

MATILDA

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(MATILDA)

MY DADDY SAYS I'M A BORE
 MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A JUMPED-UP LITTLE GERM
 THAT KIDS LIKE ME SHOULD BE AGAINST THE LAW.
 MY DADDY SAYS I SHOULD LEARN TO SHUT MY PIE HOLE
 NO-ONE LIKES A SMART-MOUTHED GIRL LIKE ME
 MUM SAYS I'M A GOOD CASE FOR POPULATION CONTROL
 DAD SAYS I SHOULD WATCH MORE TV

MR WORMWOOD bursts in, pushing past Matilda.

The Wormwood's Living Room.

MR WORMWOOD

Yes, sir. That's right, sir. One hundred and fifty five brand new luxury cars, sir.

(listens)

'Are they good runners'? Let's put it this way... you wouldn't beat them in a race.

HE laughs hugely at his funny joke. But there is silence from the other end of the line.

He stops laughing, immediately.

No, sir, yes, sir, they are good runners sir, yes, sir, indeed, sir. So, erm... how much exactly—?

Suddenly there is a scream. HE panics, nearly drops the phone, turns around. MRS WORMWOOD (the source of the scream) stands horrified, staring at MATILDA, who sits reading a book.

MRS WORMWOOD

Harry!

MR WORMWOOD

Hang on—

MRS WORMWOOD

Look at this, she's reading a book. That's not normal for a five year old. I think she might be an idiot.

MATILDA

Listen to this—'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom—'

Her MOTHER screams, covers her ears.

MR WORMWOOD

Stop scaring your mother with that book, boy!

MATILDA

I'm a girl.

Mr. & Mrs.
 Wormwood
 Matilda
 Michael

Start

MRS WORMWOOD

And she keeps trying to tell me stories, Harry. Stories? Who wants stories? I mean it's not normal for a girl to be all thinking...

MR WORMWOOD

(into the phone)

I'm gonna call you straight back

(hangs up, turning to his wife)

Would you please shut up! I'm trying to pull off the biggest business deal of my life and I have to listen to this.

SHE is shocked, but HE persists.

It's your fault; you spend us into trouble and you expect me to get us out. What am I, a flaming escapologist?

MRS WORMWOOD

Escapologist he says! What about me then? I've got a whole house to look after — dinners don't microwave themselves you know! If you're an escapologist I must be an acrobat to balance that lot — the world's greatest acrobat. I am off to bleach my roots and I shan't be talking to you for the rest of the evening, you... horrid little man!

MR WORMWOOD

But I'm going to make us rich!

MRS WORMWOOD

(steps)

Rich?

(turns)

How rich?

MR WORMWOOD

Very rich. Russian businessmen. Very, very stupid. Your genius husband is going to sell them one hundred and fifty five knackered old bangers as... brand new luxury cars!

MATILDA

But that's not fair! The cars will break down, what about the Russians?

MR WORMWOOD

Fair? Listen to the boy!

MATILDA

I'm a girl.

MR WORMWOOD

Fair does not get you anywhere, you thick-headed twitbrain! All I can say is thank heavens Michael has inherited his old man's brains, eh son?



MATILDA

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MICHAEL

Mi-chael.

MRS WORMWOOD

STOP | Hmm. Well, I shall take the money when you earn it. And I shall spend it. But I shan't enjoy it because of the despicable way in which you have spoken to me tonight.

SHE leaves. Beat. HE rounds on Matilda.

1a - Intro To Naughty

MR WORMWOOD

This is your fault! With your stupid books and your stupid reading!

MATILDA

What? But I didn't do anything! That's not right!

MR WORMWOOD

Right! Right! I tell you something; you're off to school in a few days time and you won't be getting 'right' there. Oh no. I know your headmistress Agatha Trunchbull — and I've told her all about you and your smarty pants ideas.

(coming closer)

Great big strong scary woman she is, used to compete in the Olympics, throwing the hammer. Imagine what she's going to do to a horrible, squeaky little goblin like you, boy.

MATILDA

I'm a girl...

MR WORMWOOD

Now get off to bed you little... bookworm!

MATILDA goes to her room. Alone. Picks up a book.

2 - Naughty

MATILDA

JACK AND JILL WENT UP THE HILL
TO FETCH A PAIL OF WATER, SO THEY SAY
THE SUBSEQUENT FALL WAS INEVITABLE,
THEY NEVER STOOD A CHANCE — THEY WERE WRITTEN THAT WAY.
INNOCENT VICTIMS OF THEIR STORY.

LIKE ROMEO AND JULIET,

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MATILDA

• Matilda

• Mrs. Phelps

MRS PHELPS

Goodbye Miss Honey. And good luck with the Tolstoy.

#2c - Good Luck With The Tolstoy

MISS HONEY almost bumps into Matilda. A moment. Leaves.

As I was saying, Matilda, I'm not hinting, but if you did happen to have a story you wanted to tell me, I could —

MATILDA

Who was that lady?

MRS PHELPS

That lady? That was Miss Honey. She's going to be your teacher.

MATILDA

That lady... that lady is my...?

MRS PHELPS

~~You your teacher.~~ Now look, are you going to tell me a story or not?

MATILDA

(still far away)

Once upon a time...

#3 - Acrobat Story 1

MRS PHELPS gives a squeak of delight. Runs to get some chairs for them to sit on a large one for her a small one for Matilda, but MATILDA leaps up on the big one to tell the story. With no other option MRS PHELPS sit on the small one.

Once upon a time the two greatest circus performers in the world — an escapologist, who could escape from any lock that was ever invented, and an acrobat, who was so skilled it seemed as if she could actually fly — fell in love and got married.

They performed some of the most incredible feats together anyone has ever seen and people would come from miles around: Kings, Queens, Celebrities and Astronauts. And not just to see their skill, but also to see their love for each other, which was so deep that it was said that cats would purr as they passed them and dogs would weep with joy.

They moved into a beautiful, old house on the edge of town and in the evenings they would walk and take the air. And each night the children of the town would wait in anticipation, hoping for a glimpse of the shiny white scarf that the acrobat always wore — for then they knew they had only to cry 'tricks, tricks' and the great

Start





MATILDA

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(MATILDA)

performers would instantly oblige, with the most spectacular show, just for them.
But, although they loved each other, although they were famous, and everyone loved
them, they were sad.

ACROBAT

WE HAVE EVERYTHING...

MATILDA

'We have everything that the world has to offer' said the wife

ESCAPOLOGIST

WE HAVE EVERYTHING...

MATILDA

'But we do not have the one thing in the world we want most'.

ESCAPOLOGIST & ACROBAT

BUT THE ONE THING...

MATILDA

'We do not have a child.'

ESCAPOLOGIST

PATIENCE, MY LOVE.

MATILDA

'Patience, my love' the husband replied 'time is on our side. Even time loves us'.

MRS PHELPS

Oh Matilda!

MATILDA

But time is the one thing no-one is master of. And as time passed they grew quite
old and still they had no child. At night they listened to the silence of their big
empty house and they would imagine how beautiful it would be if it was filled with
the sounds of a child playing.

MRS PHELPS

Matilda, this is very sad.

MATILDA

Do you want me to stop?

MRS PHELPS

Don't you dare!

MATILDA

Their sadness overwhelmed them and drew them on to ever more dangerous feats,
as their work became the only place they could escape the inescapable tragedy of



(MATILDA)

their lives. And so it was they decided to perform the most dangerous feat ever known to man.

MATILDA & ESCAPOLOGIST (OFF)

'It is called'...

MATILDA

said the husband, announcing the event to the world's press who had gathered to listen with bated breath...

MATILDA & ESCAPOLOGIST (OFF)

'The Burning Woman Hurling Through The Air With Dynamite In Her Hair Over Sharks And Spiky Objects, Caught By The Man Locked In The Cage. AND... it is the most dangerous feat ever known to man'

Applause, cheers, fanfare. Pause.

MATILDA & ACROBAT (OFF)

'It is our destiny,'

MATILDA

said his wife smiling sadly and slipping her hand into his

MATILDA & ACROBAT (OFF)

'It is where the loneliness of life has led us'.

MRS PHELPS gasps. Silence.

MRS PHELPS

Well? What happened?

MATILDA

L.. I don't know. Not yet, anyway.

MRS PHELPS

What? But L.. isn't there some more, I mean just a little bit. Isn't there a little bit more?

MATILDA gets up to go. MRS PHELPS gets a grip, stands.

Well. I suppose your mother will be waiting for you. Is she here? I'd love to meet her actually, maybe I could --

MATILDA

Bye, Mrs Phelps. I'll see you tomorrow.

MRS PHELPS

After your first day at school.

The school gates.

Sound of a klaxon. SMALL KIDS come on, shaking, scared, looking around.

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MATILDA

Start

Suddenly SHE knocks.

TRUNCBULL

Enter!

For a second SHE considers running away, but then SHE goes in...

Well don't just stand there like a wet tissue, get on with it.

• Miss Honey
• Trunchbull

#5a - Trunchbull Office

MISS HONEY

Well, yes, Miss Trunchbull there's, in, in, in, in my class that is, there is, Mat, a little girl called Matilda Wormwood, and —

TRUNCBULL

Daughter of Mr Harry Wormwood who owns Wormwood Motors. Excellent man. Told me to watch out for the brat, though, says she's a real wart.

MISS HONEY

Oh no, Headmistress, I don't think Matilda is that kind of child at all.

TRUNCBULL

What is the school motto, Miss Honey?

Beat.

HONEY

Bambinatum est maggatum.

TRUNCBULL

Bambinatum est maggatum. Children are maggots. In fact it must have been her who put that stink bomb under my desk this morning. I'll have her for that. Thank you for suggesting it.

MISS HONEY

But I didn't...

Miss Trunchbull; Matilda Wormwood is a genius.

TRUNCBULL

(beat)

Nonsense! Haven't I just told you that she is a gangster?

MISS HONEY

She knows her times tables.

TRUNCBULL

So she's learnt a few tricks...



MATILDA

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MISS HONEY

But she can read!

TRUNCHBULL

So can I.

MISS HONEY

I have to tell you, Headmistress, that in my opinion this little girl should be placed in the top form with the eleven year olds.

TRUNCHBULL

What? But she is a squib, a shrimp, an un-hatched tadpole. We cannot just 'place her in with the eleven year olds' — what kind of society would that be? What about rules, Honey, rules?

MISS HONEY

I believe that Matilda Wormwood is an exception to the rules.

TRUNCHBULL

An exception?

#6 - The Hammer

To the rules?

In my school?

LOOK AT THESE TROPHIES,
SEE HOW MY TROPHIES
GLEAM IN THE SUNLIGHT?
SEE HOW THEY SHINE?
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT
TOOK TO BECOME ENGLISH
HAMMER-THROWING
CHAMPION 1969
DO YOU THINK IN THAT MOMENT
WHEN MY BIG MOMENT CAME
THAT I TREATED THE RULES
WITH CASUAL DISDAIN?

WELL?
LIKE HELL.

AS I STEPPED UP TO THE CIRCLE, DID I CHANGE MY PLAN?
HUH? WHAT?

Stop



MATILDA

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(MR WORMWOOD)

HE goes to take his hat off, but finds it is stuck to his head, pulls at hat. Again but finds it is stuck.

What the?

Furious bout of pulling off trying to pull hat off. Yanks it down, then up, but nothing. HE begins to panic, yanking his hat ferociously. Remembers mechanic, who is standing there staring at him. Pause.

I'm gonna leave this on. Looks like rain.

MISS HONEY at the WORMWOOD'S FRONT DOOR.

Hesitates, knocks.

MRS WORMWOOD

Who is it?

MISS HONEY

Oh, yes, er, hello, my name is Miss Honey. Matilda's teacher?

MRS WORMWOOD

Bit busy right now..

MISS HONEY

It will only take a moment...

MRS WORMWOOD

Oh, well, come in if you must.

SHE shows Miss Honey in. RUDOLPHO is inside. He wears very tight trousers and every so often a little dance move bursts out of him like a nervous reaction. He looks slightly miffed at being disturbed.

This is Rudolpho. It's nothing like that, he's my dance partner. We're rehearsing.

RUDOLPHO

Ciao.

MISS HONEY

Ah, parlo Italiano? Bene. Ciao, Rudolpho, piacere. Come stai?

RUDOLPHO

(beat)

What?

(to Mrs Wormwood)

Who is this, babe? You know what interruptions do to my energy flow.

MRS WORMWOOD

What do you want, Miss Chutney?

• Miss Honey
• Mrs. Wormwood
• Rudolpho

Start



**MISS HONEY**

It's Miss Honey. Well, as you know Matilda is in the bottom class and children in the bottom class aren't really expected to read —

MRS WORMWOOD

Well stop her reading then. Lord knows we've tried.

RUDOLPHO

I'm in the zone, doll. I can feel it in my hips. Don't waste this.

MRS WORMWOOD

I'm not in favour of girls getting all clever pants, Miss Hussey. A girl should think about make-up and hair dye. Looks are more important than books. Now, look at you, look at me. You chose books, I chose looks.

MISS HONEY

L.. beg your pardon?

RUDOLPHO

Babes, I'm on fire here, please!

MISS HONEY

But Matilda can calculate complicated figures in her head in an instant!

RUDOLPHO

Calculate this!

HE does a particularly extravagant move.

MRS WORMWOOD

(applauding)

Oh, fantastic!

MISS HONEY

Her mind is incredible, with a little help from us she could —

MRS WORMWOOD

Mind? Her mind? You really don't know anything, do you...

stop

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY, MY DEAR,
YOU'VE MADE AN AWFUL ERROR,
YOU OUGHTN'T BLAME YOURSELF, NOW, COME ALONG.
YOU SEEM TO THINK THAT PEOPLE LIKE PEOPLE WHAT ARE CLEVER,
IT'S VERY QUIANT, IT'S VERY SWEET, BUT WRONG.

PEOPLE DON'T LIKE SMARTY PANTS WHAT GO



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MATILDA

• Bruce

• Trunchbull

MATILDA

I'm not guilty, I didn't do anything!

TRUNCHBULL

You are guilty because you are a fiend! You are a crook, you are a thief and I shall crush you! I shall pound you!

Rumble.

I shall consign you to the seventh circle of hell, child, you shall be...

Rumble.

You shall be destroyed!

BRUCE lets out a truly enormous burp, but really, really enormous, it goes on for ever. It hovers above him.

BRUCE

It was the biggest burp I had ever done. It was the biggest burp I had ever heard, the biggest burp I had ever heard about. It was like the entire world went silent for that burp to exist, as a huge cloud of chocolaty gas wafted from my mouth and drifted... across the class...

It drifts across the class.

Past Lavender...

Past Alice...

Past Matilda...

Drifts past Matilda.

and then, my great big beautiful chocolaty burp, which now seemed to have a mind of its own, wafted full into the face of the Trunchbull.

MISS TRUNCHBULL is hit by the burp. Pause.

TRUNCHBULL

Bruce Bogtrotter..

The TRUNCHBULL forgets Matilda, advances on Bruce.

#12 - Bruce

BRUCE

Yes, Miss?

TRUNCHBULL

You liked my cake, didn't you, Bruce?

BRUCE

Yes, Miss Trunchbull, and I'm very sorry, but—



MATILDA

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TRUNCHBULL

Oh, as long as you enjoyed the cake, that's the main thing.

BRUCE

Is it?

TRUNCHBULL

Yes, Bogtrotter, it is.

BRUCE

Oh. Well... I did.

Beat.

Thank you.

TRUNCHBULL

Wonderful. Marvellous. That makes me so happy, it gives me a warm glow in my lower intestine.

(calling out)

Oh, Coo-ook!

The COOK enters, carrying a massive chocolate cake with one slice missing. SHE plunks the cake in front of Bruce. HE stares at it.

What's the matter, Bogtrotter? Lost your appetite?

BRUCE

Well, yes. I'm full.

TRUNCHBULL

Oh, no, you're not full, I will tell you when you are full and I say that criminals like you are not full until you have eaten the entire cake!

BRUCE

But—

TRUNCHBULL

No, buts, you haven't got time for but: eat!

BRUCE

But I can't eat it all!

MISS HONEY

Headmistress, he'll be sick...

TRUNCHBULL

He should've thought of that before he made a pact with Satan and decided to steal my cake!

EAT!

Stop

Act Two

Lavender

#14 - Telly Off & Lavender's Newt

Start

LAVENDER

Hello. I'm Lavender by the way. Matilda's best friend. There's a bit coming up that's all about me.

Well, not exactly about me, but I play a big part in it. But I'm not gonna say what happens because I don't want to spoil it for you.

Pause.

Alright, look, what I do is I volunteer to get the Trunchbull a jug of water. And then...

No! I don't want to tell you any more because I don't want to ruin it!

Pause. Starts to go.

Well on the way back I find a newt. A newt is like a really ugly lizard that lives in water, so I pick it up and—No! I will not say any more!

Starts to go, but really this time.

I'm going to put the newt in the Trunchbull's jug! It's going to be brilliant!

Stop

#15 - When I Grow Up

BRUCE

WHEN I GROW UP

I WILL BE TALL ENOUGH TO REACH THE BRANCHES

THAT I NEED TO REACH

TO CLIMB THE TREES YOU GET TO CLIMB WHEN YOU'RE GROWN UP.

BRUCE & TOMMY

AND WHEN I GROW UP

I WILL BE SMART ENOUGH TO ANSWER ALL

THE QUESTIONS THAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

THE ANSWERS TO BEFORE YOU'RE GROWN UP.

ERIC & AMANDA

AND WHEN I GROW UP

I WILL EAT SWEETS EVERY DAY ON THE WAY TO WORK

AND I WILL GO TO BED LATE EVERY NIGHT

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MATILDA

TRUNCHBULL

Quiet!

LAVENDER hands over the jug

MISS HONEY

I don't think this is teaching at all, I think it's just cruelty!

TRUNCHBULL

That is because you, Miss Honey, are pathetic.

Pours water. Drinks

You are wet. You are weak.

Pours water. Drinks

You are, in fact, a snivelling... little...

Pours water. The newt plops in.

... newt?

Nigel

Tommy

Hortensia

Miss Honey

Trunchbull

Eric

Matilda

#18b - Newt II

SHE looks at the glass. Suddenly SHE screams and leaps away. The CHILDREN all gather round.

Newt! Newt! It's a—

NIGEL

What is it?

TOMMY

Oh, it's disgusting! It's a snake!

HORTENSIA

Watch out Miss Trunchbull, it's going to bite!

ALICE

I bet it's poisonous

MISS HONEY

Quiet, children, please!

*Silence. The TRUNCHBULL is transfixed.**Suddenly SHE whirls and points a huge finger the only child who has not moved (who happens to be ERIC).*

TRUNCHBULL

YOU!

Start





MATILDA

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ERIC

What? No, not me, I didn't—

TRUNCHBULL

Cockroach! You did this, you vile, repulsive, malicious little sinner!

SHE grabs Eric by the ears.

ERIC

Ow! No, stop!

TRUNCHBULL

What's that, Maggot? Stop? When we're only just getting started...

SHE begins to yank on Eric's ears.

ERIC

Ah, ah, ow!

MISS HONEY

Miss Trunchbull don't, please! You'll pull his ears off!

TRUNCHBULL

(through the exertion)

I have discovered, Miss Honey, through many years of experimentation that the ears of small boys do not come off—they stretch. In fact I think I can feel these ones... stretching... now!

MISS HONEY

Miss Trunchbull, no!

TRUNCHBULL yanks, and Eric's ears do in fact stretch.

ERIC

Ahhhhhh! Stop, stop!

But SHE readies herself for another yank, another stretch. Suddenly MATILDA stands up.

MATILDA

(standing up)

Leave him alone, you BIG FAT BULLY!!!

Stop

L

#19 – Quiet

Gasp from the CLASS, TRUNCHBULL too, taken aback. SHE drops Eric, who scampers back to his seat. For a moment she is speechless.

(TRUNCHBULL)

Another yelp, runs somewhere else.

I've got a newt in my knickers!

SHE runs at the kids, desperate to get the newt out

I've got a newt in my knickers!

Runs off screaming, with a newt in her knickers.

Pause. MISS HONEY looks back at the class.

MISS HONEY

Well. That was interesting.

I think we'd all better go home. While we still can.

CLASS cheers runs off. All except MATILDA who hasn't moved a muscle.

Matilda?

MATILDA

Watch.

MATILDA goes to the glass, stands it up.

MISS HONEY

Matilda, I think it would be wise to go before...

MATILDA

Watch. Please.

Concentrates. Silence. The glass tips over. MISS HONEY jumps. She goes over to the glass. Picks it up. Examines it. Looks under the desk. Looks at the glass again. Looks at Matilda.

I moved it with my eyes.

Am I strange?

Beat. MISS HONEY stares at her, dumbfounded. Then...

MISS HONEY

How do you fancy a nice cup of tea?

#19b - Walk to Miss Honey's

THEY walk, through hedgerows, woods, glades with flowers.

MATILDA

What do you think it is? This thing with my eyes?

• Miss Honey
• Matilda

Start



MATILDA

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MISS HONEY

I... can't pretend that I know, Matilda. But I don't believe we should be frightened of it. I think it's something to do with that incredible mind of yours.

MATILDA

You mean, there's no room in my head for all my brains, so they have to squish out through my eyes?

Beat.

MISS HONEY

Well, not exactly but, yes something like that. You certainly are a special girl Matilda. I met your mother. She's... unusual. What about your father? Is he proud to have a daughter as clever as you?

MATILDA

Oh yeah. Very. He is very proud. He's very, very, very proud. He's always saying 'Matilda, I am very proud to have a daughter as...'

Beat.

That's not true, Miss Honey. That's not what he says. He's not proud at all. He calls me a liar and a cheat and a nasty little creep.

MISS HONEY

I see.

THEY have arrived at the cottage. They enter.

Here we are; home, sweet home.

MATILDA

Are you poor?

MISS HONEY

Yes. Yes, I am. Very.

MATILDA

Don't they pay teachers very much?

MISS HONEY

Well, they don't, actually. But I am even poorer than most, because of...

#20 — My House

other reasons. You see I used to live with my aunt. But one day I was out walking and I came across this old shed—I fell completely in love with it. I ran to the farmer and begged him to let me move in. He thought I was mad! But he agreed and I've lived here ever since.

MATILDA

But Miss Honey, you can't live in a shed!

MISS HONEY

I'm not strong like you, Matilda. You see, my father died when I was young. Magnus was his name. He was very kind. But when he was gone, my aunt became my legal guardian. She was mean and cruel like you can hardly imagine. And then, when I got my job as a teacher, she presented me with a bill for looking after me all those years. She'd written everything down: every tea bag, every electricity bill, every tin of beans. And she made me sign a contract to pay her back every penny. She even produced a document that said my father had given her his entire house.

MATILDA

But did he really do that? Magnus, I mean. Did he really just give her his house?

MISS HONEY

I don't know. But I find it hard to believe. Just like I cannot believe that he would have... killed himself, which is what she said happened.

Sudden gasp from MATILDA, realisation.

MATILDA

You think, you think she... did him in, don't you, Miss Honey?

MISS HONEY

I... cannot say, Matilda. All I know is that years of being bullied by that woman made me... well, pathetic; I was trapped.

MATILDA

And that's why you live here.

MISS HONEY

THIS ROOF KEEPS ME DRY WHEN THE RAIN FALLS.
THIS DOOR HELPS TO KEEP THE COLD AT BAY.
ON THIS FLOOR I CAN STAND ON MY OWN TWO FEET.

ON THIS CHAIR I CAN WRITE MY LESSONS
ON THIS PILLOW I CAN DREAM MY NIGHTS AWAY
AND THIS TABLE, AS YOU CAN SEE,
WELL, IT'S PERFECT FOR TEA
IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT IT IS ENOUGH FOR ME.
IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT IT IS ENOUGH

MATILDA

But Miss Honey, she's got your father's house, she's got everything that's yours.

Stop L

MATILDA

MISS HONEY

That wouldn't work, Matilda, it'd be my word against hers! And they would never believe she was capable of murder.

MATILDA

But why? She was so cruel to you, she beat you, she shouted at you, she locked you up in tiny cupboards and threw you in cellars.

MISS HONEY

Stop Matilda, please!

MATILDA

Miss Honey, your aunt's a murderer! She killed Magnus, who is she?

AUNT / TRUNCHBULL

'a contract is a contract is a contract!'

MATILDA

Miss Trunchbull!

The klaxon sounds, The TRUNCHBULL, waiting, her medals clutched to her bosom. The CHILDREN file in, shocked.

TRUNCHBULL

In this world, children, there are two types of human being. The winners and the losers. I am a winner. I play by the rules and I win. But if I play by the rules and I... do not win, then something is wrong, something is not working. And when something is wrong you have to put it right. Even if it screams.

MISS HONEY stands glaring at the TRUNCHBULL. SHE notices.
What are you looking at?

MISS HONEY

You.

Beat. TRUNCHBULL is momentarily taken aback, but carries on.

TRUNCHBULL

This class is going to have a very special spelling test. Any child who gets one single answer wrong, shall... go... to chokey.

The CLASS are horrified.

(Pointing at Eric)

You! Spell, oh now, let me see... Spell newt.

ERIC

(stands)

Newt. N-E-W-T. Newt.

Beat.

Trunchbull

• Eric

• Hortensia

• Miss Honey

• Lavender

• Nigel

• Amanda

• Tommy

• Alice

• Matilda

Start





TRUNCHBULL

What?

ERIC

Miss Honey's taught us. She's very good at teaching.

TRUNCHBULL

Nonsense! Miss Honey is too soft and peachy to be good at anything, any moron can see that!

(pointing at Hortensia)

You! Stand up, turn around and spell the one thing that you all are... revolting!

HORTENSIA

Revolting. R-E-V-O-L-T-I-N-G. Revolting.

TRUNCHBULL

You're cheating!

MISS HONEY

Of course she's not cheating, she's simply spelling the word!

TRUNCHBULL

These little specks of dust can't be this clever, they are worms!

MISS HONEY

I've taught them, that's all. With kindness and patience and respect.

TRUNCHBULL

How dare you bring those words into my classroom, madam? You know nothing of teaching and I shall prove it.

(pointing at Lavender)

You! Filthbog! Snotnose! Spell... Amchellakamanialseptricolistimosis.

MISS HONEY

What? But that's not a word, you just made it up!

TRUNCHBULL

Spell. Or go to chokey. And I should warn you; it has silent letters...

LAVENDER

A-M-CH-E... L-LA

LAVENDER hesitates.

TRUNCHBULL

Oh dear. Oh deary, deary, dear—

LAVENDER

K?



MATILDA

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TRUNCHBULL

I'm so sorry. It was a silent Z. You're. Going. To chokey!

#20b - Nigel's Cat

The TRUNCHBULL begins to drag her off.

Suddenly NIGEL stands.

NIGEL

Cat; C-A... F! Cat.

The TRUNCHBULL turns, glares at him.

I... I got it wrong, Miss. You have to put me in chokey too.

TRUNCHBULL

Whaaaaat...?

ERIC

(standing)

Dog; D-Y-P. Dog. And me.

AMANDA

(standing)

Table; X, A, B, F, Y. And me.

TRUNCHBULL

What are you doing? What's going on? Stop this!

HORTENSIA

(standing)

You can't put us all in Chokey, Banana; G-T-A-A-B-L!

TRUNCHBULL

No, no, what are you doing, stop, this, do you hear?

TOMMY

(standing)

Maggots; T-S-P-A-D-Y-F

LAVENDER

(standing)

Snotnose U-T-O-O-O-O-O

TRUNCHBULL

Stop stop, this is —





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MATILDA

ALICE

(standing)

Naughty P-U-F-T-Y-X-N

MATILDA

(standing)

Big fat bully, P-Y-T-L-F-D-R-V-S-W

ALL

(standing)

Revolting! P-X-Q-Q-Q-AST-1-2-3-4-89-X! REVOLTING!

Huge cacophony of bad spelling all shouted at THE TRUNCHBULL. For a moment SHE looks defeated, everywhere she turns, a rebellious squit. Then suddenly she pulls on a lever. Massive clunking sound all around. THEY freeze, begin to climb down off their desks, scared, an enormous mechanical change taking place around them. It stops.

TRUNCHBULL

(mimicking)

'You have to put me in chokey too.' 'You can't put us all in chokey, Miss'.
Come now maggots. Did you think I hadn't thought of that?

SHE pulls out a remote control, flips a door. There is a button. She presses the button, to reveal a whole array of chokeys. THEY are stunned. THE TRUNCHBULL turns to the audience.

I've been busy...

(back to the kids)

A whole array of chokeys! One for each and every one of you! And now that our little spelling test is over I can tell you that each and every one of you has failed! You see children in this world there are two types of human beings,

#208 - Chalk Writing

winners and losers and I am a...

NIGEL

The chalk! Look, the chalk!

THEY all stop and follow his gaze. At the other end of the room the chalk is floating in the air by the blackboard.

TRUNCHBULL

What...?



Binder



Documents

- 90 -

MATILDA

SERGEI

I like you Matilda; you seem smart. Sadly, in my line of work I don't often get to meet smart people like you. Most of the people I deal with, their thinking is all backwards.

MICHAEL

Backwards!

Sergei
Matilda

#21d - Backwards

Beat. EVERYONE turns to the bookshelves. SERGEI nods to his men and they drag The Wormwoods out, throwing Mr Wormwood at Sergei's feet. He glowers at him, then looks back at Matilda.

SERGEI

Ee Dajza Pukrawie swayvo mere Tsatsa utsa. Da. Priyatno poznakomitsa s takoy non-noy de-vachkey.

(And she even covers for her rat of a father. Yes, it is a pleasure to meet such a child)

MATILDA

Spaseeba. Mine to-zhe priyatna paznakomitsa s-Vami.

(Thank you. And it is a pleasure to meet you, too.)

Suddenly the RUSSIANS stop. THEY turn to Matilda.

SERGEI

Ty... ty gavarish pa-rooski?

(You... you speak Russian?)

MATILDA

Ne-tak harasho kak-be mne hatelas'. E-ta krasivui yazyk, pactamu ya budu staratsa izuchat' yevro I dal'she.

(Not as well as I would like to. It's a beautiful language so I hope to learn as much as I can)

SERGEI

Matilda, who taught you how to speak Russian?

MATILDA

Well I taught myself, I suppose. I was reading Dostoyevsky and I just thought it would be better to read it in the language it was written in.

THEY all gasp. HE goes to Matilda. Embraces her, kissing her on both cheeks (at least three times). The MEN all bow.

SERGEI

I am Sergei.



Documents



MATILDA

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#22 - Priyina Paznakomitsa

(SERGEI)

It is truly an honour to meet you Matilda Wormwood.

Beat. HE considers, looks at Mr Wormwood, then Matilda.

Matilda, your father has been stupid and rude to both of us, yes? I can very easily have one of my friends... teach him manners. And one day, when he leaves hospital, he will still be stupid, but not so rude, I think. I give this as a gift to you. What do you say?

Pause. MATILDA thinks. Really thinks.

MATILDA

Mr Sergei, this is a very tempting offer. But he is my father. And I am his daughter. I think I've had enough of revenge.

SERGEI considers. Seems to be finding the idea of letting go of Mr Wormwood very difficult. But HE kneels, takes Matilda's hand.

SERGEI

THIS LITTLE GIRL,
THIS MIRACLE,
MATIL... DA.

HENCHMAN 1

Da?

HENCHMAN 2 & 3

Da?

HENCHMAN 4 & 5

DA!

THEY lift their bats to pound Mr Wormwood.

SERGEI

No!

THEY Stop.

Stotee dilayesh

(What are you doing?)

HENCHMAN 1

Ya dummel voykazalay 'da'
(I thought you said 'yes').

HENCHMAN 2

Ya toezhak dummel stohon kazal 'da'
(I thought he said 'yes' as well).