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Illustrated by Quentin Blake

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George's Marvellous Medicine

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This book is for doctors everywhere.

WARNING TO READERS:

Do not try to make George's Marvellous Medicine
yourselves at home. It could be dangerous.

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Grandma

‘I’m going shopping in the village,’ George’s mother said to George on Saturday morning. ‘So be a good boy and don’t get up to mischief.’

This was a silly thing to say to a small boy at any time. It immediately made him wonder what sort of mischief he might get up to.

‘And don’t forget to give Grandma her medicine at eleven o’clock,’ the mother said. Then out she went, closing the back door behind her.

Grandma, who was dozing in her chair by the window, opened one wicked little eye and said, ‘Now you heard what your mother said, George. Don’t forget my medicine.’

‘No, Grandma,’ George said.

‘And just try to behave yourself for once while she’s away.’

‘Yes, Grandma,’ George said.

George was bored to tears. He didn’t have a brother or a sister. His father was a farmer and the farm they lived on was miles away from anywhere, so there were never any children to play with. He was tired of staring at pigs and

hens and cows and sheep. He was especially tired of having to live in the same house as that grizzly old grunion of a grandma. Looking after her all by himself was hardly the most exciting way to spend a Saturday morning.

‘You can make me a nice cup of tea for a start,’ Grandma said to George. ‘That’ll keep you out of mischief for a few minutes.’

‘Yes, Grandma,’ George said.

George couldn’t help disliking Grandma. She was a selfish grumpy old woman. She had pale brown teeth and a small puckered-up mouth like a dog’s bottom.

‘How much sugar in your tea today, Grandma?’ George asked her.

‘One spoon,’ she said. ‘And no milk.’

Most grandmothers are lovely, kind, helpful old ladies, but not this one. She spent all day and every day sitting in her chair by the window, and she was always complaining, grouching, grumbling, griping about something or other. Never once, even on her best days, had she smiled at George and said, ‘Well, how are you this morning, George?’ or ‘Why don’t you and I have a game of Snakes and Ladders?’ or ‘How was school today?’ She didn’t seem to care about other people, only about herself. She was a miserable old grouch.

George went into the kitchen and made Grandma a cup of tea with a teabag. He put one spoon of sugar in it and no milk. He stirred the sugar well and carried the cup into the living-room.

Grandma sipped the tea. 'It's not sweet enough,' she said. 'Put more sugar in.' George took the cup back to the kitchen and added another spoonful of sugar. He stirred it again and carried it carefully in to Grandma.

'Where's the saucer?' she said. 'I won't have a cup without a saucer.'

George fetched her a saucer.



‘And what about a teaspoon, if you please?’

‘I’ve stirred it for you, Grandma. I stirred it well.’

‘I’ll stir my own tea, thank you very much,’ she said. ‘Fetch me a teaspoon.’

George fetched her a teaspoon.

When George’s mother or father were home, Grandma never ordered George about like this. It was only when she had him on her own that she began treating him badly.

‘You know what’s the matter with you?’ the old woman said, staring at George over the rim of the teacup with those bright wicked little eyes. ‘You’re *growing* too fast. Boys who grow too fast become stupid and lazy.’

‘But I can’t help it if I’m growing fast, Grandma,’ George said.

‘Of course you can,’ she snapped. ‘Growing’s a nasty childish habit.’

‘But we *have* to grow, Grandma. If we didn’t grow, we’d never be grown-ups.’

‘Rubbish, boy, rubbish,’ she said. ‘Look at me. Am I growing? Certainly not.’

‘But you did once, Grandma.’

‘Only *very little*,’ the old woman answered. ‘I gave up growing when I was extremely small, along with all the other nasty childish habits like