

LIBRETTO VOCAL BOOK

ROALD DAHL'S
Matilda
THE MUSICAL

Book by
Dennis Kelly

Music & Lyrics by
Tim Minchin



MUSIC THEATRE
INTERNATIONAL

Characters

Matilda Wormwood

Miss Agatha Trunchbull

Miss Honey

Mr. Wormwood

Mrs. Wormwood

Michael Wormwood

Mrs. Phelps

Bruce

Lavender

ENSEMBLE

The Escapologist

Amanda

Cook

Nigel

Sergei

Eric

Henchman 1

Alice

Henchman 2

Hortensia

Henchman 3

Tommy

The Acrobat

Parents

Doctor

Children's Entertainer

Rudolpho

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Act One**#1 - Miracle****ERIC**

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE!

TOMMY

MY DADDY SAYS I'M HIS SPECIAL LITTLE GUY!

AMANDA

I AM A PRINCESS

BRUCE

AND I AM A PRINCE.

ALL GIRLS

MUM SAYS I'M AN ANGEL SENT DOWN FROM THE SKY

BRUCE, ERIC, TOMMY & NIGELMY DADDY SAYS I'M HIS SPECIAL LITTLE SOLDIER
NO-ONE IS AS HANDSOME, STRONG AS ME**BRUCE**

IT'S TRUE HE INDULGES MY TENDENCY TO BULGE

BRUCE, ERIC, TOMMY & NIGEL

BUT I'M HIS LITTLE SOLDIER, HUP TWO FOUR FREE!

ALICE & HORTENSIAMY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE
ONE LOOK AT MY FACE AND IT'S PLAIN TO SEE.
EVER SINCE THE DAY DOC CHOPPED THE UMBILICAL CORD
IT'S BEEN CLEAR THERE'S NO PEER FOR A MIRACLE LIKE ME.**NIGEL & TOMMY**MY DADDY SAYS I'M HIS SPECIAL LITTLE SOLDIER
NO ONE IS AS BOLD OR TOUGH AS ME
HAS MY DADDY TOLD YA, ONE DAY WHEN I'M OLDER
I CAN BE A SOLDIER

NIGEL

AND SHOOT YOU IN THE FACE!

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINER

ONE CAN HARDLY MOVE FOR BEAUTY AND BRILLIANCE THESE DAYS
IT SEEMS THAT THERE ARE MILLIONS OF THESE
ONE-IN-A-MILLIONS THESE DAYS
"SPECIALNESS" IS DE-RIGUEUR
ABOVE AVERAGE IS AVERAGE, GO FIGUEUR,
IS IT SOME MODERN MIRACLE OF CALCULUS
THAT SUCH FREQUENT MIRACLES DON'T RENDER
EACH ONE UNMIRACULOUS?

ALL KIDS

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE
ONE LOOK AT MY FACE AND IT'S PLAIN TO SEE.
EVER SINCE THE DAY DOC CHOPPED THE UMBILICAL CORD
IT'S BEEN CLEAR THERE'S NO PEER FOR A MIRACLE LIKE ME.

LAVENDER

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A PRECIOUS BARRELINA
SHE HAS NEVER SEEN A PRETTIER BARRELINA
SHE SAYS IF I'M KEEN I HAVE TO CUT DOWN ON THE CREAM
BUT I'M A BARRELINA SO GIVE ME MORE CAKE!

DAD 1

TAKE ANOTHER PICTURE OF OUR ANGEL
FROM THIS ANGLE OVER HERE

MUM 1

SHE IS CLEARLY MORE EMOTIONALLY DEVELOPED THAN HER PEERS

DAD 1 & MUM 1

WHAT A DEAR

MUM 2

YOO-HOO! HONEY, LOOK AT MUMMY,

DAD 2

DON'T PUT HONEY ON YOUR BROTHER

MUM 2

SMILE FOR MUMMY, SMILE FOR MOTHER

DAD 2

I THINK SHE BLINKED

MUM 2

WELL, TAKE ANOTHER

DAD 3

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS SCHOOL REPORT? HE GOT A C IN HIS REPORT

OTHER PARENTS

WHAT?

DAD 3

WE'LL HAVE TO CHANGE HIS SCHOOL, THE TEACHER'S CLEARLY
FALLING SHORT

MUM 4

HE'S JUST DELIGHTFUL

DAD 4

SO HILARIOUS

DAD 4 & MUM 4

... AND INSIGHTFUL,

DADS

MIGHT SHE BE A LITTLE BRIGHTER THAN HER CLASS?

MUMS

OH YES SHE'S DEFINITELY ADVANCED

CHILDREN

(same time as PARENTS)

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE
ONE LOOK AT MY FACE AND IT'S PLAIN TO SEE.
EVER SINCE THE DAY DOC CHOPPED THE UMBILICAL CORD
IT'S BEEN CLEAR THERE'S NO PEER FOR A MIRACLE LIKE ME.
MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE
THAT I'M AS TINY AND AS SHINY AS A MIRROR BALL
YOU CAN BE ALL CYNICAL
BUT IT'S A TRUTH EMPIRICAL
THERE'S NEVER BEEN A MIRACLE,
A MIRACLE AS MIRACLE AS ME.

PARENTS

(same time as CHILDREN)

TAKE ANOTHER PICTURE OF OUR ANGEL, SHE LOOKS LOVELY
IN THIS LIGHT

(PARENTS)

I KNOW I OUGHTN'T SAY THIS BUT SHE IS THE CUTEST HERE
AM I RIGHT?
I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT!
COME HERE HONEY, NEXT TO MUMMY,
DON'T PUT HONEY ON YOUR BROTHER.
SMILE FOR MUMMY, SMILE FOR MOTHER!
I THINK SHE/HE BLINKED.
WELL, TAKE ANOTHER.
MIRACLE!
MIRROR BALL!
YOU CAN BE ALL CYNICAL
BUT IT'S A TRUTH EMPIRICAL
THERE'S NEVER BEEN A MIRACLE
A MIRACLE—

The Doctor's.

MRS WORMWOOD is behind a screen

MRS WORMWOOD

Look, is this going to take much longer, Doctor, I've got a plane to catch at three. I'm competing in the bi-annual international amateur Salsa and Ballroom Dancing Championships in Paris.

DOCTOR

You're getting on a plane, Mrs Wormwood?

MRS WORMWOOD

Of course I am! I always compete, doctor. And this time I have a secret weapon: Rudolpho. He's part Italian, you know. Very supple. And he has incredible upper body strength.

DOCTOR

I... think we should have a talk.

MRS WORMWOOD appears. She is very heavily pregnant.

MRS WORMWOOD

So? What is it? What's wrong with me?

Beat.

DOCTOR

Mrs Wormwood, do you really have no idea?

MRS WORMWOOD

(beat)

Wind?

DOCTOR

Mrs Wormwood, I want you to think very carefully; what do you think might be the cause of... this?

Pause. Suddenly SHE sags. SHE sighs.

MRS WORMWOOD

Am I... am I... Look, am I fat?

DOCTOR

Mrs Wormwood, you're pregnant.

SHE stares at him..

MRS WORMWOOD

What!?!

DOCTOR

You're going to have a baby.

MRS WORMWOOD

But I've got a baby! I don't want another one. Isn't there something you can do...?

DOCTOR

You're nine months' pregnant

MRS WORMWOOD

... antibiotics, or... Oh my good lord! What about the bi-annual international amateur Salsa and Ballroom Dancing Championship?

DOCTOR

A baby, Mrs Wormwood! A child, the most precious gift that the natural world can bestow upon us has been handed to you! A brand new human being, a life, a person, a wonderful new person is about to come into your life to bring love and magic and happiness and wonder!

MRS WORMWOOD

Oh... bloody hell!

DOCTOR

EVERY LIFE I BRING INTO THIS WORLD
RESTORES MY FAITH IN HUMANKIND

NURSE

Push, Mrs Wormwood, push!

MRS WORMWOOD

I'll push you in a minute!

DOCTOR

EACH NEWBORN LIFE A CANVAS YET UNPAINTED.
THIS STILL UNBROKEN SKIN
THIS UNCORRUPTED MIND.

DOCTOR

EVERY LIFE IS UNBELIEVABLY UNLIKELY
THE CHANCES OF EXISTENCE—
ALMOST INFINITELY SMALL
THE MOST COMMON THING IN LIFE IS LIFE

The baby is born, cries.

AND YET
EVERY SINGLE LIFE
EVERY NEW LIFE
IS A MIRACLE
MIRACLE!

ENSEMBLE

EVERY LIFE... UNBELIEVABLY UNLIKELY
CHANCES OF EXISTENCE...
INFINITELY SMALL
LIFE

EVERY BRAND NEW LIFE

MIRACLE
MIRACLE!

MRS WORMWOOD has just given birth, the baby in the Doctor's arms.

MR WORMWOOD comes rushing in, cigarette in mouth.

MR WORMWOOD

Where is he? Where's my son?

DOCTOR

Mr Wormwood, are you... are you smoking a cigarette?

MR WORMWOOD

What? Oh, of course! I'm sorry doctor, what am I thinking?

HE stubs out the cigarette. HE pulls out a massive cigar.

This calls for a proper smoke...

HE takes the child. Looks at it.

Oh my word, he's an ugly little thing.

DOCTOR

This is one of the most beautiful children I've ever seen!

MR WORMWOOD

(suddenly seeing something)

Oh my good lord! Where's his thingy?

DOCTOR

His what?

MR WORMWOOD

His thingy, his whatjamacalit, his doodah; what have you done with his thingy?

DOCTOR

This child doesn't have a... thingy, because—

MR WORMWOOD

What? A boy with no thingy?

(to his wife)

Look what you've done, you stupid woman, this boy's got no thingy!

DOCTOR

Mr Wormwood, this child is a girl. A beautiful, beautiful little girl.

MRS WORMWOOD

Is there still time for the bi-annual... inter-championship... amateur sausage and ballroom dancing—

MR WORMWOOD

Competition's finished, you missed it!

(to the doctor, pulling out a wad of cash)

I don't suppose we could exchange it for a boy, could we?

MRS WORMWOOD

(staring at the ceiling)

This is the worst day of my life.

OH, MY UNDERCARRIAGE DOESN'T FEEL QUITE NORMAL
MY SKIN LOOKS JUST REVOLTING IN THIS FOUL FLUORESCENT LIGHT
AND THIS GOWN IS NOTHING LIKE THE SEMI-FORMAL,
SEMI-SPANISH GOWN
I SHOULD BE WEARING IN THE SEMI-FINALS TONIGHT
I SHOULD BE DANCING THE TARENTELLA QUI MON FELLA ITALIANO
NOT DRESSED IN HOSPITAL COTTON
WITH A OUCHING FRONT-BOTTOM
AND THIS

DOCTOR & ENSEMBLE

MIRACLE
A MIRACLE
... BEAUTIFUL MIRACLE
I HAVE EVER SEEN

MR & MRS WORMWOOD

HORRIBLE
SMELLY LITTLE
... HORRIBLE ANIMAL
I HAVE EVER SEEN

MR WORMWOOD

I CAN'T FIND HIS FRANK AND BEANS

DOCTOR

EVERY LIFE IS UNBELIEVABLY UNLIKELY

KIDS

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE

DOCTOR

THE CHANCES OF EXISTENCE
ALMOST INFINITELY SMALL

KIDS

MY DADDY SAYS I'M HIS SPECIAL LITTLE GUY

DOCTOR

THE MOST COMMON THING IN LIFE IS LIFE

**AMANDA, LAVENDER,
BRUCE, TOMMY**

HUP TWO FOUR FREE!

DOCTOR

AND YET
EVERY SINGLE LIFE
EVERY NEW LIFE
IS A MIRACLE, MIRACLE
MIRACLE!

ENSEMBLE
EVERY LIFE... UNBELIEVABLY UNLIKE

THE CHANCES OF EXISTENCE...
INFINITELY SMALL

LIFE

LIFE!

EVERY BRAND NEW LIFE

MIRACLE, MIRACLE
MIRACLE!

ALL

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE
ONE LOOK AT MY FACE AND IT'S PLAIN TO SEE.
EVER SINCE THE DAY DOC CHOPPED THE UMBILICAL CORD
IT'S BEEN CLEAR THERE'S NO PEER FOR A MIRACLE LIKE ME.
MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE
THAT I'M AS TINY AND AS SHINY AS A MIRROR BALL
YOU CAN BE ALL CYNICAL
BUT IT'S A TRUTH EMPIRICAL
THERE'S NEVER BEEN A MIRACLE
A MIRACLE AS MIRACLE AS

As everything clears, MATILDA steps forward, alone.

MATILDA

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A LOUSY LITTLE WORM,

(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.

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

(stops)

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?

MICHAEL

Mi-chael.

MRS WORMWOOD

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,

(MATILDA)

'Twas written in the stars before they even met
that love and fate and a touch of stupidity
would rob them of their hope of living happily,
the endings are often a little bit gory
I wonder why they didn't just change their story?
we're told we have to do what we're told, but surely
sometimes you have to be a little bit naughty.

Just because you find that life's not fair, it
doesn't mean that you just have to grin and bear it
if you always take it on the chin and wear it
nothing will change
even if you're little, you can do a lot, you
mustn't let a little thing like little stop you
if you sit around and let them get on top, you
might as well be saying
you think that it's ok an'
that's not right,
and if it's not right,
you have to put it right.

During the song MATILDA sneaks out of her room, into the bathroom, opens the cabinet, taking out the bottle of peroxide her mother has just used.

(reading)

'Platinum Blonde Hair Dye—Extra Strong. Keep out of reach of children'. Hmmm.

SHE picks up another bottle.

(reading)

'Oil of Violets Hair Tonic. For Men.' Yep.

SHE opens the bottle of hair tonic, and pours a shed-load of bleach into it. She gives it a little shake, then replaces them both as if nothing happened.

IN THE SLIP OF A BOLT
THERE'S A TINY REVOLT
THE SEED OF A WAR
IN THE CREAK OF A FLOORBOARD
A STORM CAN BEGIN
WITH THE FLAP OF A WING
THE TINIEST MITE PACKS THE MIGHTIEST STING
EVERY DAY
STARTS WITH THE TICK OF A CLOCK

(MATILDA)

ALL ESCAPES
START WITH THE CLICK OF A LOCK
IF YOU'RE STUCK IN YOUR STORY
AND WANT TO GET OUT
YOU DON'T HAVE TO CRY
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SHOUT!

Heading back to her room, triumphant.

COS IF YOU'RE LITTLE, YOU CAN DO A LOT, YOU
MUSTN'T LET A LITTLE THING LIKE LITTLE STOP YOU,
IF YOU SIT AROUND AND LET THEM GET ON TOP, YOU
WON'T CHANGE A THING.
JUST BECAUSE YOU FIND THAT LIFE'S NOT FAIR, IT
DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU JUST HAVE TO GRIN AND BEAR IT
IF YOU ALWAYS TAKE IT ON THE CHIN AND WEAR IT
MIGHT AS WELL BEING SAYING
YOU THINK THAT IT'S OK AND
THAT'S NOT RIGHT,
AND IF IT'S NOT RIGHT,
YOU HAVE TO PUT IT RIGHT.

BUT NOBODY ELSE IS GOING TO PUT IT RIGHT FOR ME,
NOBODY BUT ME IS GONNA CHANGE MY STORY
SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO BE A LITTLE BIT NAUGHTY.

#2a - Green Hair

Morning.

MR WORMWOOD enters the bathroom, MICHAEL trailing.

MR WORMWOOD

In business, son, a man's hair is his greatest asset. Good hair means a good brain.
Now the secret to my success in business is—

MICHAEL

Secrets.

MR WORMWOOD

Yes. Yes, secret, the secret to my success is...

(brandishing the hair tonic)

this: 'Oil of Violets Hair Tonic For Men.'

(MR WORMWOOD)

Stand back son, your old man's going to work.

HE bends over, head into the sink, backside in the air. He massages away with great satisfaction.

Oh yeah, that's the stuff. Ohhhh, yeah! That's where it's at alright. That's the bananas, right there.

HE straightens up. His hair is bright green.

Let me tell you something son: a man in business simply cannot fail to get noticed, when he looks like this.

HE walks out of the bathroom. MICHAEL follows.

MICHAEL

Secrets.

MR WORMWOOD walks almost smack into his wife on her way into the loo.

SHE sees him and screams

(MATILDA comes out too)

MRS WORMWOOD

Your... hair! It's... It's... green!

MR WORMWOOD

Good lord, woman, have you started already, it's not even eight thirty!

SHE shows him his reflection in her compact. HE screams.

My hair's green!

MRS WORMWOOD

What on earth did you do that for? Why do you want green hair?

MR WORMWOOD

I don't want green hair, I didn't do anything!

MATILDA

Maybe you used some of mummy's peroxide by mistake?

MRS WORMWOOD

That's exactly what you've done, you stupid man!

MR WORMWOOD

My hair! My lovely hair?

(sudden thought)

Oh my good lord: I've got my deal today! The Russians... what am I going to do?

MATILDA

I know! I know what you can do.

MR WORMWOOD

What, what is it? What can I do?

MATILDA

You could pretend you're an elf.

MR WORMWOOD

Yes! That's it, I could pretend I'm a...

(realises the stupidity of it)

What are you talking about you fool? The boy's a loony!

#2b - Hear a Story

*HE leaves, devastated. MRS WORMWOOD starts to get on with her day.
MATILDA thinks, goes up to her.*

MATILDA

Mum, would you like to hear a story?

MRS WORMWOOD

Don't be disgusting! Go on, creep on back to that library of yours or something. The sooner you're locked up in school the better.

MATILDA turns up at the Library.

MRS PHELPS

Matilda! What a pleasure to see you: here in the library again, are we?

MATILDA

Yes. I mean, my Mum wanted me to stay at home with her. She hates it when I go out. She misses me so much. Dad too, he loves having me around.

Beat.

But I think it's good for grownups to have their own space.

MRS PHELPS

Your parents must be so proud to have a girl as clever as you. And do you tell them lots of stories like you do with me? Oh, I love your stories, Matilda.

Beat.

And that's not a hint, by the way. But if you did happen to have a story you wanted to tell me—

MISS HONEY is leaving the library.

MISS HONEY

Goodbye Mrs Phelps. See you next week.

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

Yes 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 I

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

(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

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

MRS PHELPS

What? But I... 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.

#4 - School Song

NIGEL

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE

TOMMY

MY DADDY SAYS I'M HIS SPECIAL LITTLE GUY...

LAVENDER

I AM A PRINCESS...

ERIC

AND I AM A PRINCE...

AMANDA

MUM SAYS I'M AN ANGEL

ALICE

MUM SAYS I'M AN ANGEL

NIGEL

MUM SAYS I'M AN ANGEL...

BIG KIDS burst in, through the gates, terrifying.

BIG KIDS

AND SO YOU THINK YOU'RE
ABLE TO SURVIVE THIS MESS BY
BEING A PRINCE OR PRINCESS, YOU WILL SOON
SEE THERE'S NO ESCAPING TRAGEDY

AND EVEN IF YOU PUT IN HEAPS OF
EFFORT, YOU'RE JUST WASTING ENERGY
COS YOUR LIFE AS YOU KNOW IT IS
ANCIENT HISTORY

I HAVE SUFFERED IN THIS GAOL
HAVE BEEN TRAPPED INSIDE THIS
CAGE FOR AGES,
THIS LIVING 'ELL,
BUT IF I TRY I CAN REMEMBER,
BACK BEFORE MY LIFE HAD ENDED,
BEFORE MY HAPPY DAYS WERE OVER,
BEFORE I FIRST HEARD THE

(BIG KIDS)

PEALING OF THE BELL.

[SFX: School Bell]

LIKE YOU I WAS CURIOUS,
SO INNOCENT, I ASKED A THOUSAND QUESTIONS,
BUT UNLESS YOU WANT TO SUFFER,
LISTEN UP AND I WILL TEACH YOU A THING OR TWO

YOU LISTEN HERE, MY DEAR, YOU'LL BE PUNISHED SO SEVERELY IF YOU
STEP OUT OF LINE AND IF YOU CRY IT WILL BE DOUBLE,
YOU SHOULD STAY OUT OF TROUBLE,
AND REMEMBER TO BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL

NIGEL

WHY?

BIG KIDS

WHY

SCARY KID

Why? Why? Did you hear what he said?

BIG KIDS

JUST YOU WAIT FOR PHYS-ED!

ALL LITTLE KIDS

WHAT'S PHYS-ED?

BIG KIDS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION!

SCARY BIG KID

It's Trunchbull's speciality

ALICE

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE

BRUCE

MY DADDY SAID I WOULD BE THE TEACHER'S PET

LAVENDER

SCHOOL IS REALLY FUN
ACCORDING TO MY MUM

ERIC & AMANDA

DAD SAID I'D LEARN THE ALPHABET.

SCARY BIG KID

The alphabet? You've got to learn to listen, kid...

THEY sing the song again, but this time producing letters that correspond to the letters contained within the words in bold (A for 'able', B for 'being', C for 'see', D in 'tragedy' etc.)

ALL KIDS

AND SO YOU THINK YOU'RE
ABLE TO SURVIVE THIS MESS BY
BEING A PRINCE OR PRINCESS, YOU WILL SOON
 SEE THERE'S NO ESCAPING **TRAGEDY**

AND EVEN IF YOU PUT IN HEAPS OF
EFFORT, YOU'RE JUST WASTING **ENERGY**
 COS YOUR LIFE AS YOU KNOW IT IS
ANCIENT HISTORY

I HAVE SUFFERED IN THIS **GAOL**
 HAVE BEEN TRAPPED INSIDE THIS
CAGE FOR AGES,
 THIS LIVING '**ELL**,
 BUT IF I TRY I CAN **REMEMBER**,
 BACK BEFORE MY LIFE HAD **ENDED**,
 BEFORE MY HAPPY DAYS WERE **OVER**,
 BEFORE I FIRST HEARD THE
PEALING OF THE **BELL**

[SFX: School Bell]

LIKE YOU I WAS **CURIOUS**,
 SO INNOCENT, I **ASKED** A THOUSAND QUESTIONS,
 BUT **UNLESS** YOU WANT TO SUFFER,
 LISTEN UP AND I WILL **TEACH** YOU A THING OR TWO

YOU LISTEN HERE, MY DEAR, YOU'LL BE PUNISHED SO **SEVERELY** IF YOU
 STEP OUT OF LINE AND IF YOU CRY IT WILL BE **DOUBLE**,
YOU SHOULD STAY OUT OF TROUBLE,
 AND REMEMBER TO BE **EXTREMELY** CAREFUL

ERIC

Why?

BIG KIDS

Why?

SCARY KID

Why? Why? Didn't you hear what we said?

BIG KIDS

JUST YOU WAIT FOR PHYS-ED
JUST YOU WAIT FOR PHYS-ED!

BIG & LITTLE KIDS

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

LITTLE KIDS

WHY, WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY?

ALL KIDS

JUST YOU WAIT FOR PHYS-ZED!

THEY scramble away, the YOUNG ONES forming a class. MISS HONEY comes on.

MISS HONEY

Good morning children. My name is Miss Honey. And today is a very special day: your first day at school. Now, do any of you know any of your two times tables?

MATILDA'S hand goes up.

Wonderful! Matilda, isn't it? Please stand and do as much as you can.

MATILDA

(standing)

One times two is two, two times two is four, three times two is six, four times two is eight, five times two is ten, six times two is twelve, seven times two is fourteen, eight times two is sixteen, nine times two is eighteen, ten times two is twenty, eleven times two is twenty two, twelve times two is twenty four...

MISS HONEY

Well, my word that is very —

MATILDA

Thirteen times two is twenty six, fourteen times two is twenty eight, fifteen times two is thirty, sixteen times two is —

MISS HONEY

Stop, stop! Good heavens, how far can you go?

MATILDA

I don't know. Quite a long way I think.

MISS HONEY

(beat)

Do you think you could tell me what two times twenty eight is?

MATILDA

Fifty six.

MISS HONEY

Fift... well, yes that's very...

How about this: now this is much harder, so don't worry if you don't get it, but two times four hundred and eighty seven, if you took your time do you think you could—

MATILDA

Nine hundred and seventy four.

MISS HONEY takes a step backward, shocked.

MISS HONEY

Twelve sevens.

MATILDA

Eighty four.

CHILDREN

No way!

The CHILDREN chatter, amazed. MISS HONEY regains control, goes to the board, underlines 'I can now read words'.

MISS HONEY

Let's leave maths for the time being and look at reading. Can anyone read this?

NIGEL, MATILDA and LAVENDER put up their hands.

NIGEL

Me, me, me, oooh, oooh, me, pick me Miss, I can, mememememe—

MISS HONEY

Very well, Nigel.

NIGEL tries to read the sentence. He opens his mouth to speak, but nothing comes out. He stares, screwing up his face, willing the marks on the board to make sense. He starts to hyperventilate, his face goes red and beads of sweat break out on his forehead.

Yes, I think we'd better leave it there, Nigel, we don't want you to burst a blood vessel on your first day.

HE collapses.

Lavender?

LAVENDER

Is the first word... tomato?

MISS HONEY

Er, no. But tomato is a very good word.

LAVENDER

Yessss!

MISS HONEY

(squeaky)

Mat...

(normal)

Matilda?

MATILDA

'I can now read words'

MISS HONEY

So Matilda, you can read words?

MATILDA

Yes. Well, I needed to learn to read words so that I could read sentences because basically a sentence is just a big bunch of words. And if you can't read sentences you've got no chance with books.

MISS HONEY

And... have you read a whole book yourself, Matilda?

MATILDA

Oh yes, more than one. I love books. Last week I read quite a few.

MISS HONEY

A few? In a week? My, my, that is good. What books did you read?

MATILDA

Nicholas Nickleby, Oliver Twist, Jane Eyre,

#4a - Matilda's Books - Pathetic Intro

Tess of the D'Urbervilles, The Lord of the Rings, Kim, The Invisible Man, The Secret Garden, Crime and Punishment, and... and Stig of the Dump.

But MISS HONEY is staring at her, open mouthed. Suddenly the bell goes. The KIDS leave. MISS HONEY shakes herself out of it and heads for the Trunchbull's door.

#5 - Pathetic

MISS HONEY

KNOCK ON THE DOOR, JENNY
JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR,
DON'T BE PATHETIC,

(MISS HONEY)

KNOCK ON THE DOOR, JENNY,
THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR
YOU'RE BEING PATHETIC.
IT'S JUST A DOOR.
YOU'VE SEEN ONE BEFORE
JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

SHE goes to knock.

LOOK AT YOU TRYING TO HIDE, SILLY
STANDING OUTSIDE
THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE
LIKE A LITTLE GIRL
IT'S JUST... PATHETIC

SHE goes to knock.

LOOK AT YOU HESITATING,
HANDS SHAKING.
YOU SHOULD BE EMBARRASSED
YOU'RE NOT A LITTLE GIRL
IT'S JUST... PATHETIC

KNOCK ON THE DOOR, JENNY
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?
JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR

SHE goes to knock.

PERHAPS I WILL WAIT
SHE'S PROBABLY HAVING A
MEETING OR SOMETHING
AND WON'T WANT TO BE INTERRUPTED
IF ANYTHING, CAUTION IN THESE SITUATIONS
IS SENSIBLE, ONE SHOULD AVOID
CONFRONTATION WHERE POSSIBLE
I'LL COME BACK LATER THEN.

SHE goes to leave.

BUT THIS LITTLE GIRL
THIS MIRACLE

KNOCK ON THE DOOR, JENNY
JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR,
DON'T BE PATHETIC!

Suddenly SHE knocks.

TRUNCHBULL

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.

#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—

TRUNCHBULL

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.

TRUNCHBULL

What is the school motto, Miss Honey?

Beat.

HONEY

Bambinatum est maggitum.

TRUNCHBULL

Bambinatum est maggitum. 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.

TRUNCHBULL

(beat)

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

MISS HONEY

She knows her times tables.

TRUNCHBULL

So she's learnt a few tricks...

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?

(TRUNCHBULL)

AS I CHALKED UP MY PALMS, DID I WAVE MY HANDS?
I DID NOT!
AS I STARTED MY SPIN, DID I LOOK AT THE VIEW?
DID I DRIFT OFF AND DREAM FOR A MINUTE OR TWO?
DO YOU THINK I FALTERED OR AMENDED MY ROTATION?
DO YOU THINK I ALTERED MY INTENDED ELEVATION?
AS THE HAMMER TOOK OFF, DID I CHANGE MY GRUNT
FROM THE GRUNT I HAD PRACTISED FOR MANY A MONTH?
NOT A JOT!
NOT A DOT
DID I STRAY FROM THE PLOT!
NOT A DETAIL OF MY THROW
WAS ADJUSTED OR FORGOTTEN
NOT EVEN WHEN THE HAMMER LEFT MY HANDS
AND SAILED HIGH UP, UP ABOVE THE STANDS
DID I LET MYSELF GO
NO NO NO NO NO NO...

Pause.

IF YOU WANT TO THROW THE HAMMER FOR YOUR COUNTRY
YOU HAVE TO STAY INSIDE THE CIRCLE ALL THE TIME.
IF YOU WANT TO MAKE THE TEAM
YOU DON'T NEED HAPPINESS OR SELF ESTEEM
YOU JUST NEED TO KEEP YOUR FEET INSIDE THE LINE

Sing Children! 2, 3, 4.

TRUNCHBULL & LITTLE KIDS

IF YOU WANT TO THROW THE HAMMER FOR YOUR COUNTRY

BIG KIDS

BAMBINATUM EST MAGITUM

TRUNCHBULL & LITTLE KIDS

YOU HAVE TO STAY INSIDE THE CIRCLE ALL THE TIME.

BIG KIDS

CIRCULUM MAGITUM MAGITUM

TRUNCHBULL

AND IF YOU WANT TO TEACH SUCCESS
YOU DON'T USE SYMPATHY OR TENDERNESS

BIG KIDS

TEN-DER-NESS

TRUNCHBULL

YOU HAVE TO FORCE THE LITTLE SQUITS TO TOE THE LINE.

Sing Jenny!

MISS HONEY & LITTLE KIDS

IF YOU WANT TO THROW THE HAMMER FOR YOUR COUNTRY

BIG KIDS

BAMBINATUM! BAMBINATUM! GLORIA MAGITUM!

MISS HONEY & LITTLE KIDS

YOU HAVE TO STAY INSIDE THE CIRCLE ALL THE TIME.

BIG KIDS

CIRCULUM EST DEUS! DEUS!

TRUNCHBULL

I APPLY JUST ONE SIMPLE RULE

TO HAMMER THROWING, LIFE AND SCHOOL

LIFE'S A BALL, SO LEARN TO THROW IT

FIND THE BALLY LINE AND TOW IT

AND ALWAYS KEEP YOUR FEET INSIDE THE LINE.

Now get out!

#6a - Hammer to Wormwoods

*Defeated, MISS HONEY begins to go. Stops.***MISS HONEY**

W, w, w, well, I must tell you headmistress that it is my intention to help this little girl. W, w, w, whether you like it or not!

*SHE goes.**MR WORMWOOD enters, sulking.***MR WORMWOOD**

Stupid, nasty, stinking, slimy, great big question-asking, how-dare-they-speak-to-me-like-that, who the hell do they think they are, flipping, filthy, nasty, stupid Russians!

MRS WORMWOOD

Oh, don't tell me we're not rich...

MR WORMWOOD

It's the mileage! They took one look at the mileage on the first car and said that these cars were knackered. I told them, I said the reason the mileage is so high is a manufacturing mistake.

MATILDA

Is that true?

MR WORMWOOD

Of course it's not true.

MATILDA

So you lied?

MR WORMWOOD

Of course I lied.

MATILDA

And they didn't believe you?

MR WORMWOOD

Of course they didn't believe me, I've got green hair!

MICHAEL

I've got hair.

MR WORMWOOD

And what's this? Another flaming book? What's wrong with the telly?

MRS WORMWOOD

She's got no respect, that one. It's all books and stories.

MATILDA

No, no, it's a lovely book, honest you should read it, I'm sure you'd -

MR WORMWOOD

Lovely? Here's what I think of your lovely!

#7 - Naughty Reprise (Superglue)

MATILDA

No! It's from the library, it's a library book!

HE rips the book up.

MRS WORMWOOD

You show the little brat!

MR WORMWOOD

Get out of here you little... stink worm.

MATILDA looks at the book. Glares up at her father. But instead of saying anything SHE gathers the torn book up.

MATILDA

Do we have any superglue?

MR WORMWOOD

In the cupboard.

HE suddenly thinks of a hilarious joke.

And while you're at it

(pausing for effect – oh this is going to be good...)

why don't you stick your stupid book to your stupid head!

The WORMWOODS laugh at this as if it were the funniest thing in the world.

MATILDA leaves, the sound of their laughter in her ears.

MATILDA

JUST BECAUSE YOU FIND THAT LIFE'S NOT FAIR, IT
DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU JUST HAVE TO GRIN AND BEAR IT
IF YOU ALWAYS TAKE IT ON THE CHIN AND WEAR IT,
NOTHING WILL CHANGE.

SHE stops in the hall at her father's hat.

EVEN IF YOU'RE LITTLE, YOU CAN DO A LOT, YOU

Grabs an umbrella, pulls down her father's hat.

MUSTN'T LET A LITTLE THING LIKE LITTLE STOP YOU
IF YOU SIT AROUND AND LET THEM GET ON TOP, YOU

Puts a massive amount of superglue inside the rim of the hat.

MIGHT AS WELL BEING SAYING
YOU THINK THAT IT'S OK AND
THAT'S NOT RIGHT!

Just then MR WORMWOOD comes out, about to go to work. Stops. Sees her with his hat in her hand. Beat. SHE offers it to him. HE looks at it, then snatches it off her. HE squashes the hat firmly down at a jaunty angle.

MR WORMWOOD

I've got my eye on you, boy.

HE goes.

MATILDA

I'm a girl!

Playground,

KIDS young and old. LAVENDER comes up to Matilda.

LAVENDER

Matilda, can I ask you a question? Do all those brains in your head give you a headache? I mean it's got to hurt, all squished in there.

MATILDA

No, it's fine. I think they just... fit.

LAVENDER

Right. Well look, I'd better hang around just in case. If they start to squeeze out of your ears you're going to need help. I'm Lavender. And I think it's probably for the best if we're best friends.

SHE holds her hand out. THEY shake. Suddenly NIGEL runs on, panicked, terrified. He runs one way. Then the other. But neither seems to offer the protection he needs.

NIGEL

Hide me! Someone poured a whole can of treacle onto Trunchbull's chair! She sat down and when she got up her knickers stayed stuck to the seat! Someone told her I did it but I never and now she's after me!

MATILDA

That's not fair! That's not fair at all!

BIG KID

You're done kid. You're finished.

BIG KID

Once Agatha Trunchbull decides you're guilty you are squished.

BIG KID

Yesterday she caught Julius Rottwinkle eating a liquorice all-sort during science. She just picked him up, swung him around and threw him out of the window.

MATILDA

Don't listen to them! That didn't happen, they're trying to scare us.

NIGEL

Oh Matilda... they're saying she's going to put me in Chokey.

#8 - Chokey Chant

The BIG KIDS suddenly gasp.

MATILDA

W... what's chokey?

NIGEL

They say it's a cupboard in her office that she throws children into. They say she's lined it with nails and spikes and bits of broken glass...

BIG KIDS

THERE'S A PLACE YOU ARE SENT
IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN GOOD

KID 1

AND IT'S MADE OF SPIKES AND WOOD

BIG KIDS

AND IT
ISN'T WIDE ENOUGH TO SIT

KID 2

AND EVEN IF YOU COULD

BIG KIDS

THERE ARE NAILS ON THE BOTTOM

KID 2

SO YOU'LL WISH YOU'D STOOD

BIG KIDS

WHEN THE HINGES CREAK
AND THE DOOR IS CLOSED
YOU CANNOT SEE SQUAT

KID 3

NOT THE END OF YOUR NOSE

BIG KIDS

AND WHEN YOU SCREAM
YOU DUNNO IF THE SOUND CAME OUT
OR IF THE SCREAM IN YOUR HEAD
EVEN REACHED YOUR MOUTH.

MATILDA

Alright, look – when did this happen?

NIGEL

Twenty minutes ago. But why?

(suddenly seeing something)

Oh no, she's coming!

MATILDA

You'd better hide. Quick! Blazers!

MATILDA

NIGEL

Please don't tell her where I am Matilda, she'll—

MATILDA

Now!

NIGEL jumps onto the floor as THEY throw their coats onto him, burying him beneath, immediately forming a line for inspection. A moment later the TRUNCHBULL storms on. She is fuming. She looks around. All the KIDS avoid eye contact. All except MATILDA.

TRUNCHBULL

(pointing a fat finger at Matilda)

You, you suppurating spleen! Where is the maggot known as Nig-el?

Pause. MATILDA thinks.

MATILDA

He's over there under those coats.

All KIDS stare at Matilda, horrified at this betrayal. The TRUNCHBULL smiles, the smile of a cobra. MATILDA steps aside and the TRUNCHBULL heads to the coats (which begin to shake with fear).

Where he's been for the last hour actually.

TRUNCHBULL stops. Turns. Beat.

TRUNCHBULL

What? An hour?

MATILDA

Oh yes. You see unfortunately, Nigel suffers from the rare but chronic sleep disorder, narcolepsy. The condition is characterized by the sufferer experiencing bouts of chronic fatigue and falling suddenly asleep, often without knowing or any warning at all. You see he fell asleep and we put him in the coats for safety. Didn't we?

THEY stare at her, open mouthed.

Didn't we?

ALL KIDS

(overlapping)

Yes
definitely
of course
oh yeah
absolutely
Yeah, yeah.

SNARK KID

Snarkolopsy.

At first the KIDS say nothing, but then start to agree, nodding. The TRUNCHBULL comes over to Matilda, suspicious. Looks down.

MATILDA

He'll probably think he's in bed when he wakes up.

At that moment NIGEL emerges, stretching.

NIGEL

(big yawn)

Is it time for school yet, mum?

(as if noticing the playground for the first time)

Hello? What am I doing here? Well... this isn't my bedroom at all! Oh, hello Miss Trunchbull.

The TRUNCHBULL knows there is something going on, but cannot put her finger on it. She is furious, shaking. But defeated. Suddenly...

TRUNCHBULL

Amanda Thripp!

#8a - Amanda Thripp / Pigtails

A small GIRL in pigtails steps forward.

AMANDA

(gulps)

Y... yes, Miss Trunchbull.

TRUNCHBULL

What have I told you about wearing pigtails? I hate pigtails!

AMANDA

But... my mummy likes them. She says they make me look pretty.

TRUNCHBULL

Then your mother...

(SHE grabs the girl by the hair)

is a twit!

SHE lifts Amanda off the floor. There is a yelp from the GIRL. The TRUNCHBULL starts to swing the girl around, slowly at first, but gaining more and more momentum, leaning back against her weight like a hammer thrower, until Amanda is a blur. She lets go. THEY watch as AMANDA sails off into the distance...

BIG KID

Look out! She's coming in to land!

BIG KID

Here she comes!

...to land with a crump. SHE gets up, dizzy, dazed, but with no apparent broken bones. The TRUNCHBULL looks back to Matilda.

TRUNCHBULL

You! What is your name?

MATILDA

Matilda. Matilda Wormwood.

TRUNCHBULL

Oh. So you're Wormwood, are you? I might have known. Well Wormwood, you have just made a very big mistake.

Leaves. The KIDS stare at Matilda in wonder. LAVENDER beams.

LAVENDER

Just so you all know — she's my best friend.

#8b — Mechanics

KIDS

Wow!

Wormwood Motors.

MR WORMWOOD enters talking on the phone, a mechanic following. Mr Wormwood is relieving himself of his jacket as HE walks.

MR WORMWOOD

Brand new stock sir. Yes sir, completely different cars, sir. Green hair? Yeah, it was erm, national green hair day, a celebration of all the wonderful green things in the world, like... lettuce and... snot. Tomorrow at one? Absolutely, sir. Bye-bye sir. Dosvidoodah.

Hangs up, pleased with himself. Turns to the mechanic.

Now that is how you do...

(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, parle 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

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

I... 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, fantastico!

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...

#9 - Loud

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 QUAIN'T, IT'S VERY SWEET, BUT WRONG.
PEOPLE DON'T LIKE SMARTY PANTS WHAT GO

(MRS WORMWOOD)

ROUND CLAIMING THAT THEY KNOW STUFF WE DON'T KNOW.
 NOW HERE'S A TIP:
 WHAT YOU KNOW MATTERS LESS
 THAN THE VOLUME WITH WHICH WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW'S
 EXPRESSED
 CONTENT HAS NEVER BEEN LESS IMPORTANT, SO...
 YOU HAVE GOT TO BE

MRS WORMWOOD

LOUD
 GIRL, YOU GOTTA LEARN TO STAND UP
 AND STICK OUT FROM THE CROWD

A LITTLE LESS FLAT, A LOT MORE HEEL!
 A LITTLE LESS FACT, A LOT MORE FEEL!
 A LITTLE LESS BRAIN, A LOT MORE HAIR!
 A LITTLE LESS HEAD, A LOT MORE DERRIÈRE!

RUDOLPHO & ENSEMBLE

LOUD! LOUD! LOUD!
 CROWD! CROWD! CROWD!

FLAT... HEEL!
 FACT... FEEL!
 BRAIN... HAIR!
 HEAD... DERRIÈRE!

MRS WORMWOOD

NO ONE'S GOING TO TELL YOU WHEN TO SHAKE YOUR TUSH, WELL
 YOU GOTTA LIGHT - DON'T HIDE IT UNDER A BUSHEL
 NO ONE'S GONNA LOOK IF YOU DON'T STAND OUT,
 NO ONE'S GONNA LISTEN IF YOU DON'T SHOUT.

MRS WORMWOOD & RUDOLPHO

NO ONE'S GONNA CARE IF YOU DON'T CARE,
 SO GO AND PUT SOME HIGHLIGHTS IN YOUR HAIR,
 COS YOU GOTTA HIGHLIGHT WHAT YOU GOT!

MRS WORMWOOD

EVEN IF

MRS WORMWOOD & RUDOLPHO

WHAT YOU GOT IS NOT A LOT!
 YOU GOTTA BE...

MRS WORMWOOD

LOUD
 YOU GOTTA GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO SHINE,
 TO STAND UP AND BE PROUD

RUDOLPHO & ENSEMBLE

LOUD! LOUD! LOUD!
 STAND UP AND BE PROUD
 PROUD! PROUD!

MRS WORMWOOD

A LITTLE LESS ZZZ, A LOT MORE ZING!
A LITTLE LESS SHHH, A LOT MORE SCHWING!
A LITTLE LESS DRESSING LIKE YOUR MUM,
A LITTLE MORE BUM-BA-BOM-BOM BOM BOM BA-BOM!

(looking in her compact)

I look nice...

(showing Miss Honey)

You don't!

NO ONE'S GONNA TELL YOU WHEN TO WIGGLE YOUR BUMBA

RUDOLPHO

NO ONE'S GONNA LUV YA IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE RHUMBA

MRS WORMWOOD

EVERYBODY LOVES A LITTLE SOMETHING EXOTIC

RUDOLPHO

BUT LEARNIN' A LANGUAGE IS OVER THE TOP

MRS WORMWOOD

IT

DOESN'T REALLY MATTER IF YOU DON'T KNOW NOWT

RUDOLPHO

'S LONG AS YOU DUNNO IT WITH A BIT OF CLOUT

MRS WORMWOOD & RUDOLPHO

THE LESS YOU HAVE TO SELL, THE HARDER YOU SELL IT
THE LESS YOU HAVE TO SAY, THE LOUDER YOU YELL IT
THE DUMBER THE ACT, THE BIGGER THE CONFESSION
THE LESS YOU HAVE TO SHOW THE LOUDER YOU DRESS IT
YOU GOTTA GET UP, YOU GOTTA GET UP AND BE -

MRS WORMWOOD & RUDOLPHO

LOUD!

Dance Break.

ENSEMBLE

LOUD, LOUD, LOUD, LOUD, LOUD, LOUD

JUDGE

Your judges!

RUDOLPHO

Come here, you.

MRS WORMWOOD

10, 10, 10. What's this? 10!

MRS WORMWOOD

YOU GOTTA BE LOUD!
AND STICK OUT FROM THE CROWD

YOU LISTENING?
YOU GOTTA BE LOUD!
YOU GOTTA GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO SHINE
TO STAND UP AND BE PROUD,
PROUD, PROUD, PROUD!

FINK YOU'RE CLEVVA? WHATEVVA!

YOU GOTTA BE

RUDOLPHO & ENSEMBLE

LOUD! LOUD! LOUD!
STICK OUT FROM THE CROWD!
CROWD! CROWD!

LOUD! LOUD! LOUD!
STAND UP AND BE PROUD!
PROUD! PROUD!

ALL

LOUD , LOUD, LOUD, LOUD...
LOUD, LOUD, LOUD, LOUD! LOUD! LOUD! LOUD! LOUD!

MRS WORMWOOD

YOU GOTTA BE LOUD!
MISS HONEY, alone, in the street outside.

#10 - This Little Girl**MISS HONEY**

STOP BEING PATHETIC, JENNY
JUST GET ON YOUR FEET, JENNY
YOU ARE GOING TO MARCH IN THERE
AND GIVE THEM A PIECE OF YOUR MIND

LEAVE IT ALONE, JENNY
THE MORE THAT YOU TRY
THE MORE YOU'LL JUST LOOK LIKE A FOOL
THIS IS NOT YOUR PROBLEM
YOU'VE NOT GOT THE SPINE
YOU ARE A TEACHER
JUST GO BACK TO SCHOOL

LOUD

(MISS HONEY)

BUT THIS LITTLE GIRL
THIS MIRACLE
SHE SEEMS NOT TO KNOW
THAT'S SHE'S SPECIAL AT ALL
AND WHAT SORT OF
TEACHER WOULD I BE
IF I LET THIS LITTLE GIRL
FALL

I CAN SEE
THIS LITTLE GIRL NEEDS
SOMEBODY STRONG
TO FIGHT BY HER SIDE
INSTEAD SHE'S FOUND ME
PATHETIC LITTLE ME
AND ANOTHER DOOR CLOSES
AND JENNY'S OUTSIDE.

MATILDA is at the library with MRS PHELPS.

MATILDA

And so the great day arrived.

#11 – Acrobat Story II

It was like the entire world had gathered to see 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.

Everything was arranged by the acrobat's sister – a frightening woman who used to be an Olympic-class hammer thrower, and who loved nothing better than to scare the children of the town. People whispered that in her dark and brooding heart she resented her sister both her success, and her love.

Suddenly out came the escapologist, dressed as usual in his tights and spangly costume, but there was no sign of the acrobat and no glimpse at all of her shiny white scarf. And instead of the musical fanfare there was silence as he solemnly strode into the ring.

The ESCAPOLOGIST steps forward in spangly outfit.

MATILDA & ESCAPOLOGIST

'Ladies and Gentlemen, boys and girls... 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... has been... cancelled.'

MRS PHELPS

No!

MATILDA

Yes. The audience gasped so loud that a passing airplane caught it on its instrumentation and reported it as an atmospheric phenomenon.

MATILDA & ESCAPOLOGIST

'Cancelled because my wife is... pregnant.'

MRS PHELPS

Oh, Matilda!

MATILDA

Absolute silence. You could have heard a fly burp.

The ACROBAT steps out.

Then suddenly the audience jumped to its feet and roared in appreciation.

The ACROBAT and ESCAPOLOGIST leave, hand in hand. So happy.

The great feat was instantly forgotten and the applause went on for nearly an hour...

MRS PHELPS

So it has a happy ending?

MATILDA

... forgotten by everyone except, that is, the acrobat's sister. When all had quietened down, she stepped forward and produced... a contract.

MRS PHELPS

A... a contract?

MATILDA & THE ACROBAT'S SISTER (OFF)

'A contract you have signed to perform this feat, and perform this feat you shall!'

MRS PHELPS

No!

MATILDA & THE ACROBAT'S SISTER (OFF)

'I have paid for the posters, publicity, the catering, the toilet facilities – if I give the crowd their money back where is my profit? A contract is a contract is a contract. My hands are tied. 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 will be performed and performed this day or... off to prison you both shall go!'

MRS PHELPS

No, no!

MATILDA gets up, starts to go. MRS PHELPS is shocked.

W, w, well what happened next?

MATILDA

I don't know, yet. I'll tell you tomorrow.

MRS PHELPS

What? But I don't know if my nerves'll make it until tomorrow.

MATILDA

Mrs Phelps, are you crying? Maybe I shouldn't tell you any more?

MRS PHELPS

Oh no, Matilda, we must find out how it ends? And I'm not crying because it's sad. It's just that they want that child so very much. It must be wonderful for a child to be so wanted.

MATILDA

Yes. Wonderful. Goodbye Mrs Phelps.

#11a - Library Into Classroom

Classroom.

As the KIDS enter MISS HONEY pulls Matilda aside.

MISS HONEY

Matilda could I speak to you, please?

I'm afraid I have not been too successful in getting others to recognise your... abilities. So, starting tomorrow I shall bring in a selection of very clever books that will challenge your mind. You may sit and read them while I teach the others and if you have any questions, well, I shall do my best to answer them. How does that sound?

Pause. MATILDA is overwhelmed. Suddenly hugs Miss Honey.

#11b - Biggest Hug

Matilda! Why... that is the biggest hug in the world! You're going to hug all of the air out of me!

But MATILDA shows no sign of breaking the hug. Beat. MISS HONEY hugs back. The TRUNCBULL storms on.

TRUNCHBULL

Matilda Wormwood!

#11c – Burp Sequence

Matilda Wormwood! Where is –

MATILDA

(stepping forwards)

Yes, Miss Trunchbull.

TRUNCHBULL

Aha! So you admit it do you?

MATILDA

Admit what, Miss Trunchbull?

TRUNCHBULL

This clot, this foul carbuncle is none other than a disgusting criminal, a denizen of the underworld, a member of the mafia! This morning you sneaked like a serpent into the kitchen and stole a slice of my private chocolate cake from my tea tray.

MATILDA

No I did not!

MISS HONEY

Miss Trunchbull, Matilda's been here all morning.

TRUNCHBULL

Standing up for the little spitball are you? Well this crime took place before school started. Therefore she is...

(writing on the board)

guilty!

BRUCE

(to the audience)

Okay, look, alright, I stole the cake. And honestly I was really, definitely, sort of almost thinking about owning up... maybe? But the thing was I was having a lot of trouble with my belly. You see, the Trunchbull's cake was so good that I'd scoffed it down too quick and now it was beginning to fight back.

HIS belly rumbles.

Ooops. See?

Rumble.

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—

TRUNCBULL

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

BRUCE

Is it?

TRUNCBULL

Yes, Bogtrotter, it is.

BRUCE

Oh. Well... I did.

Beat.

Thank you.

TRUNCBULL

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 plonks the cake in front of Bruce. HE stares at it.

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

BRUCE

Well, yes. I'm full.

TRUNCBULL

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—

TRUNCBULL

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...

TRUNCBULL

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

EAT!

LAVENDER

HE CAN'T

TRUNCHBULL

EAT!

TOMMY

HE SURELY CAN'T!

TRUNCHBULL

EAT!

NIGEL

HE MIGHT EXPLODE!

TRUNCHBULL

EAT!!!

Terrified, BRUCE sets about eating the cake.

KIDS 1

KIDS 2

A SINGLE SLICE
OR EVEN TWO, BRUCE
MIGHT'VE BEEN NICE
BUT EVEN YOU, BRUCE
HAVE TO ADMIT
BETWEEN YOU AND IT
THERE'S NOT A LOT OF DIFFERENCE IN SIZE.

HE CAN'T
HE SURELY CAN'T
HE MIGHT EXPLODE

HE'S GOING TO BLOW, MAKE HIM STOP

I CAN'T WATCH!

I THINK IN EFFECT
THIS MUST CONFIRM, BRUCE
WHAT WE ALL SUSPECTED
YOU HAVE A WORM, BRUCE
OR MAYBE YOUR LARGENESS
IS LIKE THE TARDIS:
CONSIDERABLY ROOMIER INSIDE.

HE CAN, BRUCE!
YOU ARE THE MAN, BRUCE!

HE'S QUITE ELASTIC

HE'S FANTASTIC! LOOK AT HIM GO!

(KIDS 1)

HE CAN'T
HE SURELY CAN'T, HE SURELY CAN'T

B-R-O-O-C-E

BRUCE!
YOU'LL NEVER AGAIN BE SUBJECT TO ABUSE
FOR YOUR IMMENSE CABOOSE
SHE'LL CALL A TRUCE, BRUCE.
WITH EVERY SWALLOW YOU ARE
TIGHTENING THE NOOSE.
WE NEVER THOUGHT IT WAS POSSIBLE
BUT HERE IT IS COMING TRUE.
WE CAN HAVE OUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO

THE TIME HAS COME TO PUT THAT TUMBLY
TUM TO USE
NO EXCUSE, BRUCE
LET OUT YOUR BELT, I THINK YOU'LL WANT
YOUR TROUSERS LOOSE

OHHH, STUFF IT IN!
YOU'RE ALMOST FIN-ISHED!
YOU'LL FIT IT IN!
WHATEVER YOU DO JUST DON'T GIVE IN!
DON'T LET HER WIN!
COME ON BRUCE, BE OUR HERO,
COVER YOURSELF IN CHOCOLATE GLORY!

(KIDS 2)

HE CAN, BRUCE!

YOU ARE THE MAN, BRUCE!

BRUCE!

BRUCE!

BRUCE!

BRUCE

Too much! It's just... too... much.

BRUCE suddenly sags; he collapses in the cake. But suddenly MATILDA steps forward.

MATILDA

Go on Bruce. Do it!

TRUNCBULL

Silence!

But BRUCE has been affected by her words. HE returns to the cake. Somehow manages to continue. Faster and faster...

KIDS

OHHH... BRUCE!
YOU'LL NEVER AGAIN BE SUBJECT TO ABUSE
FOR YOUR IMMENSE CABOOSE
SHE'LL CALL A TRUCE, BRUCE
JUST ONE MORE BITE AND YOU'LL'VE
COMPLETELY COOKED 'ER GOOSE
WE NEVER THOUGHT IT WAS POSSIBLE
BUT HERE IT IS COMING TRUE
WE CAN HAVE OUR CAKE AND EAT IT...

AHH AHH AHH AHH...

BRUCE puts the last bit into his mouth. Suddenly, no longer able to contain herself, MISS HONEY jumps up and screams...

MISS HONEY

Go on Brucie! Yeesss! Yesssss!

Gasp from EVERYONE. The TRUNCHBULL turns, furious. MISS HONEY remembers herself.

Sorry, Miss Trunchbull... I... I got carried away.

But — strangely — the TRUNCHBULL smiles.

TRUNCHBULL

Oh, that's alright, Jenny. We all get carried away sometimes. Even me.

THEY all return to their seats, quiet, abashed. The TRUNCHBULL moves towards Bruce. Looks down at him. For a long time.

Well, done Bogtrotter. Good show.

He has no idea what to say. So HE nods a smile to her. SHE returns it and then heads to the door. He has got away with it...

But the TRUNCHBULL stops. Turns. Looks at him.

Well?

THEY have no idea what she means.

Come along, Bogtrotter.

BRUCE

What? Where?

TRUNCHBULL

Oh, did I not mention? That was the first part of your punishment. There's more. The second part. And the second part is... chokey!

BRUCE

What?

MISS HONEY

No, Miss Trunchbull please, you can't!

TRUNCHBULL

Yes, Miss Trunchbull, please you can! Do you think I would allow myself to be defeated by these maggots? Did you? Who do you think I am, Miss Honey? A weakling? An idiot? A fool? You?

MISS HONEY

But he's eaten it all, he did what you asked!

BRUCE

I've eaten it all! I did it! I ate the lot, I... I did it!

But the TRUNCHBULL storms back to Bogtrotter, grabs him by the wrist.

No! No, please! Not that! No no please. Don't take me to Chokey.

But SHE drags him out.

Not that! Nooo!

MATILDA

That's not right!

But HE is gone.

Intermission

MR WORMWOOD comes on. Takes out a piece of paper, reads.

MR WORMWOOD

'I would like to offer an apology for some of the things that have been going on here tonight. They are not nice things and they are not right things and I would like to state garrantorically that we do not want any children that might be here tonight watching this to go home and try these things out for themselves. I am of course talking about... reading books.

It is normal for kids to behave in this fashion, it stunts the brain, wears out the eyes, makes kids ugly, stinky, fatty, sweaty, betty, boring, gaseous and crucially, it gives them varrukas... of the mind.

Under no circumstances do we condone such activities and we do so utterly without reservoirs.'

Puts the paper away, looks at the audience.

Can I just ask, how many people here have ever read a book?

Is horrified by the response, picks someone in the audience

You sir/madam, what's your name?

Gets name

Well, ... don't take this the wrong way, but...

Bookworm, bookworm, stupid little bookworm, reading all his books like a stinky little bookworm.

You read books, like a... worm. Worms read books, you read books.

Worms are stupid

You're a... swarm.

There.

Now, ...will learn from that. Won't stop them reading, but s/he'll never put her/his hand up in a theatre again.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I present to you today, the pinnacle of our achievements as a species, the very reason we bothered evolving out of unicorns in the first place.

MICHAEL comes out with the telly, and a little guitar.

#13 - All I Know

SOMEWHERE ON A SHOW I HEARD
A PICTURE TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS
SO, TELLY, IF YOU BOTHERED TO LOOK,

(MR WORMWOOD)

IS LIKE THE EQUIVALENT OF, LIKE, LOTS OF BOOKS

ALL I KNOW I LEARNT FROM TELLY
THIS BIG BEAUTIFUL BOX O' FACTS
IF YOU KNOW A THING ALREADY, BABY
YOU CAN SWITCH THE CHANNEL OVER JUST LIKE THAT

ENDLESS JOY AND ENDLESS LAUGHTER
FOLKS LIVING HAPPILY EVER AFTER
ALL YOU NEED TO MAKE YOU WISE
IS TWENTY THREE MINUTES PLUS ADVERTISEMENTS

WHY WOULD WE
WASTE OUR ENERGY
TURNING PAGES 1, 2, 3
WHEN WE CAN SIT COMF'TABLY
ON OUR LOVELY BUMP-FER-LIES
WATCHING PEOPLE SINGING AND TALKING AND DOING STUFF
ALL I LEARNT, I LEARNT FROM TELLY
THE BIGGER THE TELLY, THE SMARTER THE MAN
YOU CAN TELL FROM MY BIG TELLY JUST HOW CLEVER A FELLA I AM

Take it away son.

MICHAEL does a guitar solo (i.e. plucks a discordant string every ten seconds or so)

You can't learn that from a stupid book.

ALL I KNOW I LEARNT FROM TELLY
WHAT TO THINK AND WHAT TO BUY
I WAS PRETTY SMART ALREADY
BUT NOW I'M REALLY, REALLY SMART, VERY, VERY SMART
ENDLESS CONTENT, ENDLESS CHANNELS
ENDLESS CHAT ON ENDLESS PANELS
ALL YOU NEED TO FILL YOUR MUFFIN
WITHOUT HAVING TO REALLY THINK OR NUFFIN
WHY WOULD WE
WASTE OUR ENERGY
TRYING TO WORK OUT 'ULLISEEZ'
WHEN WE CAN SIT HAPPILY
ON OUR LOVELY BAP-PER-LIES
WATCHING SLIGHTLY FAMOUS PEOPLE TALKING TO

(MR WORMWOOD)

REALLY FAMOUS PEOPLE
ALL I KNOW, I LEARNT FROM TELLY
THE BIGGER THE TELLY, THE SMARTER THE MAN
YOU CAN TELL FROM MY BIG TELL JUST HOW CLEVER A FELLA I AM

WHO THE DICKENS IS CHARLES DICKENS?
MARY SHELLY, SHE SOUNDS SMELLY
CHARLOTTE BRONTE - DO NOT WANTEE
JANE AUSTEN, IN THE COMPOSTIN
JAMES JOYCE? DOESN'T SOUND NOICE
IAN MCEWAN, (UGH) FEEL LIKE SPEWIN
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, SCHWILLIAM SCHMAKESPEAER
MOBY DICK?

Easy, grandma...

Altogether now...

ALL I KNOW I LEARNT FROM TELLY
THE BIGGER THE TELLY, THE SMARTER THE MAN
YOU CAN TELL FROM MY BIG TELLY
JUST HOW CLEVER A FELLA I AM!

ACT II

Matilda

Act Two**#14 – Telly Off & Lavender's Newt****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!

#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

AMANDA, ERIC, TOMMY & BRUCE

AND I WILL WAKE UP WHEN THE SUN COMES UP
AND I WILL WATCH CARTOONS UNTIL MY EYES GO SQUARE

**ALICE, ERIC, TOMMY, BRUCE, HORTENSIA,
LAVENDER, NIGEL & AMANDA**

AND I WON'T CARE COS I'LL BE ALL GROWN UP.

KIDS & BIG KIDS

WHEN I GROW UP.

WHEN I GROW UP

I WILL BE STRONG ENOUGH TO CARRY
ALL THE HEAVY THINGS YOU HAVE TO
HAUL AROUND WITH YOU WHEN YOU'RE A GROWN UP.

WHEN I GROW UP

I WILL BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO FIGHT
THE CREATURES THAT YOU HAVE TO FIGHT
BENEATH THE BED EACH NIGHT TO BE A GROWN-UP.

AND WHEN I GROW UP

I WILL HAVE TREATS EVERY DAY
AND I'LL PLAY WITH THINGS THAT MUM
PRETENDS THAT MUMS DON'T THINK ARE FUN.

AND I WILL WAKE UP WHEN THE SUN COMES UP
AND I WILL SPEND ALL DAY JUST LYING IN THE SUN
AND I WON'T BURN COS I'LL BE ALL GROWN UP.

WHEN I GROW UP.

MISS HONEY

WHEN I GROW UP

I WILL BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO FIGHT
THE CREATURES THAT YOU HAVE TO FIGHT
BENEATH YOUR BED EACH NIGHT TO BE A GROWN-UP.

(same time as MATILDA)

WHEN I GROW UP—

WHEN I GROW UP—

(MISS HONEY)

WHEN I GROW UP—

WHEN I GROW UP—

MATILDA

(same time as MISS HONEY)

JUST BECAUSE YOU FIND THAT LIFE'S NOT FAIR,
IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU JUST HAVE TO GRIN AND BEAR IT
IF YOU ALWAYS TAKE IT ON THE CHIN AND WEAR IT,
NOTHING WILL CHANGE.

JUST BECAUSE I FIND MYSELF IN THIS STORY IT
DOESN'T MEAN THAT EVERYTHING IS WRITTEN FOR ME
IF I THINK THE ENDING IS FIXED ALREADY I MIGHT AS WELL
BE SAYING I THINK THAT ITS OK AND
THAT'S NOT RIGHT.

MATILDA enters the library. MRS PHELPS is there.

MRS PHELPS

Matilda! How lovely to see you! Are you enjoying school?

MATILDA

Oh yes. Bits of it anyway...

Beat.

Mrs Phelps, where's the revenge section?

MRS PHELPS

What? Well, we don't have a revenge section. Why? Is there a child at school who's behaving like a bully?

MATILDA

Oh no not a child exactly...

MRS PHELPS

Matilda, are you sure something's not—

MATILDA

Do you want to hear the next part of the story?

MRS PHELPS

Story? Did you say story? Did you say...? Matilda what are we waiting for...

SHE gets into position as MATILDA conjures the story.

#16 – Acrobat Story III

MATILDA

Slowly, very slowly, the acrobat wound her shiny white scarf around her husband's neck,

MATILDA & ACROBAT

'For luck, my love.' she said, kissing him with the gentlest of kisses.

'Smile – we have done this a thousand times'

MATILDA

But suddenly she hugged him with the biggest hug in the world, so hard that he felt that she would hug all of the air out of him.

And so they prepared themselves for the most dangerous feat that had ever been performed.

The great escapologist had to escape from the cage, lean out, catch his wife with one hand, grab a fire extinguisher with the other, and put out the flames on her specially designed dress within twelve seconds, before they reached the dynamite and blew his wife's head off!

MRS PHELPS screams out loud.

Beat.

MRS PHELPS

Sorry. Go on.

MATILDA

The trick started well.

The moment the specially designed dress was set alight the acrobat swung into the air. The crowd held their breath as she hurled over the sharks and spiky objects – one second, two seconds – they watched as the flames crept up the dress – three seconds, four seconds – she began to reach out her arms towards the cage – five seconds, six seconds – suddenly the padlocks pinged open and the huge chains fell away – seven seconds, eight seconds – the door flung open and the escapologist reached out one huge, muscled arm to catch his wife and the child – nine seconds, ten seconds...

MRS PHELPS

Oh, I can't look!

MATILDA

eleven seconds – and he grabs her hand and, and, and suddenly the flames are covered in foam before they can both be blown to pieces.

MRS PHELPS

Hooray! So the story does have a happy ending, after all!

Beat.

MATILDA

No.

MRS PHELPS

No?

MATILDA

No. Maybe it was the thought of their child. Maybe it was nerves. But the escapologist used just a touch too much foam and suddenly their hands became slippery... and she fell.

MRS PHELPS

No! Was... was she okay? Did... Did she survive?

MATILDA

She broke every bone in her body except the ones at the ends of her little fingers. She did manage to live long enough to have their child. But the effort was too great. 'Love our little girl' She said 'Love our daughter with all your heart. She is all we ever wanted'

ACROBAT (Voice-Over)

LOVE OUR GIRL
WITH EVERYTHING
SHE IS EVERYTHING

MATILDA

And then she died.

MRS PHELPS blows her nose hugely, devastated.

And then... things got worse.

Beat.

MRS PHELPS

What? Worse? Oh, no, Matilda, not worse, they can't get worse!

MATILDA

I'm afraid they did. Because the escapologist was so kind that he never for one second blamed the evil sister for what happened. In fact he asked her to move in and help look after his daughter.

(MATILDA)

She was nothing but cruel to the little girl, making her wash and iron and cook and clean, and beating her if she did a thing wrong. But always in secret, so that the escapist never suspected a thing.

And so the poor little girl grew up with the meanest, cruellest, horriest aunt you could possibly imagine!

MRS PHELPS

(jumping up)

Let's call the police!

Beat.

MATILDA

Mrs Phelps, it's... it's just a story.

MRS PHELPS

What?

(remembering herself)

Oh, yes, of course.

Matilda you are so smart! Your parents must think they have won the lottery having a child like you.

MATILDA

Oh, yeah. Yeah, they do. They're always saying that, in fact. They say 'We're so proud of you Matilda. You're like winning the lottery.'

Pause.

Yeah. I'd better go.

MR WORMWOOD bursts on, grabbing his wife, dancing, singing. He carries a suitcase with him.

We are in the Wormwoods'.

#16a — I'm So Clever

MR WORMWOOD

I'M SO CLEVER, I'M SO CLEVER,
I'M SO VERY, VERY, VERY, VERY CLEVER.
I'M SO VERY FLAMING CLEVER,
WHAT A VERY CLEVER FELLA I AM!

Come here you!

MRS WORMWOOD

Stop, stop! There's only one man I do that with!

MR WORMWOOD

Everyone, gather round; I want my family to share of my triumph.

(to Matilda, as SHE begins to join them)

Not you, boy.

MATILDA

I'm a girl!

Nonetheless, MATILDA, hovers on the outside uninvited.

MR WORMWOOD

One hundred and fifty five old bangers on my hands. All polished up, but the mileage on the clock telling the truth; that each one was... knackered. How could I possibly make the mileage go back? I couldn't very well drive each one backwards could I?

MICHAEL

Backwards.

MR WORMWOOD

When suddenly I had the most genius idea in the world! I ran into the workshop, grabbed a drill and, using my incredible mind, I attached the drill to the speedometer of the first car, turned it on and whacked it into reverse.

MICHAEL

Back-wards.

MR WORMWOOD

Yes, boy, backwards, backwards, exactly! A drill's motor whirls backwards thousands of times a second and within a few minutes I had reduced the mileage on that old rust bucket to practically nothing. I did it to every single car!

MICHAEL

Backwards!

MRS WORMWOOD

Stop talking now, darling, there's a good boy.

MR WORMWOOD

Ten minutes later the Russians show up. Great big nasty-faced apes, expensive suits, dark glasses; don't know who they thought they were.

MRS WORMWOOD

Russians are nocturnal, I saw it on a programme last night.

MATILDA

That was badgers, it was a programme about badgers.

MRS WORMWOOD

Same thing.

(to Mr Wormwood)

And? Did it work?

Beat. HE opens the suitcase: full of cash. THEY scream with joy.

Fantastico! Now I'll be able to afford Rudolpho all day long!

MATILDA

But you've cheated them! That's not fair at all; they trusted you and you've cheated them!

THEY stop dancing. Glare at Matilda.

MRS WORMWOOD

What is the matter with you? What have we done to deserve a child like you?

#16b - Bookworm

HE grabs Matilda and drags her to her room.

MR WORMWOOD

You know what I'm going to do tomorrow? I'm gonna go down that library and tell that old bag you're never to be let in again!

MATILDA

What? No, please don't—

MR WORMWOOD

And if she does... I'll have her fired! And you will never read another stinking book as long as you live! I'll put an end to your stories young man! Now get in there and stay in there you nasty... little... creep!

#17 - Acrobat Story IV (I'm Here)

HE leaves, slamming the door behind him. MATILDA sits there, alone.

SHE begins to tell the story to herself.

MATILDA

At night the escapologist's daughter cried herself to sleep alone in her room. She never said a single word about the evil aunt's bullying as she didn't want to cause a fuss and so she suffered in silence. This only encouraged the woman to greater cruelties, until one day, she exploded:

MATILDA & AUNT

'You are a useless, filthy, nasty little... creep!'

MATILDA

And she beat her, and threw her into a dank, dark, dusty cellar, locked the door and went out.

MATILDA alone, like she's been thrown into a cellar. Suddenly there is a banging on the door. More. More. SHE turns to face it.

But that day the escapologist happened to come home early. And when he heard the sound of his daughter's tears he smashed the door open!

The door bursts open. It is the ESCAPOLOGIST, furious. He runs to Matilda hugs her, THEY hug for all they are worth. He wears his wife's white scarf.

ESCAPOLOGIST

DON'T CRY

I AM HERE, LITTLE GIRL

PLEASE DON'T CRY, DRY YOUR EYES,

WIPE AWAY YOUR TEARS, LITTLE GIRL

FORGIVE ME, I DIDN'T MEAN TO DESERT YOU

DON'T CRY LITTLE GIRL, NOTHING CAN HURT YOU

YOU'VE NOTHING TO FEAR

I'M HERE.

HE wraps the white scarf around Matilda's neck.

MATILDA & ESCAPOLOGIST

'Have I been so wrapped up in my grief for my wife that I have forgotten the one thing that mattered to us most? I love you so much, my daughter, I shall spend the rest of my life making it up to you. We shall be together forever'

MATILDA

DON'T CRY DADDY

I'M ALRIGHT, DADDY

PLEASE DON'T CRY

HERE - LET ME WIPE AWAY YOUR TEARS.

ESCAPOLOGIST

(same time as MATILDA, following)

FORGIVE ME

I DIDN'T MEAN TO DESERT YOU

DON'T CRY LITTLE GIRL, NOTHING CAN HURT YOU

YOU'VE NOTHING TO FEAR. I'M HERE.

MATILDA

(same time as ESCAPOLOGIST)

DADDY, FORGIVE ME

(MATILDA)

I DIDN'T WANT TO UPSET YOU
PLEASE DADDY
DON'T CRY
I'LL BE ALRIGHT
WITH YOU BY MY SIDE
I HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR
YOU'RE HERE.

The ESCAPOLOGIST scoops Matilda up in his arms, takes her to the bed, lays her down to sleep. MATILDA ducks out, leaving the scarf.

MATILDA

But when the little girl fell asleep, the escapologist's thoughts turned to the acrobat's sister and an almighty rage grew inside his great heart.

MATILDA & ESCAPOLOGIST

'This demon, this villain, this monster! She has sullied the memory of my wife, she has betrayed the trust of her own sister, she has shown cruelty to the most precious reality of my marriage. Bullying children is her game, is it? Then let us see what this creature thinks she can do when the wrath of a grown man stands before her!'

The ESCAPOLOGIST leaves. MATILDA alone, now.

MATILDA

But that was the last the little girl ever saw of her father. Because he never came home. Ever again.

MATILDA, alone. MISS HONEY enters with some books.

MISS HONEY

Matilda, I've got you those books, we spoke about, so if you like—

The shrill scream of a whistle. The TRUNCHBULL steps forward, dressed in old-fashioned gym gear. BRUCE is with her, a shadow of his former self, broken, tamed, can hardly look at Matilda and Miss Honey. The TRUNCHBULL stares at Miss Honey.

#17a — What Are You Doing With Those Books?

TRUNCHBULL

What are you doing with those books, woman?

MISS HONEY

They... they're for Matilda

TRUNCHBULL

No they are not! Not on my watch! There is an age for reading and an age for being a filthy little toad. These... are toads. Aren't you Bogtrotter?

BRUCE

Yes, Miss Trunchbull

TRUNCHBULL

Yes Miss Trunchbull. Only Bogtrotter here is now a good toad

(to Miss Honey)

Sit.

MISS HONEY complies.

It has become clear to me, Honey, that you have no idea what you are doing. You believe in kindness and fluffiness and books and stories. That is not teaching! To teach the child, we must first break the child.

SHE blows a whistle the KIDS march on, stop, silent. Pause.

QUIET, YOU MAGGOTS!

MISS HONEY

But no-one was speaking, Miss Trunchbull.

TRUNCHBULL

Miss Honey, please understand that when I say 'Quiet, you maggots', you are entirely included in that statement. Where is my jug of water?

LAVENDER

I'll get it Miss Trunchbull.

LAVENDER gets up. She is hugely excited. SHE cannot help but give the audience a huge thumbs-up as she goes.

TRUNCHBULL

Stupid girl.

(back at the others)

Look at you. Flabby! Disgusting! Revolting! Revolting, I say! I think it's time we toughened you all up with a little... Phys-ed.

#18 – The Smell Of Rebellion

THIS SCHOOL, OF LATE, HAS STARTED REEKING...
 QUIET, MAGGOT, WHEN I'M SPEAKING!
 ... REEKING WITH A MOST DISTURBING SCENT.
 ONLY THE FINEST NOSTRILS SMELL IT,
 BUT I KNOW IT OH TOO WELL,

(TRUNCHBULL)

IT IS THE ODOUR OF REBELLION,
IT'S THE BOUQUET OF DISSENT.

AND YOU MAY BET YOUR BRITCHES
THIS HEADMISTRESS
FINDS THIS FOUL ODIFEROUS-NESS
WHOLLY OLFACTORILY INSULTING
AND SO TO STOP THE STENCH'S SPREAD
I FIND A SESSION OF PHYS-ED
SORTS THE MERELY RANK FROM THE REVOLTING.

THE SMELL OF REBELLION
COMES OUT IN THE SWEAT
AND PHYS-ED'LL GET YOU SWEATING
AND IT WON'T BE LONG
BEFORE I SMELL THE PONG
OF AIDING AND ABETTING

A BIT OF PHYS-ED
WILL TELL US
WHO HAS A HEADFUL
OF REBELLIOUS
THOUGHTS.

HOLD! HOLD!

JUST LIKE A ROT -
TON EGG
FLOATS TO THE TOP
OF A BUCKET OF WATER

TRUNCHBULL

THE SMELL OF REBELLION
THE STENCH OF REVOLT
THE REEK OF INSUBORDINATION
A WHIFF OF RESISTANCE
THE PONG OF DISSENT
THE FUNK OF MUTINY IN ACTION

KIDS

1, 2
3, 4
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE
1, 2
3, 4

MATILDA & MISS HONEY

BUT THAT'S NOT RIGHT!

(TRUNCHBULL)

BEFORE A WEED
BECOMES TOO BIG AND GREEDY
YOU REALLY NEED
TO NIP IT IN THE BUD

Position two!
BEFORE THE WORM STARTS TO TURN
YOU MUST SCRAPE OFF THE DIRT
AND RIP IT FROM THE MUD

Blows her whistle.

A WHIFF OF INSURGENCE

THE STENCH OF INTENT

THE REEK OF PREPUBESCENT PROTEST
THE FUNK OF DEFIANCE

THE ODOUR OF COUP

THE WAFT OF ANARCHY IN PROGRESS

TOMMY & AMANDA

IT HURTS!

HORTENSIA & ERIC

I CAN'T!

ALICE & NIGEL

BUT MISS!

BRUCE

NO MORE!

KIDS

1, 2, 3, 4

1, 2, 3, 4

1, 2, 3, 4

1, 2, 3, 4

ERIC

PLEASE, MISS! PLEASE!

TRUNCHBULL

ONCE WE'VE EXERCISED THESE DEMONS
THEY SHALL BE TOO POOPED FOR SCHEMING
SOME DOUBLE-TIME DISCIPLINE
SHOULD STOP THE ROT FROM SETTING IN.

Alright, let's step it up, double time!

DISCIPLINE, DISCIPLINE
FOR CHILDREN WHO AREN'T LISTENING
FOR MIDGETS WHO ARE FIDGETING

(TRUNCBULL)

AND WHISPERING IN HISTORY
THEIR CHATTERING AND CHITTERING
THEIR NATTERING AND TWITTERING
IS TEMPERED WITH A SMATTERING OF DISCIPLINE.

WE MUST BEGIN INSISTING
ON RIGIDITY AND DISCIPLINE
PERSISTENTLY RESISTING
THIS ANARCHISTIC MISCHIEFIN'
THESE MINUTES YOU ARE FRITTERIN'
ON PANDERING AND PITYING
WHILE LITTLE-UNS LIKE THIS THEY JUST NEED
DISCIPLINE.

THE SIMPERING AND WHIMPERING
THE DRIBBLING AND THE SPITTLING
THE "MISS, I NEED A TISSUE"
IT'S AN ISSUE WE CAN FIX
THERE IS NO MYSTERY TO MASTERING
THE ART OF CLASSROOM MISTRESSING
IT'S DISCIPLINE! DISCIPLINE!

KIDS

DISCIPLINE!

TRUNCBULL

THE SMELL OF REBELLION
THE STENCH OF REVOLT
THE REEK OF PREPUBESCENT PLOTTING
A WHIFF OF RESISTANCE
THE PONG OF DISSENT
THE FUNK OF MORAL FIBRE ROTTING...

IMAGINE A WORLD WITH NO CHILDREN
CLOSE YOUR EYES AND JUST DREAM
IMAGINE (COME ON, TRY IT!)
THE PEACE AND THE QUIET,
A BURBLING STREAM

NOW IMAGINE A WOODS WITH A COTTAGE

(TRUNCHBULL)

AND INSIDE THAT COTTAGE WE FIND
 A DWARF CALLED ZEEK,
 A CARNIVAL FREAK
 WHO CAN FOLD PAPER HATS WITH HIS MIND.
 AND HE SAYS,
 DON'T LET THEM STEAL YOUR HORSES
 DON'T LET THEM TAKE THEM AWAY
 IF YOU FIND YOUR WAY THROUGH
 THEY'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU
 SINGING NEIGH. NEIGH. NEIGH.

ERIC

SHE'S MAD!

TRUNCHBULL

AH-HA! AND THERE. JUST LIKE I SAID
 THE STINKY MAGGOT REARS HIS HEAD
 EVEN THE SQUITTIEST PITEOUS MESS
 CAN HARBOUR SEEDS OF STINKINESS
 HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ANYTHING MORE REPELLENT
 HAVE YOU EVER SMELT ANYTHING WORSE THAN THAT

SMELL OF REBELLION
 THE STENCH OF REVOLT
 THE REEK OF INSUBORDINATION
 A WHIFF OF RESISTANCE
 THE PONG OF DISSENT...
 AND I WILL NOT STOP TIL YOU ARE SQUASHED
 TIL THIS REBELLION IS QUASHED
 TIL GLORIOUS SWEATY DISCIPLINE HAS WASHED
 THIS SICKENING STENCH AWAY.

The KIDS are practically unable to stand. LAVENDER returns with the water, which now has a newt in it. She can't help but tell the audience:

#18a - Newt I

LAVENDER

Look, the newt! Can you see? It's the newt! I've got the Newt, this is the newt!
 Look, I'm gonna put the newt into the Trunchbull's -

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?

#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!

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!!!

#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.

TRUNCBULL

How dare you! You are not fit to be in this school! You ought to be in prison, in the deepest, dankest, darkest prison! I shall have you wheeled out, strapped to a trolley with a muzzle over your mouth!

I shall crush you! I shall pound you, I shall dissect, you madam! I shall strap you to a table and perform experiments on you. All of those disgusting little slugs shall suffer the most appalling indignities because of you — yes, you!

But suddenly everything seems to go quiet, slow motion, almost stopped. MATILDA steps forward to the audience, alone, like stepping out of the scene.

MATILDA

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED, WELL I HAVE, ABOUT HOW WHEN I SAY, SAY "RED", FOR EXAMPLE, THERE'S NO WAY OF KNOWING IF "RED" MEANS THE SAME THING IN YOUR HEAD AS "RED" MEANS IN MY HEAD WHEN SOMEONE SAYS "RED"?

AND HOW IF WE ARE TRAVELLING AT ALMOST THE SPEED OF LIGHT AND WE'RE HOLDING A LIGHT, THAT LIGHT WOULD STILL TRAVEL AWAY FROM US, AT THE FULL SPEED OF LIGHT, WHICH SEEMS RIGHT IN A WAY, BUT I'M TRYING TO SAY

I'M NOT SURE, BUT I WONDER IF INSIDE MY HEAD I'M NOT JUST A BIT DIFFERENT FROM SOME OF MY FRIENDS THESE ANSWERS THAT COME INTO MY MIND UNBIDDEN THESE STORIES DELIVERED TO ME FULLY WRITTEN

AND WHEN EVERYONE SHOUTS LIKE THEY SEEM TO LIKE SHOUTING, THE NOISE IN MY HEAD IS INCREDIBLY LOUD AND I JUST WISH THEY'D STOP, MY DAD AND MY MUM AND THE TELE AND STORIES WOULD STOP JUST FOR ONCE AND, I'M SORRY I'M NOT QUITE EXPLAINING IT RIGHT BUT THIS NOISE BECOMES ANGER, AND THE ANGER IS LIGHT AND THIS BURNING INSIDE ME WOULD USUALLY FADE BUT IT ISN'T TODAY, AND THE HEAT AND THE SHOUTING AND MY HEART IS POUNDING AND MY EYES ARE BURNING AND SUDDENLY, EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING IS

QUIET.

(MATILDA)

LIKE SILENCE BUT NOT REALLY SILENT.
 JUST THAT STILL SORT OF QUIET;
 LIKE THE SOUND OF A PAGE BEING TURNED IN A BOOK,
 OR A PAUSE IN A WALK IN THE WOODS.

QUIET.
 LIKE SILENCE BUT NOT REALLY SILENT.
 JUST THAT NICE KIND OF QUIET;
 LIKE THE SOUND WHEN YOU LIE UPSIDE DOWN IN YOUR BED,
 JUST THE SOUND OF YOUR HEART IN YOUR HEAD.

AND THOUGH THE PEOPLE AROUND ME,
 THEIR MOUTHS ARE STILL MOVING,
 THE WORDS THEY ARE FORMING
 CANNOT REACH ME ANY MORE

AND IT IS QUIET.
 AND I AM WARM.
 LIKE I'VE SAILED INTO THE EYE OF THE STORM.

MATILDA steps back into the scene. Focuses on the glass

(whispering)

Go on. Tip... tip over... tip... tip over!

#19a – Newt III / 2nd Glass Tipping

The scene snaps back into full speed/volume and suddenly the glass throws itself (and the newt) at the TRUNCHBULL. At first she hardly notices, just feeling something a little... but then suddenly she gives a yelp and leaps in the air, grabbing for her posterior.

TRUNCHBULL

... miserable collection of excuses for children, and you, madam, standing there like the squirt of squits, are its beating heart. But I am a match for you and I tell you that there is nothing that I shall not do, no length to which I shall not go, no punishment I shall not inflict, no ear I shall not stretch back, no finger I shall not... what is it?... what is it? Get it off me. Get it off me... it's heading north...

I've got a newt in my knickers.

(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

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.

MISS HONEY

ON THESE WALLS I HANG WONDERFUL PICTURES.
THROUGH THIS WINDOW I CAN WATCH THE SEASONS CHANGE.
BY THIS LAMP I CAN READ AND I,
I AM SET FREE!
AND WHEN IT'S COLD OUTSIDE I FEEL NO FEAR
EVEN IN THE WINTER STORMS
I AM WARMED BY A SMALL BUT STUBBORN FIRE,
AND THERE IS NOWHERE I WOULD RATHER BE.
IT ISN'T MUCH BUT IT IS ENOUGH FOR ME.

FOR THIS IS MY HOUSE.
THIS IS MY HOUSE.
IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT IT IS ENOUGH FOR ME.

THIS IS MY HOUSE.
THIS IS MY HOUSE.
IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT IT IS ENOUGH...

(at same time as ESCAPOLOGIST, below)

AND WHEN IT'S COLD AND BLEAK, I FEEL NO FEAR
EVEN IN THE FIERCEST STORMS
I AM WARMED BY THIS SMALL BUT STUBBORN FIRE,
EVEN WHEN OUTSIDE IT'S FREEZING
I DON'T PAY MUCH HEED
I KNOW THAT EVERYTHING I NEED
IS IN HERE.

ESCAPOLOGIST

(same time as MISS HONEY)

DON'T CRY
PLEASE DON'T CRY, I AM HERE, LITTLE GIRL
PLEASE DON'T CRY, LET ME WIPE AWAY YOUR TEARS,
FORGIVE ME, I DIDN'T MEAN TO DESERT YOU
I KNOW THAT I HURT YOU

MISS HONEY

IT ISN'T MUCH BUT IT IS ENOUGH FOR ME.
IT ISN'T MUCH BUT IT IS ENOUGH FOR ME.

Towards the end of song MISS HONEY wraps a white scarf around Matilda's neck to keep her warm. MATILDA notices it.

#20a - The Trunchbull Revelation

MATILDA

(staring at the scarf)

Miss Honey, is this your father's scarf?

MISS HONEY

Well, yes. My mother gave it to him before she died, you see she was—

MATILDA

An acrobat.

MISS HONEY

Well... well yes, she, she was. How did you...? And my father was—

BOTH

An escapologist.

MISS HONEY

(suddenly standing up)

Matilda, how do you know that!

MATILDA

So... so they were your parents?

MISS HONEY

What? Who? I don't...

MATILDA

The people in my story!

MISS HONEY

What story?

MATILDA

A story! I've been telling a story and I thought I was making it up, but it's real! It's your life! I've seen your life!

MISS HONEY

You've seen... my life?

MATILDA

She did him in! Let's go to the police!

MISS HONEY

What? No, no, we can't, we have no evidence!

MATILDA

But you could just tell them! Tell them she did it!

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.

TRUNCBULL

What?

ERIC

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

TRUNCBULL

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.

TRUNCBULL

You're cheating!

MISS HONEY

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

TRUNCBULL

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.

TRUNCBULL

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!

TRUNCBULL

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

LAVENDER

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

LAVENDER hesitates.

TRUNCBULL

Oh dear. Oh deary, deary, dear—

LAVENDER

K?

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

Whaaaat...?

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—

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,

#20c – 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...?

NIGEL

It's moving!

The chalk writes

ERIC

It's moving! Look, it's writing something.

TRUNCHBULL

What the devil is this? Who, who...?

NIGEL

No-one! No-one's doing anything!

ERIC

(reading)

'Agatha'

AMANDA

(reading)

'Agatha, this is... Magnus!'

TRUNCHBULL

No! It... it can't be! It can't be!

ALL KIDS

(reading)

'Give my Jenny back her house...

TRUNCHBULL

Stop this! Stop this, do you hear?

ALL KIDS

(reading)

...Then LEAVE'

TRUNCHBULL

It can't be... It can't be Magnus!

EVERYONE turns to the TRUNCHBULL, who is now gasping for air.

ALL KIDS

(reading)

Or I will get you...

TRUNCHBULL

No, no...

ALL KIDS

(reading)

... like YOU GOT ME!

TRUNCHBULL

NO!

ALL KIDS

(reading)

Run... Run...

ALL KIDS & MISS HONEY

RUN, RUN, RUN, RUN, RUN!!!

The TRUNCHBULL runs screaming from the class. Huge cheer, out of which suddenly BRUCE (who has been quiet for the entire scene) leaps up onto his desk.

#21 – Revolting Children

BRUCE

NEVER AGAIN WILL SHE GET THE BEST OF ME,
NEVER AGAIN WILL SHE TAKE AWAY MY FREEDOM,
AND WE WON'T FORGET THE DAY WE FOUGHT

ALL KIDS

FOR THE RIGHT TO BE A LITTLE BIT NAUGHTY!
NEVER AGAIN

BRUCE

WILL THE CHOKEY DOOR SLAM

KIDS (Not BRUCE)

NEVER AGAIN

BRUCE

WILL I BE BULLIED AND

KIDS (Not BRUCE)

NEVER AGAIN

BRUCE

WILL I DOUBT IT WHEN

ALL KIDS

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A MIRACLE
NEVER AGAIN!

(ALL KIDS)

NEVER AGAIN WILL BE LIVE BEHIND BARS,
NEVER AGAIN NOW THAT WE KNOW WE ARE,
REVOLTING CHILDREN
LIVING IN REVOLTING TIMES.
WE SING REVOLTING SONGS
USING REVOLTING RHYMES.
WE'LL BE REVOLTING CHILDREN
'TIL OUR REVOLTING'S DONE,
AND WE'LL HAVE THE TRUNCHBULL BOLTING,
WE'RE REVOLTING!

WE ARE REVOLTING CHILDREN
LIVING IN REVOLTING TIMES.
WE SING REVOLTING SONGS
USING REVOLTING RHYMES.
WE'LL BE REVOLTING CHILDREN
'TIL OUR REVOLTING'S DONE,
AND WE'LL HAVE THE TRUNCHBULL BOLTING,
WE'RE REVOLTING!

TOMMY

WE WILL BECOME A SCREAMING HORDE!

LAVENDER

TAKE OUT YOUR HOCKEY STICK AND USE IT AS A SWORD!

BRUCE

NEVER AGAIN WILL WE BE IGNORED

HORTENSIA

WE'LL FIND OUT WHERE THE CHALK IS STORED

NIGEL

AND DRAW RUDE PICTURES ON THE BOARD

ALICE

IT'S NOT INSULTING

ALL KIDS

WE'RE REVOLTING!

ALICE, LAVENDER & ERIC

WE CAN S-P-EL HOW WE LIKE!

AMANDA, HORTENSIA, TOMMY, BRUCE, NIGEL
IF ENOUGH OF US ARE WRONG, WRONG IS RIGHT!

ALICE, LAVENDER & ERIC
EVERYONE! N-O-R-T-Y!

AMANDA, HORTENSIA, TOMMY, BRUCE, NIGEL
COS WE'RE A LITTLE BIT NAUGHTY!

ALICE, LAVENDER & ERIC
SO WE GOTTA STAY INSIDE THE LINE,
AMANDA, HORTENSIA, TOMMY, BRUCE, NIGEL
IF WE DISOBEY AT THE SAME TIME,

ALICE, LAVENDER & ERIC
THERE IS NOTHING THAT THE TRUNCHBULL CAN DO

BRUCE
SHE CAN TAKE HER HAMMER AND S-H-U-
(BRUCE covers his mouth before saying a rude word).

BIG & LITTLE KIDS
YOU DIDN'T THINK YOU COULD PUSH US TOO FAR
BUT THERE'S NO GOING BACK NOW WE
R-E-V-O-L-T-I-N-
WE'LL S-I-N-G
U-S-I-N-G
WE'LL BE R-E-V-O-L-T-I-N-G
IT IS 2 L 8 4 U "E" R E-VOLTING!

BRUCE
REVOLTING TIMES
SONGS
RHYMES

WE ARE REVOLTING CHILDREN
LIVING IN REVOLTING TIMES.
WE SING REVOLTING SONGS
USING REVOLTING RHYMES.
WE'LL BE REVOLTING CHILDREN
'TIL OUR REVOLTING'S DONE,
IT IS 2 L 8 4 U

ALL KIDS
WE ARE REVOLTING CHILDREN

LIVING IN REVOLTING TIMES.

BRUCE
NEVER AGAIN WILL SHE GET
THE BEST OF ME

(ALL KIDS)

WE SING REVOLTING SONGS

BRUCE

WHOA, OH, OH—

USING REVOLTING RHYMES.

WE'LL BE REVOLTING CHILDREN

'TIL OUR REVOLTING'S DONE,

DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN

IT IS 2-L-8-4-U

ALL

WE ARE REVOLTING!

#21a – A Few Days Later

The Library.

MATILDA is there looking at the books. MRS PHELPS comes forward, smiling.

MRS PHELPS

A few days later, the acrobat and the escapologist's... daughter received a letter from a solicitor. It said that her parents' will had mysteriously turned up and she was now the owner of the beautiful old house which had up until that moment, been owned by the evil aunt—one Agatha Trunchbull.

She moved in immediately and she was very happy, happier than she had ever been in her entire life.

MRS HONEY comes forward to continue the story.

MISS HONEY

As for Miss Trunchbull... she was never seen again. The Chokeys were immediately destroyed and a new headmistress took over.

MRS PHELPS

And her name was... Miss Honey! And it was often said that it was the best school in all the land.

MISS HONEY

And do you know something else, Matilda was never again able to move things with her eyes. I thought perhaps it was because her mind was being challenged. But she said it was because she no longer had a need for super powers. But sometimes I would look at Matilda, this little girl who had done so much to help others, but who was stuck with parents who were mean and cruel and called her names. And I would feel my blood boil. And I would wish that I could just... do something.

MRS PHELPS

So. This is the end. And I wish so much that I could tell you that the story has a happy ending. I wish so much that I could tell you that Matilda got the love she deserved.

But perhaps the truth is not all stories have happy endings.

SHE begins to go. The end of the story...

Suddenly there is the screech of a car. The WORMWOODS (and RUDOLPHO) run on with suitcases.

#21b - We're Going To Spain

MR WORMWOOD

Don't stand there gawping, we're going to Spain.

MATILDA

Spain? But... why?

MRS WORMWOOD

Because this idiot, this nit, this twitbrain seemed to think it was a good idea to sell a hundred and fifty five old bangers to the Russian Mafia!

MR WORMWOOD

I didn't know they were the flaming Russian Mafia, did I? Come on, boy; we're leaving forever and we're never coming back!

MISS HONEY

Let Matilda stay here with me!

Pause. MR WORMWOOD turns. SHE almost falters but doesn't.

MR WORMWOOD

I beg your pardon.

MISS HONEY

Mr Wormwood, I would love to take Matilda. If she would like to stay with me, that is. I would look after her with love and respect and care and I'd pay for everything. Would... would you like that, Matilda?

MR WORMWOOD

You mean... you mean leave our daughter. Here, with you?

MATILDA

What did you say? Did you call me...

MRS WORMWOOD

They'll be here any minute!

MATILDA

Dad you... you called me your daughter.

Pause. MATILDA steps toward her father...

MRS WORMWOOD

They're here! You idiot, I told you!

MRS PHELPS

Quick hide in the books!

RUDOLPHO

What if they damage my legs? My beautiful legs!

#21c - Arrival Of The Russians

The RUSSIANS turn up, sharp suits, sunglasses, their leader (SERGEI) last, sucking on a lollipop. One of the MEN looks through the Wormwoods stuff, pulls out the suitcase full of cash, looks inside, shows the money to Sergei. SERGEI gives an almost imperceptible nod, turns to Matilda, looks at her and pops the lolly from his mouth.

SERGEI

You are the Wormwood's daughter?

MATILDA

Yes.

SERGEI

Where is your father?

MATILDA

He's... I don't know.

SERGEI

The Wormwood, is a stupid man. And being stupid he assumed I was stupid too. And that is a very, very, stupid—and rude—thing to do.

MATILDA

Yes. But I'm afraid my father is quite rude and very, very stupid.

SERGEI

You know this? At least there is one clever one in the family.

The beefy MEN laugh. SERGEI raises a hand and THEY stop.

(looking at her)

What is your name, little girl?

MATILDA

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!

#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 Pukravie swayvo mere Tsatsa utsa. Da. Priyatno poznakomitsa s takoy oom-noy de-vachkoy.

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

MATILDA

Spaseeba. Mne 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 yazik, pactamu ya budu staratsa izuchat' yevo 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.

#22 – Priyatna 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 voyskazalay 'da'

(I thought you said 'yes').

HENCHMAN 2

Ya toezhah dummel stohon kazal 'da'

(I thought he said 'yes' as well).

SERGEI

Matilda, ya skazal Matilda, stoh tsveyemi sivohnjah
(‘Matilda’, I said ‘Matilda’. What’s the matter with you guys today?)

HENCHMAN 1

izineetshay gaspahdin
(Sorry boss).

HENCHMAN 2

izineetshay
(Sorry.)

HENCHMAN 3

izineetshay
(Sorry).

THEY step back. SERGEI thinks, looks to Matilda.

SERGEI

Your father is very, very, stupid. But he is also very, very, very, very, lucky to have you as his daughter. Although if I happen to be doing business here again and I see him, he will not be so lucky.

HE claps his hands twice, and the RUSSIANS all leave.

MRS WORMWOOD

Quick, let’s get out of here before they change their minds.

MR WORMWOOD

What about the girl? Do you want to stay? Here with Miss Honey?

MATILDA looks at Miss Honey.

MATILDA

Yes! Yes I do!

MR WORMWOOD

And you want to look after her?

MISS HONEY

I do.

#23 – *They Had Found Each Other (Finale)*

MR WORMWOOD

Well... we are a bit short of room, so... Yes.

MATILDA

Thank you!

MISS HONEY

And Matilda leapt into Miss Honey's arms

MATILDA

and hugged her

MISS HONEY

and Miss Honey hugged her back

MRS PHELPS

and they hardly noticed as the Wormwoods

RUDOLPHO

and Rudolpho

MRS PHELPS

as the Wormwoods and Rudolpho sped away into the distance

MISS HONEY

Because they had found each other.

MATILDA

Yes. They had found each other.

The End

#24 - Bows

ALL

WHEN I GROW UP
I WILL BE TALL ENOUGH TO REACH
THE BRANCHES THAT I NEED TO CLIMB
THE TREES YOU GET TO CLIMB WHEN YOU'VE GROWN UP

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'VE GROWN UP

KIDS

AND WHEN I GROW UP
I WILL EAT SWEETS EVERY DAY ON THE WAY TO WORK
AND I WILL GO TO BED LATE EV'RY NIGHT
AND I WILL WAKE UP
WHEN THE SUN COMES UP

(KIDS)

AND I WILL WATCH CARTOONS UNTIL MY EYES GO SQUARE
AND I WON'T CARE COS I'LL BE ALL GROWN UP

WHEN I GROW UP

ADULTS

WHEN I GROW UP

KIDS

EVEN IF YOU'RE LITTLE, YOU CAN DO A LOT
YOU MUSTN'T LET A LITTLE THING LIKE LITTLE STOP YOU

ADULTS

WHEN I GROW UP

KIDS

IF YOU SIT AROUND AND LET THEM GET ON TOP
YOU WON'T CHANGE A THING
JUST BECAUSE YOU FIND THAT LIFE'S NOT FAIR
IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU JUST HAVE TO GRIN AND BEAR IT
IF YOU ALWAYS TAKE IT ON THE CHIN AND WEAR IT
YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE SAYING YOU THINK THAT IT'S O-K
AND THAT'S NOT RIGHT
AND IF IT'S NOT RIGHT

KIDS & ADULTS

YOU HAVE TO PUT IT RIGHT
BUT NOBODY ELSE IS GONNA PUT IT RIGHT FOR ME
NOBODY BUT ME IS GONNA CHANGE MY STORT

FULL COMPANY

SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO BE A LITTLE BIT...

TRUNCHBULL

MAGGOTS...

FULL COMPANY

NAUGHTY!

APPENDIX

The TRUNCBULL'S unheard monologue, which goes under #19 – 'Quiet'

TRUNCBULL

How dare you! You are not fit to be in this school! You ought to be in prison, in the deepest, dankest, darkest prison! I shall have you wheeled out, strapped to a trolley with a muzzle over your mouth!

I shall crush you! I shall pound you, I shall dissect, you madam! I shall strap you to a table and perform experiments on you.

(chasing the kids)

All of these disgusting little slugs shall suffer the most appalling indignities because of you – yes, you!

I shall feed you to the termites, and then I shall smash the termites into tiny fragments, and then I shall grind the tiny fragments into dust, and then I shall take that dust, and feed it to the bloodworms, and the bloodworms I shall feed to the birds, and the birds I shall release into the air and then shoot down with my twelve-bore shotgun, and so on and so on, ad infinatum, madam! Ad infinatum!

Your father is a crook, and so are you! Last night I was driving home in that monstrosity he sold me and the engine fell, out. What do you say to that? You can say nothing and there is nothing you can say, because you are genetically predisposed to evil, and you must be destroyed before you can be allowed to grow one centimeter taller than you currently are, do you hear? Vomit! Puke! Snot-stain! Are you listening?

I shall rip the rebellion out of this class and devour it whole! I shall hang each and every one of you upside-down by your ankles until all of your bodily liquids drain out through your nose and into jars! Yes, jars! Which I shall then send to your parents with your school reports upon which I shall write "could do better!"

Miss Honey has allowed her weakness and filth to permeate through this miserable collection of excuses for children, and you, Madam, standing there before me like the squirt of squirts are its beating heart! You are the axis of evil! You are the nexus of necrosis! You are a rotting lump of pure wrong! You are the dark heart of all that is unholy in this land, a black hole of wrong-headedness from which no light, no strength, no discipline can escape;

but I am a match for you, madam. In me you have met the avenger, the spirit of all that is right!

And I tell you that there is nothing I shall not do, no length to which I shall not go, no punishment I shall not inflict, no ear I shall not stretch,

(TRUNCHBULL)

no fingers I shall not snap back to defeat you!

Yes, I defeat you in exultation, do you hear? Are you listening?

Are you listening, madam?