

The text of the 2016 Philippa Pearce Lecture
Given by ALLAN AHLBERG on Thursday September 1st, 2016
Mary Allan Building, Homerton College, Cambridge.

JOHN WAYNE AND SIBELIUS

or

THE TRAIN HAS RAIN IN IT

— A Rigmarole —

in seven

or possibly eleven parts

with readings from

Marilynne Robinson

William Maxwell

William Strunk, Jr.

The Guardian newspaper

and

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary

[some singing]

ALLAN AHLBERG gave the 2016 Pearce lecture on September 1st in the Mary Allan Building, Homerton College, Cambridge. This document is a reproduction of Allan's typed and annotated lecture notes from the event, along with a sprinkling of the cuttings, letters and drawing which inspired and illustrated this extraordinary lecture.

It is hard to think of any other living author whose work has made such a contribution to the cultural life of young children. He is the one who finds the stories behind the nursery rhymes and puts the rhymes into fairy stories. The cataloger of babyhood and the bard of the classroom, Allan Ahlberg has been a gentle presence in young lives for over five decades. But as the mind behind *Burglar Bill*, Allan is also the master of mischief. And so his Pearce lecture proved him to be. By turns, funny, poignant and thought-provoking, Allan never let the audience settle into simply being lectured. From his seat by the sunflowers, he led us through a series of vignettes, snapshots, meditations.

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- 1. Hello!
- 2. Hang down
- 3. glasses on
- 4. look off
- 5. off the go ... other upon a time

(The Pearce Lecture Draft 10)

JOHN WAYNE AND SIBELIUS

1. In the early nineteen-nineties Janet was interviewed by Ken and Sylvia Marantz for a book they were putting together called Artists of the Page - lots of interviews with illustrators. Right at the end they asked this question: 'Is there anything else you'd like to say about your work?' And Janet replied: 'Only that we love doing it. But it is a bit strange. The other day we found ourselves having a ludicrous conversation about talking biscuits. It was in connection with a book we're working on. But it's nice that it does end up, we hope, in something worth having.'

Read + MS
for 2 adults!

2. Something worth having - this could have been the title of my talk today. Incidentally, for any PhD students in the audience, the talking biscuits, or rather the talking biscuit, is to be found in The Jolly Christmas Postman in a small book inside the big book entitled The Toytown Christmas Annual and on the back the following blurb:

Miles of Smiles for little people, clockwork people, small dressed-up animals, elves and pixies, teddies, dolls, and talking biscuits. This particular talking biscuit, as I recall, was the gingerbread boy. Actually, come to think of it, I do happen to have the little book with me here now. (produce) complete, I can report, with its own little price and its own little baa code ... on a sheep.

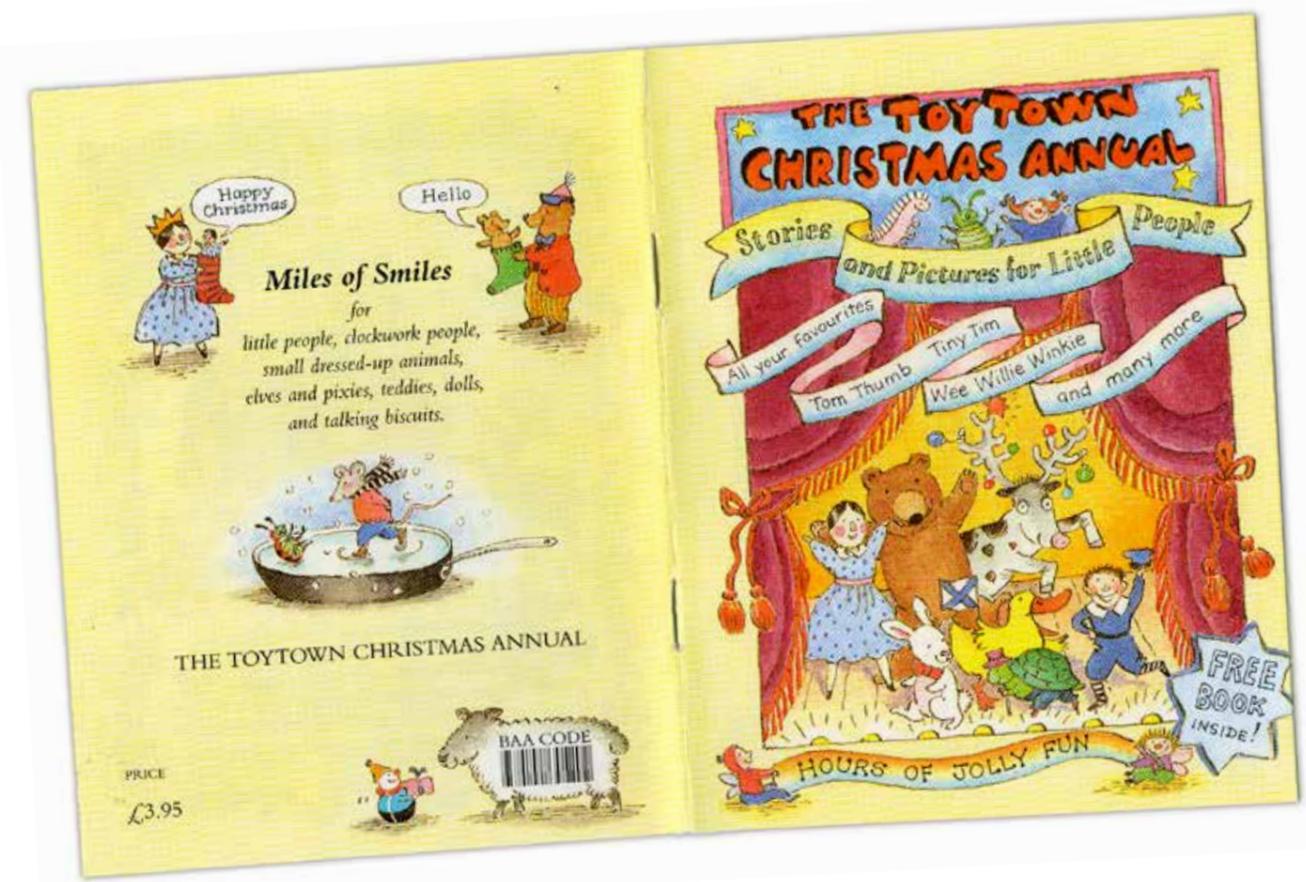
Read + MS
look work!

3. I have chosen to begin with Janet because, of course, without her there wouldn't have been any books, I wouldn't be here, you might be here with somebody else, but not me. She got the whole thing started when one day, fed up with illustrating non-fiction books about how to make things out of yoghurt pots, she commissioned me to write her a story. She drew me in, as it were, and here I am.

Let me offer you another quote - I like a good quote - this time from a book by the film director John Boorman. He made a film called The Emerald Forest and wrote a book about it called Money into Light - there's another good title - Money into Light. Anyway, John Boorman had this to say: 'Of course, one must be totally serious about film making and at the same time not take it seriously at all. It is hard to know how to get the balance right.' Well, in my line of work I'd say Amen to that. If short books of light comedy for little children are not taken seriously - if you don't put your heart and soul into them - why bother? There again I do sometimes feel myself to be a kind of candyfloss maker. My candyfloss, miraculously I hope, is full of fibre and no E-numbers. Or I'm like a man - an oldish man - striving might and mane ... to blow soap bubbles.

MS or old notes?
look!

- 1. + Eriv! PLY in ERAM.
- 2. 1/2 repeat SLOW MAN ✓



Boorman
Money into Light
(The Emerald Forest)
Of course, one must be totally serious about film making and at the same time not take it seriously at all. It is hard to know how to get the balance right.
Amen! lots of fibre. No E numbers.
1. If not total = good.
2. on the Mr had - what are you up to?
Candy floss maker.
my hat a man -> soap bubbles!

4. You must excuse me just now - I ~~nearly forgot~~ - I ^{need} ought to read you ~~this~~. (Search in pockets and pull out The Slow Man). It's a poem that my voice coach has urged me to make use of - I have a tendency to gabble, become incoherent even, on occasions like this. He recommends this as an antidote:

Read it
or
Pocket it

The Slow Man

The phone rings
But never long enough
For the Slow Man.

By the time
The set's switched on
His favourite programme's over.

His tea grows cold
From cup to lip,
His soup evaporates.

He laughs, eventually,
At jokes long since
Gone out of fashion.

Sell-by dates
And limited special offers
Defeat him.

He comes home
With yesterday's paper
And reads it ... tomorrow.

That's better. I feel decidedly slower. ✓ Helps I may need to read it * 2.

Pocket it

5. There is just one other little thing I'd like to read/a tiny yellowed cutting that I've carried around with me for years and made use of at times like this, places like this. It helps me to guard against feelings of self-importance: me up here, you down there. (produce cutting) ✓
It's a letter to the Guardian from Mr Len Clay, Mr Len Clay of Fiskerton, Newark and it places my self-importance, if I've got it, in a larger context. Keeps me grounded - brings me down to earth.

From Mr Len Clay:

THE SLOW MAN

The phone rings
But never long enough
For the Slow Man.

By the time
The set's switched on
His favourite programme's over.

His tea grows cold
From cup to lip
His soup evaporates.

He laughs, eventually,
At jokes long since
Gone out of fashion.

Sell-by dates
And limited special offers
Defeat him.

He comes home
With yesterday's paper
And reads it ... tomorrow.

Sir,

So the Hubble Telescope reveals one thousand five hundred galaxies, each containing up to one hundred billion stars all streaming away from Earth at nineteen thousand miles per second (sixty-eight million, four hundred thousand miles an hour). All I can say is, thank goodness they are not heading this way.

Yours faithfully,
Len Clay

Yes, Len Clay, the aptly named Mr Len Clay. Thank you, Mr Clay.

IMPROVE

By the way ^{having thanked you all for a heading.}

6. Oh, while I remember, I almost forgot to thank Louise for her kind opening remarks. Travelling up here today by train (no rain!) I did speculate a little about the audience I would encounter - and what they would or wouldn't know about me and my books and Janet's books. After all, the tickets are free, aren't they? - people could wander in off the street to get warm, or cool, or out of the rain and have no idea what was going on and, of course, since I've promised a rigmarole, it's highly likely that if I succeed, none of you will know what's going on. Anyway, thinking about this suggests to me that I should offer you a testimonial. From Mia, with love from Mia, actually. Mia is probably about six, I would guess, seven perhaps, five maybe, but as you'll see, she knows a thing or two.

Letter

Here's her letter (produce):

Dear Mr Ahlberg,

I love all the books that you make. I really love all of them and they are so good, I love them all. (23)

Love from Mia.

Louise did her best!

There you are, that's a testimonial, isn't it? I love all the books that you make. I really love all of them and they are so good, I love them all - and now, having opened the door to children's letters. (produce) Here are some more.

+ Letters

Letter from Daniel (Bogota):

Dear Allan Ahlberg,

Thank you for the book you sent us. I really liked the book. One of the best poems is "Please Mrs Butler". Could you call me at my house? My telephone number is 3217727. I Please Mrs Butler. Could you call me at my house? My telephone number is 3217727. I

POCKET 1

1. HERE WE GO ^{great MIBI in a poem book!}

2. A LITTLE YELLOWEN CUTTING.

3. CARRY ON ^(10,000,000) YOURS FAITHFULLY, LYNDON PEGINGTON Baildon, West Yorkshire 17 January

4. QUARTER OF TEN

5. LETTUCE

6. SET DOWN

not the Weary is wic Chechens they are a mon territo and religio deserving their own st are a nation most horriar the Russiar wiped out and encou their land t women an to a burni "federatio scious de remain pat the Chec sen to be "federatio The coi

From Mr Len Clay
Sir: So, the Hubble telescope reveals 1,500 galaxies, each containing up to 100 billion stars, all streaming away from Earth at 19,000 miles per second (68,400,000 miles an hour). All I can say is, thank goodness they are not heading this way!
Yours faithfully,
LEN CLAY
Fiskerton, Newark

July '02

Dear Boys and Girls (N should that be Girls & Boys?) Thank you for letting me see your lovely Jolly Postman Books - they are all - ace! fantastic!

— also very good.

It was so hard to choose the winners - they are all winners! But anyway, I did it.

Extra congratulations to: Sam
+ Airon
+ Briny
+ Jessica

Very well done - EVERYBODY!
600 million half pints each!
Plus 14 thousand gold stars,
A three-piece suite,
A fridge
A year's supply of CAT FOOD
And a toyota 4-wheel drive!
(Plus) - my very very best wishes
Allan Ahlberg

Dear Mr. Ahlberg,
I Love all The Books that you Make I really Love all of them and they are so good I Love them all when you start writing? LOVE FROM MI

The JOLLY POSTMAN



Dear Allan Ahlberg,
Thank you for the book that you sent us. I really liked the book. One of the best poems is "Please Mrs Butler". Could you call me at my house? My telephone number is: 3217227. I really like your books. Do you have sons? I think if you had sons they should like to write books. Which is your favourite book of all that you have written? I wish you were here in Colombia. I hope you like the photo of the class.

From Daniel.



Dear Mr. Ahlberg,
January 10, 2005

Hi my name is Morgan Blane Schilling. I'm in third grade. I'm not a good writer or a good reader. I'm glad you write easy books. I have blue eyes and brown hair. I have a dog named Honey and a sister. I know a lot of things about you like you have blue eyes and a small mouth. I know that you have a child named Jessica. I know you have a cat and your wife was your illustrator. I know you like running and swimming. I know you wrote thirty seven books. Do you have any more pets and could you tell me what kind? How long do you run? What is your oldest pet? Did you go to writing school? Do you like eating food a lot, like I do?

Sincerely,
Your reader,
Morgan

really like your books. Do you have sons? I think if you had sons they should like to write books.

Letter from Morgan (USA - too much American, sorry about that):

Hi, my name is Morgan Blane Schilling. I'm in third-grade. I'm not a good writer or a good reader. I'm glad you write easy books. I have blue eyes and brown hair. I have a dog named Honey and a sister.

Letter from Nikita:

Dear Mr Ahlberg,

I am writing to tell you how much I like your books and poems. My best book is Please Mrs Butler and Slow Dog Falling. I like the bit in Please Mrs Butler when the girl keeps saying 'Please Mrs Butler, this boy Derek Drew keeps copying my work, Miss. What shall I do? I wonder what your favourite author is. My favourite author is Dick King-Smith ... and I like yours too.

At this point, I have a confession to make. In announcing my intention to deliver this talk, I did promise you a rigmarole. Well, I'm sorry to report that this isn't it - because while it does comply with parts of the Shorter Oxford (sorry Cambridge) definition - a succession of incoherent statements - a rambling discourse - it's not really rigmarolish enough. I had hopes of constructing an intricate - yes, that's the point, intricate - tangle of ideas and bits and pieces, etc. Unfortunately, the thing I ended up with a few days ago was such a preposterous tangle, such a thicket of language, such a maze - that even I, its author, got lost in it.

If ever you needed a thicket of words, the Shorter Oxford Dictionary is the place to apply. Look at this lovely word (produce page) that I found on the same page that I found rigmarole: the word rimple. Bet you don't know what a rimple is. Rimple: a wrinkle, a ripple - see also rumple.

I did also, by the way, look up the word lecture - very early on when I realised that whatever it is that I might be able to do, it would never be a lecture (produce)-lecture: the action of reading, also that which is read - the action of reading aloud - a discourse before an audience upon a given subject for the purpose of instruction. Well, of course, at that point I realised my goose was cooked. No lecture for me - it was a rigmarole or bust. Incidentally, the definition of the verb lecture has this to say: to deliver a lecture, to admonish, rebuke, reprimand. And I did toy a little with that, of course.

With his sense we can hope that that must be no to strong
+ Chris Stephenson + join in / hand it off before!

RIGHT OF WAY 1833
or enforcement of some law, rule, etc. late ME. 3. Of weather or climate: severity; extremity or excess of cold; violence (of storms) 1848. b. Extreme distress or hardship 1769. 4. Strictness of discipline, etc.; austerity of life; an instance of this 1440. b. Puritanic strictness; rigorism; tan in exactitude 1565.
1. If they have tempered r. with lenity of the game LAMER. Phr. The (. . .) r. of the line. 3. From regions of Arctie r. 1876. b. The utmost r. of famine 1769. 4. The r. of the monastic diet to recover HICHLANDS. 5. The term philosophy. when employed in propriety and r. 1836.
H. I. = RIGOR 1. 1541. 12. Of material objects: Stiffness, hardness - 1700.
2. The rigors. Did first the r. of their kind expel. And supplid into softness as they fell DEYDEN.
Ri-g-out. collog. 1823. [f. RISE v.] An outfit; a suit of clothes; a costume.
Rig-veda (rig, v-dá). 1776. [skr. ríghveda, f. rígh praise + véda VEDA.] The principal of the Vedas or sacred books of the Hindus.
Rile (rill), v. Chiefly U.S. and collog. 1825. 1. trans. To make (a liquid) thick or turbid by stirring up the sediment; to make muddy 1825. 2. To excite, disturb; to vex, annoy, angry 1844.
2. b. The little fellow riled up at this 1863. Hence Riled ppl.
Rille (rill), sb. 1538. [prob. of L.Du. origin; cf. L.G. rille, Du. EPRIS, ríl (whence G. rille), stream; a brook, runnel, rivulet. 1. A small narrow trench; a drill. Now dial. 1668. 3. 1. Shallow rills run trickling through the grass in a small stream. 2. trans. a. To form by flowing. b. To utter in liquid notes. 1845. 13. To make drills in a garden bed. RYLAND. 1. Time's sand-dry streamlet through its glassy strait Rilled rustles 1845.
Rille (rill), 1865. [- G. rille; see HILL sb.] A str. One of the long narrow trenches or valleys observed on the surface of the Moon.
Rind (raind), sb. 1657. ME. 1. (OFR) rime (rimin), sb. 1. Rhythmus RHYTHMUS (used spec. of accentual verse which was used rhymed; for L. rhythmus RHYTHMUS).
About 1560 rime (ryme) was altered on classical models to rhyne, rhymer, rhymer. Soon after 1600, prob. from a desire to distinguish between 'rime' and 'rhythm', the intermediate forms 'rime' and 'rhythim' were used. 'Rime' finally became the standard form (see RHYME sb.). From about 1870 the use of rime has been considerably revived.
1. = RHYME sb. 12. = RHYTHM sb. 1. 1. -1677. 1. Much ado v. ll. 37. Besute making beautiful old r. In praise of Ladies dead, and loudly Knights SHAKS. The Anglo-Saxon poets, generally used rhyme without r. 1774. The R. of the Ancyent Marlinere COLLEIDGE.
Comb.: r.-letter, the distinctive initial letter in a line of alliterative verse. Hence Rime-less a. line of alliterative verse. Rime-taster.
Rime (rimin), sb. 1. (OE. rime = (M)Du. rijn, ON. rrim.) Hoar-frost; frozen mist. Also dial. a chill mist or fog.
Moonlight splendor of interest r. With which frost paints the pines in winter time SHELLEY. 2. rime, the r. of age LONGF. Hence Rime v. 1. trans. To cover with hoar-frost. Rime v. 2. Rime (rimin), v. 1. ME. [- OFR. rimer, f. rime RIME sb. 1. For the spelling see RIME sb. 1.] 1. Infr. To make rhymes or verses; to compose rhyming verse; to versify on, upon, Cf. RHYME v. 1. 2. trans. To recount or celebrate in verse or rhyme; to turn into, or compose (a lib. rhyming verse ME. b. To create (a lib. rhyme 1867. 3. To bring by rhyming 1584. 4. Infr. To form a rhyme. Also fig. to agree. 1450. b. To have rhyming endings 1660. 5. To use rhyme 1602.
1. How vildely doth this Cynicke r. SHAKS. 2. He rime'd history, ballads and legends 1867. 3. These fellows. that can ryme themselves into Ladies favours SHAKS. 5. Hand. III. ll. 296. Hence Rimer sb. 1. Rime-frost. ME. [f. RIME sb. 1. + FROST sb. 1. -1626. Rimer sb. 1. -1626. Rimer (roi-maz), sb. 1. 1815. = REAMER. Rimoso (roi-moz), rímuz sb. a. 1726. [- L. rimosus, f. RIMA; see -ose.] Full of, or having, fissures or chinks. Chiefly Bot. So Rimosous a. 1709.
Rimple (ri-mpl'), sb. 1440. Now dial. [corrupt. In sense to (M)Du. and (M)LL. rimpel. See also RUMPLE sb. 1. A wrinkle. 2. A ripple 1877. Hence Rimple v. trans. To wrinkle, pucker; to ripple; Rimpled a. (now dial. or U.S.), wrinkled, pucker'd; rippled.
Rind (raind), sb. 1. (OE. rind, rinde, corresp. with variation, to OS. rinda, MDu. rinde, rinde, runde (Du. run), OHG. rinda, rinda

LEDGEMENT

-1765. +Also fig. 6. An admonition, esp. by way of reproof. Phr. To read (a person) a l. 1600.
4. The Common Law School, where the Vigerian Professor reads his Lectures 1827. C. The l. founded by the late rev. and pious John Hampton M.A. 1780. 6. Our young bridegroom receiv'd a terrible l. 1732.
Lecture, v. 1590. [f. LECTURE sb.] 1. Infr. To deliver a lecture or lectures. 2. trans. To deliver lectures to or before (an audience) 1681. 3. To admonish, rebuke, reprimand 1706.
Lecturer, 1570. [f. LECTURE v. + -ER.] 1. = LECTOR 1. -1797. 2. An assistant preacher in the Church of England, who delivers afternoon or evening lectures 1583. 3. One who gives a lecture or lectures; spec. one appointed to deliver a course of lectures in a university or college, esp. as subordinate to a professor 1615. Hence Lecturership 1691.
Lectureship, 1634. [f. LECTURE sb. (sense 4.) + -SHIP; commonly used in place of the more regular lectureship.] The office of a lecturer.
Lecturn, see LECTURE.
Lecyth (le-sith), 1846. [- mod. L. Lecythis, deduced from Lecythidaceae; see -ITH.] Bot. A plant of the order Lecythidaceae (typical genus Lecythis). So Lecythidaceae (typical genus Lecythis). So Lecythidaceae 1871. 1857. [- Gr. λέκυθος.] Gr. Lecythidaceae a vase or flask with a narrow neck. Hence Lecythidaceae, resembling a l.
Led (led), ppl. a. 1563. [pa. ppl. of LEAD v.] In various uses (see the vb.).
Phrases. Led horse, a spare horse, led by an attendant or groom; also a sumpter-horse. L. capelle, a hange-on, dependent, parasite.
Ledde, Obs. [repp. OE. leod nation, people, hode, hoda men, people (= G. leude, leud man.) A people, nation; persons collectively; (one's own) people; a man -1650.
Ledden, Obs. exc. dial. [OE. ledde, repp. a Celtic or early Rom. pronunc. of L. Latinum Latin, confused with heda language, f. hode people.] 1. Latin. Only OE. 12. The language of a nation, etc.; a 'tongue' -ME. 13. Form of speech; way of speaking -1696. 14. poet. Applied to the 'language' of birds -1612.
Ledge (ledj), sb. [perh. f. ME. ledge (ledjo) LAY v. 1. A transverse bar or strip of wood, etc. fixed upon a door, gate, piece of furniture or the like. Now dial. and techn. b. Nauf, a name for the small pieces of timber placed athwartships, under the decks of a ship, in the intervals between the beams ME. c. Arch. a small moulding; a string-course 1828. 12. A raised edging running along the extremity of a board or the like along the top of some projection in the vertical face of a wall, etc. 1558. b. A shelf-like projection on the side of a rock or mountain 1732. c. Fortif. = BURN 1729. 4. A ridge of rocks, esp. such as are near the shore beneath the surface of the sea; the range of hills; a ridge of earth 1555. 5. A course or layer (WOTTON); a stratum of metal-bearing rock; a quartz-vein 1847. 6. attrib. L.-door = ledged door 1823.
7. a. We cling to the crannies and ledges of the rock STRAYDEN. 4. Three of the ships on invisible ledges the South winds draw DOWNER. Hence Ledged ppl. a. having or furnished with a ledge; as, ledged door, one in which vertical boards are held together by three horizontal ledges.
Ledger, v. 1. Obs. exc. dial. ME. Also 'ledge, etc. Aphet. f. ledge, ledge ALLERT v. 1. Say 'tis no matter sit, what he luges in Latine SHAKS.
Ledger, v. 1. rare. 1598. [f. LEDGE sb.] 1. Infr. To form a ledge. 2. trans. To furnish with a ledge; to form as a ledge 1599.
Ledgement, ledgment (le-djment), Arch. ME. [pp. f. LEDGE sb. + -MENT.] 1. A string-course or horizontal suit of mouldings, such as the base-mouldings, etc., of a building. 2. The development of a surface, or the surface of a body stretched out on a plane, so that the dimensions of the different sides may be easily ascertained 1842.

1

How can he!

With his sense we can hope that that must be no to strong

+ Chris Stephenson + join in / hand it off before!

or whether who has provided + ledges

If I might test your patience - I recently had reason to check out the word flabbergasted - and came upon - the same page - Shorter Oxford - the splendid multi-purpose word - fizgig (produce).

plus minus

10. So - no rigmarole - more a series of stepping-stones maybe. There again, even a failed rigmarole - a half-rigmarole could benefit from some kind of road map - so here, I hope, is THE PLAN. A useful guide to what is coming, or what is probably likely to be coming, I will tell you now what I'm going to talk about and then I'll talk about it and then I'll stop. For a variety of reasons this may well be my last talk. In the course of it, I'm hoping to have things to say about children and children's books and play and playfulness. This is probably the central theme, the main thread - playfulness - plus also pandas, Don Bradman, home-made books (if I remember), grave digging ... and one other thing - what was it? Where am I?

pocket

11. (Search in pockets) Oh yes, one other thing, what was it? Yes, the mystery of the universe.

12. Well, although this is still, if I'm being completely honest, a bit of a rigmarole - still some residual rigamarolity present, as it were - the piece will have a beginning - had you noticed? - a middle and an end - actually, it will probably have three or four beginnings, a multitude of middles and no end of ends.

or had them by now!

MS & TAKE

13. So let me talk a little about my principle concern, play. First of all, here's another letter from the Guardian about cricket. It's from David Westgate, Hexham, Northumberland:

It was good to see that photo again of Bradman batting at Worcester in 1948. Along with my school friends I was there, aged 11. In mid-morning, as Bradman and Barnes were both more than halfway to their centuries, our headmaster called the whole school together. He told us lessons were suspended and we were to get ourselves to the county ground as fast as we could, or miss history being made. We saw both make their hundreds and the great Don get bowled for 107.

14 Read

Education for children, even tiny children - is, of course, in part necessarily about hard work and the acquisition of skills and understandings - but it's also, or it ought to be, about fun and excitement - and the storing away of memorable events. Years ago, when I was a primary school teacher, I took my class away to stay at a kind of school camp, or residential centre, for a whole week in Snowdonia, a place called Hafod Meurig. Forty children, three teachers; we all stayed and slept in dormitories and so on in a converted old school in the middle of the village. There were residential instructors there, climbing instructors, I seem to remember, with names like Jake and Spider - and the children, of

The Shute or find Nit
FIXATIVE
760
Fixative (fiksativ), 1644. [f. FIX v. + -IVE.]
A. v. Tending to fix.
B. n. A substance used to set or fix colours, charcoal drawings, etc. 1870.
Fixature (fiksatur), 1890. [f. as prec., after curvature, etc.] A gummy preparation for fixing the hair.
A stick of f. for the mustachios 1860.
Fixed (fikst), ppl. a. ME. [f. FIX v. + -ED.] 1. Placed or attached firmly 1577.
b. Her. Of a cross: extending to each side of the shield. 1688. 2. In immaterial sense: firmly attached or implanted. Now rarely of persons: firmly resolved; constant. 1562. 3. Made rigid or immobile 1698. 4. a. Deprived of volatility 1766. b. Not easily volatilised 1641. c. Of acids and oils: that cannot be evaporated or distilled without decomposition 1800. 5. Fast, permanent, as a colour, etc. 1791. 6. Stationary or unchanging in relative position ME. 7. Not fluctuating: definite, permanent 1698. 8. Prepared, put in order 1638.
1. Where the firm or f. ice lies 1694. 2. Fixed idea: an idea unduly dominant in the brain (f. idee fixe). Fixed fact: a well-established fact (U.S.). A man of no fixt Resolution HEARNE. 3. Her eyes were f. and staring W. BLAKE. 4. a. 'Fixed air': black's name for carbonic dioxide (carbonic acid); see AIR sb. 1.2. & Fixed point: a place where a poleman is permanently stationed. Fixed star: star which appears always to occupy the same position in the heavens (f. planet). Fixed capital: see CAPITAL sb. 7. One loves f. Laws, and the other arbitrary Power SIX W. TEMPLE. 8. 'Fixed ammunition': a charge of powder and shot enclosed together in a wrapper or case ready for loading (Knights). Hence: Fixedly adv. Fixedness, the quality or condition of being f.; the quality of being non-volatile.
Fixidity (fiksiditi), Now rare. 1762. [Badly f. FIX v. or FIXED ppl. a., after fluidity.] = FIXITY.
Fixing (fiksin), vbl. sb. 1605. [f. FIX v. + -ING.] 1. The action of FIX v. in various senses: concr. that which fixes. 2. concr. In pl. (orig. U.S.) Apparatus, equipment; trimmings; garnishing 1827. b. = FIX sb. 2. 1874. Comb. I-bath (Photogr.), the bath in which a developed negative or positive is plunged in order to fix it.
*Fixion. 1555. [- med.L. fixio in same sense, f. fixare; see FIX v., -ION.] = FIXATION 2. -1031.
Fixity (fiksit), 1666. [f. FIX v. + -ITY. Later (XVII) partly through Fr. *fixité*.] 1. Orig. spec.: The property of enduring heat without volatilization or loss of weight. 2. gen. The quality or condition of being fixed (see FIXED) 1791.
2. Fixity of feature: the condition of having a permanent feature.
Fixive (fiksv), a. rare. [f. FIX v. + -IVE, after active.] Adapted or tending to fix.
*Fixure (fikjur), 1598. [Altered f. FIXURE, after mixture.] 1. The action of fixing; the process of becoming fixed. 2. Anything fixed, or made firm, stable, or immovable; U.S. in pl. 'fixings' 1812. 3. Last. In pl., 'Things of an accessory character annexed to houses or lands, which become, immediately on annexation, part of the reality itself' (Wharton) 1756. 4. A person or thing permanently established in a particular place or position 1788. 5. Sports, rarely Cosm. An appointment or date for a meet, race, etc.; hence, the meet, race, etc. 1827.
1. The firm f. of thy foote Merry Wives II. 1. 2. There are no fixtures in nature. The universe is fluid and volatile. EMERSON. 4. His father's fixure was f. at his death. MARYASTAY. 5. Fixures of the principal yachting clubs 1860.
Fixure (fikjur), Obs. or arch. See prec. 1603. [- late L. *fixura*, f. *fixere* to FIX; see -URE.] Fixed condition, position, or attitude; fixedness, stability.
Fizgig (fizgig), 1529. [In senses 1-2 the first element may be the breaking wind, or FIZZ v.; the second is GIG sb.; sense 3 is app. = FIZZ only; for sense 4 cf. Sp. *figa* harpoon.] 1. A frivolous madabout woman: = GIG sb. II. 1. 2. A whipping-top 1655. 3. A kind of firework; a squib 1644.
4. A kind of harpoon. Also FISH-ING. 1565.
5. A gimcrack; a crotchet 1822.
Fizz, fiz (fiz), sb. colloq. 1734. [f. next vb.] 1. A hissing sound 1842. 2. A fuss 1734; 'go' 1856. 3. Something that fizzes; esp. champagne 1864.
Fizz, fiz (fiz), v. 1665. [imit.] To make a hissing or sputtering sound; to move with a hissing sound. Hence: Fizzly a., effervescent. Fizzle (fizl), sb. 1596. [f. next vb.] 1. The action of breaking wind quietly; the action of hissing or sputtering. 2. A failure or fiasco 1848.
Fizzle (fizl), v. 1532. [app. f. FIZZ v. (but this is recorded later)] + -LE.] 11. [intr. To break wind quietly] -1739. 2. [intr. To hiss or sputter] 1850. 3. Sp. [chiefly U.S. colloq.] To fall, make a fiasco 1847.
2. The black oil fizzes 1859.
Fjeld (fyeld), 1800. [- Norw. *fjell* = ON. *fjall*; see FELL sb.] An elevated rocky plateau, almost bare.
Fjord, var. of FJORD.
Flabbergast (flabergast), v. colloq. 1772. [FR. an arbitrary formation on FLABBY and ACHIEVE; trans. to put to confusion and embarrassment; to astonish utterly, confound. Hence Flabbergast sb., gasconade (rare).]
Flabby (flabi), a. 1697. [Expressive alt. of flappy (XVI), f. FLAP v. + -Y.] 1. Flaying loose by its own weight, yielding to touch and easily moved or shaken. Flaccid, limp. 2. Weak, wanting 'back-bone'; nerveless 1791. 3. Clammy 1780.
1. His f. Flanks decrease DRYDEN. 2. An indolent f. kind of creature CARLYLE. 3. F. weather 1780.
Hence Flabbily adv. Flabbiness.
Flabell (flabel), 1552. [- L. *flabellum* small fan.] A fan -1681.
Flabellate (flabelit), a. 1819. [f. L. *flabellum* (see prec.) + -ATE.] Bot. and Zool. Fan-shaped.
Flabellation (flabelitjon), 1658. [- Fr. *flabellation* = mod. L. *flabellatio*, f. *flabellatus*, pa. ppl. stem of late L. *flabellare*, f. FLABELLUM; see -ION.] Surg. The action of fanning.
Flabelliform (flabelifom), a. 1777. [f. L. *flabellum* + -FORM.] Fan-like.
Flabellum (flabelom), pl. -la (erron. -ib) 1807. [L.; see FLABELL.] 1. A fan; esp. used of a fan carried in religious ceremonies 1875. 2. Science. A fan-shaped part of anything.
Flabile, a. rare. 1727. [- (later senses of L. *flabilis* airy, f. *flare* blow; see -ILE.)] Of musical instruments: Wind. Also transf.
Flaccid (flakid), a. 1620. [- Fr. *flaccide* or L. *flaccidus*, f. *flaccus* flabby; see -ID.] 1. Wanting in stiffness, hanging or lying loose in wrinkles; limp; flabby; relaxed. Chiefly of flesh. 2. Wanting vigour and energy. limp, feeble 1647.
1. His double chin over his f. whitey-brown shirt collar THACKERAY. 2. A scheme that had left us f. and drain'd TENNYSON. Hence Flaccidly adv., -ness.
Flaccidity (flakiditi), 1676. [f. prec. + -ITY.] 1. The quality or condition of being flaccid. 2. A disease of silkworms (fr. It. *flaccidezza*, fr. *flacherie*) 18...
Flacherie (flaferi), 1885. [Fr.] = FLACCIDITY 2.
Flacian (fla-jian), 1565. [f. Flacius + -AN.]
A. adj. Of or pertaining to Flacius Illyricus, a Protestant divine of the 16th c., who opposed the adiaphorist views of Melancthon.
B. sb. A follower of Flacius Illyricus; an anti-Adiaphorist. Hence Flacianism, the doctrine of the Flacians.
Flacker (flaker), v. Now dial. [ME. *flakere*, prob. repr. an OE. **flacorian*, f. *flacor* (of arrows) flying, f. imit. base **flak*, repr. also in MEG. *clackers* flicker (cf. *flackera*), ON. *flakra*, *flakka* flutter. See FLICKER v.] intr. To flap, flutter, throb. Also trans. To flap (the wings). ME.
I. I used - and then in the SIMONE drink!

The MYSTERY of the UNIVERSE!

Don's party
It was good to see that photo again of Bradman batting at Worcester in 1948 (Obituary, February 27). Along with my school friends I was there, aged 11. In mid-morning, as Bradman and Barnes were both more than half way to their centuries, our headmaster called the whole school together. He told us all lessons were suspended and we were to get ourselves to the County Ground as fast as we could - or miss history being made. We saw both make their hundreds and the great Don get bowled for 107. David Westgate Hexham, Northumberland
Corrections and
In a report headed Drink and

course, loved them. Two memories remain with me: on the final day, the chief instructor stepped out onto a patch of grass in front of the school and challenged the children to fight him. Regrettably, of course, these days what happened next could not have occurred. The children - boys and girls knew instinctively what was up - they circled him. A little bold child made a grab for his arm and was tossed down onto the grass. Another had a go - and another eventually, of course - and joyously really - this brave man disappeared under a suffocating pile of children.

⊖ T /

① E

Read

15.

That was on the last day. On the last night we had a bonfire - and all of us, adults and children, ended up holding hands and dancing, in a long, slow circle, around the fire. At some point, I was startled to find I was holding the hands of children I had never seen before in my entire life. The village children, attracted by the drama and the flames, had snuck in over the low brick wall around the school and joined in under the cover of darkness, or in the twilight.

16.

And now here's a nice piece about play from a different direction, taken from Marilynne Robinson's wonderful book Housekeeping. I promised you Marilynne Robinson, didn't I? Actually, I promised you William Maxwell as well, but it doesn't look like I'm going to be able to fit him in - or William Strunk Junior. No, I can't not include Mr Strunk, if only in honour of his name - I shall playfully squeeze him in.

⊖ T /

Hold up a book.

17.

William Strunk was an American, the author of a little book called The Elements of Style which was later revised and added to by a former pupil of his E.B. White. This is what E.B. White has to say about Professor Strunk:

(viii)

Professor Strunk was a positive man. His book contains rules of grammar phrased as direct orders. In the main I have not tried to soften his commands, or modify his pronouncements, or remove the special objects of his scorn. I have tried, instead, to preserve the flavour of his discontent while slightly enlarging the scope of the discussion. The reader will soon discover that these rules and principles are in the form of sharp commands, Sergeant Strunk snapping orders to his platoon: Do not join independent clauses by a comma. (Rule 5) - Do not break sentences in two. (Rule 6) - Use the active voice. (Rule 10) - Omit needless words. (Rule 13)

ms

Read this.

18.

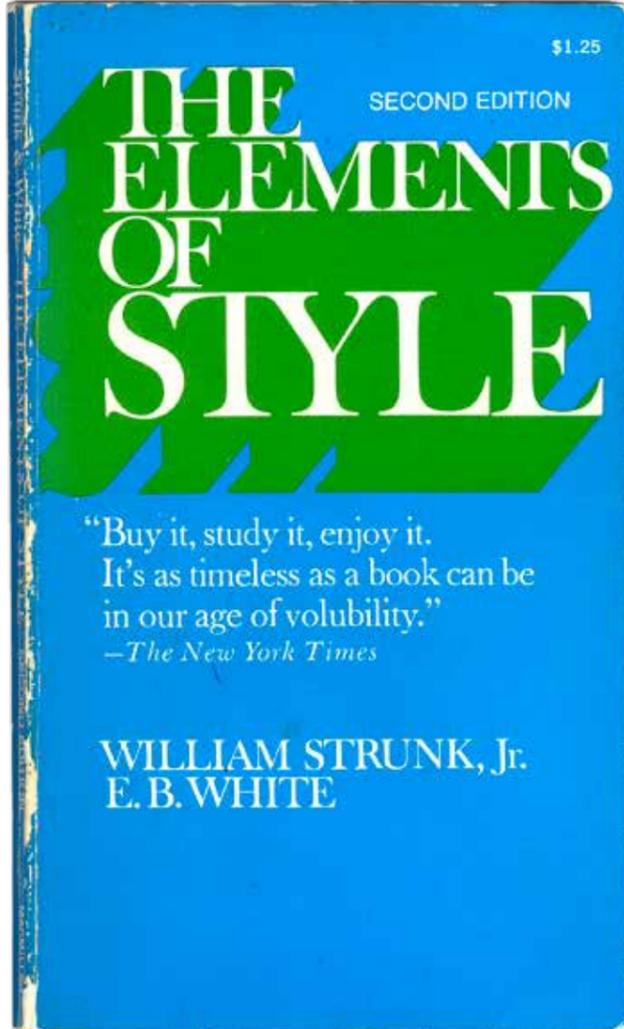
William Strunk - of all William Strunk's rules my favourite is Rule number 7: a participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence must refer to the grammatical subject.

⊖ T /

ms

(p8)

Sentences violating Rule 7 are often ludicrous:



Being in a dilapidated condition, I was able to buy the house very cheap.
Wondering irresolutely what to do next, the clock struck twelve.
As a mother of five with another on the way, my ironing board is always up.

M.S. P. 9 not spoken to in call!

19. Where was I? Oh yes, Marilynne Robinson and Housekeeping. What a GOOD book. Anyway, here Marilynne Robinson has two girls, Ruth and Lucille, playing with dolls in a garden - 1950s?

at some Book p 77

Sylvia liked to eat supper in the dark. This meant that in summer we were seldom sent to bed before 10 or 11 o'clock, a freedom to which we never became accustomed. We spent days on our knees in the garden, digging caves and secret passages with kitchen spoons for our dolls, mine a defrocked bride with a balding skull and Lucille's a filthy and eyeless Rose Red. Long after we knew we were too old for dolls, we played out intricate, urgent dramas of entrapment and miraculous escape. When the evenings came they were chill because the mountains cast such long shadows over the land and over the lake. There the wind would be, quenching the warmth out of the air before the light was gone, raising the hairs on our arms and necks with its smell of frost and water and deep shade.

... intricate urgent dramas of entrapment and miraculous escape - I love that. Marilynne Robinson's perception is excellent and complete. It requires no gloss or comment from me - it is sufficient. OMIT NEEDLESS WORDS!

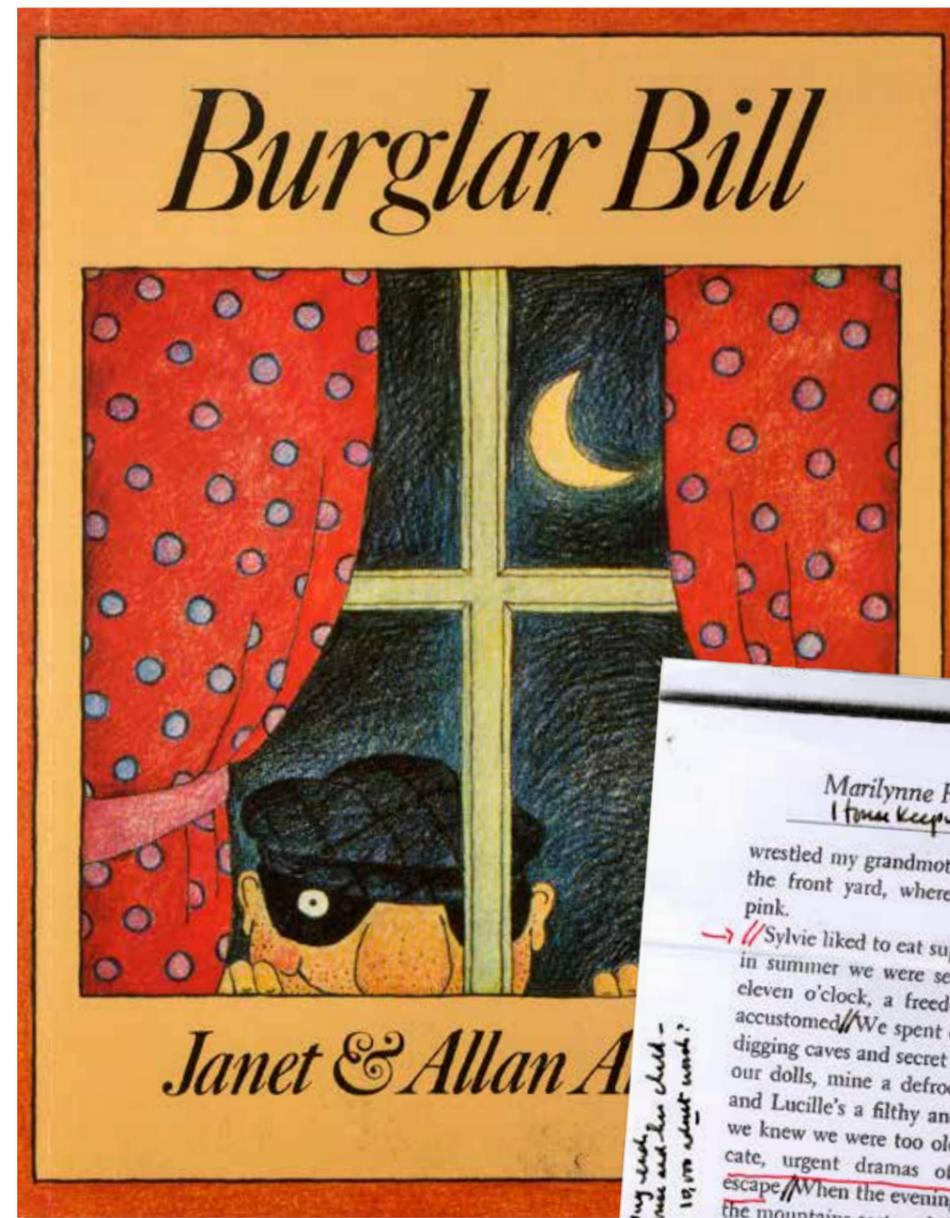
20
1/2 read!

Now then, what next? Two things - I must reveal to you the contents of this bag - and speak up in favour of home-made books.

Over the years - I spoke of this earlier, I ^{have} received lots of letters from children - but also quite a few from their parents. Parents send me manuscripts of stories they have made up and told to their own children, and the children it turns out love these stories ... and do I have any advice about how to get them published. Well, sadly, the stories are rarely publishable, but for the audience for whom they were made, I can absolutely believe that they WERE loved.

Home-made books - cut and pasted - from magazines, catalogues, comics - with added captions dictated perhaps by the child - or stories, as Jessica used to say, out of your mouth, made up on the spot - are like home cooking. Yes, shop-bought cake is one thing, home-baked, still warm from the oven, is quite another.

home. Here's an example. Burglar Bill lives by himself in a tall house full of stolen property ... Burglar Bill came to life, moved in, took up residence in a reception class of infants in a school in Leicestershire in the 1970s. Their teacher was off for a term, I was the deputy



Marilynne Robinson
Housekeeping
Ruth & Lucille
7

wrestled my grandmother's plum-colored davenport into the front yard, where it remained until it weathered pink.

→ // Sylvie liked to eat supper in the dark. This meant that in summer we were seldom sent to bed before ten or eleven o'clock, a freedom to which we never became accustomed. We spent days on our knees in the garden, digging caves and secret passages with kitchen spoons for our dolls, mine a defrocked bride with a balding skull and Lucille's a filthy and eyeless Rose Red. Long after we knew we were too old for dolls, we played out intricate, urgent dramas of entrapment and miraculous escape. When the evenings came they were chill because the mountains cast such long shadows over the land and over the lake. There the wind would be, quenching the warmth out of the air before the light was gone, raising the hairs on our arms and necks with its smell of frost and water and deep shade. // ←

Then we would take our dolls inside and play on the floor in the circle of chairs and couches, by the refracted, lunar light of the vacant sky, while darkness began to fill the room, to lift the ice-blue doilies from the sodden sleeves of chairs. Just when the windows went stark blue Sylvie would call us into the kitchen. Lucille and I sat across from each other and Sylvie at the end of the table. Opposite her was a window luminous and cool as aquarium glass and warped as water. We looked at the window as we ate, and we listened to the crickets and nighthawks, which were always unnaturally loud then, perhaps because they were within the bounds that light would fix around us, or perhaps because one sense is a shield for the others and we had lost our sight.

186
← snails! →
only's best when can see the end a the way there.

the importance of play ...

you hear - some

head, with no class of my own and so I took over. Whereupon, of course, I soon discovered with this class of 25 five-year olds - I usually taught 4-year olds - where all the work in the school was being done. Eventually I ended up - done to a frazzle - with the children getting their coats on and sitting on the mat ready to go home at half past two in the afternoon.

One way or another, I introduced Burglar Bill to the children. It was love at first sight or rather hearing. I had the class register open on my desk beside me - containing all the children's home addresses. And off we'd go ... Burglar Bill walks down Severn Road until he comes to number ... hm - quick glance at register / ... number 8 where Alice Hicks lives. Meanwhile Alice Hicks snaps to attention and looks rather pleased with herself. Burglar Bill creeps into the hall - that's a nice umbrella, says Burglar Bill - I'll have that, and he puts it into his sack. Burglar Bill creeps into the sitting room - that's a nice antique clock, says Burglar Bill. I'll have that, and he puts it into his sack. Burglar Bill creeps into the kitchen. Here Alice Hicks' mummy is making a nice cheese and pickle sandwich for Alice to eat when she comes home from school. That's a nice ... MUMMY, says Burglar Bill, I'll have her, and he puts her into his sack. Thereafter, the possibilities of the story, whatever they might have been, collapse. The children - all of them - completely absorbed in the possibility that Burglar Bill would come to their house and put their mummy in a sack - sit up rigidly on the story mat like little tethered self-important balloons tapping themselves on the chest, some of them, hoping to get the nod.

Well, some years later, I wrote Burglar Bill - and, though I say it myself it's not a bad book, it's stuck around. But the best version (and the best audience response - I have never had a better!) ... was this one - rough and ready, particular and home made.

21. Now back to the bag...

Yes, I must reveal to you the contents of this bag - and apologise to the contents of this bag. I nearly forgot all about them. Here they are, stuck in the dark - in a lonely bag, soft toys - all play and playfulness - Mr Tump (he's older than me) and Little Tump and Teddy Fudge, Roy the Rabbit (produce). When they see me getting ready to leave the house on occasions like this, and when they, for some reason, suspect that there may be children at the end of the journey - they are all eager to come along. I did tell them there were no children on this occasion, children were not allowed - children were forbidden - this was a lecture for goodness sake. But of course, as we all know, soft toys go everywhere, are carried everywhere - inviting little children to experiment with love - my granddaughter, Colette - 18 months - fully understands the idea of cuddle - Ah, give him a cuddle. And love, in all our lives, is a very big deal indeed. As Violet Elizabeth Bott confidently informs us - love is all!



D. & May (mum)
in the bag!

22. Unfortunately - the worm in the bud - soft toys, though ideal for little children to practise their cuddling on - can also be subject to other kinds of treatment - experimentation, and in my case in later life a source of other kinds of remorse.

✓ **Unicef (p 86)**

"But worse than this, worse than anything really, is what I did to the panda. When I was five or six, I took my well-loved soft toy panda into the wash house, soaked him under the tap, cleaned his ears out, scolded his grubby ways and mangled him. **Do you know about mangles? Are you familiar with them? Just in case, here's me and my old mum and her mangle.**

NOTE

THE MANGLE (p 12)

look:

MS

or HE?? Ee =
Shag + Bunk (12)

In the steamy washhouse
My mother's face is pink
As she wrestles with dad's overalls
In the soap suddy sink.

The overalls don't like it
I see them fighting back
Mum wrings their arms and legs out
The water turns quite black.

My mother's arms are mighty
Her shoulders rise and fall
The scrubbing brush is in her hand
And green soap conquers all.

The mangle's my opponent
It lifts me off my feet
It takes the total weight of me
To mangle up a sheet.

Two heavy wooden rollers
Cogs like a giant clock
A handle for the turning
Sheet, shirt or sock.

Goes squelching in on one side
Comes flattened out the other
I fling that handle high and wide
And help my boiling mother.

With puny muscles all geared up
 My strength is that of ten
 We feed the overalls to their doom
 And feed them in again.

The battle's almost over
 The vanquished washing lies
 In a woven wooden basket
 The mangle creaks and sighs.

A sm^l of soot from the boiler
 Sweat on my youthful nose
 Steam on mother's glasses
 A pile of flattened clothes.

The wash house stands deserted
 As silent as the grave
 The mangle, damp and dripping
 A monster in a cave.

While elsewhere in the windy yard
 Pegged out and looking fine
 Dad's resurrected overalls
 Are dancing on the line.

Well, that poor old panda went into the mangle round and came out flat. Not temporarily flat either, he was not well made to start with, but flat forever, hardly thicker than a slice of bread.

I work in a shed at the bottom of the garden. This shed contains many things: manuscripts, notebooks, dictionaries; a Prudential Assurance policy for the funeral expenses of a child (me); photographs, pencils, pens; a kettle; toy soldiers that my father did not make; an original 1940s clockwork boat with a key in its funnel that cost £375; a panda.

Yes, as I write these words, a crooked-eyed, glass-eyed, eight-inch ancient panda is sitting on my desk. He is not my panda. My panda, remember, was mangled to a pulp. But he's of the tribe of panda. Actually, he's been on my desk for months, a candidate for a small part in another story. I'm auditioning him.

PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED.
(Incorporated in England.)
 CHIEF OFFICE—HOLBORN BARS, LONDON, E.C.1.
INDUSTRIAL BRANCH.

Whole Life Assurance on Life of Another for Funeral Expenses with Bonus Participation as stated below.
Free for reduced amount after one year's premiums have been paid.
Ages 1-10 next Birthday at entry.

Whereas a proposal has been made by the person named in the schedule hereto (hereinafter called "the Assured") to effect an assurance upon the life of the child named in the said schedule who is stated in the proposal to be of the age specified in the said schedule (hereinafter called "the child") with THE PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED (hereinafter called "the Company") on the terms hereinafter mentioned and on the basis of the aforesaid proposal. **And whereas** the assurance is effected for providing money to be paid for the funeral expenses of the child who is of the degree of relationship to the Assured stated in the said schedule, **Now these presents witness** that a premium of the amount specified in the said schedule having been paid to the Company on the granting of this Policy the Company hereby agree that if the Assured shall pay a premium of a similar amount to the Company on their duly authorised agent on or before or within twenty-eight days after the Monday succeeding the date of this Policy and every succeeding Monday during the life of the child or until the fulfilment of the provision in regard to age hereinafter contained then the Company will upon proof of death of the child and of the circumstances connected therewith being given to the reasonable satisfaction of the Directors of the Company pay the Benefit specified in the schedule to the Assured or the executors or administrators of the Assured.

After one year's premiums have been paid if a forfeiture notice under Section 23 of the Industrial Assurance Act 1923 is served and default made in payment of any premium to which the forfeiture notice relates in accordance with and within the period specified in such notice this Policy will on the expiration of the last-mentioned period automatically become a free paid-up Policy in respect whereof no premiums (unless for special risk under the conditions indorsed hereon) will be payable and that free paid-up Policy will subject as hereinafter provided assure a reduced sum of an amount determined according to the Company's Tables for the time being in force for computing the amounts of free paid-up Policies in the Industrial Branch. Such reduced sum will not be less than the amount determined in accordance with the rules for ascertaining the amount of a free paid-up Policy contained in the 4th Schedule to the Industrial Assurance Act 1923. If after one year's premiums have been paid payment of premiums is discontinued with the intention of making no further payment then notwithstanding that no forfeiture notice is served the Policy will automatically become a free paid-up Policy assuring such reduced sum as aforesaid provided that no forfeiture be restored to full benefit by payment of any premium thereunder the Policy may subject to the provisions and conditions of the same participate in any bonus distribution made after such conversion. If after conversion into a free paid-up Policy the child dies under age ten no sum will be payable under the free paid-up Policy. **When this Policy has become a free paid-up Policy the Assured or the executors or administrators of the Assured shall be entitled to the reduced sum and stating the amount of that sum.**

After premiums shall have been paid until the attainment by the child of age 75 the Policy if in force will become a free paid-up Policy for the full sum assured and bonuses declared to the date when premiums cease to be payable.

The production by the Company of a receipt for any Benefit payable after the child has attained the age of ten years under this Policy or the conditions or statutory provisions indorsed hereon or under any free paid-up Policy which this Policy may have become which shall not have been paid during the lifetime of the Assured signed by any person being either an executor or administrator of the Assured or the husband or wife or a relation by blood or connection of the Assured shall be a good discharge to the Company for the same as against every person or persons whomsoever and every such receipt so signed as aforesaid shall be final and conclusive evidence to all intents and purposes that the Benefit therein expressed to have been received has been duly paid to and received by the person or persons lawfully and rightfully entitled to the same and that all claims and demands whatsoever against the Company in respect of such Benefit have been fully and truly satisfied and discharged.

The Company shall not be bound by any assignment (whether partial or otherwise) or mortgage of or charge on the Policy and shall be entitled to disregard the same and to deal only with or recognise only the Assured or such other persons as are expressly authorised to give a receipt under the provision in that behalf hereinbefore contained.

This Policy is subject to the conditions and statutory provisions indorsed hereon and to the Articles of Association from time to time of the Company and will so remain after it shall have become a free paid-up Policy as aforesaid. It is issued out of the Industrial Branch of the Company and the Industrial Branch Fund together with the Capital Stock of the Company shall alone be answerable for any claims hereunder.

This Policy is granted upon the express condition that the same shall become absolutely void and all premiums paid thereon shall be forfeited to and retained by the Company if default shall be made in payment of the aforesaid premiums in compliance with the Statutory Notice of non-payment of a premium unless the Policy has become a free paid-up Policy as aforesaid or if any of the conditions indorsed hereon have not been or shall not be in all respects performed and observed.

see Free Policy Indorsement TABLE C.

WORLD WIDE.		SCHEDULE.	
No. OF POLICY. 140165034 H38-1207		NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE ASSURED. ELIZABETH AHLBERG 86 BIRCHFIELD LANE OLDBURY	
AMOUNT OF WEEKLY PREMIUM. ONE PENNY		NAME OF THE CHILD. GEORGE ALLAN AHLBERG	AGE NEXT BIRTHDAY OF THE CHILD STATED AS ONE YEARS
SUM ASSURED PAYABLE AT DEATH SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS INDORSED HEREON.		RELATIONSHIP TO THE ASSURED CHILD	

As witness the common Seal of the Company this Twentieth day of March one thousand nine hundred and thirty nine

J. Dum
General Manager.

P. L. Reid
Directors.

He gives me a look, had his eye on me, perhaps, for a while, before ever I thought to write this piece. A lopsided, reproachful look. Did you mangle the panda? (He sounds quite like my mother.) Did you flatten him like a pancake, like pastry? Did you mangle him? Did you? I move him forward, lean him against a cup so that I can see him better. He looks pretty tough, it seems to me, for a soft toy. Time has dried him out, mangle-proofed him you might say, his head, especially, like a nut. And his gaze is full of accusations; implacable. Did you? Did you?

Well, yes, I did. I mangled the panda."

(Reveal the panda.)

He got the part. (+ Emma C.C.)

23. Returning briefly to Len Clay - many years later I encountered another letter in the Guardian from Tony Cheney (produce).

read w panda table

The article by your science correspondent on the way the sun will expand in about three billion years time reminds me of a lecture (!) - LECTURE - given by Sir Arthur Eddington on the same subject. When he has finished, a chap in the audience asked: "Could you say again how long it will be before the sun expands?" Sir Arthur replied: "We think it will be about three billion years." The chap replied, "That's a relief - I thought you said three million years."

24. And then this - another newspaper article - with the headline - (produce) - Monster Black Hole Discovery Suggests That They May be Rife.

table

Our universe could be riddled with monster black holes, new research suggests. The revelation comes after a black hole with a mass of 17 billion suns was found in a large virtually deserted galaxy 200 million light years away.

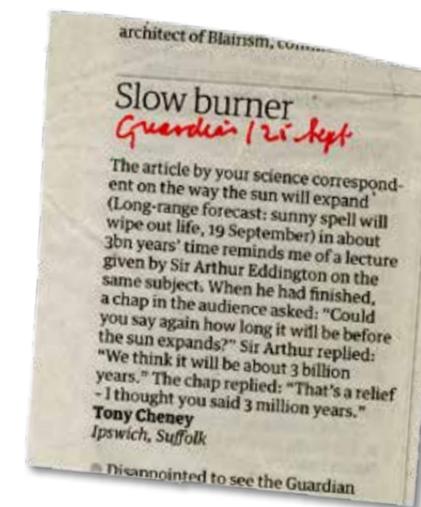
"We didn't expect to see such a huge black hole in a small place," said Professor Chung Pi Ma from the University of California. "That," she added, "opens up an intriguing possibility. With such galaxies more common than rich clusters, such super massive black holes could be rife."

April 2016

Vanessa and I were in the process of moving house - negotiating, etc. - but when I revealed to Vanessa the intriguing possibility that with such galaxies more common than rich clusters, such super-massive black holes could be rife, Vanessa declared: Rife! Rife? That does it - ring the estate agent - the deal's off.

25. Finally, Professor John Wheeler - who coined the term black hole, who was, you might say, the father of the black hole, of all black holes. Towards the end of his life at the age

table



of 91 - he wrote: How come the universe? How come us? How come anything? And that's it really, isn't it? It's not the limitless - the never ending - revealed intricacies of the universe - the ability of tiny ants on the shore of an enormous sea - somehow able to calculate the tides. It's not the vastness, the duration - it's just that question: **why is there something rather than nothing?**

The subtitle for this part could well be **Send for Ezio!** Well, we seem to have ended up in a rather bleak place - got into a bit of a hole. We are in need of a saviour - how about Ezio Pinza? (**Now stop and play a little of his song**). That's better, isn't it - a love song and Ezio Pinza's wonderful voice. **I promised you singing, I never said it would be me doing it.** Well, I'm not really very sure about any of this, but I would like to suggest, perhaps, that maybe serious thought about life, the universe and all that, I'd give that nine out of ten. But what remarkable little creatures we are - for when Len Clay comes along and is bravely comic about the whole business - I give that ten out of ten. And when Ezio Pinza comes along and sings *Some Enchanted Evening* - full of love - the bass gets the girl - that gets eleven out of ten.

27. **Some Enchanted Evening.** Actually, of course, as you might guess *Some Enchanted Evening* was also a candidate for the title of my talk, although five o'clock is a bit early, isn't it, for evening. And *Some Enchanted Teatime* doesn't sound quite right, does it?

Titles do matter. A good title is simply pleasing in itself - *The Owl Service* - *Minnow on the Say* - *A Dog So Small* - *The Member of the Wedding* - *The Manchurian Candidate* - *So Long, See You Tomorrow* - by William Maxwell - got him in after all. Well, perhaps it's about time I said something about my titles - *The Train Has Rain in It*: that's the title of a book that I played around with and that fell apart almost before I got into it:

The Sun is shining,
The clouds are high
But the train has rain in it,
I wonder why.

Playing around with the idea that one word is contained within another. In this case there's a train going along and the sun is shining, but inside the carriage people have got umbrellas up and it's raining.

John Wayne and Sibelius. Well, Sibelius, wonderful Sibelius, more research - wrote seven tremendous symphonies - and for the last thirty years of his life he no doubt, and certainly everybody else, was hoping to hear his eighth, but it never arrived. He wrote stuff, it wasn't good enough, it never saw the light of day. John Wayne, on the other hand, kept going - film after film - and right at the end when he was dying of cancer he made a

Obituaries

John Wheeler

American physicist best known for coining the term 'black hole'

The physicist John Wheeler, who has died aged 96, was a key figure among the international scientists who formed the Manhattan Project and created the first atomic bomb. But he is likely to be better remembered as the man who coined the term "black hole" and that remembrance will be appropriate, because Wheeler was also a talented and committed teacher, and a philosopher of science on a quest for a unified theory of existence, what he called "the perception of how things fit together".

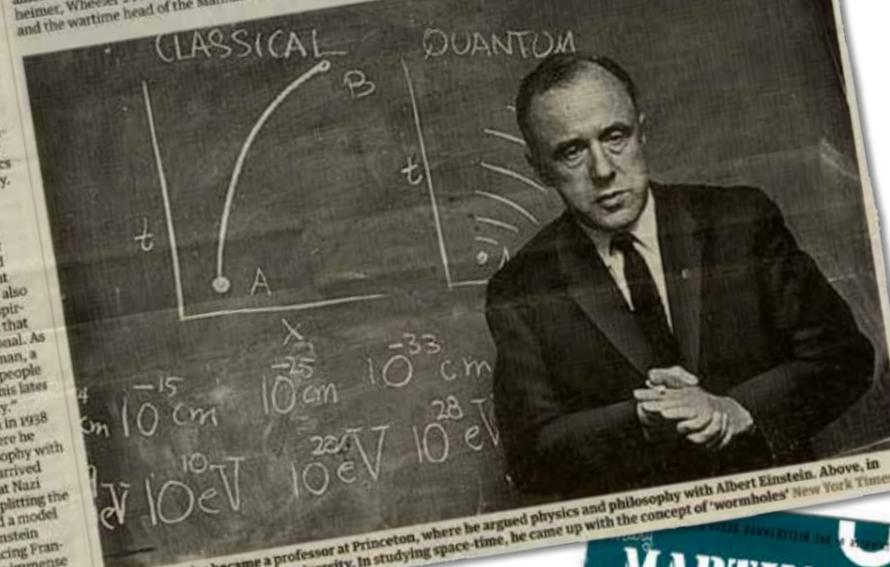
These two strands of Wheeler's career reflected his friendship with the Danish physicist Niels Bohr, which proved crucial to the Manhattan Project. Wheeler's parents were librarians, who moved the family frequently around the US, and encouraged their children's curiosity. Wheeler recalled asking his mother, at the age of four, where the universe ended; his dissatisfaction with universe ended; his dissatisfaction with universe led him to science. As a child he developed a fascination with home-made rockets, and once touched an 11,000-volt power line to find out what would happen. Born in Jacksonville, Florida, he went to high school in Baltimore, Maryland, and in 1933, still only 21, he had earned a doctorate in physics from nearby Johns Hopkins University.

He left for Copenhagen to study under Bohr, but not before getting engaged, after only three dates, to Wheeler's student Janet Hegner. With Bohr, Wheeler co-wrote the paper which identified U-235 as the isotope of uranium that could be made to fission. But Bohr also opened his eyes to philosophy, inspiring his protégé to never fear ideas that might be considered unconventional. As Wheeler's student Richard Feynman, a Nobel prizewinner, said: "Some people think Wheeler's gotten crazy in his late years, but he's always been crazy."

Wheeler returned to America in 1938 as a professor at Princeton, where he could argue physics and philosophy with Albert Einstein. In 1939, Bohr arrived in New York with the news that Nazi scientists had succeeded in splitting the atom. He and Bohr developed a model for fission, and along with Einstein were instrumental in convincing Franklin Roosevelt to commit the immense resources needed to create the atom bomb after America entered the war. While it was built at Los Alamos, New Mexico, Wheeler supervised the creation of reactors in Hanford, Washington, which produced the necessary plutonium. Meanwhile, his brother Joseph, serving in the army, was killed in Italy, but not before sending Wheeler a note saying "sorry". He never forgot the lives lost before his weapons put an end to the war.

Wheeler returned to Europe on a Guggenheim grant in 1949. But soon after he and Janet settled in Paris, then he was asked by Henry Smyth, then head of the Atomic Energy Commission, to return to the US to work on a new weapon. From conversations with Edward Teller, its leading proponent, Wheeler knew this was the hydrogen bomb. He hesitated, but was convinced to join the project at Los Alamos by Bohr's question: "Do you for a moment imagine that Europe would be free of Soviet control today were it not for the atomic bomb?"

The Wheelers never settled in Los Alamos, but his students Ken Ford and John Toll, and his protégé Fred Taylor, proved crucial to the development of nuclear fusion. After returning to Princeton, Wheeler was caught up in the political manoeuvring of Teller and his colleagues. Their target was Robert Oppenheimer, Wheeler's Princeton colleague, and the wartime head of the Manhattan



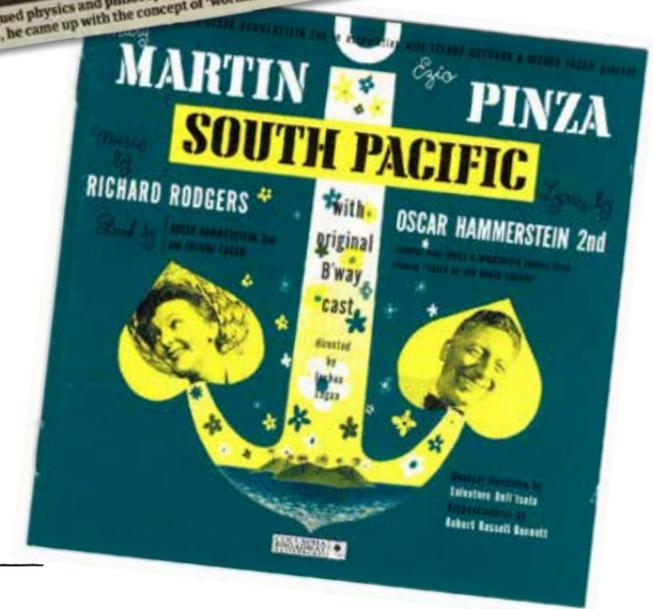
Use + describe
Oh well! 26
no really:
a lesson ✓
Read
for L

← NOTE
something missing here?

+ ask
Wheeler.

28.
Research!
no LATE!

10 words +
any 5 tag of it all.
E.T. mind works!
- a 9 hour period
Use + speech
+ many into legit
"No punks" - juno
there + my
sucker)



pretty good film called The Shootist, directed by Don Siegel, about an old gunfighter ...
dying of cancer. In my case, I'm a little more John Wayne than Sibelius. My work - as I
get older - well, there's less of it and it's less good - sorry about that - but I am inclined to
stick at it.

29. But of course, on this subject of work - it's not just me - as I mentioned earlier, others are
involved - so thanks again to Janet who got me into it - and Vanessa who keeps me going
- and to Mr McGibbon:

*MS +
read ✓*

I wish to thank the Superintendent of Parks and Cemeteries for Oldbury in the 1960s, Mr
McGibbon. I was employed then, in one of his cemeteries as a gravedigger. Eventually,
Mr McGibbon persuaded me up and out of my hole in the ground and propelled me off to
become, in the fullness of time, a teacher ... and a few other things. Mr McGibbon was
my Good Samaritan. I owe him.

Yes, and Harry and Dennis too, my fellow gravediggers, who taught me that all work has
its skills. The graves they dug were eight feet deep, neat and perpendicular and coffin-
shaped. They did not move one spadeful of earth more than was needed (mitred corners,
tapered ends). My graves, ragged-edged and sloping, were not a patch on theirs. The
digging I do now is with a pen. It is a trade - prose, poetry or verse - I'm better suited for
(or used to be).

30. Thanks number two: a few more thanks to all the ^{many, multi} other talented illustrators I've had the
pleasure of working with - the editors and designers - printers and paper makers and trees
- thank you, tree - the readers and the librarians ... and the office cleaners.

*+ good
fortune*

It takes a whole lot of us to make a book - which is the thing worth having, we hope - the
occasion for my being invited to deliver this non-lecture - partly failed rigmarole ...

31. Hm ... office cleaners - my old mum was an office cleaner - and so, a final aside - I would
very much like, before I stop - which I will very soon! - to honour my parents. Well. I
have already honoured my mum with The Mangle. So here, yes, here's my dad.

*read +
MS*

MY INVISIBLE DAD

My dad is a mystery
He has a bristly chin
His hat hangs in a house
That he is never in.

He goes to work at half-past five
Comes home at eight
I hear him whistling in the yard
His dinner on a plate

Gets dried out in the oven
He washes at the sink
Blows water like a walrus
His hairy ears are pink.

My dad makes model soldiers
He has a fretwork saw
His flat cap on the cabinet
His work boots by the door.

I smell his overalls
He leans above my cot
His whiskery kiss upon my cheek
His smoky breath is hot.

The light shines on the landing
Some music down below
Descending steps upon the stairs
From the dad I hardly know.

32

Read

BUT WATCH TIME!

So finally, finally back to play and playfulness. We are all of us let loose in this mysterious universe, this impenetrable, this impossible place - and oddly - comically - most of us from time to time somehow find a way of playing with it, given a chance, as well of course, as taking it seriously - and loving it.

I'm going to tell you a story now - and sing you a song - and then we can all get our coats on and go home. So here's the story:

Link

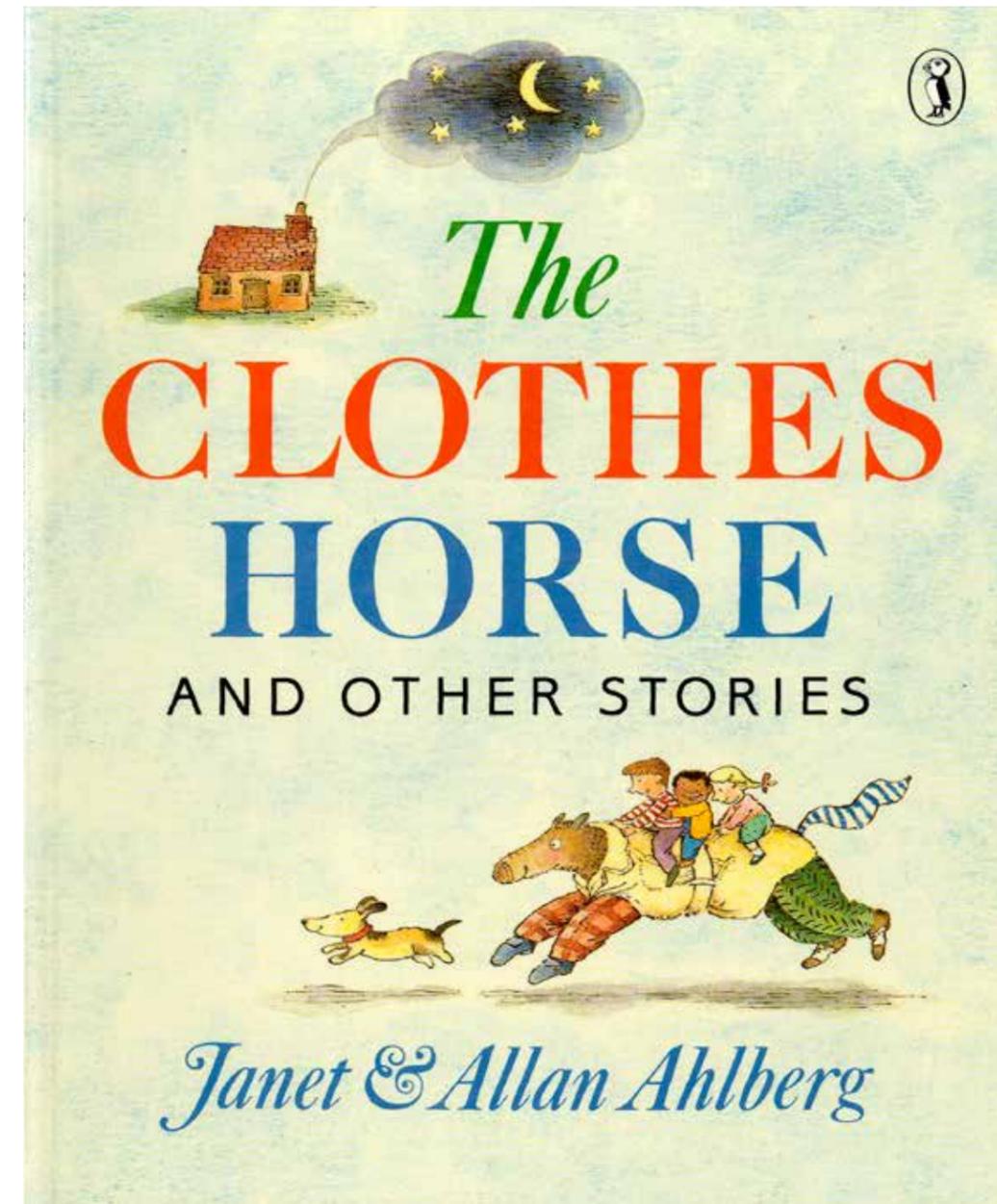
GOD KNOWS

Once - I will not say upon a time, because there was no time the, only eternity. The children of God, there were three of them, climbed on their Father's knee and demanded a story.

'Isn't it your mother's turn?' said God.

'No,' said the children, 'Yours!'

or - via -> Mum + Dad + Clothes It.
-> Put + Jack + me
-> Mr + C. (Mrs + wife + savings)
And (it + Mrs!)
God knows.



So then, reluctantly, God put aside His newspaper, rubbed His chin, and began.
'Once upon a time (*He* could say that of course; He was God) there was a place called ... Mars.'

'We've had that already,' said the children, and they pointed through the open window to a small red planet hanging low in the night sky.

'Jupiter then,' said God.

'And that!'

'Earth?' said God.

'No,' said the children; 'not had that,' and they smiled and snuggled closer together in happy expectation of what was to come.

'Well,' said God, 'once there was a place called Earth.'

As He spoke a third planet (complete with moon) took up its position in the sky beside Jupiter and Mars - and the History of the World began.

'In the beginning,' said God, 'not a lot happened; just earthy volcanoes - dust storms, that sort of thing. The atmosphere was full of ammonia and methane gas. ('Ugh!' said the children.) It was pretty hot and pretty boring. Then after a while, the seas formed and the grass began to grow.'

Up in the sky the Earth was turning green and blue with swirls of white cloud trailed around it and patches of white snow at the poles.

'Did the seas have fish in them?' said the children

'Fish,' said God. 'Yes, by and by. And later there were ... seals and frogs and turtles and alligators and antelopes and sabre-toothed tigers and ... people.'

'No dinosaurs?' said the children. 'You had dinosaurs on Jupiter.'

'All right, dinosaurs, too,' said God. 'Only they became extinct after a time, and the people took over.'

Above them in the sky, the dinosaurs were taking leave of the Earth and preparing to become fossils. God paused for a moment and blew His nose.

'And after that things speeded up a little. There were the Pyramids and the Great Wall of China; the Battle of Hastings and the Boston Tea Party. And there was the Domesday Book and the Invention of Printing and Mozart and Charles Dickens and the Beatles.'

'What else did they invent?' said the children 'We like the inventions.'

'Well let's see,' said God. 'Bicycles - zip fasteners - cheese - boats and planes ... spaceships! They went to the Moon.'

Now the dark side of the Earth was glittering with city lights and a silver space ship hung in the sky between the Earth and the Moon

'Did they go to Mars, too?' said the children

'By and by,' said God

Just then a voice called from the kitchen. 'Supper's ready!'



God got to His feet with the children still in His arms. 'Good heavens!' He cried. 'Is that the time?'

After that - and when they had kissed their Mother, of course - He hurried them upstairs to bed.

On the stairs the youngest child said, 'Do they have dancing on the Earth?'

'Dancing?' said God. 'Oh, yes!'

And the oldest said, 'I'm gong to make my own place up, one of these days. I'm gong to call it ... Pluto!'

And the middle one laughed at Pluto. 'What a name!'

God tucked them in and moved to pull the curtains across.

'Leave them open!' said the children. 'We want to look at the Earth.'

As He reached the door the children did their best to make Him stay. 'Don't go!' they said. 'What else did they invent? What happens next?'

But God was not to be fooled. He knew what they were up to. 'What happens next?' He paused and rubbed His chin. (Meanwhile, above them in the starry sky the Earth hung, waiting.)

'God knows,' said God - and went downstairs.

Now for the song. I promised you some singing - and I never said I *wouldn't* be the singer
Sing:

LET MY CHILDREN GO

The time has come the good Lord said
To let my children go.
I got this brainwave in my head
Let my children go.
Let them stand, let them fall
Hide and seek, or kick a ball
I'm here to tell you one and all
To let my children go.

The time has come the good Lord cried
To let my children go.
I'm tired of seeing them stuck inside
Let my children go.
Grass is greener, can't you see
Under feet, not on TV
So I'd really like it if you'd agree
To let my children go.

Let My Children Go

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The time has come, the good Lord said
To let my children go.
I got this brainwave in my head
Let my children go.
Let them stand, let them fall
Hide & seek or kick a ball
I'm here to tell you one & all
To let my children go.

The time has come, the good Lord cried
To let my children go.
I'm tired of seeing them stuck inside
Let my children go.
Grass is greener, can you see
Under feet not on TV
So I'd really like it if you'd agree
To let my children go.

The time has come, the good Lord spoke
To let my children go.
A bit of freedom for their sake
Let my children go.
Let them wander, let them stray *
Feel that weather every day
A love all, people, let them play
Yes - let my people go.

God + balloons / fruit...

or a prologue

- 1. * work on.
- 2. Could be No 1? (or name substitute?)

The time has come, the good Lord spake
To let my children go.
A bit of freedom for their sake
Let my children go.
Let them wander, let them stray
Feel that weather every day
Above all people let them play
Yes - let my - children - go.

The End

THE PHILIPPA PEARCE LECTURE is an annual event that celebrates excellence in literature for children. It provides a platform for the very best children's authors, poets and illustrators to reflect on their art. Always thought-provoking, the lectures have tackled such topics as the significance of time, the place of fear, and what poetry is for.

The lectures were established in 2007 by the family, friends and colleagues of the highly distinguished children's author, Philippa Pearce. They attract a regular and wide-ranging audience of academics, writers, publishers and lovers of children's literature. A video recording is always made available.

"She was one of the very finest writers British children's literature has ever had, and everything she wrote has a touch of the particular vision and understanding of human nature that was hers alone."

Philip Pullman

The Philippa Pearce Lectures are held in association with Homerton College, Cambridge.