

ROALD DAHL

ILLUSTRATED BY QUENTIN BLAKE



THE WORLD'S  
No. 1  
★ STORYTELLER ★

# Dirty Beasts



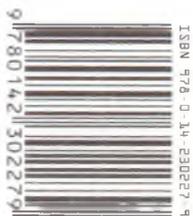
**ROALD DAHL** (1916–1990) was born in Wales of Norwegian parents. He spent his childhood in England and, at age eighteen, went to work for the Shell Oil Company in Africa. When World War II broke out, he joined the Royal Air Force and became a fighter pilot. At the age of twenty-six he moved to Washington, D.C., and it was there he began to write. His first short story, which recounted his adventures in the war, was bought by *The Saturday Evening Post*, and so began a long and illustrious career.

After establishing himself as a writer for adults, Roald Dahl began writing children's stories in 1960 while living in England with his family. His first stories were written as entertainment for his own children, to whom many of his books are dedicated.

Roald Dahl is now considered one of the most beloved storytellers of our time. Although he passed away in 1990, his popularity continues to increase as his fantastic novels, including *James and the Giant Peach*, *Matilda*, *The BFG*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, delight an ever-growing legion of fans.

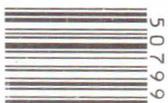
Learn more about Roald Dahl on the official Roald Dahl Web site: [www.roalddahl.com](http://www.roalddahl.com)

**QUENTIN BLAKE** is a well-known artist whose work has made him popular on both sides of the Atlantic. He was Great Britain's first children's laureate and now lives in London.



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ROALD DAHL

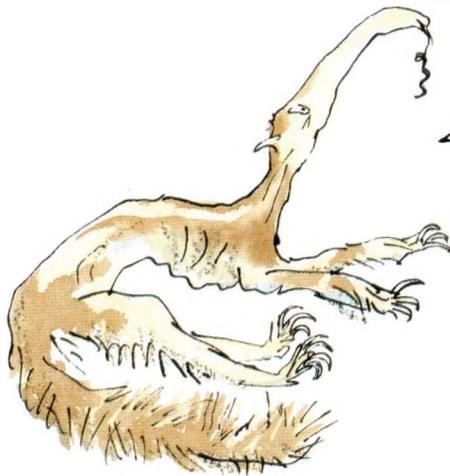
Dirty  
Beasts



*Illustrated by Quentin Blake*

PUFFIN BOOKS

# To Alfhild, Else and Asta



Find out more about Roald Dahl  
by visiting the web site at  
[www.roalddahl.com](http://www.roalddahl.com)

## PUFFIN BOOKS

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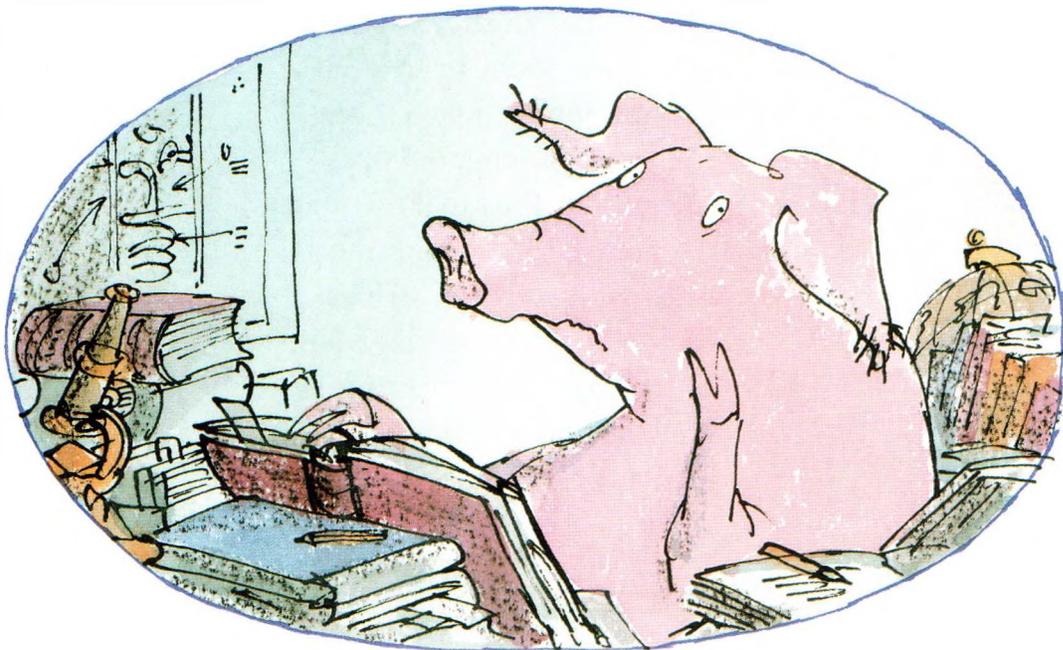
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# The Pig

In England once there lived a big  
And wonderfully clever pig.  
To everybody it was plain  
That Piggy had a massive brain.  
He worked out sums inside his head,  
There was no book he hadn't read,  
He knew what made an airplane fly,  
He knew how engines worked and why.  
He knew all this, but in the end  
One question drove him round the bend:  
He simply couldn't puzzle out  
What LIFE was really all about.  
What was the reason for his birth?  
Why was he placed upon this earth?  
His giant brain went round and round.  
Alas, no answer could be found,  
Till suddenly one wondrous night,  
All in a flash, he saw the light.  
He jumped up like a ballet dancer  
And yelled, "By gum, I've got the answer!"





“They want my bacon slice by slice  
“To sell at a tremendous price!  
“They want my tender juicy chops  
“To put in all the butchers’ shops!  
“They want my pork to make a roast  
“And that’s the part’ll cost the most!  
“They want my sausages in strings!  
“They even want my chitterlings!  
“The butcher’s shop! The carving knife!  
“That is the reason for my life!”  
Such thoughts as these are not designed  
To give a pig great peace of mind.

Next morning, in comes Farmer Bland,  
A pail of pigswill in his hand,  
And Piggy with a mighty roar,  
Bashes the farmer to the floor . . .  
Now comes the rather grizzly bit  
So let's not make too much of it,  
Except that you *must* understand  
That Piggy *did* eat Farmer Bland,  
He ate him up from head to toe,  
Chewing the pieces nice and slow.  
It took an hour to reach the feet,  
Because there was so much to eat,  
And when he'd finished, Pig, of course,  
Felt absolutely no remorse.  
Slowly he scratched his brainy head  
And with a little smile, he said,  
"I had a fairly powerful hunch  
"That he might have me for his lunch."  
"And so, because I feared the worst,  
"I thought I'd better eat *him* first."



# The Crocodile

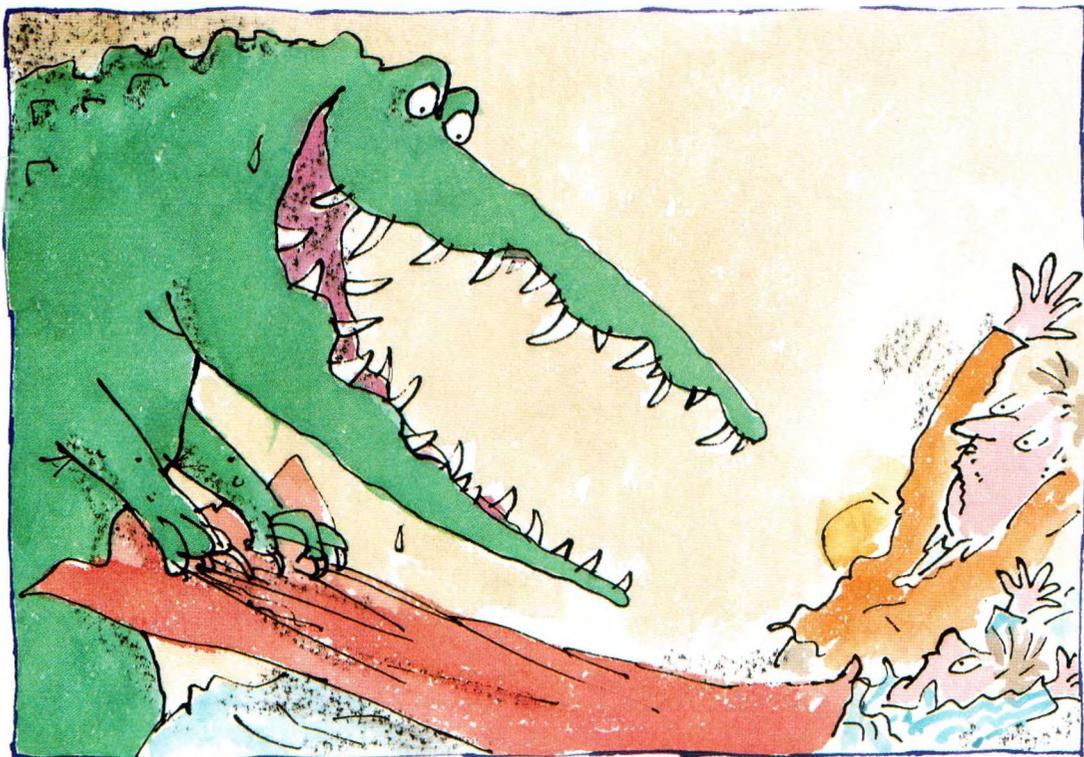
No animal is half so vile  
As Crocky-Wock the crocodile.  
On Saturdays he likes to crunch  
Six juicy children for his lunch,  
And he especially enjoys  
Just three of each, three girls, three boys.  
He smears the boys (to make them hot)  
With mustard from the mustard pot.



But mustard doesn't go with girls,  
It tastes all wrong with plaits and curls.  
With them, what goes extremely well  
Is butterscotch and caramel.  
It's such a super marvellous treat  
When boys are hot and girls are sweet.  
At least that's Crocky's point of view.  
He ought to know. He's had a few.



That's all for now. It's time for bed  
Lie down and rest your sleepy head . . .  
Ssh! *Listen!* What is that I hear  
Gallumphing softly up the stair?  
Go lock the door and fetch my gun!  
Go on, child, hurry! Quickly, run!  
No, stop! Stand back! He's coming in!  
Oh, look, that greasy greenish skin!  
The shining teeth, the greedy smile!  
It's CROCKY-WOCK, THE CROCODILE!



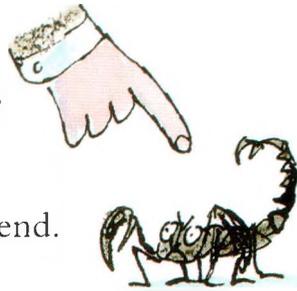
# The Lion

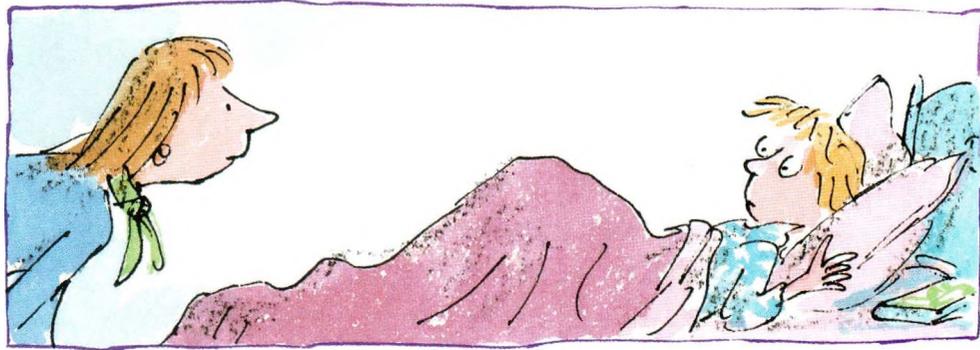
The lion just adores to eat  
A lot of red and tender meat,  
And if you ask the lion what  
Is much the tenderest of the lot,  
He will not say a roast of lamb  
Or curried beef or devilled ham  
Or crispy pork or corned beef hash  
Or sausages or mutton mash.  
Then could it be a big plump hen?  
He answers no. What is it, then?  
Oh, lion dear, could I not make  
You happy with a lovely steak?  
Could I entice you from your lair  
With rabbit-pie or roasted hare?  
The lion smiled and shook his head.  
He came up very close and said,  
“The meat I am about to chew  
Is neither steak nor chops. IT’S YOU.”



# The Scorpion

You ought to thank your lucky star  
That here in England where you are  
You'll never find (or so it's said)  
A scorpion inside your bed.  
The scorpion's name is Stingaling,  
A most repulsive ugly thing,  
And I would never recommend  
That you should treat him as a friend.  
His scaly skin is black as black  
With armour-plate upon his back.  
Observe his scowling murderous face,  
His wicked eyes, his lack of grace,  
Note well his long and crinkly tail.  
And when it starts to swish and flail,  
Oh gosh! Watch out! Jump back, I say,  
And run till you're a mile away.  
The moment that his tail goes *swish*  
He has but one determined wish,  
He wants to make a sudden jump  
And sting you hard upon your rump.



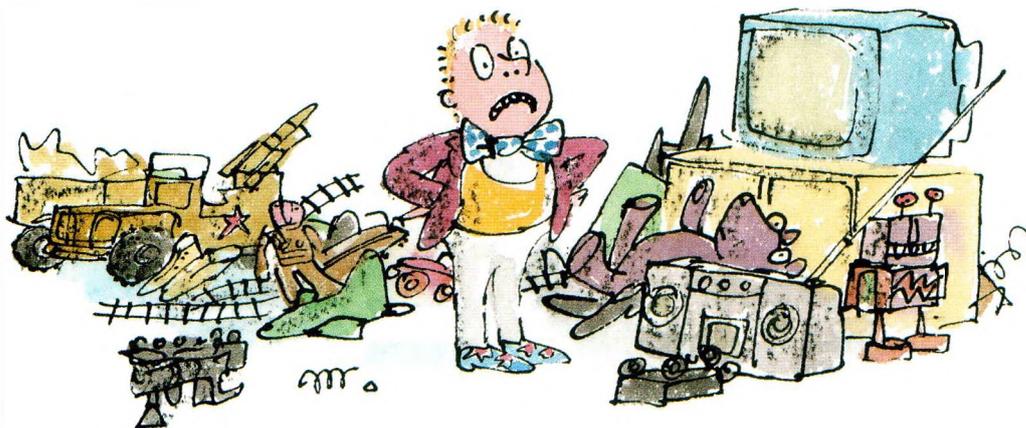


“What *is* the matter, darling child?  
“Why do you look so tense and wild?”  
“Oh mummy, underneath the sheet  
“There’s something moving on my feet,  
“Some horrid creepy crawly thing,  
“D’you think it could be Stingaling?”  
“What nonsense child! You’re teasing me.”  
“I’m not, I’m not! It’s reached my knee!  
“It’s going . . . going up my thigh!  
“Oh mummy, catch it quickly! Try!  
“It’s on . . . it’s on my bottom now!  
“It’s . . . *Ow! Ow-ow! Ow-ow! OW-OW!*”

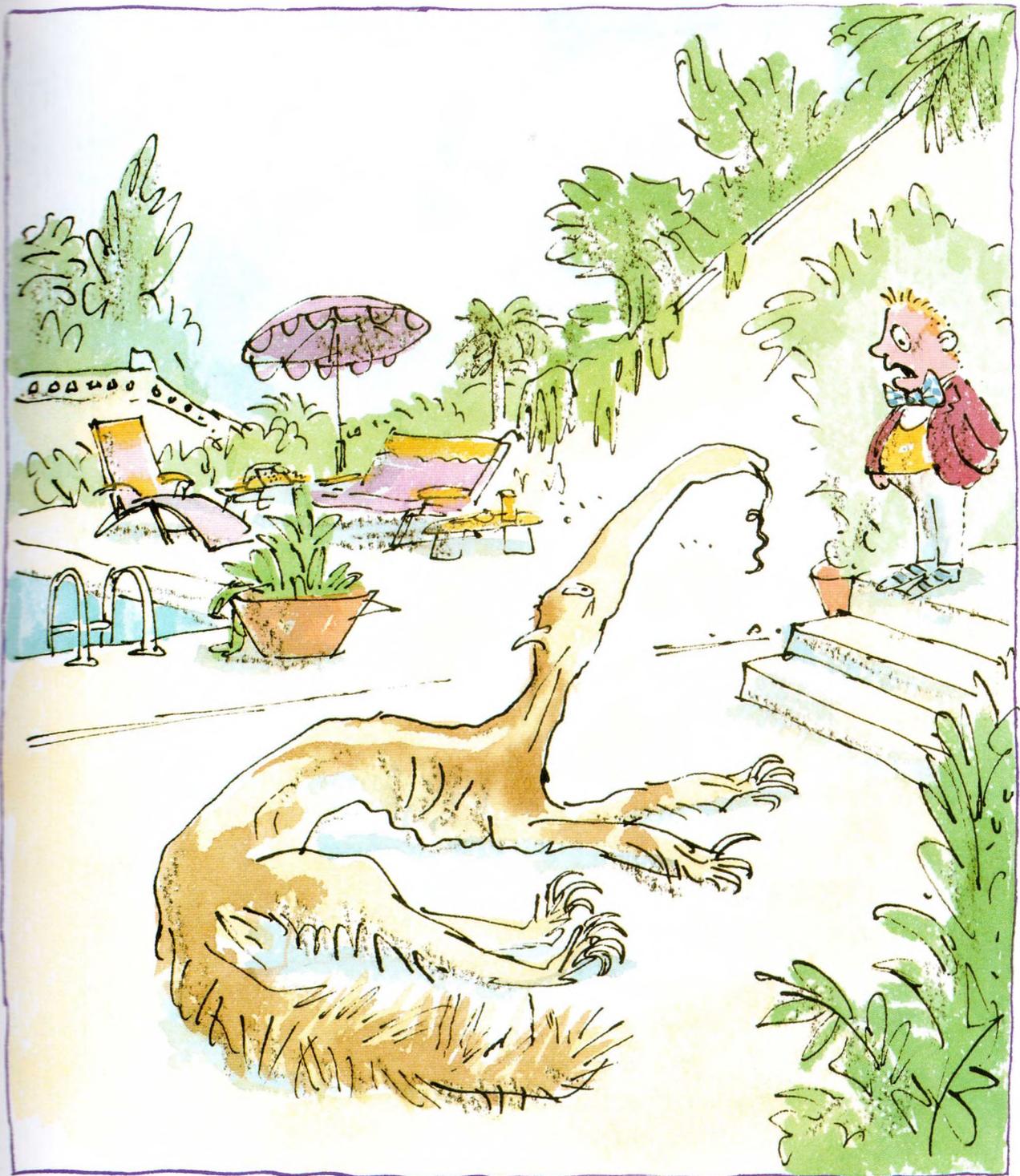


# The Ant-Eater

Some wealthy folks from U.S.A.,  
Who lived near San Francisco Bay,  
Possessed an only child called Roy,  
A plump and unattractive boy –  
Half-baked, half-witted and half-boiled,  
But worst of all, most dreadfully spoiled.  
Whatever Roy desired each day,  
His father bought him right away –  
Toy motor-cars, electric trains,  
The latest model aeroplanes,  
A colour television-set,  
A saxophone, a clarinet,  
Expensive teddy-bears that talked,  
And animals that walked and squawked.  
That house contained sufficient toys  
To thrill a half a million boys.  
(As well as this, young Roy would choose,  
Two pairs a week of brand-new shoes.)  
And now he stood there shouting, “What  
“On earth is there I haven’t got?  
“How hard to think of something new!  
“The choices are extremely few!”



Then added, as he scratched his ear,  
“Hold it! I’ve got a good idea!  
“I think the next thing I must get  
“Should be a most peculiar pet –  
“The kind that no one else has got –  
“A giant ANT-EATER! Why not?”  
As soon as father heard the news,  
He quickly wrote to all the zoos.  
“Dear Sirs,” he said, “My dear keepers,  
“Do any of you have ant-eaters?”  
They answered by return of mail.  
“Our ant-eaters are not for sale.”  
Undaunted, Roy’s fond parent hurled  
More messages across the world.  
He said, “I’ll pay you through the nose  
“If you can get me one of those.”  
At last he found an Indian gent  
(He lived near Delhi, in a tent),  
Who said that he would sacrifice  
His pet for an enormous price  
(The price demanded, if you please,  
Was fifty thousand gold rupees).  
The ant-eater arrived half-dead.  
It looked at Roy and softly said,  
“I’m famished. Do you think you could  
“Please give me just a little food?  
“A crust of bread, a bit of meat?  
“I haven’t had a thing to eat  
“In all the time I was at sea,  
“For nobody looked after me.”  
Roy shouted, “No! No bread or meat!  
“Go find some ants! They’re what you eat!”  
The starving creature crawled away.  
It searched the garden night and day,  
It hunted every inch of ground,  
But not one single ant it found.



“Please give me food!” the creature cried.

“Go find an ant!” the boy replied.

By chance, upon that very day,  
Roy's father's sister came to stay –  
A foul old hag of eighty-three  
Whose name, it seems, was Dorothy.  
She said to Roy, "Come let us sit  
"Out in the sun and talk a bit."  
Roy said, "I don't believe you've met  
"My new and most unusual pet?"  
He pointed down among the stones  
Where something lay, all skin and bones.  
"Ant-eater!" he yelled. "Don't lie there yawning!  
"This is my ant! Come say good morning!"



(Some people in the U.S.A.  
Have trouble with the words they say.  
However hard they try, they can't  
Pronounce a simple word like AUNT.  
Instead of AUNT, they call it ANT,  
Instead of CAN'T, they call it KANT.)  
Roy yelled, "Come here, you so-and-so!  
"My ant would like to say hello!"  
Slowly, the creature raised its head.  
"D'you mean that that's an *ant*?" it said.  
"Of course!" cried Roy. "Ant Dorothy!  
"This ant is over eighty-three."  
The creature smiled. Its tummy rumbled.  
It licked its starving lips and mumbled,  
"A giant ant! By gosh, a winner!  
"At last I'll get a decent dinner!  
"No matter if it's eighty-three.  
"If that's an ant, then it's for me!"

Then, taking very careful aim,  
It pounced upon the startled dame.  
It grabbed her firmly by the hair  
And ate her up right then and there,  
Murmuring as it chewed the feet,  
"The largest ant I'll ever eat."



Meanwhile, our hero Roy had sped  
In terror to the potting-shed,  
And tried to make himself obscure  
Behind a pile of horse-manure.  
But ant-eater came sneaking in  
(Already it was much less thin)  
And said to Roy, "You little squirt,  
"I think I'll have you for dessert."



# The Porcupine

Each Saturday I shout "Hooray!"  
For that's my pocket-money day,  
(Although it's clearly understood  
I only get it when I'm good.)  
This week my parents had been told  
That I had been as good as gold,  
So after breakfast 50p  
My generous father gave to me.  
Like lightning down the road I ran  
Until I reached the sweet-shop man,  
And bought the chocolates of my dreams,  
A great big bag of raspberry creams.  
There is a secret place I know  
Where I quite often like to go,  
Beyond the wood, behind some rocks,  
A super place for guzzling chocs.  
When I arrived, I quickly found  
A comfy-looking little mound,  
Quite clean and round and earthy-brown  
Just right, I thought, for sitting down.  
Here I will sit all morning long  
And eat until my chocs are gone.  
I sat. I screamed. I jumped a foot!  
Would you believe that I had put  
That tender little rump of mine  
Upon a giant porcupine!  
My backside seemed to catch on fire!  
A hundred red-hot bits of wire  
A hundred prickles sticking in  
And puncturing my precious skin!  
I ran for home. I shouted, "Mum!  
"Behold the prickles in my bum!"  
My mum, who always keeps her head,  
Bent down to look and then she said,





“I personally am not about  
“To try to pull *those* prickles out.  
“I think a job like this requires  
“The services of Mr Myers.”  
I shouted, “Not the dentist! No!  
“Oh mum, why don’t *you* have a go?”  
I begged her twice, I begged her thrice,  
But grown-ups never take advice.  
She said, “A dentist’s very strong.  
“He pulls things out the whole day long.”  
She drove me quickly into town,  
And then they turned me upside down  
Upon the awful dentist’s chair,  
While two strong nurses held me there.



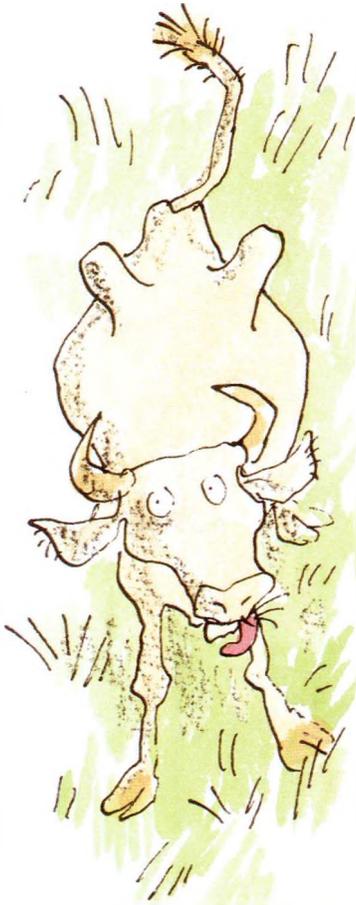
Enter the dreaded Mr Myers  
Waving a massive pair of pliers.  
“This is,” he cried with obvious glee,  
“A new experience for me.  
“Quite honestly I can’t pretend  
“I’ve ever pulled things from *this* end.”  
He started pulling one by one  
And yelling “My, oh my, what fun!”

I shouted "Help!" I shouted "Ow!"  
He said, "It's nearly over now.  
"For heaven's sake, don't squirm about!  
"Here goes! The last one's coming out!"  
The dentist pulled and out it came,  
And then I heard the man exclaim,  
"Let us now talk about the fees.  
"That will be fifty guineas, please."  
My mother is a gutsy bird  
And never one to mince a word.  
She cried, "By gosh, that's jolly steep!"  
He answered, "No, it's very cheap.  
"My dear woman, can't you see  
"That if it hadn't been for me  
"This child could go another year  
"With prickles sticking in her rear."  
So that was that. Oh, what a day!  
And what a fuss! But by the way,  
I think I know why porcupines  
Surround themselves with prickly spines.  
It is to stop some silly clown  
From squashing them by sitting down.  
Don't copy me. Don't be a twit.  
Be sure you LOOK before you SIT.



# The Cow

Please listen while I tell you now  
About a most fantastic cow.  
Miss Milky Daisy was her name,  
And when, aged seven months, she came  
To live with us, she did her best  
To look the same as all the rest.  
But Daisy, as we all could see  
Had some kind of deformity,  
A funny sort of bumpy lump  
On either side, above the rump.  
Now, not so very long ago,  
These bumpy lumps began to grow,  
And three or maybe four months later,  
(I stood there, an enthralled spectator)  
These bumpy lumps burst wide apart  
And out there came (I cross my heart)  
Of all the wondrous marvellous things,  
A pair of gold and silver wings!  
A cow with wings! A flying cow!  
I'd never seen one up to now.  
"Oh Daisy dear, can this be true?"  
She flapped her wings and up she flew!  
Most gracefully she climbed up high,  
She fairly whizzed across the sky.  
You should have seen her dive and swoop!  
She even did a loop the loop!  
Of course, almost immediately  
Her picture was on live T.V.,  
And millions came each day to stare  
At Milky Daisy in the air.  
They shouted "Jeepers Creepers! Wow!"  
"It really is a flying cow!"  
They laughed and clapped and cheered and waved,  
And all of them were well-behaved





Except for one quite horrid man  
Who'd travelled from Afghanistan.  
This fellow, standing in the crowd,  
Raised up his voice and yelled aloud,  
"That silly cow! Hey, listen Daisy!  
"I think you're absolutely crazy!"  
Unfortunately Daisy heard  
Quite clearly every single word.  
"By gosh," she cried, "what awful cheek!  
"Who is this silly foreign freak?"  
She dived, and using all her power  
She got to sixty miles an hour.  
"Bombs gone!" she cried. "Take that!" she said,  
And dropped a cowpat on his head.



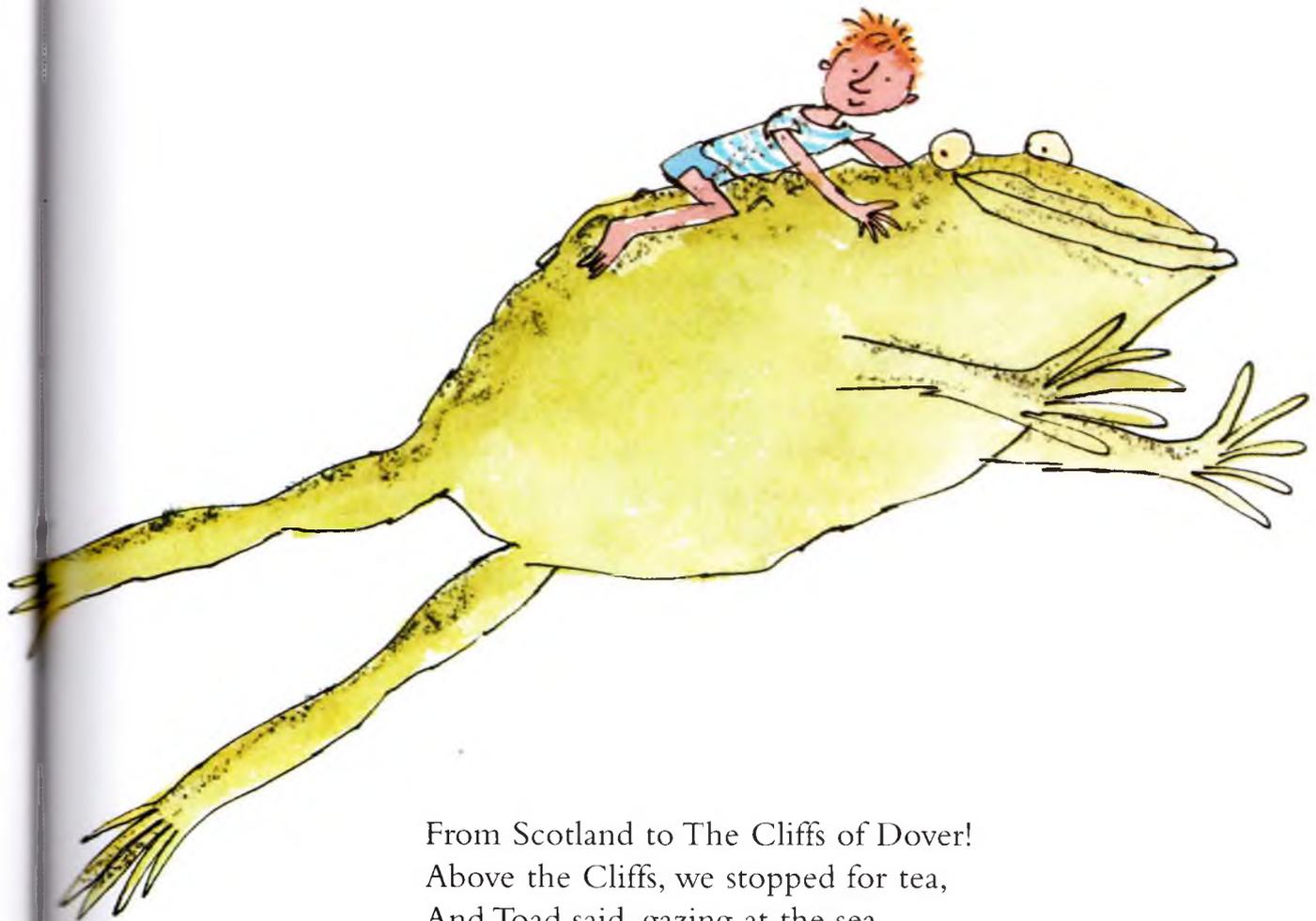
# The Toad and the Snail

I really am most awfully fond  
Of playing in the lily-pond.  
I take off shoes and socks and coat  
And paddle with my little boat.  
Now yesterday, quite suddenly,  
A giant toad came up to me.  
This toad was easily as big  
As any fair-sized fattish pig.  
He smiled and said "How do you do?  
"Hello! Good morning! How are you?"



(His face somehow reminded me  
Of mummy's sister Emily.)  
The toad said, "Don't you think I'm fine?"  
"Admire these lovely legs of mine,  
"And I am sure you've never seen  
"A toad so gloriously green!"  
I said, "So far as I can see,  
"You look just like Aunt Emily."  
He said, "I'll bet Aunt Emily  
"Can't jump one half as high as me.  
"Hop on my back, young friend," he cried,  
"I'll take you for a marvellous ride."  
As I got on, I thought, oh blimey,  
Oh, deary me. How wet and slimy!  
"Sit further back," he said. "That's right.  
"I'm going to jump, so hold on tight."  
He jumped! Oh, how he jumped! By gum,  
I thought my final hour had come!  
My wretched eardrums popped and fizzed.  
My eyeballs watered. Up we whizzed.  
I clung on tight. I shouted, "How  
"Much further are we going now?"  
Toad said, his face all wreathed in smiles,  
"With every jump, it's fifty miles!"  
Quite literally, we jumped all over,





From Scotland to The Cliffs of Dover!  
Above the Cliffs, we stopped for tea,  
And Toad said, gazing at the sea,  
“What do you say we take a chance,  
“And jump from England into France?”  
I said, “Oh dear, d’you think we oughta?  
“I’d hate to finish in the water.”  
But toads, you’ll find, don’t give a wink  
For what we little children think.  
He didn’t bother to reply.  
He jumped! You should have seen us fly!  
We simply soared across the sea,  
The marvellous Mister Toad and me.



Then down we came, and down and down,  
And landed in a funny town.  
We landed hard, in fact we bounced.  
“We’re there! It’s France!” the Toad announced.  
He said, “You must admit it’s grand  
“To jump into a foreign land.  
“No boats, no bicycles, no trains,  
“No cars, no noisy aeroplanes.”  
Just then, we heard a fearful shout,  
“Oh, heavens above!” the Toad cried out.  
I turned and saw a frightening sight –  
On every side, to left, to right,  
People were running down the road,  
Running at me and Mister Toad,  
And every person, man and wife  
Was brandishing a carving-knife.  
It didn’t take me very long  
To figure there was something wrong.  
And yet, how could a small boy know,  
For nobody had told me so,  
That Frenchmen aren’t like you or me,  
They do things very differently.  
They won’t say “yards”, they call them “metres”,



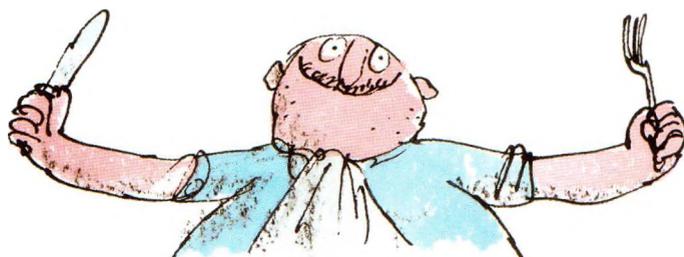
And they're the *most peculiar* eaters:  
A Frenchman frequently regales  
Himself with half-a-dozen SNAILS!  
The greedy ones will gulp a score  
Of these foul brutes and ask for more.  
(In many of the best hotels  
The people also eat the shells.)  
Imagine that! My stomach turns!  
One might as well eat slugs or worms!  
But wait. Read on a little bit.



You haven't heard the half of it.  
These French go even more agog  
If someone offers them a FROG!  
(You'd better fetch a basin quick  
In case you're going to be sick.)  
The bits of frog they like to eat  
Are thighs and calves and toes and feet.  
The French will gobble loads and loads  
Of legs they chop off frogs and toads.  
They think it's absolutely ripping  
To guzzle frogs-legs fried in dripping.  
That's why the whole town and their wives  
Were rushing us with carving-knives.



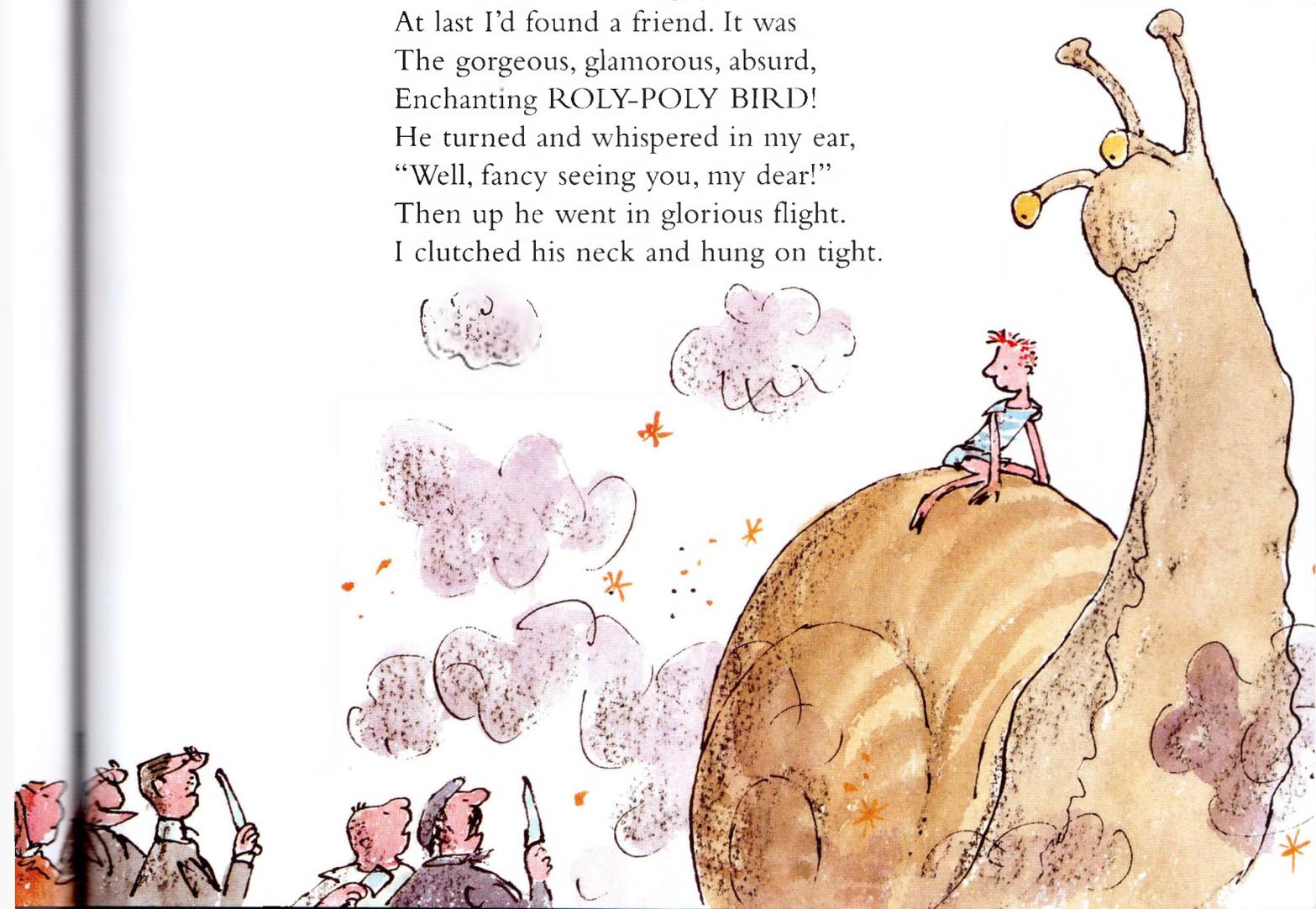
They screamed in French, "Well I'll be blowed!  
"What legs there are upon that toad!  
"Chop them! Skin them! Cook them! Fry them!  
"All of us are going to try them!"  
"Toad!" I cried. "I'm not a funk,  
"But ought we not to do a bunk?  
"These rascals haven't come to greet you.  
"All they want to do is eat you!"



Toad turned his head and looked at me,  
And said, as cool as cool could be,  
“Calm down and listen carefully please,  
“I often come to France to tease  
“These crazy French who long to eat  
“My lovely tender froggy meat.  
“I am a MAGIC TOAD!” he cried.  
“And I don’t ever have to hide!  
“Stay where you are! Don’t move!” he said,  
And pressed a button on his head.  
At once, there came a blinding flash,  
And then the most almighty crash,  
And sparks were bursting all around,  
And smoke was rising from the ground . . .  
When all the smoke had cleared away  
The Frenchmen with their knives cried, “*Hey!*  
“Where is the toad? Where has he gone?”  
You see, I now was sitting on  
A wonderfully ENORMOUS SNAIL!  
His shell was smooth and brown and pale,  
And I was so high off the ground  
That I could see for miles around.  
The Snail said, “Hello! Greetings! Hail!  
“I was a Toad. Now I’m a Snail.  
“I had to change the way I looked  
“To save myself from being cooked.”  
“Oh Snail,” I said, “I’m not so sure.  
“I think they’re starting up once more.”  
The French were shouting, “What a snail!  
“Oh, what a monster! What a whale!  
“He makes the toad look titchy small!  
“There’s lovely snail-meat for us all!  
“We’ll bake the creature in his shell  
“And ring aloud the dinner-bell!  
“Get garlic, parsley, butter, spices!  
“We’ll cut him into fifty slices!



“Come sharpen up your carving-knives!  
“This is the banquet of our lives!”  
I murmured through my quivering lips,  
“Oh Snail, I think we’ve had our chips.”  
The Snail replied, “I disagree.  
“Those greedy French, they’ll not eat me.”  
But on they came. They screamed, “Yahoo!  
“Surround the brute and run him through!”  
Good gracious, I could almost feel  
The pointed blades, the shining steel!  
But Snail was cool as cool could be.  
He turned his head and winked at me,  
And murmured, “Au revoir, farewell,”  
And pulled a lever on his shell.  
I looked around. The Snail had gone!  
And *now* who was I sitting on? . . .  
Oh what relief! What joy! Because  
At last I’d found a friend. It was  
The gorgeous, glamorous, absurd,  
Enchanting ROLY-POLY BIRD!  
He turned and whispered in my ear,  
“Well, fancy seeing you, my dear!”  
Then up he went in glorious flight.  
I clutched his neck and hung on tight.



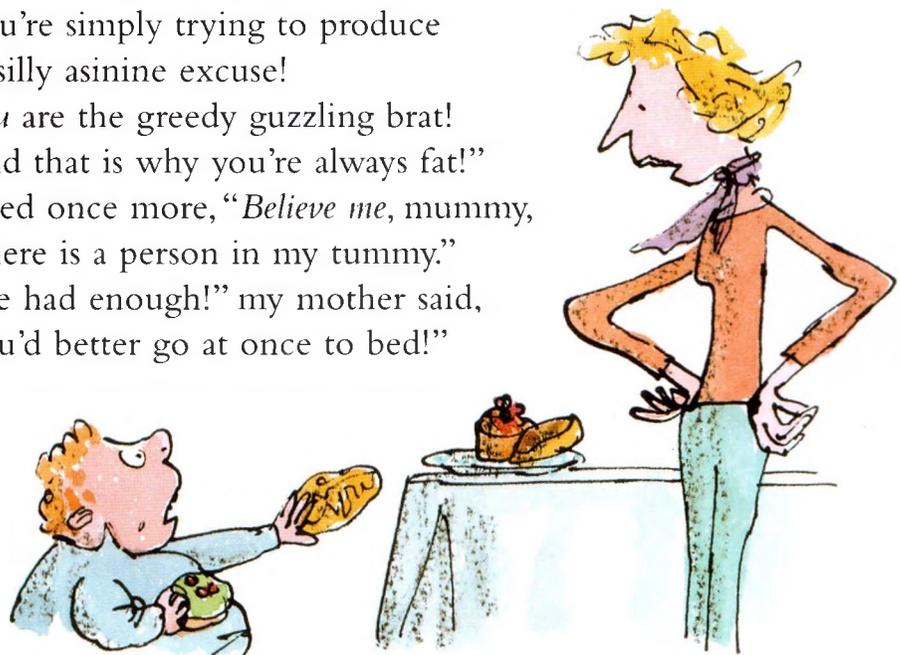


We fairly raced across the sky,  
The Roly-Poly Bird and I,  
And landed safely just beyond  
The fringes of the lily-pond.  
When I got home I never told  
A solitary single soul  
What I had done or where I'd been  
Or any of the things I'd seen.  
I did not even say I rode  
Upon a giant jumping toad,  
'Cause if I had, I knew that they  
Would not believe me anyway.  
But you and I know well it's true.  
We know I jumped, we know I flew.  
We're sure it all took place, although  
Not one of us will ever know,  
We'll never, never understand  
Why children go to Wonderland.



# The Tummy Beast

One afternoon I said to mummy,  
“Who is this person in my tummy?”  
“He must be small and very thin  
“Or how could he have gotten in?”  
My mother said from where she sat,  
“It isn’t nice to talk like that.”  
“It’s true!” I cried. “I swear it, mummy!”  
“There *is* a person in my tummy!”  
“He talks to me at night in bed,  
“He’s always asking to be fed,  
“Throughout the day, he screams at me,  
“Demanding sugar buns for tea.  
“He tells me it is not a sin  
“To go and raid the biscuit tin.  
“I know quite well it’s awfully wrong  
“To guzzle food the whole day long,  
“But really I can’t help it, mummy,  
“Not with this person in my tummy.”  
“You horrid child!” my mother cried.  
“Admit it right away, you’ve lied!  
“You’re simply trying to produce  
“A silly asinine excuse!  
“You are the greedy guzzling brat!  
“And that is why you’re always fat!”  
I tried once more, “Believe me, mummy,  
“There is a person in my tummy.”  
“I’ve had enough!” my mother said,  
“You’d better go at once to bed!”

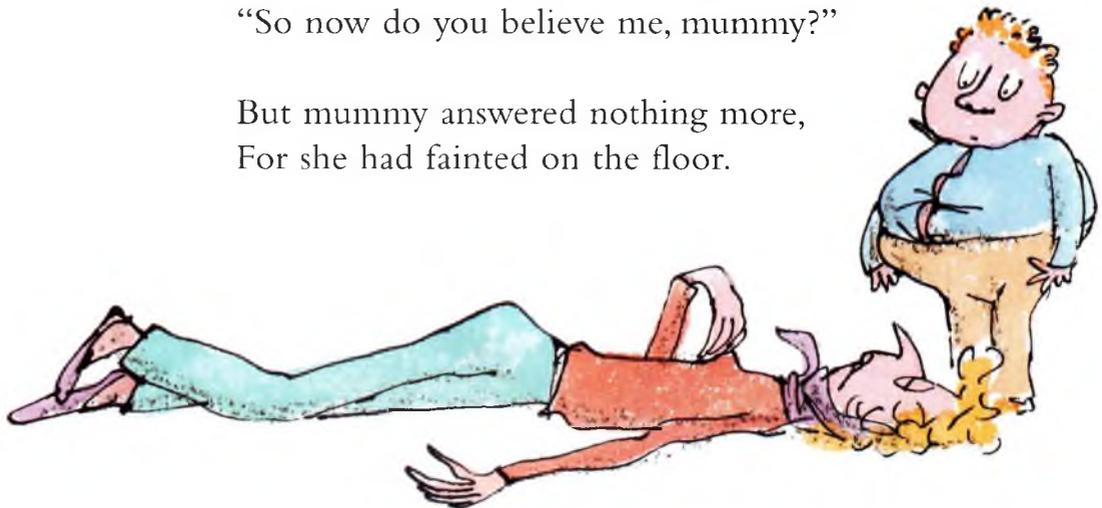


Just then, a nicely timed event  
Delivered me from punishment.  
Deep in my tummy something stirred,  
And then an awful noise was heard,  
A snorting grumbling grunting sound  
That made my tummy jump around.  
My darling mother nearly died,



“My goodness, what was that?” she cried.  
At once, the tummy voice came through,  
It shouted, “Hey there! Listen you!  
“I’m getting hungry! I want eats!  
“I want lots of chocs and sweets!  
“Get me half a pound of nuts!  
“Look snappy or I’ll twist your guts!”  
“That’s him!” I cried. “He’s in my tummy!”  
“So now do you believe me, mummy?”

But mummy answered nothing more,  
For she had fainted on the floor.



There's more to Roald Dahl than great stories...

Did you know that 10% of author royalties\* from this book go to help the work of the Roald Dahl charities?



The Roald Dahl Foundation supports specialist paediatric Roald Dahl nurses throughout the UK caring for children with epilepsy, blood disorders, and acquired brain injury. It also provides practical help for children and young

people with brain, blood, and literacy problems—all causes close to Roald Dahl during his lifetime—through grants to UK hospitals and charities as well as to individual children and their families.

The Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre, based in Great Missenden just outside London, is in the Buckinghamshire village where Roald Dahl lived and wrote. At the heart of the Museum, created to inspire a love of reading and writing, is his unique archive of letters and manuscripts. As well as two fun-packed biographical galleries, the Museum boasts an interactive Story Centre. It is a place for family, teachers and their pupils to explore the exciting world of creativity and literacy.



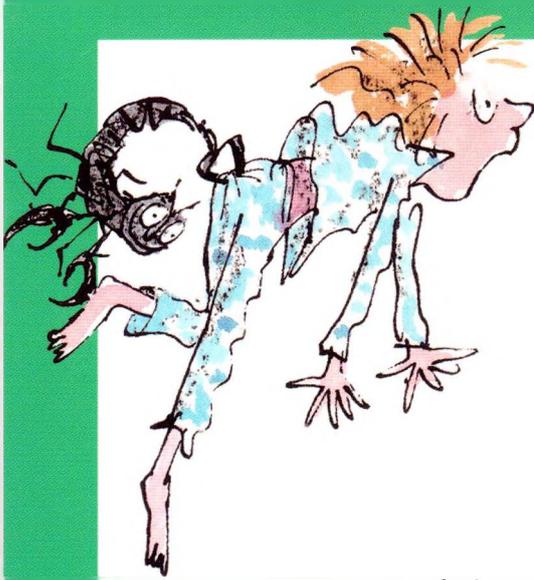
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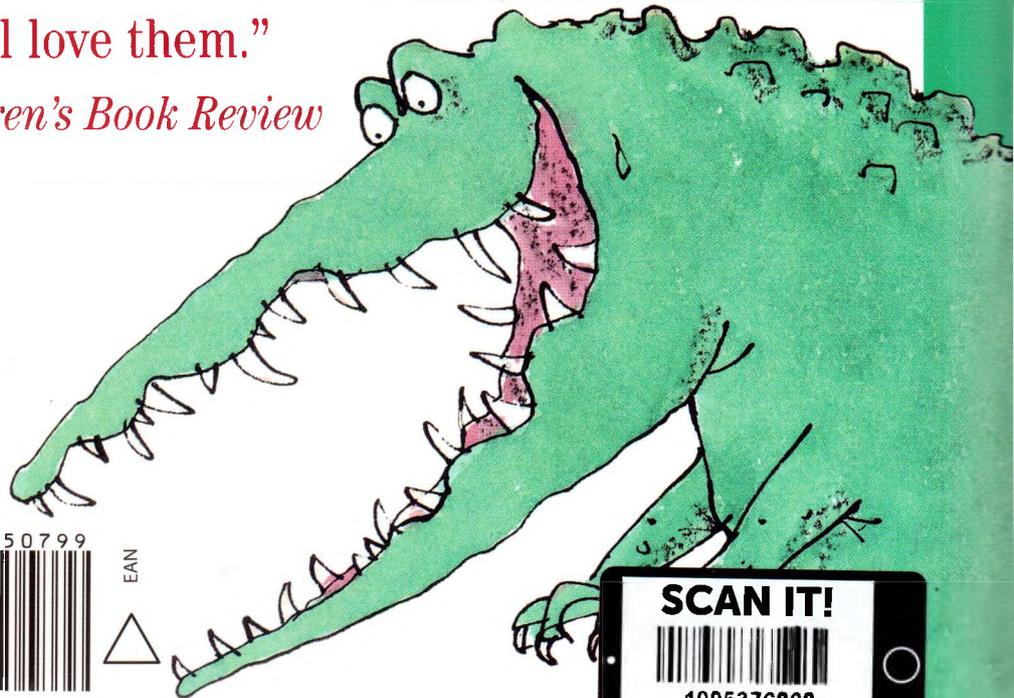


# BEWARE of animals!

**F**rom Stingaling the scorpion to Crocky-Wock the crocodile, Roald Dahl's animals are nothing short of ridiculous. A clever pig with an unmentionable plan to save his own bacon and an anteater with an unusually large appetite are among the absurd characters you'll meet in Dahl's collection of comic verse!

*“Will elicit a loud ‘Yuck.’ In other words, children will love them.”*

*—Children's Book Review*



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