

Chapter 6 The Chocolate Cake

Among Matilda's new friends was the girl called Lavender. A small girl with brown eyes and dark hair. Before the end of the first week, they heard some terrible stories about Miss Trunchbull. A ten-year-old girl, Hortensia, who they met in the school field told them, 'She doesn't like very small children. And have you heard about The Chokey?'

'What's The Chokey?' asked Matilda.

'It's a very tall, narrow cupboard in Trunchbull's room,' said Hortensia. 'It's too small to sit down in, so you have to stand up. And the walls and doors have bits of broken glass all over them. So you have to stand up straight all the time when she locks you in there.'

'Have you ever been in there?' asked Lavender.

'In my first year, I was in there six times,' said Hortensia. 'Twice for a day and the other times for —'

She stopped. Suddenly all the children in the field were silent. Miss Trunchbull was walking across the field towards a girl of about ten. The girl had very long fair hair. 'Amanda Thripp, come here!' shouted Miss Trunchbull.

'Trunchbull doesn't like very long hair,' Hortensia said.

Miss Trunchbull was now standing above Amanda like someone who wanted to put their foot down on something small and smelly. 'Cut off some of that dirty long hair before you come back to school tomorrow!' she shouted. 'Do you hear?'

'M-my m-m-mummy likes it long,' said the frightened Amanda.

'Do as I tell you, you little rat!' shouted Miss Trunchbull. And she put out a large hand, took Amanda by the hair and lifted the girl *off the ground*. Then she turned her round and round above her head - faster and faster! Amanda screamed when, suddenly, Miss Trunchbull stopped holding her hair and the girl flew up into the sky! She came down again in the next field. Then she got up on to her feet and walked back again!

Matilda's mouth fell open with surprise.



At lunch time the next day, all two hundred and fifty children in the school got orders to go into the big room, and to sit on the floor and wait for Miss Trunchbull.

When she came in, she stood at the front of them and shouted, 'Bruce Bogtrotter, come up here!'

A very fat eleven-year-old boy went out to the front.

'This thief, this robber went into the school kitchen yesterday and stole some of my special chocolate cake!' shouted Miss Trunchbull. 'It was not boys' cake! Cook made it with real

butter and real chocolate — for me! And this selfish little snake ate it! The cook saw him.’ When she spoke again, her voice was dangerously friendly. ‘Do you like my chocolate cake, Bogtrotter?’

‘It’s very good,’ the boy said, before he could stop himself.

‘You’re right, it is very good,’ said Miss Trunchbull, then she turned to the door. ‘Cook! Come in here!’

The school cook came into the room. She was carrying the largest chocolate cake you have ever seen. There was a small table and a chair next to Miss Trunchbull, and the cook put the cake on the table.

‘Sit down, Bogtrotter,’ said Miss Trunchbull.

The boy sat down and looked at the big cake.

‘It’s all for you, Bogtrotter,’ said Miss Trunchbull. ‘You wanted cake! Now you’ve got cake! And nobody will leave this room until you’ve eaten every bit of it!’

The boy looked at the cake, then began to eat.

‘He’ll be sick before he eats half of it,’ Lavender said to Matilda. She was wrong. Bruce Bogtrotter ate half the cake before he stopped for a few seconds.

‘Eat! Eat!’ shouted Miss Trunchbull.

The boy cut another piece of cake. He didn’t say, ‘I’m going to be sick!’ He went on eating ... and eating ...

Two hundred and fifty children watched. Suddenly, someone shouted, ‘Come on Bruce, you can do it!’

‘Be quiet!’ shouted Miss Trunchbull, angrily.

The boy continued to push cake into his mouth. As the last piece disappeared, the children shouted ‘Well done, Bruce!’ But Miss Trunchbull picked up the empty plate and crashed it down on his head. Bruce was too full of cake for it to hurt him. He just smiled.

‘Get out of here, all of you!’ screamed Miss Trunchbull, and she walked out of the room, with the cook behind her.



In the middle of the first week, Miss Honey said to her group, ‘Tomorrow afternoon, Miss Trunchbull will give you your lesson. You must not speak until she speaks to you, and you must stand up to answer her questions. And a large glass of water must always be on the table here when she comes in. She never gives a lesson without one. She keeps her special large glasses in the school kitchen. Now, who will see that her glass of water is ready for her?’

‘I will,’ said Tavender at once. She wanted to be as brave as Matilda, after hearing the stories about the glue-on-the-hat and the talking ‘ghost’ parrot. Like Matilda, Lavender

thought that bad people needed to have something bad happen to *them* sometimes.

After school that day, she went down to the river at the bottom of her garden. There was a family of newts in the river. A newt is a very ugly animal, with greenish skin and an orange stomach. It can live in or out of water. Lavender caught one and put it in her pencil box.

The next day, she took it to school. Immediately after lunch, she went to the kitchen and found one of Miss Trunchbull's large glasses. She put some water into the glass and took it to Miss Honey's room.

Then she dropped the newt into the water and put the glass on the table. And smiled.