

MATILDA

NIGEL

Please don't tell her where I am Matilda, she'll—

MATILDA

Now!

NIGEL jumps onto the floor as THEY throw their coats onto him, burying him beneath, immediately forming a line for inspection. A moment later the TRUNCHBULL storms on. She is fuming. She looks around. All the KIDS avoid eye contact. All except MATILDA.

TRUNCHBULL

(pointing a fat finger at Matilda)

You, you suppurating spleen! Where is the maggot known as Nig-el?

Pause. MATILDA thinks.

MATILDA

He's over there under those coats.

All KIDS stare at Matilda, horrified at this betrayal. The TRUNCHBULL smiles, the smile of a cobra. MATILDA steps aside and the TRUNCHBULL heads to the coats (which begin to shake with fear).

Where he's been for the last hour actually.

TRUNCHBULL stops. Turns. Beat.

TRUNCHBULL

What? An hour?

MATILDA

Oh yes. You see unfortunately, Nigel suffers from the rare but chronic sleep disorder, narcolepsy. The condition is characterized by the sufferer experiencing bouts of chronic fatigue and falling suddenly asleep, often without knowing or any warning at all. You see he fell asleep and we put him in the coats for safety. Didn't we?

THEY stare at her, open mouthed.

Didn't we?

ALL KIDS

(overlapping)

Yes
definitely
of course
oh yeah
absolutely
Yeah, yeah.

MATILDA

You'd better hide. Quick! Blazers!

SNARK KID

Snarkolopsy.

At first the KIDS say nothing, but then start to agree, nodding. The TRUNCHBULL comes over to Matilda, suspicious. Looks down.

MATILDA

He'll probably think he's in bed when he wakes up.

At that moment NIGEL emerges, stretching.

NIGEL

(big yawn)

Is it time for school yet, mum?

(as if noticing the playground for the first time)

Hello? What am I doing here? Well... this isn't my bedroom at all! Oh, hello Miss Trunchbull.

The TRUNCHBULL knows there is something going on, but cannot put her finger on it. She is furious, shaking. But defeated. Suddenly...

TRUNCHBULL

Amanda Thripp!

#8a - Amanda Thripp / Pigtails

A small GIRL in pigtails steps forward.

AMANDA

(gulps)

Y... yes, Miss Trunchbull.

TRUNCHBULL

What have I told you about wearing pigtails? I hate pigtails!

AMANDA

But... my mummy likes them. She says they make me look pretty.

TRUNCHBULL

Then your mother...

(SHE grabs the girl by the hair)

is a twit!

SHE lifts Amanda off the floor. There is a yelp from the GIRL. The TRUNCHBULL starts to swing the girl around, slowly at first, but gaining more and more momentum, leaning back against her weight like a hammer thrower, until Amanda is a blur. She lets go. THEY watch as AMANDA sails off into the distance...

BIG KID

Look out! She's coming in to land!

BIG KID

Here she comes!

...to land with a crump. SHE gets up, dizzy, dazed, but with no apparent broken bones. The TRUNCHBULL looks back to Matilda.

TRUNCHBULL

You! What is your name?

MATILDA

Matilda. Matilda Wormwood.

TRUNCHBULL

Oh. So you're Wormwood, are you? I might have known. Well Wormwood, you have just made a very big mistake.

Leaves. The KIDS stare at Matilda in wonder. LAVENDER beams.

LAVENDER

Just so you all know—she's my best friend.

#8b - Mechanics

KIDS

Wow!

Wormwood Motors.

MR WORMWOOD enters talking on the phone, a mechanic following. Mr Wormwood is relieving himself of his jacket as HE walks.

MR WORMWOOD

Brand new stock sir. Yes sir, completely different cars, sir. Green hair? Yeah, it was erm, national green hair day, a celebration of all the wonderful green things in the world, like... lettuce and... snot. Tomorrow at one? Absolutely, sir. Bye-bye sir. Dosvidoodah.

Hangs up, pleased with himself. Turns to the mechanic.
Now that is how you do...