



FANTASTIC FAN

“Thanks for coming early,” said Hooey as he opened the door to Twig. “Will needs our help with something before school starts.”

“Your Will’s an actual genius,” said Twig as they climbed the stairs to the attic. “Last summer my nan had a problem with carrot flies and he solved it just like that.”

“How?”

“Told her to stop planting carrots.”

“Wow.”

“I know. Awesome.”

Hooey stopped on the landing and gazed out of the window.



he said.

Twig nodded.

“What’s out there, it reminds me of that advert.”

“Which one?”

“Sky.”

When they reached the attic, Will was standing next to a giant fan with a clipboard in his hand.

“Here she is,” he said, tapping the fan with his pencil. “All set up and ready to go.”

“Farmer Jenkins has got a fan like that,” said Twig. “He uses it to stop his sheds from overheating.”

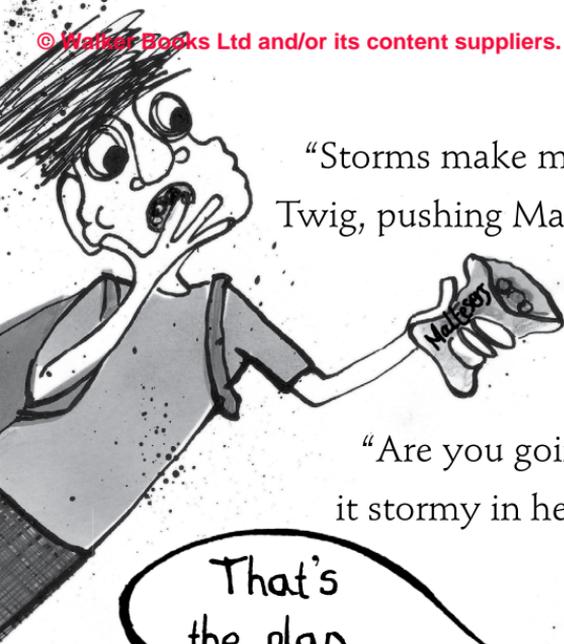
“Same one,” said Will. “I showed him how to rig up his scarecrow with an old tape recorder that shouts, “*Get off my land!*” and he was so pleased, he let me borrow his fan.”

He ran his pencil across the fan’s protective cage and it made a **brrrring** sound.

“That is one massive fan,” said Hooey admiringly. “But wouldn’t it be easier just to turn the heating down? Or open a window or something?”

“It’s not for cooling things down,” said Will. “It’s for testing out my **Wet and Windy Weather Gear.**”





“Storms make me hungry,” said Twig, pushing Maltesers into his mouth and offering the bag to Hooey. Hooey took one.

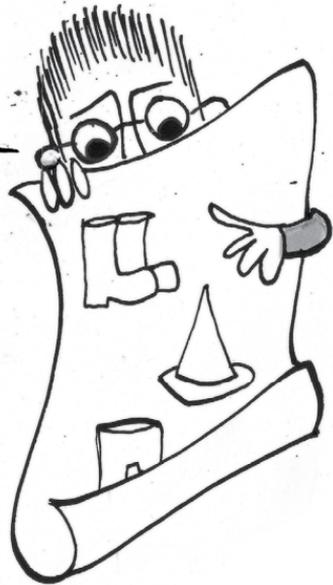
“Are you going to try and make it stormy in here, then, Will?”

That’s the plan,

said Will.

“The fan plan,” said Twig, although it sounded more like, “Va fom pom,” because of the Maltesers.

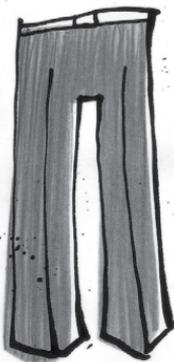
“It’s not finished yet,” said Will, unrolling a sheet of wallpaper. “But these drawings should give you some idea.”





The first one showed a pair of wellies, beside which Will had written GRAVITY BOOTS.

The next was a picture of a pointy hat labelled WILL'S WIND-CUTTING WIMPLE.



Then there was a pair of trousers with sharp creases down the legs. BREEZE-SLICERS was written underneath.

Finally, there was a jacket which said: FLOAT COAT.



“All I need to do now,” said Will, “is test them.”

He looked at Hooey.

Hooey nodded and smiled.

“I guess it would require someone really brave and intelligent to test them out,” he said. “Someone who wouldn’t mind being thought of as a hero when people found out that he’d done such an incredible and amazing thing.”

“Ooh,” said Twig, thrusting his hand in the air. “Ooh, ooh.”

“I know what you mean, Hooey,” said Will. “But who do we know with those kind of qualities?”

“I’ll do it!” cried Twig.
“Pick me, pick me!”

Hooey grinned. “Now why didn’t we think of that?” he said.



Will reached under the bed and pulled out a flat piece of wood. It was mounted on rollerskates and slid smoothly into the middle of the room. Carefully laid out on top was Will's Wet and Windy Weather Gear.

"Oh, look!" squealed Twig, hopping from foot to foot. "I'll be like Batman and you'll be like Alfred the Butler, all quiet and brainy and giving me loads of crime-fighty stuff and that."

"It's not about fighting crime," said Will, "it's about not getting blown over."

"Even so," said Twig, clapping his hands.



Dressing up!



He picked up the trousers and Hooey saw that they were a pair of Grandpa's old brown slacks. Will had sewn cardboard flaps into the legs so that the creases stuck out like sharp blades.

"I call these my Breeze-Slicers," said Will. "They'll cut through air like a shark through water. When you put these on, the wind will run right around you and blow next door's fence down instead."

"It'll be like a film," said Twig. "About

fences blowing down
and stuff. And also that
Twister one where a
cow flies through the air and goes
Moooooooooooo-smack."



"That's how *everyone* should get their
milk delivered," said
Hooey. "Imagine a cow
landing on your doorstep
every morning. That'd
certainly wake you up."



"You'd probably get some

yogurt as well," said Will. "What with
all the spinning around."

"Or butter," said
Hooey. "Some sort of
dairy product, anyway."



Next Will handed Twig
what appeared to be a silver wizard's hat
with a bungee cord attached.



“Oh, hello!” said Twig. “Is this a magical crime-fighting helmet I see before me? I think it is!”

“Or a traffic cone covered in Baco-Foil,” said Hooey.

“Actually neither,” said Will. “It’s a Wind-Cutting Wimple. Built by my own fair hand.”

Twig put it on his head and watched it slowly sink over his face.

“It’s a bit dark in here,” he said.



Hooey lifted the wimple back onto the



top of Twig’s head and stuffed a sock in each side.

“Is that better?”

Twig stared at himself in the mirror. “Now I

look like a dog who's got his head stuck in a traffic cone."



"Don't knock it," said

Hooey, stretching out the bungee cord and snapping it beneath Twig's chin. "They'll all be wearing these next year."



"Tilt your head forward," said Will.

Twig pointed his head at the floor.

"Not that far," said Will.

Twig pointed his head at the ceiling.

"Now you look like a unicorn who's just been shot," said Hooey. "Or been given some very bad news."

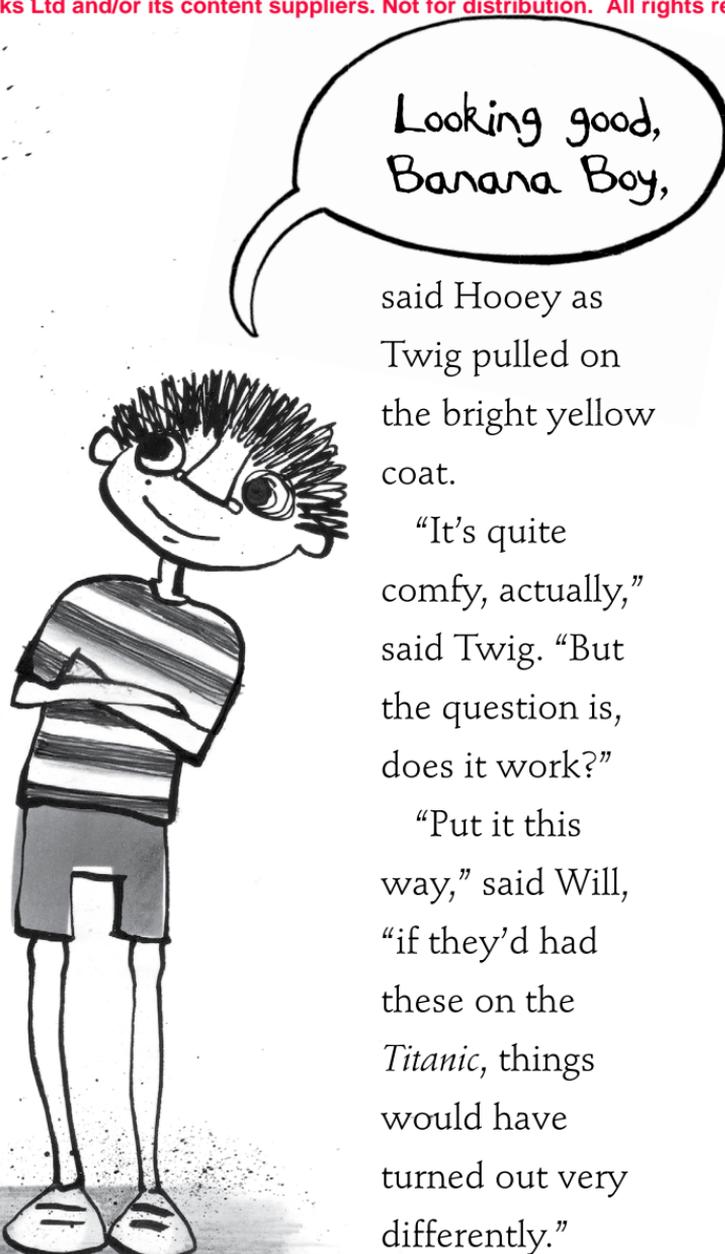
"Like being told he has to wear a traffic cone on his head," said Twig.

"It's not a traffic cone, it's a wimple," said Will.

He reached down to the trolley and took a yellow oilskin jacket.

And now
for the Float
Coat.

Sellotaped inside the coat were three empty milk cartons, four balloons, half a dozen tennis balls and a beige-coloured loofah from the bathroom.

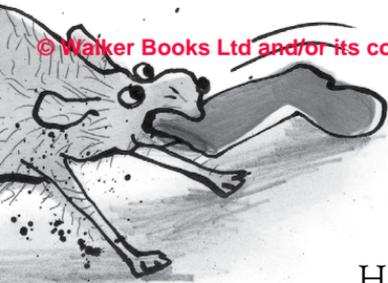


Looking good,
Banana Boy,

said Hooey as
Twig pulled on
the bright yellow
coat.

“It’s quite
comfy, actually,”
said Twig. “But
the question is,
does it work?”

“Put it this
way,” said Will,
“if they’d had
these on the
Titanic, things
would have
turned out very
differently.”

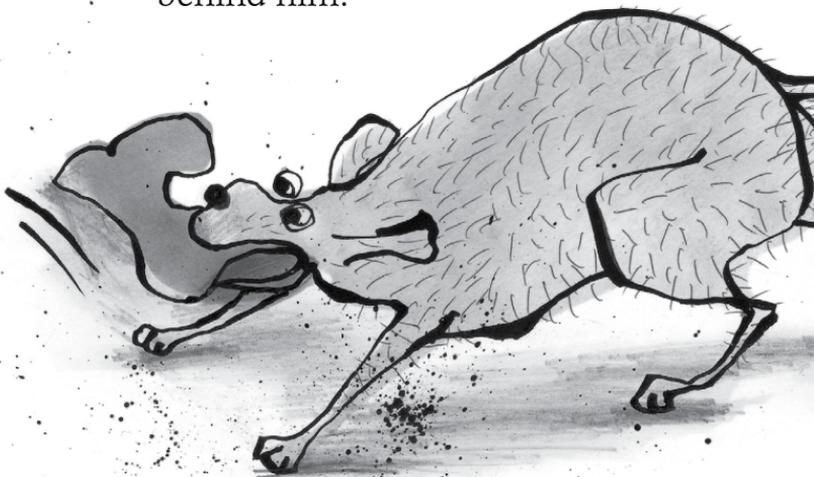


There was a scraping sound coming from the doorway and Hooey turned to see Dingbat slowly dragging a green welly boot into the room.



“Ah, my trusty assistant,” said Will. “Fetch the other one, Dingbat!”

With an enthusiastic yelp, Dingbat bolted out of the room and returned a few seconds later, tail first, dragging the second boot behind him.

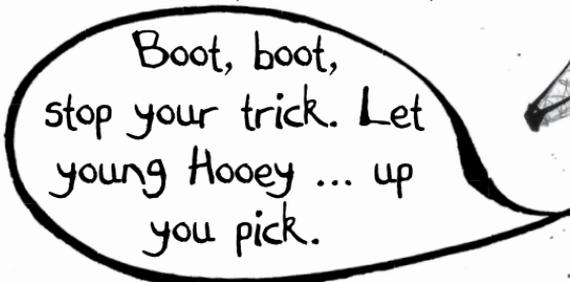


“Having a bit of trouble there, boy?” asked Hooey as Dingbat struggled towards them with the boot. Hooey bent down to try and pick it up, but it seemed to be stuck to the floor.

“Wow,” said Hooey. “These boots are hard to move.”

“Maybe they’re magical boots!” said Twig. “Maybe my magical wimple-hat is casting a magical spell on them!”

Bending over to point at one of them, he chanted,



Boot, boot,
stop your trick. Let
young Hooey ... up
you pick.

“Twig, that’s terrible,” said Hooey, finally managing to lift up the boot and carry it into the middle of the room.



“Worked though, didn’t it?” said Twig.
“They don’t call me Mister Magic for nothing.”

“Mr Muppet, you mean,” said Hooey.
“What did you put in these boots, Will?



Concrete?”

“Certainly did,” said Will.

“They’re my Gravity Boots.” He pointed to a

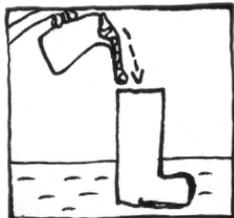
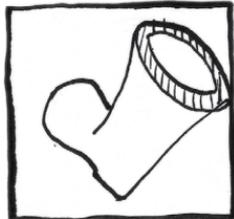


diagram on the wall. “I made a mould of my leg from Plaster of Paris, stuck it in the boot and then poured concrete



round the outside. When the concrete set, I just smashed up the Plaster of Paris and, hey presto! Gravity Boots.”

“Genius,” said Hooey, as Dingbat helped him drag the other boot into the centre of the room. “All set, Twig?”

“All set for what?”

“For my Windy Weather Wear Test, of course,” said Will.

Hooey looked at him. “Should I take cover?”

“Best to be on the safe side,” said Will. “Just stand behind the fan and you’ll be fine.”

“Oh, great,” said Twig.

“What about me?”

“You’re the safest one in the room,” said Hooey. “You’ve got all the protective gear on, remember?”

“How could I forget?” said Twig.



Will pushed the button and there was a faint hum which grew louder as the fan picked up speed. At first there was only a gentle breeze which cooled the air and ruffled the curtains. Then, as the fan blades turned faster, the socks on Twig's ears began to lift and flap in the wind.



“I’m going to increase the power a bit now,” said Will, raising his voice so he could be heard over the noise of the fan.

“Remember: head down and wimple to the wind.”

Twig leaned forward purposefully.

“OK,” he said.



