



George Begins to Make the Medicine

George took an enormous saucepan out of the cupboard and placed it on the kitchen table.

‘George!’ came the shrill voice from the next room. ‘What are you doing?’

‘Nothing, Grandma,’ he called out.

‘You needn’t think I can’t hear you just because you closed the door! You’re rattling the saucepans!’

‘I’m just tidying the kitchen, Grandma.’

Then there was silence.

George had absolutely no doubts whatsoever about how he was going to make his famous

medicine. He wasn’t going to fool about wondering whether to put in a little bit of this or a little bit of that. Quite simply, he was going to put in EVERYTHING he could find. There would be no messing about, no hesitating, no wondering whether a particular thing would knock the old girl sideways or not. The rule would be this: whatever he saw, if it was runny or powdery or gooey, in it went.

Nobody had ever made a medicine like that before. If it didn’t actually cure Grandma, then it would anyway cause some exciting results. It would be worth watching.

George decided to work his way round the various rooms one at a time and see what they had to offer.

He would go first to the bathroom. There are always lots of funny things in a bathroom. So upstairs he went, carrying the enormous two-handled saucepan before him.



In the bathroom, he gazed longingly at the famous and dreaded medicine cupboard. But he didn't go near it. It was the only thing in the entire house he was forbidden to touch. He had made solemn promises to his parents about this and he wasn't going to break them. There were things in

there, they had told him, that could actually kill a person, and although he was out to give Grandma a pretty fiery mouthful, he didn't really want a dead body on his hands. George put the saucepan on the floor and went to work.

Number one was a bottle labelled GOLDEN GLOSS HAIR SHAMPOO. He emptied it into the pan. 'That ought to wash her tummy nice and clean,' he said.



He took a full tube of TOOTHPASTE and squeezed out the whole lot of it in one long worm. 'Maybe that will brighten up those horrid brown teeth of hers,' he said.

There was an aerosol can of SUPERFOAM SHAVING SOAP belonging to his father. George loved playing with aerosols. He pressed the button and kept his finger on it until there was nothing left. A wonderful mountain of white foam built up in the giant saucepan.

With his fingers, he scooped out the contents of a jar of VITAMIN ENRICHED FACE CREAM.

In went a small bottle of scarlet NAIL VARNISH. 'If the toothpaste doesn't clean her teeth,' George said, 'then this will paint them as red as roses.'



He found another jar of creamy stuff labelled HAIR REMOVER. SMEAR IT ON YOUR LEGS, it said, AND ALLOW TO REMAIN FOR FIVE MINUTES. George tipped it all into the saucepan.

There was a bottle with yellow stuff inside it called DISHWORTH'S FAMOUS DANDRUFF CURE. In it went.

There was something called BRILLIDENT FOR CLEANING FALSE TEETH. It was a white powder. In that went, too.

He found another aerosol can, NEVERMORE

PONKING DEODORANT SPRAY, GUARANTEED, it said, TO KEEP AWAY UNPLEASANT BODY SMELLS FOR A WHOLE DAY. 'She could use plenty of that,' George said as he sprayed the entire canful into the saucepan.

LIQUID PARAFFIN, the next one was called. It was a big bottle. He hadn't the faintest idea what it did to you, but he poured it in anyway.

That, he thought, looking around him, was about all from the bathroom.

On his mother's dressing-table in the bedroom, George found yet another lovely aerosol can. It was called HELGA'S HAIRSET. HOLD TWELVE INCHES AWAY FROM THE HAIR AND SPRAY LIGHTLY. He squirted the whole lot into the saucepan. He *did* enjoy squirting these aerosols.

There was a bottle of perfume called FLOWERS OF TURNIPS. It smelled of old cheese. In it went.

And in, too, went a large round box of POWDER. It was called PINK PLASTER. There was a powder-puff on top and he threw that in as well for luck.

He found a couple of LIPSTICKS. He pulled the greasy red things out of their little cases and added them to the mixture.

The bedroom had nothing more to offer, so

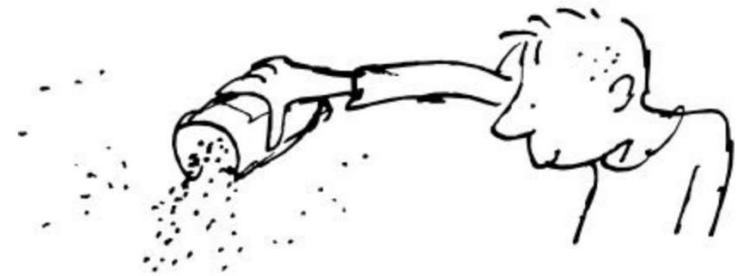
George carried the enormous saucepan downstairs again and trotted into the laundry-room where the shelves were full of all kinds of household items.

The first one he took down was a large box of SUPERWHITE FOR AUTOMATIC WASHING-MACHINES. DIRT, it said, WILL DISAPPEAR LIKE MAGIC. George didn't know whether Grandma was automatic or not, but she was certainly a dirty old woman. 'So she'd better have it all,' he said, tipping in the whole boxful.



Then there was a big tin of WAXWELL FLOOR POLISH. IT REMOVES FILTH AND FOUL MESSSES FROM YOUR FLOOR AND LEAVES EVERYTHING SHINY BRIGHT, it said. George scooped the orange-coloured waxy stuff out of the tin and plonked it into the pan.

There was a round cardboard carton labelled FLEA POWDER FOR DOGS. KEEP WELL AWAY FROM THE DOG'S FOOD, it said, BECAUSE THIS POWDER, IF EATEN, WILL MAKE THE DOG EXPLODE. 'Good,' said George, pouring it all into the saucepan.



He found a box of CANARY SEED on the shelf. 'Perhaps it'll make the old bird sing,' he said, and in it went.



Next, George explored the box with shoe-cleaning

materials – brushes and tins and dusters. Well now, he thought, Grandma’s medicine is brown, so *my* medicine must also be brown or she’ll smell a rat. The way to colour it, he decided, would be with BROWN SHOE-POLISH. The large tin he chose was labelled DARK TAN. Splendid. He scooped it all out with an old spoon and plopped it into the pan. He would stir it up later.

On his way back to the kitchen, George saw a bottle of GIN standing on the sideboard. Grandma was very fond of gin. She was allowed to have a small nip of it every evening. Now he would give her a treat. He would pour in the whole bottle. He did.

Back in the kitchen, George put the huge saucepan on the table and went over to the cupboard that served as a larder. The shelves were bulging with bottles and jars of every sort. He chose the following and emptied them one by one into the saucepan:

- A TIN OF CURRY POWDER
- A TIN OF MUSTARD POWDER
- A BOTTLE OF ‘EXTRA HOT’ CHILLI SAUCE
- A TIN OF BLACK PEPPERCORNS
- A BOTTLE OF HORSERADISH SAUCE

‘There!’ he said aloud. ‘That should do it!’

‘George!’ came the screechy voice from the next room. ‘Who are you talking to in there? What are you up to?’

‘Nothing, Grandma, absolutely nothing,’ he called back.

‘Is it time for my medicine yet?’

‘No, Grandma, not for about half an hour.’

‘Well, just see you don’t forget it.’

‘I won’t, Grandma,’ George answered. ‘I promise I won’t.’



Task - please answer these questions.

1. **Find and copy** a word in the first few lines, which means high-pitched or piercing.
2. What does **hesitating** mean? (choose a, b or c)
 - a) to arrange something in order
 - b) to make someone do something
 - c) to be unsure or slow in doing something
3. On page 1, it says 'So upstairs he went, carrying the *enormous* two-handled saucepan before him', can you think of another word for *enormous* that means the **opposite**?
4. George found many ingredients in his bathroom, write down 4 items.
5. Why did George add in the BROWN SHOE POLISH?