipe everywhere.

Then we heard a loud shout and watched the young doctor fly into the air. His pipe flew out of his mouth, and his face was the colour of snow.

“Help! Help! My body is on fire!” the doctor shouted.

My very old half-sister was very frightened. “What’s wrong? Where does it hurt?” she cried. “Get the boat! Quickly! We must go to hospital!”

But the young doctor lay on the ground and breathed in the clean air. After five minutes, he started to feel better.

“What happened?” asked my very old half-sister.

“I don’t know,” said the doctor.

“I know! I know!” said my little sister, excitedly.

“Tell us!” said my very old half-sister.

“It’s his pipe!” shouted my little sister.

“What’s wrong with my pipe?” asked the doctor.

“It had goat droppings in it!” said my little sister, and she laughed.

My very old half-sister and the doctor quickly understood, and they were very angry. The doctor stood up. My half-brother, sisters and I quickly ran away from him into the sea.

Repton

In 1929, my mother asked me, “Do you want to go to Marlborough or Repton?”

They were famous and expensive English schools, but I knew nothing about them other than that.

“Repton,” I answered, because it was an easier word to say than “Marlborough”.

“Very well,” said my mother. “You will go to Repton.”

Repton was a boarding school in the middle of England. Every Repton boy wore the same, very strange, uniform. I wore it, and my sisters laughed at me.

I felt stupid in the clothes for Repton, but in the street my mother said, “You look good in your school uniform. People can see it. They think you are important because you go to a famous school.”



I did not like my new Repton uniform.

At the station, I saw many boys, and they all wore the same uniform. The train took us all away to Repton. I was thirteen years old.



I went to Repton in my school uniform.

Lots of strange things happened at Repton – they did at all English boarding schools. Older boys were always more important than younger boys, and a small group of the oldest boys were the most important of all.

At Repton, we called these boys "Boazers". Boazers told us what to do, and we had to do it. We cleaned the Boazers' rooms and made their fires. We sometimes cooked their breakfast. Boazers were always right, and younger boys were always wrong.



A room at Repton

On Sundays, two other boys and I had to clean our Boazer's room. We cleaned it for hours. We washed the floor, the windows and the walls.

But the Boazer often found something wrong with our cleaning, and he hit us with a cane.



The cane, again

A Boazer could stand in any room of the school and shout about a job. Then every young boy had to run to him. The slowest boy had to do the job. One snowy morning, I heard a Boazer shout about a job. I ran as fast as possible, but I was the slowest boy to get there.

"Dahl, come here," said the Boazer. His name was Wilberforce. "Go and make my toilet warm."

At Repton, all the toilets were outside, and their little rooms had no doors. In winter, they were very cold. My job was to sit on the toilet before Wilberforce and make it warm for him.



**Reading books helped the time on
the toilet go faster.**

I sat on the toilet for fifteen minutes, and then Wilberforce came.

“Is it warm?” he asked me.

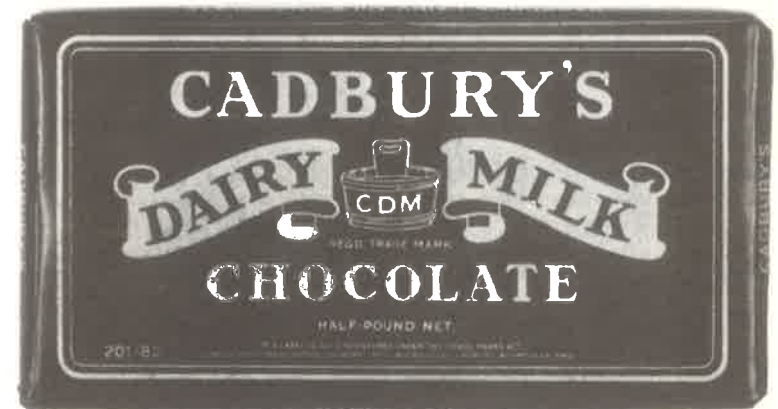
“It’s as warm as possible, Wilberforce.”

“We will see,” he said.

He sat on the toilet. “Very good,” he said. “Very, very good. Some boys have cold bottoms. I only use boys with warm bottoms. I will not forget you.”

He did not forget me. I always carried a book with me because I often had to sit on Wilberforce’s toilet. It was very boring. In my first winter at Repton, I read many books by Charles Dickens on Wilberforce’s toilet.

Not everything at school was bad. Sometimes all the boys got a grey box from a company called Cadbury’s. Cadbury’s made wonderful chocolates.



Cadbury's chocolate

Inside the box were twelve different chocolates. We always knew one of them well, but eleven of them were new. There was also paper in the box. Our job was to try all the chocolates and write the good and bad things about each one on the paper.

Cadbury's plan to ask us about their new chocolates was a good one. Boys at Repton were some of the best chocolate customers in the world. Who knew more about chocolate than us?!

How do companies plan their new chocolates? I loved to think about this.

Many years later, I needed a story for a new book. I remembered those little boxes of chocolate at Repton, and I started to write my book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

Sport is very important at English boarding schools, and we played a lot of it. Happily, I was good at sport, and I enjoyed it. Playing sport helped to make the long days shorter.

Life at school was easier for good sportsmen, but it was difficult for bad sportsmen. My favourite sport was a very fast game with a ball. It was called Fives. Because I was one of the best at Fives at Repton, I travelled to other boarding schools and played it with their boys. I also played football and a ball game called squash.



My Fives group

At school, I loved taking photos. Today, cameras are very easy to use, but in the 1920s they were difficult work. I had a big, heavy camera with glass plates. I made a **darkroom** near the school's music rooms, and I made many photos there.



A photo I made at Repton

“After school, do you want to study at Oxford or Cambridge?” my mother asked me one day. These are great and very famous places, and boys from good public schools normally wanted to study at them. But I did not want to study more. I chose to start work at a company called Shell because I wanted to see the world.



Me at work

I travelled to many countries with Shell, but that is a different story and a different book. I may tell it one day.

*Home from
Boy*

During-reading questions

Write the answers to these questions in your notebook.

CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Where does Roald's father come from?
- 2 What happens to Roald's father's arm?
- 3 How does Roald's father cut his food?

CHAPTER TWO

- 1 Roald and his friends do not like Mrs Pratchett. Why?
- 2 How do the children give Mrs Pratchett a shock?
- 3 What does the headmaster do to the boys?

CHAPTER THREE

- 1 Where does Roald's family go on holiday?
- 2 How do they travel?
- 3 What bad thing happens to Roald on holiday?

CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 What is a boarding school?
- 2 What do mothers send their sons every week?
- 3 Why do parents think the letters are all true?

CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 What new thing does Roald's family buy in 1925?
- 2 Roald's half-sister is about twenty-one years old in this story. Why does he call her "very old", do you think?
- 3 How many people travel in the car?

CHAPTER SIX

- 1 Roald and his young sisters do not like the doctor. Why?
- 2 What does Roald put in the doctor's pipe?
- 3 How does the very old half-sister feel at the end of the chapter?

CHAPTER SEVEN

- 1 Why does Roald have to do something for Wilberforce?
 - 2 Why does Roald read a lot?
 - 3 What two things does Roald like doing best at school?
-

After-reading questions

- 1 At the beginning of the book, Roald Dahl wrote, "Sometimes, a person writes a book all about his or her life. These books are normally very boring. This is not one of those books. I do not want to write everything about me." Why do you think he said this?
- 2 Mrs Pratchett said, "There will not be any more dead mice in my sweet jars now." Was she right, do you think?
- 3 Did Roald have a happy life, do you think?
- 4 In what ways was Roald's life in the 1920s different from life today?

Exercises

CHAPTER ONE

1 Are these sentences *true* or *false*? Write the answers in your notebook.

- 1 Roald's father had a shop in Norway.*false*.....
- 2 Roald's father had only one arm.
- 3 Roald's father married twice.
- 4 Roald's father was Norwegian, and his mother was French.
- 5 Roald had a bike with two wheels.
- 6 There were lots of cars on the road in those days.

CHAPTERS TWO AND THREE

2 Put the adjectives in the correct group in your notebook.

friendly bad difficult excited dirty great happy
ugly special beautiful wonderful

Example:

| Positive meaning | Negative meaning |
|------------------|------------------|
| <i>friendly</i> | <i>ugly</i> |
| | |

CHAPTER FOUR

3 Order the words to make sentences in your notebook.

- 1 night / boarding school / stay / Children / the / at
Children stay the night at boarding school.....
- 2 frog / One / kept / a / box / boy / tuck / his / in
- 3 a / uniform / had / school / new / I
- 4 cane / I / of / was / the / frightened / always
- 5 hungry / Mothers / food / their / every / sent / week / sons

CHAPTER FIVE

4 Complete these sentences in your notebook, using the adverbs from the box.

fast well slowly nearly badly

- 1 "How*fast*..... will it go?" we asked our very old half-sister.
- 2 My very old half-sister started the car, and we drove through the village.
- 3 My family were all OK, but I was hurt.
- 4 My nose was cut from my face.
- 5 "..... done. This is for you," she said.

CHAPTER SIX

5 Write the past tense of these irregular verbs in your notebook.

- 1 My very old half-sister*chose*..... (choose) to marry an English doctor.
- 2 I quickly (put) some of the goat droppings in the pipe.
- 3 Then we (hear) a loud shout.
- 4 The young doctor's pipe (fly) out of his mouth.
- 5 The young doctor (lie) on the ground.
- 6 My very old half-sister and the doctor quickly (understand).



CHAPTER SEVEN

- 6 Match the verbs and the nouns. Then write sentences in your notebook.

Example: I --f. I wear a uniform to school.

- | | |
|---------|-------------|
| 1 wear | a breakfast |
| 2 clean | b the world |
| 3 cook | c a room |
| 4 read | d photos |
| 5 play | e a book |
| 6 take | f a uniform |
| 7 see | g sport |

ALL CHAPTERS

- 7 Complete these sentences in your notebook, using the infinitives from the box.

to cut to marry to be to see
to use to feel

- 1 It was normal *to cut* a child's adenoids with no anaesthetic in those days!
- 2 How wonderful away from school!
- 3 People in the street were excited our car.
- 4 My very old half-sister chose an English doctor.
- 5 After five minutes, he started better.
- 6 Today, cameras are very easy

Project work

- 1 You are one of these people. Write a diary page.
 - Mrs Pratchett in Chapter Two.
 - Roald Dahl's half-sister in Chapter Five.
 - The young doctor in Chapter Six.
- 2 Write about your life at school. How is/was it the same as Roald Dahl's school life? How is/was it different?
- 3 You want parents to send their boys to St Peter's School. Make a poster about the school.
- 4 Roald Dahl wrote to his mother every week for thirty-two years. Write a letter from him to her, and then write a letter from her back to him.
- 5 Write about the people in the story. Who was good, bad, kind, etc.? Give reasons for your ideas.

An answer key for all questions and exercises can be found at www.penguinreaders.co.uk



Glossary

adenoids (n.)

Your *adenoids* are at the back of your mouth. In this story, the boy has a problem with his *adenoids*.

air (n.)

Air is everywhere, but you cannot see it. It goes into your nose and mouth.

anaesthetic (n.)

A doctor or dentist gives you an *anaesthetic*. Then they can cut your body, and you do not feel anything.

boarding school (n.)

an expensive school. Parents pay for their children to live at a *boarding school*.

boring (adj.)

We are not *excited* by *boring* books, lessons or places.

bottom (n.)

Your *bottom* is part of your body. You sit on your *bottom*.

breathe (v.)

to take *air* into your body through your nose or mouth

broken (adj.)

Broken glass is in small bits after an accident. You must not stand on it.

cane (n.)

In the 1920s, teachers sometimes hit children with a long *cane*.

coin (n.)

used as money

company (n.)

A *company* makes or sells things, and then people pay the *company* for those things.

darkroom (n.)

A very dark room where people make photos.

dead (adj.)

not living

droppings (n.)

Droppings are black or brown balls. They come out of an animal's *bottom*.

excited (adj.)

very happy because something good is going to happen

frog (n.)

a small, green animal with big eyes

fuel (n.)

Cars, lorries and boats need *fuel* to work.

goat (n.)

A *goat* is an animal! It is smaller than a cow. It gives us milk.

half-sister (n.);**half-brother** (n.)

You have the same mother or father as your *half-sister* or *half-brother*.

headmaster (n.)

the most important teacher in a school

hurt (v.)

You have an accident, and then your body *hurts*.

illness (n.)

when you have something wrong with your body, and you are not very well

island (n.)

a country, or part of a country, with water on every side of it

jar (n.)

a glass pot

life (n.)

from the beginning of living to the end of living. This is a *life*.

mile (n.)

You can run a *mile* in about 7 to 10 minutes. A *mile* is about 1.6 kilometres long.

on fire (adj.)

in this story, very hot

outside (adv.)

out of a place and into the street

pipe (n.)

You put a *pipe* in your mouth and *smoke* the *tobacco* in it.

shock (n.)

A *shock* is when you are not happy and not well because something very bad happened.

smell (v.)

Your nose tells you how something *smells*.

smoke (v.)

in this story, to use a *pipe* with *tobacco* in it

tobacco (n.)

Tobacco is a plant. People put *tobacco* in a *pipe* and *smoke* it.

tricycle (n.)

a bike that has three *wheels*

uniform (n.)

School children must wear the same trousers or skirt and shirt. This is the school's *uniform*.

wheel (n.)

A bike has two *wheels*. A *tricycle* has three *wheels*.