

*For Aileen, lover of  
onions and murder.  
Claire*

*This book is dedicated to  
my many enemies.  
Alasdair*

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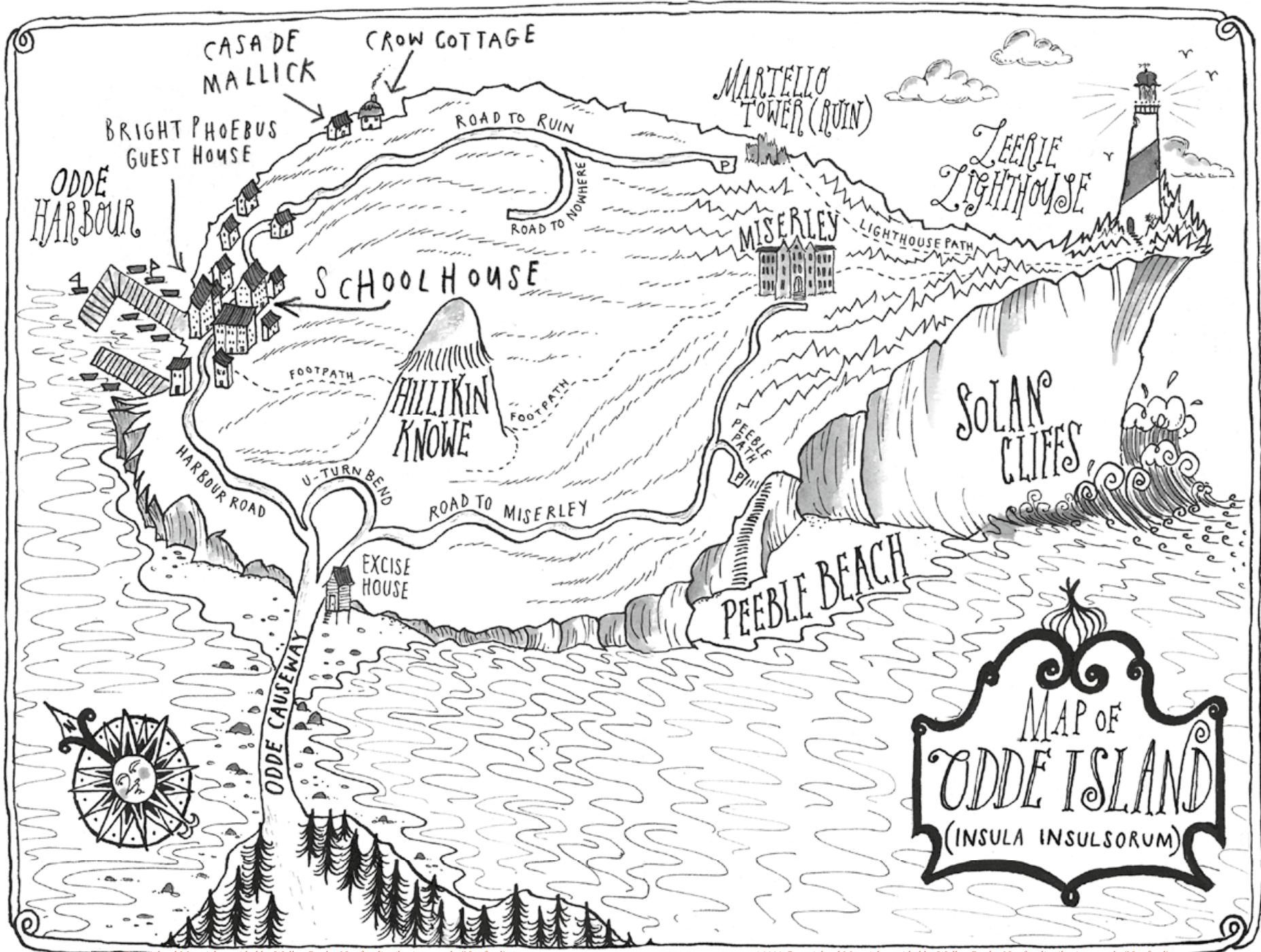
MONTGOMERY  
BONBON

# DEATH AT THE LIGHTHOUSE



**ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING**

**ILLUSTRATED BY CLAIRE POWELL**



CASA DE MALLICK

CROW COTTAGE

MARTELLO TOWER (RUIN)

LEERIE LIGHTHOUSE

ODDE HARBOUR

BRIGHT PHOEBUS GUEST HOUSE

ROAD TO RUIN

ROAD TO NOWHERE

MISERLEY

LIGHTHOUSE PATH

SCHOOLHOUSE

HILLKIN KNOWE

SOLAN CLIFFS

HARBOUR ROAD

FOOTPATH

FOOTPATH

U-TURN BEND

ROAD TO MISERLEY

PEEBLE PATH

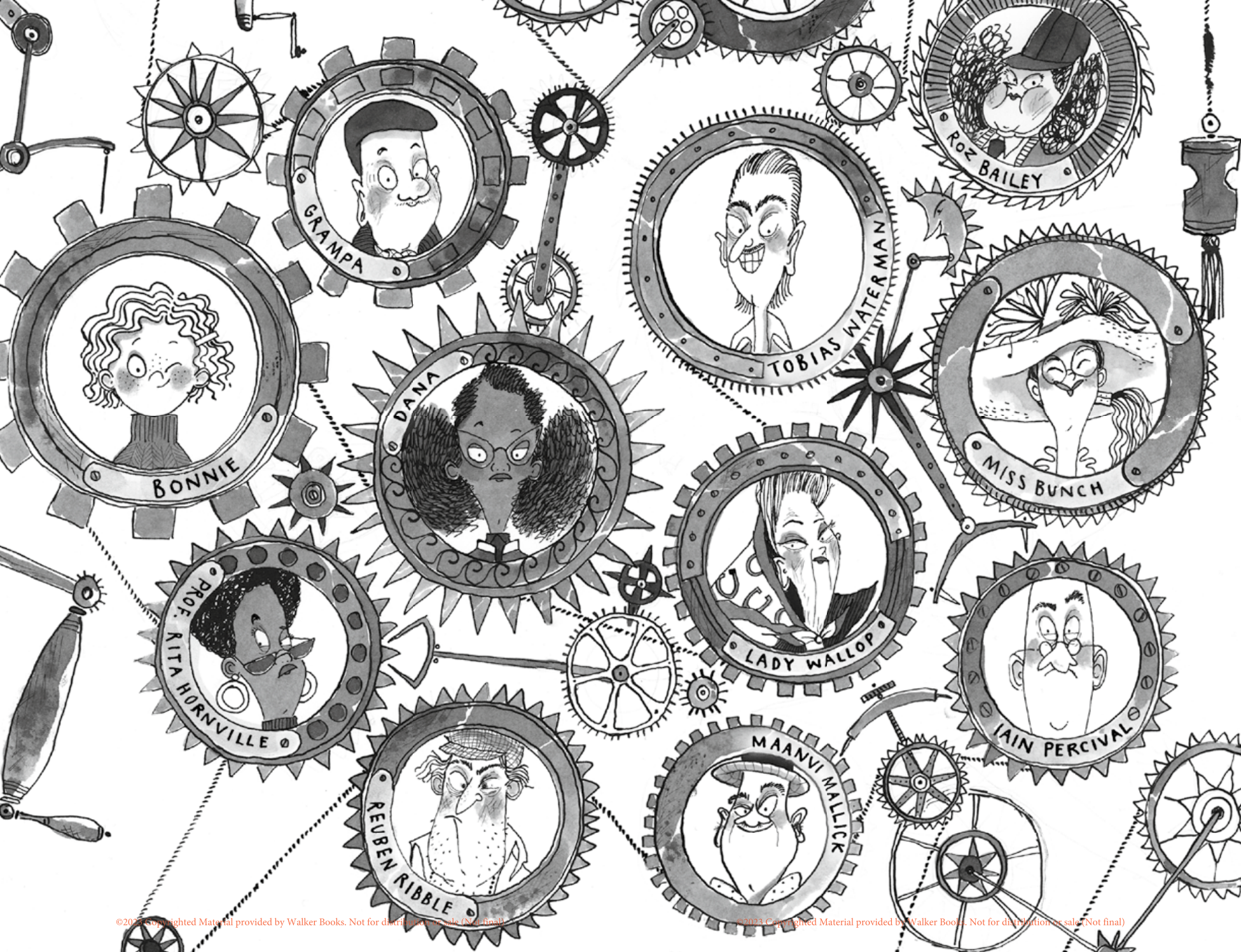
PEEBLE BEACH

EXCISE HOUSE

ODDE CAUSEWAY

MAP OF  
ODDE ISLAND  
(INSULA INSULSORUM)





GRAMPA

ROZ BAILEY

BONNIE

TOBIAS WATERMAN

MISS BUNCH

DANA

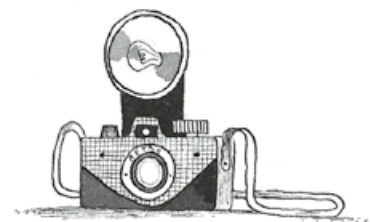
LADY WALLOP

PROF. RITA HORNVILLE

IAIN PERCIVAL

REUBEN RIBBLE

MAANVI MALLICK



## Chapter One Odde Island

The most troublesome thing about being a detective is that it is almost impossible to go on holiday.

That was what Bonnie was thinking to herself, seated in the old grey ice-cream van as it rumbled across the causeway to Odde Island. The vehicle's name was Bessie, and Grampa Banks was in the driver's seat. The former ice-cream vendor was snappily dressed as always, with a tailored cardigan and a silk cravat. His old-fashioned camera swung around his neck on a strap, bouncing every time Bessie hit a pothole.

Next to Grampa Banks was his granddaughter, Bonnie Montgomery.

Let us be clear: Bonnie was not a detective. She was an ordinary girl from a town called Widdlington – one of the most ordinary places in the entire galaxy. Ordinary ten-year-olds are not, ordinarily, allowed to go around solving mysteries. Everybody knows that. But, by an extraordinary coincidence, the world’s finest detective had a tendency to show up wherever Bonnie went.

Montgomery Bonbon was not a tall man. In fact, he was exactly the same height as Bonnie. He was never seen without his signature beret and his battered old raincoat.

A distinguished black moustache bristled proudly underneath his nose, and when he spoke, it was with *the foreign accent most mystérieux, non?*

No one knew that Bonnie Montgomery and the celebrated



foreign sleuth were one and the same person. No one apart from Bonbon’s loyal assistant and Bonnie’s loving grandfather, Grampa Banks. This was why Bonnie never got to enjoy a holiday. She rarely had time to unpack her bucket and spade before she found herself slapping on her alter ego’s fabulous false moustache.

“I’ve always wanted to visit Odde Island,” said Grampa Banks, as much to himself as to Bonnie. “The lighthouse, the beaches and the pageant – it’s meant to be a right royal spectacle.”

Grampa Banks’s enthusiasm was starting to rub off on Bonnie. This little getaway *had* to go more smoothly than their recent stay at Pinshaw Waterslide Park. That holiday had been ruined when Montgomery Bonbon had been called upon to track down the infamous Pinshaw Pooper. (Tragically, Bonnie and Grampa Banks were too late to stop the park’s number one log flume becoming a number *two* log flume.) And their last camping trip had been all but ruined when the great detective found himself on the trail of the Green Phantom of Crumberley End. The creature, which had so terrorized campers,

turned out to be Grampa Banks wearing his nightly avocado face mask.

With Bonbon around, even something as pleasant as a visit to a museum was liable to end in cold-blooded murder. Detectives are drawn towards mystery, you see – like new wellington boots towards a great big muddy puddle.

Bonnie looked out of the passenger window and saw the North Sea stretching away towards the horizon. Driving on Odde Causeway made her feel like a stone skimming across the surface of the water. It was a very strange kind of road, because it was only a road when the tide was out. In a few hours, the autumn sun would set, the tide would come in and Odde Causeway would

disappear beneath the waves. The island that was rising up before them would be completely cut off from the rest of the world, until the tide went out again.

Ahead, the sandy road gave way to pebbly beaches and treeless cliffs topped with long shaggy grass waving in the wind. To Bonnie, the craggy rocks looked like funny faces wearing glorious green wigs. The lopsided island sloped up, up, up towards its famous lighthouse. Bonnie felt lucky. The storms of the previous night had cleared up, just in time for their arrival, and now the sun shone down on the island, bathing it in a rosy gold light.



“There it is,” said Grampa Banks, nudging Bonnie cheerfully. “Odde Island!”

He was an experienced detective’s assistant, so he rarely missed little details like that.

“And if you think that’s good, just wait for the pageant. They’ve got fireworks and face painting and fabulous costumes. There’s a parade across the island, like summat you’ve never seen before. Sounds grand, doesn’t it? A week without murder.” He glanced at Bonnie, radiating optimism. “Just the ticket, eh?”

Bonnie smiled back at Grampa Banks. A week without murder did indeed sound grand. From the moment she had kissed her mum goodbye, Bonnie had been looking forward to watching the Odde Island Pageant, visiting the island’s famous clockwork lighthouse, digging a great big hole on the beach and then getting a bit bored.

She had stuffed Montgomery Bonbon’s disguise into her favourite yellow backpack and hidden it in her bedroom at home in Widdlington. Now Bonnie was free to have a quiet little holiday without mystery

or intrigue or shenanigans of any kind. And nothing was going to stop her.

# CLANG!

A red and white striped barrier crashed down across the road ahead, like an executioner’s axe. Grampa Banks’s reflexes had been honed over many years of driving Bessie. You never knew when an ice-cream enthusiast was going to leap out in front of you, in search of a Raspberry Surprise. A crêpe-soled shoe slammed into the brake.

# SCREEEEEEEE!

Bonnie felt herself lurch forward as the van squealed to a halt. Her hand flew to her face to stop her moustache from whizzing off and sticking to the windscreen. At the last second, she remembered that she was not wearing it.

“Flamin’ Nora!” cried Grampa Banks, before adding, “Pardon my language” under his breath.

Grampa Banks was an excellent driver, and he was not a man who easily lost his cool. But Bonnie knew there was one thing he could not stand, and that was

*rudeness*. Clattering a barrier down in front of two innocent holidaymakers seemed exceedingly rude to Bonnie. Her grandfather's eyebrows had little experience when it came to frowning, but they were making a good go of it now.

"What the bloomin' heck is this all about?" he asked no one in particular.

The striped barrier was attached to a small building, raised up from the beach on funny wooden stilts. According to a weather-beaten sign, it was the Odde Island Excise House. A little door opened, and Bonnie saw a man emerge. He carried a clipboard and there was a brass bugle dangling from his belt. The man was completely bald, apart from a tiny quiff on the top of his head fluttering in the sea breeze. He marched down a flight of steps towards Bessie, wedged a tiny pair of glasses onto the end of his nose and rapped smartly on the driver's window.

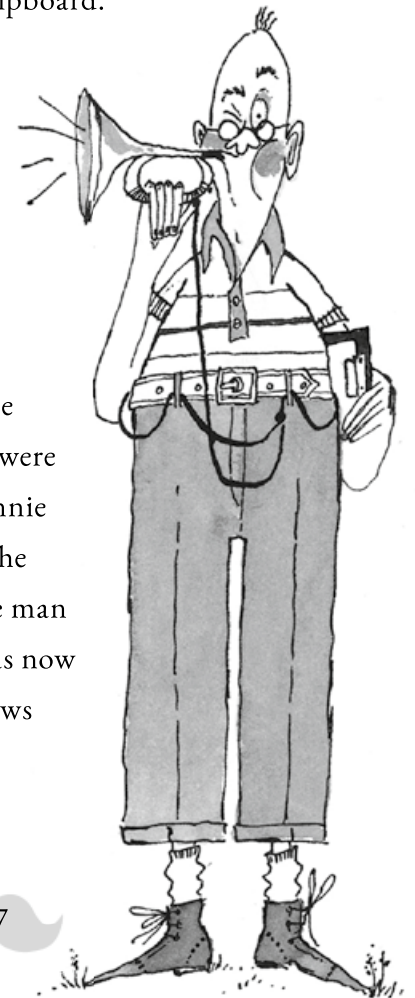
As Grampa Banks wound down the window, the man lifted the brass bugle to his lips and blew a short, sharp, eardrum-shattering...

"Oi!" said Grampa Banks, jamming his fingers in his ears. "What d'you think you're playing at?!"

Instead of answering, the man took a deep, deep breath. It was so deep Bonnie was convinced she could see tufts of grass bending towards him. Then he began to read from his clipboard.

"ON behalf of the Odde Island ORDER of the Golden Fleece, it is MY privilege to welcome you in YOUR capacity as most welcome visitors TO our island..."

Back in Widdlington, the inhabitants of Odde Island were known as Oddities, and Bonnie was beginning to see why. She glanced between the strange man and Grampa Banks, who was now frowning so hard his eyebrows had formed one big angry monobrow.



“Now, look here—” began Grampa Banks, but the Oddity continued.

“...and IN my capacity as Iain Percival, exciseman-in-chief OF Odde Island, permit me to remind you that ALL varieties of the bulb *Allium cepa* ARE held as contraband herein, heretofore, hereupon and hereafter.”

Grampa Banks looked at Bonnie, obviously hoping she had made sense of all that waffle. She shook her head.

“Excuse me?” said Grampa Banks.

“On Odde Island,” said Iain Percival impatiently, as if this were the most obvious thing in the world, “onions are banned!”

“You what?” spluttered Grampa Banks.

“By order of the Order of the Golden Fleece,” added Iain Percival, as if that explained anything.

The exciseman thrust a pamphlet into Grampa Banks’s hands. It was entitled *Know Your Onions* and it had a picture of an onion on the front with a big cross through it.

“Well,” puffed Grampa Banks, tucking the

pamphlet into his cardigan and coaxing his eyebrows back into their usual positions, “we haven’t got any onions. Not a single one. So you can open up your little barrier and we’ll be on our merry—”

Bonnie coughed, and both men turned to look at her.

“We ... um...” she began. “We haven’t quite finished this bag of Cheese and Onion Crunchy Puffs...”

She crinkled a half-empty crisp packet out from one of Bessie’s crevices, and Iain Percival reacted as if she had slapped him in the face with wet seaweed.

“Contrabaaaaand!” he exclaimed. “Call the Onion Disposal Unit!”

The Onion Disposal Unit turned out to be Iain Percival wearing a large hat that said *Onion Disposal Unit* and wielding a large wooden mallet. He glared at Bonnie and Grampa Banks while he smashed the offending Crunchy Puffs flat with the mallet.

“Flagrant disregard for local ordinances!”

**CRUNCH!**

“Endangering the delicate noses of islanders AND the sensitive beaks of indigenous seabirds!”

**CRUNCH!**

“I could turn you both away right now!”

**CRUNCH!**

Bonnie had never seen such a big fuss over nothing. And she had once witnessed Inspector Prashanti Sands, Widdlington Constabulary’s most plodding detective, attempting to run the Splat the Rat stall at the town fête. By the end of the day, the inspector had arrested three children, kicked a vicar and splatted a bottle of fizzy wine.

Eventually, after scribbling copious notes on his clipboard, Iain Percival let Grampa Banks off with a stern warning. The barrier finally lifted, Bessie grumbled back into life and rolled on.

Bonnie Montgomery was on holiday ... at last.

“That business about the Order of the Golden Fleece,” began Grampa Banks, “did that make any sense to you?”

“Nope!” said Bonnie, watching the road rise up and down as undulating sand dunes turned into grassy hillocks. They were heading for Odde Harbour, the multicoloured scattering of buildings that was the closest thing to a town on the island.

“It didn’t strike you as ... *mysterious* at all?” he asked.

“Well,” admitted Bonnie, “it was a bit weird, I suppose. But this is *Odde* Island.”

“You can say that again. That Percival bloke is more waffly than a Belgian buffet. But look at me, worrying about nothing. The important thing is, we are going to have a lovely time, right?”

“Right,” said Bonnie with determination.

“And nobody,” said Grampa Banks, “and I mean *nobody*, is going to get murdered. Right?”

“Right!”

Wrong.