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穆尔提默的涂鸦

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by

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CHAPTER ONE

‘Hello, Mort, what can I do for you today?’ Mr Fletcher shouted when Mortimer opened the door to the **bakery**. The baker always shouted when he was talking to Mortimer. Suddenly Mortimer was sorry that he hadn’t taken the longer way to the supermarket, where you just took the bread from the shelf. You didn’t have to speak and nobody shouted at you. But the supermarket was always full on Saturday afternoons. And he was late, because he had been playing computer games at the town’s new **Internet cafe**.

‘Are your mum’s friends coming to play bridge again? The same as usual then? A **loaf** of bread and some **scones**? How many scones do you want? Just shake your head when we come to the right number, son – one, two, three, . . . ,’ he shouted. But Mortimer was not **deaf**. He just had this ‘m-m-m-problem’.

There was no ‘m’ in the sentence ‘I want a loaf of bread’ so he could say it. But Mr Fletcher was shouting numbers at him.

‘Five, or do you want more, son? And how is your mum?’

Mortimer **hated** it when older people called his mother ‘mum’, as if he weren’t fourteen but were still a little boy. The baker had a large paper bag in one of his big red hands and with the other he was taking scones from the shelf and dropping them into the bag.

‘Seven then, eight?’

The door opened before Mortimer could say ‘No!’ and stop the baker. A woman who he had never seen before came into the shop. She was very beautiful.

bakery

['beikəri] *n.* 面包店

Internet cafe 网吧

loaf [ləʊf] *n.*
一块面包

scone [skəʊn]
n. 烤饼

deaf [def] *adj.*
聋的

hate [heit] *vt.*
痛恨



‘Morning, madam!’ shouted Mr Fletcher, but not as loudly as before. She smiled.

‘Just one moment, madam, we have to find out how many scones this young boy wants. He has this **handicap**, you see. We all help him. We have to speak for him, so to speak ... so to speak, ha ha,’ Mr Fletcher laughed and dropped more scones into the bag, ‘Nine ... ten.’

Mortimer saw that the woman was watching him and his face became very red. He often **blushed** and he hated it. Again he tried to say ‘just a loaf of bread’ but could not because this woman was looking at him and Mr Fletcher was still laughing. So he just shook his head.

‘Ten it is then. Here you are, son.’ The baker put the last scone in the bag and gave it to Mortimer. ‘Your mother can pay for the scones when she comes next time!’ he shouted to Mortimer, who was running out of the shop.

He ran for a long time, until he was almost home because he didn’t want to think of the bag in his hand. Scones, when his mother just wanted a loaf of bread! The bridge group was meeting at Mrs Smith’s house, not at Mortimer’s house. He knew that his mother would **sigh** again. She always sighed. His mother never really got angry with him. Maybe because she thought that he had a handicap. Just like the baker did.

He wanted to cry but didn’t. He was too old for that.

handicap

[ˈhændɪkæp]

n. 阻碍, 妨碍

(此处指

Mortimer 说话有点结巴的毛病)

blush [blʌʃ] vi.

脸红

sigh [saɪ] vi.

叹气

CHAPTER TWO

Brighton

['braɪtən] 布赖顿(英国城市)

Mortimer walked along Market Street and remembered how different his life had been in **Brighton**, when they were still living with his father.

His father often got angry with him when he did something wrong, but he did not talk to him like a little kid. In Brighton he never felt he was very different from other children.

But his father had a new wife and a new son now. They lived in their old house in Brighton.

divorce

[di'vɔ:s] *n.* 离婚

After the **divorce** Mortimer and his mother came to live with his grandma in this small town. Grandma died last year but his mother didn't want to move back to Brighton. Mortimer didn't ask why. She didn't want to talk about his father.

His father came once to see Mortimer, but they didn't talk a lot. He hadn't seen his father for two years. His mother said that his father was very busy.

company

['kʌmpəni] *n.* 公司

Mortimer had never seen his brother, but he was sure that he could speak better than Mortimer could although he was only three years old.

develop

[di'veləp] *vt.* 发展

Everything was better in Brighton. The boys at school knew that his father worked for a **company** which **developed** new computer games, and that he, Mortimer, could repair computers.

Momomo

Mortimer 的同学因他口吃而给他起的外号

You didn't have to talk a lot when you helped people with their computers.

'Hey **Momomo!**' somebody called. Mortimer looked up and saw Paul Henderson on the other side of the street. Mortimer **waved** at his classmate. Paul was not as bad as the others, but even he called him Momomo.

wave [weɪv]
vi. 挥手示意

You didn't have to talk a lot when you were helping people with their computers, but you could only help people if they already knew that you understood how computers worked.

When his school first got computers, Mr Finley, the maths teacher, had a problem with the teachers' computer. Mortimer was excited. Now he could show them that he was really good!

'I ... I ... I think I know what's wrong, I ... I ... I know a lot about **programm-gram-gram-mming-**'

'Mo-mo-mo knows about pro-gram-gram-gramming!'

shouted Ray, the oldest and most **horrible** boy in the class and everybody laughed. They laughed so much that some almost fell off their chairs.

programming
[ˈprəʊɡræmɪŋ]
n. 计算机编程

horrible
[ˈhɒrəbl̩] *adj.*
可恶的, 讨厌的

That happened a year ago. After that, he didn't speak a lot in class. But everybody at school still called him Momomo.

When he arrived at his street it was almost quarter past two.

As he came closer to their house, he saw Tessa's pink bike. His heart jumped. Tessa.

She was his only friend. They sat next to each other at school. She was new in the town, too. His heart hadn't jumped when he'd seen her for the first time. Of course, he didn't want to sit next to her. No other boy sat next to a girl in the classroom! And she was fat. This made other pupils laugh at her too.

Now, two years later, she wasn't so fat. Only a little maybe, but in the right places.

Mortimer opened the door.

'Mortimer, it's nearly quarter past two! You're late! Where have you been?' his mother shouted when she heard him. His heart was beating fast when he went into the kitchen and saw Tessa at the table.

'Tessa is here. Put the bread on the shelf, please.' His mother was finishing a cake. She didn't look up.



‘I was hungry so I bought some –’

‘Scones!’ Tessa finished his sentence. She had seen the bag full of scones. She was proud that she often knew what he wanted to say, so she spoke for him even when he didn’t need help.

5

His mother looked at him. Then she looked at the bag. She didn’t say anything but she was **probably** angry. She was going to take a cake to Mrs Smith, she didn’t need any scones.

‘I have the new L. J. Master Cool CD!’ Tessa couldn’t wait to tell him. ‘Do you want to **record** it?’

10

Mortimer still felt terrible. He put the bag on the kitchen table.

‘We’re going to mmmmmmy-’

‘His room, Mrs McNeal – to listen to the CD!’ Tessa got up, and they ran upstairs to his room.

15

probably

['prɒbəbli]

adv. 很可能

record [ri'kɔ:d]

vt. 录音, 录制

‘There’s **spaghetti** for your tea!’ his mother shouted after him. ‘I’ll be back between six and seven!’

He closed the door of his room.

She didn’t say she was angry with me, he thought. But she

5 was. Why didn’t she tell me she was angry?

spaghetti

ˈspæɡeti n. 意

大利面条

CHAPTER THREE

break down
(机器)损坏,
故障

tight [taɪt] *adj.*
紧的, 紧身的

pullover
[ˈpʊləvə] *n.*
套头衫

high-heeled
[ˈhaɪˈhiːld]
adj. 高跟的

battery
[ˈbætəri] *n.* 电
池

make-up *n.* 化
妆品

His room was small. There was a bed, a shelf on the opposite wall, a chair and a table next to the window, and a small cupboard for his clothes, but most of his clothes were on the chair. When he still had his computer, the room was almost too small for him. But the computer **broke down** last year.

Tessa was sitting on his bed and smiling

‘She’s so beautiful!’ thought Mortimer. She was wearing a **tight pullover**. Mortimer liked it a lot. But he didn’t like her new **high-heeled** shoes. They looked terrible and they made her taller than him. But, of course, he didn’t want to tell her how he felt about her shoes.

Shoes were not important.

Not when you loved someone.

He put new **batteries** into his CD player.

‘I’m sure that I put the CD in my bag.’ Tessa opened her bag. It was a big bag full of girl’s things, like **make-up**, a magazine, a Walkman, lots of notes from her friends, a big pink pencil and many other things.

He put the CD player on the table and sat down on the bed. Not next to her because she had put all the things from her bag on the bed between them. They made a small hill and Mortimer was afraid that it might get even higher and become a mountain because there were still so many things in her bag. When they were sitting down, he felt taller.

‘I’d like to tell her that I like it when she is smaller than me,’ he thought. But perhaps she didn’t want to be smaller? He wanted to say something nice to her, but what? Maybe

something about her long black hair. He didn't know what girls liked to hear.

'Oh no! I must have left it at home,' she said.

5 'What do you mean?' For a moment Mortimer didn't know what she was talking about.

'The CD,' she laughed. 'I think I left it at home. But I can give it to you at school on Monday.' She looked at him with her dark-blue eyes and smiled. 'You are my best friend. I must tell you something very important!'

10 'Wait a moment,' he said and jumped from the bed to get his 'Love Songs' CD from the shelf.

Now or never! He must tell her that he loved her and then maybe say something nice about her eyes.

But then she said, 'Jason kissed me!'

15 Mortimer's heart stopped for a moment. 'Love Songs' dropped from his hand. He felt terrible. But Tessa didn't know that. Her eyes were closed and she was smiling.

20 'I was in the park,' she said. 'I was walking past Jason and his friends, when he suddenly took my hand – and then he kissed me! And do you know what he said? He said, "I had to do that, you're so sweet!"' She sighed. 'Of course his friends laughed. I didn't know what to say, so I walked away.'

She smiled and then she sighed again.

25 The only thing that Mortimer wanted to do that moment was to beat Jason on the head with his 'Love Songs' CD.

Tessa opened her eyes and looked at him. 'What do you think?' But she didn't wait for an answer. As usual, she answered for him.

30 'Of course you're right, I never liked him because he called me a fat cow when he first saw me, but I was really fat two years ago and people can change, don't you think?'



be grown up 成熟

stutter ['stʌtə]
vi. 口吃, 结巴

Mortimer wasn't really listening. 'He's changed a lot. He works in his uncle's shop in the evenings and he **is** very **grown up**.'

'Why didn't I kiss her?' Mortimer thought. 'I was afraid to tell her that I love her because I **stutter**, but why didn't I kiss her?'

'Don't tell anybody about it!' she suddenly said. 'I've only told you because you're my very best friend. I didn't even tell Jane! I think that she's in love with Jason!'

Jane is Tessa's younger sister. She's thirteen.

'Remember when everybody always said that Jane was so beautiful and I was only her fat sister? ... Of course, Jane is beautiful,' she said quickly.

Suddenly Mortimer was very angry. She didn't really want to know what he thought about Jason. She didn't even give him a chance to say something.

‘I think I m-m-must learn for the geography test now.’
He only said that because he wanted to be alone. Tessa was not
very good at school and she was not very interested in
geography. And she hated homework, so she looked
surprised.

‘I’m sorry,’ said Mortimer, ‘but you know, M-M-M-M-M-M. . .’ He wanted to say Miller. Miller was their geography teacher.

‘Miller told us that we have to do better, I know.’ Tessa
finished his sentence again. She put her things back into her
bag and got up. ‘But who **cares about** geography? Well, I’m
going home. I’ll see you on Monday,’ she said and left the
room.

care about 关
心,在乎

CHAPTER FOUR

On Sunday morning Mortimer woke up and his first thought was that something terrible had happened to Tessa. But what?

Oh no – it was Jason!

Could Tessa really fall in love with a boy who only two years ago had called her a fat cow? OK, Jason had kissed her, but Tessa didn't really want a kiss from him, or did she? Mortimer tried to remember her words. Did she tell Jason that she didn't want a kiss? But Jason was big and strong. Perhaps she was afraid.

Mortimer jumped out of his bed. He threw all his clothes out of the cupboard until he found his favourite T-shirt. It looked almost clean.

'Where are you going? You haven't had breakfast!' his mother shouted after him. But Mortimer had more important things to do.

It was a sunny Sunday, too warm for October. Mortimer was going to London Road, where Tessa lived. She and her family lived in an old farmhouse outside the town.

He now knew what he must do.

CHAPTER FIVE

‘I’ve always loved you Tessa.’

‘Really? Oh Mortimer, why didn’t you tell me? I thought that you didn’t care about me!’

‘I’m going to take you to the cinema tonight, Tessa, but
5 first I’m going to **teach** that Jason a **lesson**. He’ll never try to kiss you again.’

teach sb. a
lesson 给某人
一个教训

‘Hi, Mortimer, you want to see Tessa, right?’ His daydreams stopped when Jane came to the door. No, he didn’t think that she was more beautiful than Tessa.

10 ‘Jason came to take her for a ride in his car. He’s got this **amazing** American **pick-up**; it’s really cool,’ she said.

amazing
[ə'meɪzɪŋ]
adj. 令人惊奇的

Mortimer didn’t know what to say.

‘I’m sure that she’ll be home late. They’ve gone to the seaside. Mum and dad are in London for the day. Tessa said
15 that when mum and dad come home, I must tell them that she’s with you, and that you’re learning for a geography test.’ Jane laughed. ‘It’s great. No parents, no sister! I feel free!’

pick-up n. 小
卡车

‘I ... I ... ,’ he started but then turned around and quickly walked away.

20 ‘Jason has a pick-up. What can I give her?’ Mortimer thought. ‘You can’t do anything in this town. There are only a few shops open on Sunday. I hate this town! But I’ll find something. I’ll make her see how much I love her.’