



Journey to Dream Country

After the mad frobscottle party was over, Sophie settled herself again on top of the enormous table.

'You is feeling better now?' asked the Big Friendly Giant.

'Much better, thank you,' Sophie said.

'Whenever I is feeling a bit scrotty,' the BFG said, 'a few gollops of frobscottle is always making me hopscotchy again.'

'I must say it's quite an experience,' Sophie said.

'It's a razztwizzler,' the BFG said. 'It's gloriumptious.' He turned away and strode across the cave and picked up his dream-catching net. 'I is galloping off now,' he said, 'to catch some more whoppsy-whiffing dreams for my collection. I is doing this every day without missing. Is you wishing to come with me?'

'Not me, thank you very much!' Sophie said. 'Not with those other giants lurking outside!'

'I is snuggling you very cosy into the pocket of my waistcoat,' the BFG said. 'Then no one is seeing you.'

Before Sophie could protest, he had picked her up off the table and popped her into the waistcoat pocket. There was plenty of room in there. 'Is you wishing for a little hole to peep out from?' he asked her.

'There's one here already,' she said. She had found a small hole in the pocket, and when she put one eye close to it, she could see out very well indeed. She watched the BFG as he bent down and filled his suitcase with empty glass jars. He closed the lid, picked up the suitcase in one hand, took the pole with the net on the end in the other hand, and marched towards the entrance of the cave.

As soon as he was outside, the BFG set off across the great hot yellow wasteland where the blue rocks lay and the dead trees stood and where all the other giants were

skulking about.

Sophie, squatting low on her heels in the pocket of the leather waistcoat, had one eye glued to the little hole. She saw the group of enormous giants about three hundred yards ahead.

'Hold your breaths!' the BFG whispered down to her. 'Cross your figglers! Here we go! We is going right past all these other giants! Is you seeing that whopping great one, the one nearest to us?'

'I see him,' Sophie whispered back, quivering.

'That is the horriblest of them all. And the biggest of them all. He is called the Fleshlumpeating Giant.'

'I don't want to hear about him,' Sophie said.

'He is fifty-four feet high,' the BFG said softly as he jogged along. 'And he is swolloping human beans like they is sugar-lumps, two or three at a time.'

'You're making me nervous,' Sophie said.

'I is nervous myself,' the BFG whispered. 'I always gets as jumpsy as a joghopper when the Fleshlumpeating Giant is around.'

'Keep away from him,' Sophie pleaded.

'Not possible,' the BFG answered. 'He is galloping easily two times as quicksy as me.'

'Shall we turn back?' Sophie said.

'Turning back is worse,' the BFG said. 'If they is seeing me running away, they is all giving chase and throwing rocks.'

'They would never eat you though, would they?' Sophie asked.

'Giants is never guzzling other giants,' the BFG said. 'They is fighting and squarreling a lot with each other, but never guzzling. Human beans is more tasty to them.'

The giants had already spotted the BFG and all heads were turned, watching him as he jogged forward. He was aiming to pass well to the right of the group.

Through her little peep-hole, Sophie saw the Fleshlumpeating Giant moving over to intercept them. He didn't hurry. He just loped over casually to a point where the BFG would have to pass. The others loped after him. Sophie counted nine of them altogether and she recognized the Bloodbottler in the middle of them. They were bored. They had nothing to do until nightfall. There was an air of menace about them as they loped slowly across the plain with long lolloping strides, heading for the BFG.

'Here comes the runty one!' boomed the Fleshlumpeater. 'Ho-ho there, runty one! Where is you splash-winkling away to in such a hefty hurry?' He shot out an

enormous arm and grabbed the BFG by the hair. The BFG didn't struggle. He simply stopped and stood quite still and said, 'Be so kind as to be letting go of my hair, Fleshlumpeater.'

The Fleshlumpeater released him and stepped back a pace. The other giants stood around, waiting for the fun to start.

'Now then, you little grobsquiffler!' boomed the Fleshlumpeater. 'We is all of us wanting to know where you is galloping off to every day in the daytime. Nobody ought to be galloping off to anywhere until it is getting dark. The human beans could easily be spotting you and starting a giant hunt and we is not wanting that to happen, is we not?'

'We is not!' shouted the other giants. 'Go back to your cave, runty one!'

'I is not galloping to any human bean country,' the BFG said. 'I is going to other places.'

'I is thinking,' said the Fleshlumpeater, 'that you is catching human beans and keeping them as pets!'

'Right you is!' cried the Bloodbottler. 'Just now I is hearing him chittering away to one of them in his cave!'

'You is welcome to go and search my cave from frack to bunt,' the BFG answered. 'You can go looking into every crook and nanny. There is no human beans or stringy beans or runner beans or jelly beans or any other beans in here.'

Sophie crouched still as a mouse inside the BFG's pocket. She hardly dared breathe. She was terrified she might sneeze. The slightest sound or movement would give her away. Through the tiny peep-hole she watched the giants clustering around the poor BFG. How revolting they were! All of them had piggy little eyes and enormous mouths. When the Fleshlumpeater was speaking, she got a glimpse of his tongue. It was jet black, like a slab of black steak. Every one of them was more than twice as tall as the BFG.

Suddenly, the Fleshlumpeater shot out two enormous hands and grabbed the BFG around the waist. He tossed him high in the air and shouted, 'Catch him, Manhugger!'

The Manhugger caught him. The other giants spread out quickly in a large circle, each giant about twenty yards from his neighbour, preparing for the game they were going to play. Now the Manhugger threw the BFG high and far, shouting 'Catch him, Bonecruncher!'

The Bonecruncher ran forward and caught the tumbling BFG and immediately swung him up again. 'Catch him, Childchewer!' he shouted.

And so it went on. The giants were playing ball with the BFG, vying with each other to see who could throw him the highest. Sophie dug her nails into the sides of the pocket, trying to prevent herself from tumbling out when she was upside down. She felt as though she were in a barrel going over the Niagara Falls. And all the time there was the fearful danger that one of the giants would fail to catch the BFG and he would go crashing to the ground.



'Catch him, Meatdripper!' ...

'Catch him, Gizzardgulper!' ...

'Catch him, Maidmasher!' ...

'Catch him, Bloodbottler!' ...

'Catch him! ... Catch him! ... Catch him! ...'

In the end, they got bored with this game. They dumped the poor BFG on the ground. He was dazed and shattered. They gave him a few kicks and shouted, 'Run, you little runt! Let us be seeing how fast you is galloping!' The BFG ran. What else could he do? The giants picked up rocks and hurled them after him. He managed to dodge them. 'Ruddy little runt!' they shouted. 'Troggy little twit! Shrivelly little shrimp! Mucky little midget! Squaggy little squib! Grobby little grub!'

At last the BFG got clear of them all and in another couple of minutes the pack of

giants was out of sight over the horizon. Sophie popped her head up from the pocket. 'I didn't like that,' she said.

'Phew!' said the BFG. 'Phew and far between! They was in a nasty crotching mood today, was they not! I is sorry you was having such a whirlgig time.'

'No worse than you,' Sophie said. 'Would they ever *really* hurt you?'

'I isn't ever trusting them,' the BFG said.

'How do they actually catch the humans they eat?' Sophie asked.

'They is usually just sticking an arm in through the bedroom window and snitching them from their beds,' the BFG said.

'Like you did to me.'

'Ah, but I isn't eating you,' the BFG said.

'How else do they catch them?' Sophie asked.

'Sometimes,' the BFG said, 'they is swimmeling in from the sea like fishies with only their heads showing above the water, and then out comes a big hairy hand and grabbles someone off the beach.'

'Children as well?'

'Often chidders,' the BFG said. 'Little chidders who is building sandcastles on the beach. That is who the swimmeling ones are after. Little chidders is not so tough to eat as old grandmamma, so says the Childchewing Giant.'

As they talked, the BFG was galloping fast over the land. Sophie was standing right up in his waistcoat pocket now and holding on to the edge with both hands. Her head and shoulders were in the open and the wind was blowing in her hair.

'How else do they catch people?' she asked.

'All of them is having their own special ways of catching the human bean,' the BFG said. 'The Meatrippin Giant is preferring to pretend he is a big tree growing in the park. He is standing in the park in the dusky evening and he is holding great big branches over his head, and there he is waiting until some happy families is coming to have a picnic under the spreading tree. The Meatrippin Giant is watching them as they lay out their little picnic. But in the end it is the Meatripper who is having the picnic.'

'It's too awful!' Sophie cried.

'The Gizzardgulin Giant is a city lover,' the BFG went on. 'The Gizzardgulper is lying high up between the roofs of houses in the big cities. He is lying there snuggy as a sniggler and watching the human beans walking on the street below, and when he sees

one that looks like it has a whoppsy-good flavour, he grabs it. He is simply reaching down and snitching it off the street like a monkey taking a nut. He says it is nice to be able to pick and choose what you is having for your supper. He says it is like choosing from a menu.'

'Don't people *see* him doing it?' Sophie asked.

'Never is they seeing him. Do not forget it is dusky-dark at this time. Also, the Gizzardgulper has a very fast arm. His arm is going up and down quicker than squinkers.'

'But if all these people are disappearing every night, surely there's some sort of an outcry?' Sophie said.

'The world is a whopping big place,' the BFG said. 'It has a hundred different countries. The giants is clever. They is careful not to be skiddling off to the same country too often. They is always switchfiddling around.'

'Even so ...' Sophie said.

'Do not forget,' the BFG said, 'that human beans is disappearing everywhere all the time even *without* the giants is guzzling them up. Human beans is killing each other much quicker than the giants is doing it.'

'But they don't *eat* each other,' Sophie said.

'Giants isn't eating each other either,' the BFG said. 'Nor is giants *killing* each other. Giants is not very lovely, but they is not killing each other. Nor is crockadowndillies killing other crockadowndillies. Nor is pussy-cats killing pussy-cats.'

'They kill mice,' Sophie said.

'Ah, but they is not killing their own kind,' the BFG said. 'Human beans is the only animals that is killing their own kind.'

'Don't poisonous snakes kill each other?' Sophie asked. She was searching desperately for another creature that behaved as badly as the human.

'Even poisnowse snakes is never killing each other,' the BFG said. 'Nor is the most fearsome creatures like tigers and rhinostosterisses. None of them is ever killing their own kind. Has you ever thought about that?'

Sophie kept silent.

'I is not understanding human beans at all,' the BFG said. 'You is a human bean and you is saying it is grizzling and horrigust for giants to be eating human beans. Right or left?'

'Right,' Sophie said.

'But human beans is squishing *each other* all the time,' the BFG said. 'They is shootling guns and going up in aerioplanes to drop their bombs on each other's heads every week. Human beans is always killing other human beans.'

He was right. Of course he was right and Sophie knew it. She was beginning to wonder whether humans were actually any better than giants. 'Even so,' she said, defending her own race, 'I think it's rotten that those foul giants should go off every night to eat humans. Humans have never done *them* any harm.'

'That is what the little piggy-wig is saying every day,' the BFG answered. 'He is saying, "I has never done any harm to the human bean so why should he be eating me?"'

'Oh dear,' Sophie said.

'The human beans is making rules to suit themselves,' the BFG went on. 'But the rules they is making do not suit the little piggy-wiggies. Am I right or left?'

'Right,' Sophie said.

'Giants is also making rules. Their rules is not suiting the human beans. Everybody is making his own rules to suit himself.'

'But you don't like it that those beastly giants are eating humans every night, do you?' Sophie asked.

'I do not,' the BFG answered firmly. 'One right is not making two lefts. Is you quite cosy down there in my pocket?'

'I'm fine,' Sophie said.

Then suddenly, once again, the BFG went into that magical top gear of his. He began hurtling forward with phenomenal leaps. His speed was unbelievable. The landscape became blurred and again Sophie had to duck down out of the whistling gale to save her head from being blown off her shoulders. She crouched in the pocket and listened to the wind screaming past. It came knifing in through the tiny peep-hole in the pocket and whooshed around her like a hurricane.

But this time the BFG didn't stay in top gear long. It seemed as though he had had some barrier to cross, a vast mountain perhaps or an ocean or a great desert, but having crossed it, he once again slowed down to his normal gallop and Sophie was able to pop her head up and look out once more at the view.

She noticed immediately that they were now in an altogether paler country. The sun had disappeared above a film of vapour. The air was becoming cooler every minute. The land was flat and treeless and there seemed to be no colour in it at all.

Every minute, the mist became thicker. The air became colder still and everything became paler and paler until soon there was nothing but grey and white all around them. They were in a country of swirling mists and ghostly vapours. There was some sort of grass underfoot but it was not green. It was ashy grey. There was no sign of a living creature and no sound at all except for the soft thud of the BFG's footsteps as he hurtled on through the fog.

Suddenly he stopped. 'We is here at last!' he announced. He bent down and lifted Sophie from his pocket and put her on the ground. She was still in her nightie and her feet were bare. She shivered and stared around her at the swirling mists and ghostly vapours.

'Where are we?' she asked.

'We is in Dream Country,' the BFG said. 'This is where all dreams is beginning.'



Dream-Catching

The Big Friendly Giant put the suitcase on the ground. He bent down low so that his enormous face was close to Sophie's. 'From now on, we is keeping as still as winky little micies,' he whispered.

Sophie nodded. The misty vapour swirled around her. It made her cheeks damp and left dewdrops in her hair.

The BFG opened the suitcase and took out several empty glass jars. He set them ready on the ground, with their screw tops removed. Then he stood up very straight. His head was now high up in the swirling mist and it kept disappearing, then appearing again. He was holding the long net in his right hand.

Sophie, staring upwards, saw through the mist that his colossal ears were beginning to swivel out from his head. They began waving gently to and fro.

Suddenly the BFG pounced. He leaped high in the air and swung the net through the mist with a great swishing sweep of his arm. 'Got him!' he cried. 'A jar! A jar! Quick quick quick!' Sophie picked up a jar and held it up to him. He grabbed hold of it. He lowered the net. Very carefully he tipped something absolutely invisible from the net into the jar. He dropped the net and swiftly clapped one hand over the jar. 'The top!' he whispered. 'The jar top quick!' Sophie picked up the screw top and handed it to him. He screwed it on tight and the jar was closed. The BFG was very excited. He held the jar close to one ear and listened intently.

'It's a winksquiffler!' he whispered with a thrill in his voice. 'It's ... it's ... it's ... it's even better. It's a phizzwizard! It's a golden phizzwizard!'

Sophie stared at him.

'Oh my, oh my!' he said, holding the jar in front of him. 'This will be giving some

THE BFG



'What *are* you talking about?' Sophie said. The BFG was getting more distressed every moment.

'Oh, bash my eyebones!' he cried, waving the jar in the air. 'I come all this way to get lovely golden dreams and what is I catching?'

'What *are* you catching?' Sophie said.

'I is catching a frightsome trogglehumper!' he cried. 'This is a *bad bad dream*! It is worse than a bad dream! It is a nightmare!'

'Oh dear,' Sophie said. 'What will you do with that?'

'I is never never letting it go!' the BFG cried. 'If I do, then some poor little tottler will

little tottler a very happy night when I is blowing it in!'

'Is it really a good one?' Sophie asked.

'A *good one*?' he cried. 'It's a golden phizzwizard! It is not often I is getting one of these!' He handed the jar to Sophie and said, 'Please be still as a starfish now. I is thinking there may be a whole swarm of phizzwizards up here today. And do kindly stop breathing. You is terribly noisy down there.'

'I haven't moved a muscle,' Sophie said.

'Then don't,' the BFG answered sharply. Once again he stood up tall in the mist, holding his net at the ready. Then came the long silence, the waiting, the listening, and at last, with surprising suddenness came the leap and the swish of the net.

'Another jar!' he cried. 'Quick quick quick!'

When the second dream was safely in the jar and the top was screwed down, the BFG held it to his ear.

'Oh *no*!' he cried. 'Oh mince my maggots! Oh swipe my swoggles!'

'What's the matter?' Sophie asked.

'It's a trogglehumper!' he shouted. His voice was filled with fury and anguish. 'Oh, save our solos!' he cried. 'Deliver us from weasels! The devil is dancing on my dibbler!'

be having the most curdblooding time! This one is a real kicksy bog-thumper! I is exploding it as soon as I get home!'

'Nightmares are horrible,' Sophie said. 'I had one once and I woke up sweating all over.'

'With this one you would be waking up *screaming* all over!' the BFG said. 'This one would make your teeth stand on end! If this one got into you, your blood would be freezing to icicles and your skin would go creeping across the floor!'

'Is it as bad as that?'

'It's worse!' cried the BFG. 'This is a real whoppsy grobswitcher!'

'You said it was a trogglehumper,' Sophie told him.

'It is a trogglehumper!' cried the exasperated BFG. 'But it is also a *bogthumper* and a *grobswitcher*! It is all three riddled into one! Oh, I is so glad I is clutching it tight. Ah, you wicked beastie, you!' he cried, holding up the jar and staring into it. 'Never more is you going to be bunkdoodling the poor little human-beaney tottlers!'

Sophie, who was also staring into the glass jar, cried out, 'I can see it! There's something in there!'

'Of course there is something in there,' the BFG said. 'You is looking at a frightsome trogglehumper.'

'But you told me dreams were invisible.'

'They is always invisible until they is *captured*,' the BFG told her. 'After that they is losing a little of their invisibility. We is seeing this one very clearly.'

Inside the jar Sophie could see the faint scarlet outline of something that looked like a mixture between a blob of gas and a bubble of jelly. It was moving violently, thrashing against the sides of the jar and forever changing shape.



'It's wiggling all over the place!' Sophie cried. 'It's fighting to get out! It'll bash itself to bits!'

'The nastier the dream, the angrier it is getting when it is in prison,' the BFG said. 'It is the same as with wild animals. If an animal is very fierce and you is putting it in a cage, it will make a tremendous rumpledumpus. If it is a nice animal like a cockatootloo or a foggelfrump, it will sit quietly. Dreams is exactly the same. This one is a nasty fierce bogrotting nightmare. Just look at him splashing himself against the glass!'

'It's quite frightening!' Sophie cried.

'I would be hating to get this one inside me on a darksome night,' the BFG said.

'So would I!' Sophie said.

The BFG started putting the bottles back into the suitcase.

'Is that all?' Sophie asked. 'Are we going?'

'I is so upset by this trogglehumping bogthumping grobswitcher,' the BFG said, 'that I is not wishing to go on. Dream-catching is finished for today.'

Soon Sophie was back in the waistcoat pocket and the BFG was racing home as fast as he could go. When, at last, they emerged out of the mist and came again on to the hot yellow wasteland, all the other giants were sprawled out on the ground, fast asleep.

A Trogglehumper for the Fleshlumpeater

'They is always having fifty winks before they goes scumpering off to hunt human beans in the evening,' the BFG said. He stopped for a few moments to let Sophie have a better look. 'Giants is only sleeping every then and now,' he said. 'Not nearly as much as human beans. Human beans is crazy for sleeping. Is it ever occurring to you that a human bean who is fifty is spending about *twenty* years sleeping fast?'

'I must admit that never occurred to me,' Sophie said.

'You should *allow* it to occur to you,' the BFG said. 'Imagine it please. This human bean who says he is fifty has been fast asleep for twenty years and is not even knowing where he is! Not even *doing* anything! Not even thinking!'

'It's a funny thought,' Sophie said.

'Exunckly,' the BFG said. 'So what I is trying to explain to you is that a human bean who says he is fifty is not fifty, he is only thirty.'

'What about me?' Sophie said. 'I am eight.'

'You is not eight at all,' the BFG said. 'Human bean babies and little chidders is spending half their time sleeping, so you is only four.'

'I'm eight,' Sophie said.

'You may *think* you is eight,' the BFG said, 'but you has only spent four years of your life with your little eyes open. You is only four and please stop higgling me. Titchy little snapperwhippers like you should not be higgling around with an old sage and onions who is hundreds of years more than you.'

'How much do giants sleep?' Sophie asked.

'They is never wasting much time snoozling,' the BFG said. 'Two or three hours is enough.'

'When do *you* sleep?' Sophie asked.

'Even less,' the BFG answered. 'I is sleeping only once in a blue baboon.'

between his two open lips and then it would burst with a splash and cover his face with saliva.

Taking infinite care, the BFG unscrewed the top of the glass jar and tipped the squiggling squirming faintly scarlet trogglehumper into the wide end of his long trumpet. He put the other end of the trumpet to his lips. He aimed the instrument directly at the Fleshlumpeater's face. He took a deep breath, puffed out his cheeks and then *whoof!* He blew!

Sophie saw a flash of pale red go darting towards the giant's face. For a split second it hovered above the face. Then it was gone. It seemed to have been sucked up the giant's nose, but it had all happened so quickly, Sophie couldn't be sure.

'We had better be skiddling away quick to where it is safe,' the BFG whispered. He trotted off for about a hundred yards, then he stopped. He crouched low to the earth. 'Now,' he said, 'we is waiting for the gun and flames to begin.'



They didn't have long to wait.

The air was suddenly pierced by the most fearful roar Sophie had ever heard, and she saw the Fleshlumpeater's body, all fifty-four feet of it, rise up off the ground and fall back again with a thump. Then it began to wriggle and twist and bounce about in the most violent fashion. It was quite frightening to watch.

'Eeeow!' roared the Fleshlumpeater. 'Ayeee! Oooow!'

'He's still asleep,' the BFG whispered. 'The terrible trogglehumping nightmare is

Sophie, peeping out from her pocket, examined the nine sleeping giants. They looked even more grotesque now than when they were awake. Sprawled out across the yellow plain, they covered an area about the size of a football field. Most of them were lying on their backs with their enormous mouths wide open, and they were snoring like foghorns. The noise was awful.

Suddenly the BFG gave a jump in the air. 'By gumfrog!' he cried. 'I is just having the most whoopsey-whiffing idea!'

'What?' Sophie said.

'Wait!' he cried. 'Hold your horsefeathers! Keep your skirt on! Just you wait to see what I is going to bring about!' He galloped off fast to his cave with Sophie hanging on tight to the rim of the pocket. He rolled back the stone. He entered the cave. He was very excited. He was moving quickly. 'You stay where you is in my pocket, huggybee,' he said. 'We is doing this lovely bit of buckswashing both together.' He laid aside the dream-catching net but hung on to the suitcase. He ran across to the other side of the cave and grabbed the long trumpet thing, the one he had been carrying when Sophie had first seen him in the village. With the suitcase in one hand and the trumpet in the other, he dashed out of the cave.

What is he up to now? Sophie wondered.

'Peep your head up good,' the BFG said, 'then you will get a fine wrinkle of what is going on.'

When the BFG came near to the sleeping giants, he slowed his pace. He began moving softly. He crept on his toes towards the ugly brutes. They were still snoring loudly. They looked repulsive, filthy, diabolical. The BFG tip-toed around them. He went past the Gizzardgulper, the Bloodbottler, the Meadripper, the Childchewer. Then he stopped. He had reached the Fleshlumpeater. He pointed at him, then he looked down at Sophie and gave her a big wink.

He knelt on the ground and very quietly he opened the suitcase. He took out of it the glass jar containing the terrible nightmarish trogglehumper.

At that point, Sophie guessed what was going to happen next.

Ouch, she thought. This could be rather dangerous. She crouched lower in the pocket so that only the top of her head and her eyes were showing. She wanted to be ready to duck out of sight very fast should anything go wrong.

They were about ten feet away from the Fleshlumpeater's face. The snoring-snorting noise he was making was disgusting. Every now and again a big bubble of spit formed

beginning to hit him.'

'Serves him right,' Sophie said. She could feel no sympathy for this great brute who ate children as though they were sugar-lumps.



'Save us!' screamed the Fleshlumpeater, thrashing about madly. 'He is after me! He is getting me!'

The thrashing of limbs and the waving of arms became more violent by the second. It was an awesome thing to watch such a massive creature having such mighty convulsions.

'It's Jack!' bellowed the Fleshlumpeater. 'It's the grueful gruncious Jack! Jack is after me! Jack is wackcrackling me! Jack is spikesticking me! Jack is splashplunking me! It is the terrible frightswiping Jack!' The Fleshlumpeater was writhing about over the ground like some colossal tortured snake. 'Oh, spare me, Jack!' he yelled. 'Don't hurt me, Jack!'

'Who is this Jack he's on about?' Sophie whispered.

'Jack is the only human bean all giants is frightened of,' the BFG told her. 'They is all absolutely terrified of Jack. They is all hearing that Jack is a famous giant-killer.'

'Save me!' screamed the Fleshlumpeater. 'Have mercy on this poor little giant! The beanstalk! He is coming at me with his terrible spikesticking beanstalk! Take it away! I is begging you, Jack, I is praying you not to touch me with your terrible spikesticking beanstalk!'

'Us giants,' the BFG whispered, 'is not knowing very much about this dreaded human bean called Jack. We is knowing only that he is a famous giant-killer and that he is owning something called a beanstalk. We is knowing also that the beanstalk is a fearsome thing and Jack is using it to kill giants.'

Sophie couldn't stop smiling.

'What is you griggling at?' the BFG asked her, slightly nettled.



'I'll tell you later,' Sophie said.



The awful nightmare had now gripped the great brute to such an extent that he was tying his whole body into knots. 'Do not do it, Jack!' he screeched. 'I was not eating you, Jack! I is never eating human beans! I swear I has never gobbled a single human bean in all my wholesome life!'

'Liar,' said the BFG.

Just then, one of the Fleshlumpeater's flailing fists caught the still-fast-asleep Meatdripping Giant smack in the mouth. At the same time, one of his furiously thrashing legs kicked the snoring Gizzardgulping Giant right in the guts. Both the injured giants woke up and leaped to their feet.

'He is swiping me right in the mouth!' yelled the Meatdripper.

'He is bungswoggling me smack in the guts!' shouted the Gizzardgulper.

The two of them rushed at the Fleshlumpeater and began pounding him with their fists and feet. The wretched Fleshlumpeater woke up with a bang. He awoke straight from one nightmare into another. He roared into battle, and in the bellowing thumping rough and tumble that followed, one sleeping giant after another either got stepped upon or kicked. Soon, all nine of them were on their feet having the most almighty free-for-all. They punched and kicked and scratched and bit and butted each other as hard as they could. Blood flowed. Noses went crunch. Teeth fell out like hailstones. The giants roared and screamed and cursed, and for many minutes the noise of battle rolled across the yellow plain.

The BFG smiled a big wide smile of absolute pleasure. 'I is loving it when they is all

having a good tough and rumble,' he said.

'They'll kill each other,' Sophie said.

'Never,' the BFG answered. 'Those beasts is always bishing and walloping at one another. Soon it will be getting dusky and they will be galloping off to fill their tummies.'

'They're coarse and foul and filthy,' Sophie said. 'I hate them!'

As the BFG headed back to the cave, he said quietly, 'We certainly was putting that nightmare to good use though, wasn't we?'

'Excellent use,' Sophie said. 'Well done you.'



Dreams

The Big Friendly Giant was seated at the great table in his cave and he was doing his homework.

Sophie sat cross-legged on the table-top near by, watching him at work.

The glass jar containing the one and only good dream they had caught that day stood between them.

The BFG, with great care and patience, was printing something on a piece of paper with an enormous pencil.

'What are you writing?' Sophie asked him.

'Every dream is having its special label on the bottle,' the BFG said. 'How else could I be finding the one I am wanting in a hurry?'

'But can you really and truly tell what sort of a dream it's going to be simply by listening to it?' Sophie asked.

'I can,' the BFG said, not looking up.

'But *how*? Is it by the way it hums and buzzes?'

'You are less or more right,' the BFG said. 'Every dream in the world is making a different sort of buzzy-hum music. And these grand swashboggling ears of mine are able to read that music.'

'By music, do you mean tunes?'

'I am not meaning tunes.'

'Then what *do* you mean?'

'Human beans are having their own music, right or left?'

'Right,' Sophie said. 'Lots of music.'



'And sometimes human beans are very overcome when they are hearing wonderful music. They are getting shivers down their spindles. Right or left?'

'Right,' Sophie said.

'So the music is saying something to them. It is sending a message. I do not think the human beans are knowing what that message is, but they are loving it just the same.'

'That's about right,' Sophie said.

'But because of these jumpsquiffing ears of mine,' the BFG said, 'I am not only able to *hear* the music that dreams are making but I am *understanding* it also.'

'What do you mean *understanding* it?' Sophie said.

'I can read it,' the BFG said. 'It talks to me. It is like a langwitch.'

'I find that just a little hard to believe,' Sophie said.

'I'll bet you are also finding it hard to believe in quogwinkles,' the BFG said, 'and how they are visiting us from the stars.'

'Of course I don't believe that,' Sophie said.

The BFG regarded her gravely with those huge eyes of his. 'I hope you will forgive me,' he said, 'if I tell you that human beans are thinking they are very clever, but they are not. They are nearly all of them notmuchers and squeakpips.'

'I *beg* your pardon,' Sophie said.

'The matter with human beans,' the BFG went on, 'is that they are absolutely refusing to believe in anything unless they are actually seeing it right in front of their own schnozzles. Of course quogwinkles is existing. I am meeting them oftenly. I am even

chittering to them.' He turned away contemptuously from Sophie and resumed his writing. Sophie moved over to read what he had written so far. The letters were printed big and bold, but were not very well formed. Here is what it said:

THIS DREAM IS ABOUT HOW I AM SAVING MY TEECHER FROM DROWNING. I AM DIVING INTO THE RIVER FROM A HIGH BRIDGE AND I AM DRAGGING MY TEECHER TO THE BANK AND THEN I AM GIVING HIM THE KISS OF DEATH ...



'The kiss of *what*?' Sophie asked.

The BFG stopped writing and raised his head slowly. His eyes rested on Sophie's face. 'I am telling you once before,' he said quietly, 'that I am never having a chance to go to school. I am full of mistakes. They are not my fault. I do my best. You are a lovely little girl, but please remember that you are not exactly Miss Knoweverything yourself.'

'I'm sorry,' Sophie said. 'I really am. It is very rude of me to keep correcting you.'

The BFG gazed at her for a while longer, then he bent his head again to his slow laborious writing.

'Tell me honestly,' Sophie said. 'If you blew this dream into my bedroom when I was asleep, would I really and truly start dreaming about how I saved my teacher from drowning by diving off the bridge?'

'More,' the BFG said. 'A lot more. But I cannot be squibbling the whole gropeflunking dream on a titchy bit of paper. Of course there is more.'

The BFG laid down his pencil and placed one massive ear close to the jar. For about thirty seconds he listened intently. 'Yes,' he said, nodding his great head solemnly up and down. 'This dream is continuing very nice. It has a very dory-hunky ending.'

'How does it end?' Sophie said. 'Please tell me.'

'You would be dreaming,' the BFG said, 'that the morning after you are saving the teacher from the river, you are arriving at school and you are seeing all the five hundred

pupils sitting in the assembly hall, and all the teachers as well, and the head teacher is then standing up and saying, "I am wanting the whole school to give three cheers for Sophie because she is so brave and is saving the life of our fine arithmetic teacher, Mr Figgins, who was unfortunately pushed off the bridge into the river by our gym teacher, Miss Amelia Upscotch. So three cheers for Sophie!" And the whole school is then cheering like mad and shouting bravo well done, and, for ever after that, even when you are getting your sums all gungswizzled and muddled up, Mr Figgins is always giving you ten out of ten and writing *Good Work Sophie* in your exercise book. Then you are waking up.'

'I like that dream,' Sophie said.

'Of course you like it,' the BFG said. 'It is a phizzwizard.' He licked the back of the label and stuck it on the jar. 'I am usually writing a bit more than this on the labels,' he said. 'But you are watching me and making me jumpsy.'

'I'll go and sit somewhere else,' Sophie said.

'Don't go,' he said. 'Look in the jar carefully and I think you will be seeing this dream.'

Sophie peered into the jar and there, sure enough, she saw the faint translucent outline of something about the size of a hen's egg. There was just a touch of colour in it, a pale sea-green, soft and shimmering and very beautiful. There it lay, this small oblong sea-green jellyish thing, at the bottom of the jar, quite peaceful, but pulsing gently, the whole of it moving in and out ever so slightly, as though it were breathing.

'It's moving!' Sophie cried. 'It's alive!'

'Of course it's alive.'

'What will you feed it on?' Sophie asked.

'It is not needing any food,' the BFG told her.

'That's cruel,' Sophie said. 'Everything alive needs food of some sort. Even trees and plants.'

'The north wind is alive,' the BFG said. 'It is moving. It touches you on the cheek and on the hands. But nobody is feeding it.'

Sophie was silent. This extraordinary giant was disturbing her ideas. He seemed to be leading her towards mysteries that were beyond her understanding.

'A dream is not needing anything,' the BFG went on. 'If it is a good one, it is waiting peaceably for ever until it is released and allowed to do its job. If it is a bad one, it is always fighting to get out.'

The BFG stood up and walked over to one of the many shelves and placed the latest jar among the thousands of others.

'Please can I see some of the other dreams?' Sophie asked him.

The BFG hesitated. 'Nobody is ever seeing them before,' he said. 'But perhaps after all I am letting you have a little peep.' He picked her up off the table and stood her on the palm of one of his huge hands. He carried her towards the shelves. 'Over here is some of the good dreams,' he said. 'The phizzwizards.'

'Would you hold me closer so I can read the labels,' Sophie said.

'My labels are only telling bits of it,' the BFG said. 'The dreams are usually much longer. The labels are just to remind me.'

Sophie started to read the labels. The first one seemed long enough to her. It went right round the jar, and as she read it, she had to keep turning the jar. This is what it said:

TODAY I AM SITTING IN CLASS AND I DISCOVER THAT IF I AM STARING VERY HARD AT MY TEECHER IN A SPESHAL WAY, I AM ABLE TO PUT HER TO SLEEP. SO I KEEP STARING AT HER AND IN THE END HER HEAD DROPS ON TO HER DESK AND SHE GOES FAST TO SLEEP AND SNORKLES LOUDLY. THEN I MARCHES THE HEAD TEECHER AND HE SHOUTS 'WAKE UP MISS PLUMRIDGE! HOW DARE YOU GO TO SLEEP IN CLASS! GO FETCH YOUR HAT AND COAT AND LEAVE THIS SCHOOL FOR EVER! YOU ARE SACKED!' BUT IN A JIFFY I AM PUTTING THE HEAD TEECHER TO SLEEP AS WELL, AND HE JUST CRUMPLES SLOWLY TO THE FLOOR LIKE A LUMP OF JELLY AND THERE HE LIES ALL IN A HEAP AND STARTS SNORKELLING EVEN LOUDER THAN MISS PLUMRIDGE. AND THEN I AM HEARING MY MUMMY'S VOICE SAYING WAKE UP YOUR BREAKFAST IS REDDY.



'What a funny dream,' Sophie said.

'It's a ringbeller,' the BFG said. 'It's whoppsy.'

Inside the jar, just below the edge of the label, Sophie could see the putting-to-sleep

GOES ALL FUNNY AND HE SAYS 'WHAT! WHO?' AND THEN HE SAYS 'YES SIR I UNDERSTAND SIR BUT SURELY IT IS ME YOU ARE WISHING TO SPEAK TO SIR NOT MY LITTLE SON?' MY FATHER'S FACE IS GOING FROM WHITE TO DARK PURPLE AND HE IS GULPING LIKE HE HAS A LOBSTER STUCK IN HIS THROAT AND THEN AT LAST HE IS SAYING 'YES SIR VERY WELL SIR I WILL GET HIM SIR' AND HE TURNS TO ME AND HE SAYS IN A RATHER RESPECTFUL VOICE 'ARE YOU KNOWING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES?' AND I SAY 'NO BUT I EXPECT HE IS HEARING ABOUT ME.' THEN I AM HAVING A LONG TALK ON THE PHONE AND SAYING THINGS LIKE 'LET ME TAKE CARE OF IT, MR PRESIDENT. YOU'LL BUNGLE IT ALL UP IF YOU DO IT YOUR WAY'. AND MY FATHER'S EYES ARE GOGGLING RIGHT OUT OF HIS HEAD AND THAT IS WHEN I AM HEARING MY FATHER'S REAL VOICE SAYING GET UP YOU LAZY SLOB OR YOU WILL BE LATE FOR SKOOL.



'Boys are crazy,' Sophie said. 'Let me read this next one.' Sophie started reading the next label:

I AM HAVING A BATH AND I AM DISCOVERING THAT IF I PRESS QUITE HARD ON MY TUMMY BUTTON A FUNNY FEELING COMES OVER ME AND SUDDENLY MY LEGS ARE NOT THERE NOR ARE MY ARMS. IN FACT I HAVE BECOME ABSOLUTELY INVISIBLE ALL OVER. I AM STILL THERE BUT NO ONE CAN SEE ME NOT EVEN MYSELF. SO MY MUMMY COMES IN AND SAYS 'WHERE IS THAT CHILD! HE WAS IN THE BATH A MINUTE AGO AND HE CAN'T POSSIBLY HAVE WASHED HIMSELF PROPERLY!' SO I SAY 'HERE I AM' AND SHE SAYS 'WHERE?' AND I SAY 'HERE' AND SHE SAYS 'WHERE?' AND I SAY 'HERE!' AND SHE YELLS 'HENRY! COME UP QUICK!' AND WHEN MY DADDY RUSHES IN I AM WASHING MYSELF AND MY DADDY SEES THE SOAP FLOATING AROUND IN THE AIR BUT OF COURSE HE IS NOT SEEING ME AND HE SHOUTS 'WHERE ARE YOU BOY?' AND I SAY 'HERE' AND HE SAYS 'WHERE?' AND I SAY 'HERE' AND HE SAYS 'WHERE?' AND I SAY 'HERE!' AND HE SAYS 'THE SOAP, BOY! THE SOAP! IT'S FLYING IN THE AIR!' THEN I PRESS MY TUMMY BUTTON AGAIN AND NOW I AM VISIBLE. MY DADDY IS SQUIFFY WITH EXCITEMENT AND HE

dream lying peacefully on the bottom, pulsing gently, sea-green like the other one, but perhaps a trifle larger.

'Do you have separate dreams for boys and for girls?' Sophie asked.

'Of course,' the BFG said. 'If I am giving a girl's dream to a boy, even if it was a really whoppsy girl's dream, the boy would be waking up and thinking what a rotbungling grinksludging old dream that was.'

'Boys would,' Sophie said.

'These here are all girls' dreams on this shelf,' the BFG said.

'Can I read a boy's dream?'

'You can,' the BFG said, and he lifted her to a higher shelf. The label on the nearest boy's-dream jar read as follows:

I AM MAKING MYSELF A MARVELUS PAIR OF SUCTION BOOTS AND WHEN I PUT THEM ON I AM ABLE TO WALK STRAIGHT UP THE KITCHEN WALL AND ACROSS THE CEILING. WELL, I AM WALKING UPSIDE DOWN ON THE CEILING WHEN MY BIG SISTER COMES IN AND SHE IS STARTING TO YELL AT ME AS SHE ALWAYS DOES, YELLING WOT ON EARTH IS YOU DOING UP THERE WALKING ON THE CEILING AND I LOOKS DOWN AT HER AND I SMILES AND I SAYS I TOLD YOU YOU WAS DRIVING ME UP THE WALL AND NOW YOU HAS DONE IT.



'I find that one rather silly,' Sophie said.

'Boys wouldn't,' the BFG said, grinning. 'It's another ringbeller. Perhaps you have seen enough now.'

'Let me read another boy's one,' Sophie said.

The next label said:

THE TELLYPHONE RINGS IN OUR HOUSE AND MY FATHER PICKS IT UP AND SAYS IN HIS VERY IMPORTANT TELLYPHONE VOICE 'SIMPKINS SPEAKING'. THEN HIS FACE GOES WHITE AND HIS VOICE

SAYS 'YOU ARE THE INVISIBLE BOY!' AND I SAY 'NOW I AM GOING TO HAVE SOME FUN,' SO WHEN I AM OUT OF THE BATH AND I HAVE DRIED MYSELF I PUT ON MY DRESSING-GOWN AND SLIPPERS AND I PRESS MY TUMMY BUTTON AGAIN TO BECOME INVISIBLE AND I GO DOWN INTO THE TOWN AND WALK IN THE STREETS. OF COURSE ONLY ME IS INVISIBLE BUT NOT THE THINGS I AM WEARING SO WHEN PEOPLE ARE SEEING A DRESSING-GOWN AND SLIPPERS FLOATING ALONG THE STREET WITH NOBODY IN IT THERE IS A PANIC WITH EVERYBODY YELLING 'A GHOST! A GHOST!' AND PEOPLE ARE SCREAMING LEFT AND RIGHT AND BIG STRONG POLICEMEN ARE RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES AND BEST OF ALL I SEE MR GRUMMIT MY ALGEBRA TEECHER COMING OUT OF A PUB AND I FLOAT UP TO HIM AND SAY 'BOO!' AND HE LETS OUT A FRIGHTSOME HOWL AND DASHES BACK INTO THE PUB AND THEN I AM WAKING UP AND FEELING HAPPY AS A WHIFFSQUIDDLER.



'Pretty ridiculous,' Sophie said. All the same, she couldn't resist reaching down and pressing her own tummy button to see if it worked. Nothing happened.

'Dreams are very mystical things,' the BFG said. 'Human beans are not understanding them at all. Not even their brainiest professors are understanding them. Has you seen enough?'

'Just this last one,' Sophie said. 'This one here.'

She started reading:

I HAVE WRITTEN A BOOK AND IT IS SO EXCITING NOBODY CAN PUT IT DOWN. AS SOON AS YOU HAVE READ THE FIRST LINE YOU ARE SO HOOKED ON IT YOU CANNOT STOP UNTIL THE LAST PAGE. IN ALL THE CITIES PEOPLE ARE WALKING IN THE STREETS BUMPING INTO EACH OTHER BECAUSE THEIR FACES ARE BURIED IN MY BOOK AND DENTISTS ARE READING IT AND TRYING TO FILL TEETHS AT THE SAME TIME BUT NOBODY MINDS BECAUSE THEY ARE ALL READING IT TOO IN THE DENTIST'S CHAIR. DRIVERS ARE READING IT WHILE DRIVING AND CARS ARE CRASHING ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. BRAIN SURGEONS ARE READING IT WHILE THEY ARE OPERATING ON BRAINS AND AIRLINE PILOTS ARE READING IT AND GOING TO

TIMBUCTOO INSTEAD OF LONDON. FOOTBALL PLAYERS IS READING IT ON THE FIELD BECAUSE THEY CAN'T PUT IT DOWN AND SO IS OLIMPICK RUNNERS WHILE THEY IS RUNNING. EVERYBODY HAS TO SEE WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT IN MY BOOK AND WHEN I WAKE UP I IS STILL TINGLING WITH EXCITEMENT AT BEING THE GREATEST RITER THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN UNTIL MY MUMMY COMES IN AND SAYS I WAS LOOKING AT YOUR ENGLISH EXERCISE BOOK LAST NITE AND REALLY YOUR SPELLING IS ATROSHUS SO IS YOUR PUNTULASHON.



'That's enough for now,' the BFG said. 'There is dillions more but my arm is getting tired holding you up.'

'What are all those over there?' Sophie said. 'Why have they got such tiny labels?'

'That,' the BFG said, 'is because one day I is catching so many dreams I is not having the time or energy to write out long labels. But there is enough to remind me.'

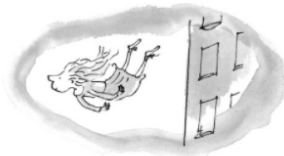
'Can I look?' Sophie said.

The long-suffering BFG carried her across to the jars she was pointing to. Sophie read them rapidly, one after the other:

I IS CLIMBING MOUNT EVERAST WITH JUST MY PUSSY-CAT FOR CUMPANY.



I IS ABEL TO JUMP OUT OF ANY HIGH WINDOW AND FLOTE DOWN SAFELY.



I HAS A PET BEE THAT MAKES ROCK AND ROLL MUSIK WHEN IT FLIES.



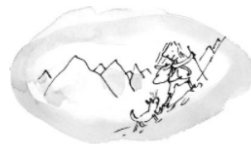
'What amazes me,' Sophie said, 'is how you ever learned to write in the first place.'

'Ah,' said the BFG. 'I has been wondering how long it is before you is asking me that.'

'Considering you never went to school, I think it's quite marvellous,' Sophie said.

'How *did* you learn?'

The BFG crossed the cave and opened a tiny secret door in the wall. He took out a book, very old and tattered. By human standards, it was an ordinary sized book, but it looked like a postage stamp in his huge hand.



I IS INVENTING A CAR THAT RUNS ON TOOTHPASTE.



I IS ABLE TO MAKE THE ELEKTRIK LITES GO ON AND OFF JUST BY WISHING IT.



I IS ONLY AN EIGHT YEAR OLD LITTLE BOY BUT I IS GROWING A SPLENDID BUSHY BEARD AND ALL THE OTHER BOYS IS JALOUS.

'One night,' he said, 'I is blowing a dream through a window and I sees this book lying on the little boy's bedroom table. I wanted it so very badly, you understand. But I is refusing to steal it. I would never do that.'

'So how did you get it?' Sophie asked.

'I *borrowed* it,' the BFG said, smiling a little. 'Just for a short time I borrowed it.'

'How long have you had it?' Sophie asked.



'Perhaps only about eighty years,' the BFG said. 'Soon I shall be putting it back.'

'And that's how you taught yourself to write?' Sophie asked him.

'I is reading it hundreds of times,' the BFG said. 'And I is still reading it and teaching new words to myself and how to write them. It is the most scrumdiddlyumptious story.'

Sophie took the book out of his hand. '*Nicholas Nickleby*,' she read aloud.

'By Dahl's Chickens,' the BFG said.

'By *who*?' Sophie said.

Just then, there came a tremendous noise of galloping feet from outside the cave.

'What's that?' Sophie cried.

'That is all the giants zippfizzing off to another country to guzzle human beans,' the BFG said. He quickly popped Sophie into his waistcoat pocket, then hurried to the cave entrance and rolled back the stone.

Sophie, peeping out of her spy-hole, saw all nine of the fearsome giants coming past at full gallop.

'Where is you off to tonight?' shouted the BFG.

'We is all of us flushbunking off to England tonight,' answered the Fleshlumpeater as they went galloping past. 'England is a luctuous land and we is fancying a few nice little English chiddlers.'

'I,' shouted the Maidmasher, 'is knowing where there is a gigglehouse for girls and I

is guzzling myself full as a frothblower!'

'And I knows where there is a bogglebox for boys!' shouted the Gizzardgulper. 'All I has to do is reach in and grab myself a handful! English boys is tasting extra lickswishy!'

In a few seconds, the nine galloping giants were out of sight.

'What *did* he mean?' Sophie said, poking her head out of the pocket. 'What is a gigglehouse for girls?'

'He is meaning a girls' school,' the BFG said. 'He will be eating them by the bundle.'

'Oh no!' cried Sophie.

'And boys from a boys' school,' said the BFG.

'It mustn't happen!' Sophie cried out. 'We've got to stop them! We can't just sit here and do nothing!'

'There's not a thing we can do,' the BFG said. 'We is helpless as horsefeathers.' He sat down on a large craggy blue rock near the entrance to his cave. He took Sophie from his pocket and put her beside him on the rock. 'It is now quite safe for you to be outside until they is coming back,' he said.

The sun had dipped below the horizon and it was getting dark.



The Great Plan

'We've absolutely *got* to stop them!' Sophie cried. 'Put me back in your pocket quick and we'll chase after them and warn everyone in England they're coming.'

'Redunculus and *um*-possiple,' the BFG said. 'They is going two times as fast as me and they is finishing their guzzle before we is halfway.'

'But we can't just sit here doing nothing!' Sophie cried. 'How many girls and boys are they going to eat tonight?'

'Many,' the BFG said. 'The Fleshlumpeater Giant alone has a most squackling whoppsy appetite.'

'Will he snatch them out of their beds while they're sleeping?'

'Like peas out of a poddle,' the BFG said.

'I can't bear to think of it!' Sophie cried.

'Then don't,' the BFG said. 'For years and years I is sitting here on this very rock every night after night when they is galloping away, and I is feeling so sad for all the human beans they is going to gobble up. But I has had to get used to it. There is nothing I can do. If I wasn't a titchy little runty giant only twenty-four feet high then I would be stopping them. But that is absolutely out of the window.'

'Do you always know where they're going?' Sophie asked.

'Always,' the BFG said. 'Every night they is yelling at me as they go bootling past. The other day they was yelling "We is off to Mrs Sippi and Miss Souri to guzzle them both!"'

'Disgusting,' Sophie said. 'I hate them.'

She and the Big Friendly Giant sat quietly side by side on the blue rock in the gathering dusk. Sophie had never felt so helpless in her life. After a while, she stood up and cried out, 'I can't stand it! Just think of those poor girls and boys who are going to be eaten alive in a few hours' time! We can't just sit here and do nothing! We've got to go after those brutes!'



'How dare he!' Sophie cried.

'But Fleshlumpeater says there is too many soldiers around her Palace and he dursent try it.'

'He'd better not!' Sophie said.

'He is also saying he would like very much to guzzle one of the soldiers in his pretty red suit but he is worried about those big black furry hats they is wearing. He thinks they might be sticking in his throat.'

'I hope he chokes,' Sophie said.

'Fleshlumpeater is a very careful giant,' the BFG said.

Sophie was silent for a few moments. Then suddenly, in a voice filled with excitement, she cried out, 'I've got it! By golly, I think I've got it!'

'Got what?' asked the BFG.

'The answer!' cried Sophie. 'We'll go to the Queen! It's a terrific idea! If I went and told the Queen about those disgusting man-eating giants, I'm sure she'd do something about it!'

The BFG looked down at her sadly and shook his head. 'She is never believing you,' he said. 'Never in a month of Mondays.'

'I think she would.'

'Never,' the BFG said. 'It is sounding such a wonky tall story, the Queen will be

'No,' the BFG said.

'We must!' Sophie cried. 'Why won't you go?'

The BFG sighed and shook his head firmly. 'I has told you five or six times,' he said, 'and the third will be the last. I is *never* showing myself to human beans.'

'Why ever not?'

'If I do, they will be putting me in the zoo with all the jiggyraffes and cattypiddlers.'

'Nonsense,' Sophie said.

'And they will be sending *you* straight back to a norphanage,' the BFG went on. 'Grown-up human beans is not famous for their kindnesses. They is all squifflerotters and grinksludgers.'

'That simply isn't true!' Sophie cried angrily. 'Some of them are very kind indeed.'

'Who?' the BFG said. 'Name one.'

'The Queen of England,' Sophie said. 'You can't call her a squifflerotter or a grinksludger.'

'Well ...' the BFG said.

'You can't call her a squeakpip or a notmucher either,' Sophie said, getting angrier and angrier.

'The Fleshlumpeater is longing dearly to guzzle her up,' the BFG said, smiling a little now.

'Who, the *Queen*?' Sophie cried, aghast.

'Yes,' the BFG answered. 'Flesh lumpeater says he is never eating queen and he thinks perhaps she has an especially scrumdiddlyumptious flavour.'

laughing and saying "What awful rubbsquash!"

'She would not!'

'Of course she would,' the BFG said. 'I has told you before that human beans is simply not *believing* in giants.'

'Then it's up to us to find a way of *making* her believe in them,' Sophie said.

'And how is you getting in to see the Queen anyway?' the BFG asked.

'Now hold on a sec,' Sophie said. 'Just you hold on a sec because I've got another idea.'

'Your ideas is full of crodswoggle,' the BFG said.

'Not this one,' Sophie said. 'You say that if we tell the Queen, she would never believe us?'

'I is certain she wouldn't,' the BFG said.

'But we aren't *going* to tell her!' Sophie said excitedly. 'We don't *have* to tell her! We'll make her *dream* it!'

'That is an even more frothbungling suggestion,' the BFG said. 'Dreams is lots of fun but nobody is believing in dreams either. You is only believing in a dream while you is actually dreaming it. But as soon as you is waking up you is saying "Oh thank goodness it was only a dream".'

'Don't you worry about that part of it,' Sophie said. 'I can fix that.'

'Never can you fix it,' the BFG said.

'I can! I swear I can! But first of all, let me ask you a very important question. Here it is. Can you make a person dream absolutely anything in the world?'

'Anything you like,' the BFG said proudly.

'If I said I wanted to dream that I was in a flying bathtub with silver wings, could you make me dream it?'

'I could,' the BFG said.

'But how?' Sophie said. 'You obviously don't have exactly that dream in your collection.'

'I do not,' the BFG said. 'But I could soon be mixing it up.'

'How could you mix it up?'

'It is a little bit like mixing a cake,' the BFG said. 'If you is putting the right amounts of all the different things into it, you is making the cake come out any way you want, sugary, spongy curranty, Christmassy or grobswitchy. It is the same with dreams.'

'Go on,' Sophie said.

'I has dillions of dreams on my shelves, right or left?'

'Right,' Sophie said.

'I has dreams about bathtubs, lots of them. I has dreams about silver wings. I has dreams about flying. So all I has to do is mix those dreams together in the proper way and I is very quickly making a dream where you is flying in a bathtub with silver wings.'

'I see what you mean,' Sophie said. 'But I didn't know you could mix one dream with another.'

'Dreams *like* being mixed,' the BFG answered. 'They is getting very lonesome all by themselves in those glassy bottles.'

'Right,' Sophie said. 'Now then, do you have dreams about the Queen of England?'

'Lots of them,' the BFG said.

'And about giants?'

'Of course,' the BFG said.

'And about giants eating people?'

'Swiggles of them,' the BFG said.

'And about little girls like me?'

'Those is commonest of all,' the BFG said. 'I has bottles and bottles of dreams about little girls.'

'And you could mix them all up just as I want you to?' Sophie asked, getting more and more excited.

'Of course,' the BFG said. 'But how is this helping us! I think you is barking up the wrong dog.'

'Now hold on,' Sophie said. 'Listen carefully. I want you to mix a dream which you will blow into the Queen of England's bedroom when she is asleep. And this is how it will go.'

'Now hang on a mintick,' the BFG said. 'How is I possibly going to get near enough to the Queen of England's bedroom to blow in my dream? You is talking dumbly.'

'I'll tell you that later,' Sophie said. 'For the moment please listen carefully. Here is the dream I want you to mix. Are you paying attention?'

'Very close,' the BFG said.

'I want the Queen to dream that nine disgusting giants, each one about fifty feet tall, are galloping to England in the night. She must dream their names as well. What are their names again?'

'Fleishlumpeater,' the BFG said. 'Manhugger. Bonecruncher. Childchewer. Meatdrripper. Gizzardgulper. Maidmasher. Bloodbottler. And the Butcher Boy.'

'Let her dream all those names,' Sophie said. 'And let her dream that they will be creeping into England in the depths of the witching hour and snatching little boys and girls from their beds. Let her dream that they will be reaching into the bedroom windows and pulling the little boys and girls out of their beds and then ...' Sophie paused. 'Do they eat them on the spot or do they carry them away first?' she asked.

'They is usually just popping them straight into their mouths like popcorn,' the BFG said.

'Put that in the dream,' Sophie said. 'And then ... then the dream must say that when their tummies are full, they will go galloping back to Giant Country where no one can find them.'

'Is that all?' the BFG said.

'Certainly not,' Sophie said. 'You must then explain to the Queen in her dream that there is a Big Friendly Giant who can tell her where all those beasts are living, so that she can send her soldiers and her armies to capture them once and for all. And now let her dream one last and very important thing. Let her dream that there is a little girl called Sophie sitting on her window-sill who will tell her where the Big Friendly Giant is hiding.'

'Where is he hiding?' asked the BFG.

'We'll come to that later,' Sophie said. 'So the Queen dreams her dream, right?'

'Right,' the BFG said.

'Then she wakes up and the first thing she thinks is oh what a horrid dream. I'm so glad it *was* only a dream. And then she looks up from her pillow and what does she see?'

'What *does* she see?' the BFG asked.

'She sees a little girl called Sophie sitting on her window-sill, right there in real life before her very eyes.'

'How is you going to be sitting on the Queen's window-sill, may I beg?' the BFG said.

'You are going to put me there,' Sophie said. 'And that's the lovely part about it. If someone *dreams* that there is a little girl sitting on her window-sill and then she wakes up and sees that the little girl *really* is sitting there, that is a dream come true, is it not?'

'I is beginning to see where you is driving to,' the BFG said. 'If the Queen is knowing

that part of her dream is true, then perhaps she is believing the rest of it is true as well.'

'That's about it,' Sophie said. 'But I shall have to convince her of that myself.'

'You said you is wanting the dream to say there is a Big Friendly Giant who is also going to talk to the Queen?'

'Absolutely,' Sophie said. 'You must. You are the only one who can tell her where to find the other giants.'

'How is I meeting the Queen?' asked the BFG. 'I is not wanting to be shot at by her soldiers.'

'The soldiers are only in the front of the Palace,' Sophie said. 'At the back there is a huge garden and there are no soldiers in there at all. There is a very high wall with spikes on it around the garden to stop people climbing in. But you could simply walk over that.'

'How is you knowing all this about the Queen's Palace?' the BFG asked.

'Last year I was in a different orphanage,' Sophie said. 'It was in London and we used to go for walks all around there.'

'Is you helping me to find this Palace?' the BFG asked. 'I has never dared to go hide and sneaking around London in my life.'

'I'll show you the way,' Sophie said confidently.

'I is frightened of London,' the BFG said.

'Don't be,' Sophie said. 'It's full of tiny dark streets and there are very few people about in the witching hour.'

The BFG picked Sophie up between one finger and a thumb and placed her gently on the palm of the other hand. 'Is the Queen's Palace very big?' he asked.

'Huge,' Sophie said.



'Then how is we finding the right bedroom?'

'That's up to you,' Sophie said. 'You're supposed to be an expert at that sort of thing.'

'And you is absolutely sure the Queen will not put me in a zoo with all the cattypiddlers?'

'Of course she won't,' Sophie said. 'You'll be a hero. And you'll never have to eat snozzcumbers again.'

Sophie saw the BFG's eyes widen. He licked his lips.

'You mean it?' he said. 'You really mean it? No more disgusting snozzcumbers?'

'You couldn't get one if you wanted to,' Sophie said. 'Humans don't grow them.'

That did it. The BFG got to his feet. 'When is you wanting me to mix this special dream?' he asked.

'Now,' Sophie said. 'At once.'

'When is we going to see the Queen?' he said.

'Tonight,' Sophie said. 'As soon as you've mixed the dream.'

'Tonight?' the BFG cried. 'Why such a flushbunking flurry?'

'If we can't save tonight's children, we can anyway save tomorrow's,' Sophie said.

'What is more, I'm getting famished. I haven't had a thing to eat for twenty-four hours.'

'Then we had better get crackling,' the BFG said, moving back towards the cave.

Sophie kissed him on the tip of his thumb. 'I knew you'd do it!' she said. 'Come on! Let's hurry!'



Mixing the Dream



It was dark now. The night had already begun. The BFG, with Sophie sitting on his hand, hurried into the cave and put on those brilliant blinding lights that seemed to come from nowhere. He placed Sophie on the table. 'Stay there please,' he said, 'and no chittering. I am needing to listen only to silence when I am mixing up such a knotty plexicated dream as this.'

He hurried away from her. He got out an enormous empty glass jar that was the size of a washing machine. He clutched it to his chest and hurried towards the shelves on which stood the thousands and thousands of smaller jars containing the captured dreams.

'Dreams about giants,' he muttered to himself as he searched the labels. 'The giants are guzzling human beans ... no, not that one ... nor that one ... here's one! ... And here's another! ...' He grabbed the jars and unscrewed the tops. He tipped the dreams into the enormous jar he was clutching and as each one went in, Sophie caught a glimpse of a small sea-green blob tumbling from one jar into the other.

The BFG hurried towards another shelf. 'Now,' he muttered, 'I am wanting dreams about gigglehouses for girls ... and about boggleboxes for boys.' He was becoming very tense now. Sophie could almost see the excitement bubbling inside him as he scurried back and forth among his beloved jars. There must have been fifty thousand dreams altogether up there on the shelves, but he seemed to know almost exactly where every one of them was. 'Dreams about a little girl,' he muttered. 'And dreams about me ... about the BFG ... come on, come on, hurry up, get on with it ... now where in the wonky world is I keeping those? ...'



After about a minute, the BFG stopped whisking. The whole bottle was now full to the brim with large bubbles. They were almost exactly like the bubbles we ourselves blow from soapy water, except that these had even brighter and more beautiful colours swimming on their surfaces.

'Keep watching,' the BFG said.

Quite slowly, the topmost bubble rose up through the neck of the jar and floated away. A second one followed. Then a third and a fourth. Soon the cave was filled with hundreds of beautifully coloured bubbles, all drifting gently through the air. It was truly a wonderful sight. As Sophie watched them, they all started floating towards the cave entrance, which was still open.

'They're going out,' Sophie whispered.

'Of course,' the BFG said.

'Where to?'

'Those are all little tiny dream-bits that I isn't using,' the BFG said. 'They are going back to the misty country to join up with proper dreams.'

'It's all a bit beyond me,' Sophie said.

'Dreams are full of mystery and magic,' the BFG said. 'Do not try to understand them. Look in the big bottle and you will now see the dream you are wanting for the Queen.'

Sophie turned and stared into the great jar. On the bottom of it, something was thrashing around wildly, bouncing up and down and flinging itself against the walls of the jar. 'Good heavens!' she cried. 'Is that it?'

And so it went on. In about half an hour the BFG had found all the dreams he wanted and had tipped them into the one huge jar. He put the jar on the table. Sophie sat watching him but said nothing. Inside the big jar, lying on the bottom of it, she could clearly see about fifty of those oval sea-green jellyish shapes, all pulsing gently in and out, some lying on top of others, but each one still a quite separate individual dream.

'Now we are mixing them,' the BFG announced. He went to the cupboard where he kept his bottles of frobscottle, and from it he took out a gigantic egg-beater. It was one of those that has a handle which you turn, and down below there are a lot of overlapping blades that go whizzing round. He inserted the bottom end of this contraption into the big jar where the dreams were lying. 'Watch,' he said. He started turning the handle very fast.

Flashes of green and blue exploded inside the jar. The dreams were being whisked into a sea-green froth.

'The poor things!' Sophie cried.

'They are not feeling it,' the BFG said as he turned the handle. 'Dreams are not like human beans or animals. They have no brains. They are made of zozimus.'

'That's it,' the BFG said proudly.

'But it's ... it's horrible!' Sophie cried. 'It's jumping about! It wants to get out!'

'That's because it's a trogglehumper,' the BFG said. 'It's a nightmare.'

'Oh, but I don't want you to give the Queen a nightmare!' Sophie cried.

'If she is dreaming about giants guzzling up little boys and girls, then what is you expecting it to be except a nightmare?' the BFG said.

'Oh, no!' Sophie cried.

'Oh, yes,' the BFG said. 'A dream where you are seeing little chiddlers being eaten is about the most frightsome trogglehumping dream you can get. It's a kicksy bogthumper. It's a whoppsy grobswitcher. It is all of them riddled into one. It is as bad as that dream I blew into the Fleshlumpeater this afternoon. It is worse.'

Sophie stared down at the fearful nightmare dream that was still thrashing away in the huge glass jar. It was much larger than the others. It was about the size and shape of, shall we say, a turkey's egg. It was jellyish. It had tinges of bright scarlet deep inside it. There was something terrible about the way it was throwing itself against the sides of the jar.

'I don't want to give the Queen a nightmare,' Sophie said.



'I am thinking,' the BFG said, 'that your Queen will be happy to have a nightmare if having a nightmare is going to save a lot of human beans from being gobbled up by filthy giants. Is I right or is I left?'

'I suppose you're right,' Sophie said. 'It's got to be done.'

'She will soon be getting over it,' the BFG said.

'Have you put all the other important things into it?' Sophie asked.

'When I am blowing that dream into the Queen's bedroom,' the BFG said, 'she will be dreaming every single little thingalingaling you are asking me to make her dream.'

‘About me sitting on the window-sill?’

‘That part is very strong.’

‘And about a Big Friendly Giant?’

‘I is putting in a nice long gobbit about him,’ the BFG said. As he spoke, he picked up one of his smaller jars and very quickly tipped the struggling thrashing trogglehumper out of the large jar into the small one. Then he screwed the lid tightly on to the small jar.

‘That’s it,’ he announced. ‘We is now ready.’ He fetched his suitcase and put the small jar into it.

‘Why bother to take a great big suitcase when you’ve only got one jar?’ Sophie said.

‘You could put the jar in your pocket.’

The BFG looked down at her and smiled. ‘By goggles,’ he said, taking the jar out of the suitcase, ‘your head is not quite so full of grimesludge after all! I can see you is not born last week.’

‘Thank you, kind sir,’ Sophie said, making a little curtsy from the table-top.

‘Is you ready to leave?’ the BFG asked.

‘I’m ready!’ Sophie cried. Her heart was beginning to thump at the thought of what they were about to do. It really was a wild and crazy thing. Perhaps they would both be thrown into prison.

The BFG was putting on his great black cloak.

He tucked the jar into a pocket in his cloak. He picked up his long trumpet-like dream-blower. Then he turned and looked at Sophie, who was still on the table-top.

‘The dream-bottle is in my pocket,’ he said. ‘Is you going to sit in there with it during the travel?’

‘Never!’ cried Sophie. ‘I refuse to sit next to that beastly thing!’

‘Then where is you going to sit?’ the BFG asked her.

Sophie looked him over for a few moments. Then she said, ‘If you would be kind enough to swivel one of your lovely big ears so that it is lying flat like a dish, that would make a very cosy place for me to sit.’

‘By gumbo, that is a squackling good idea!’ the BFG said.

Slowly, he swivelled his huge right ear until it was like a great shell facing the heavens. He lifted Sophie up and placed her into it. The ear itself, which was about the size of a large tea-tray, was full of the same channels and crinkles as a human ear. It was extremely comfortable.

‘I hope I don’t fall down your earhole,’ Sophie said, edging away from the large hole just beside her.

‘Be very careful not to do that,’ the BFG said. ‘You would be giving me a cronking earache.’

The nice thing about being there was that she could whisper directly into his ear.

‘You is tickling me a bit,’ the BFG said. ‘Please do not jiggle about.’

‘I’ll try not to,’ Sophie said. ‘Are we ready?’

‘Oweeee!’ yelled the BFG. ‘Don’t do that!’

‘I didn’t do anything,’ Sophie said.

‘You is talking too *loud*! You is forgetting that I is hearing every little thingalingaling fifty times louder than usual and there you is shouting away right inside my ear!’

‘Oh gosh,’ Sophie murmured. ‘I forgot that.’

‘Your voice is sounding like thunder and thrumpets!’

‘I’m so sorry,’ Sophie whispered. ‘Is that better?’

‘No!’ cried the BFG. ‘It sounds as though you is shootling off a bunderbluss!’

‘Then how can I talk to you?’ Sophie whispered.

‘Don’t!’ cried the poor BFG. ‘Please don’t! Each word is like you is dropping buzzbombs in my earhole!’

Sophie tried speaking right under her breath. ‘Is this better?’ she said. She spoke so softly she couldn’t even hear her own voice.

‘That’s better,’ the BFG said. ‘Now I is hearing you very nicely. What is it you is trying to say to me just now?’

‘I was saying are we ready?’

‘We is off!’ cried the BFG, heading for the cave entrance. ‘We is off to meet Her Majester the Queen!’

Outside the cave, he rolled the large round stone back into place and set off at a tremendous gallop.