Lovereading4kids.co.uk

Helping you choose books for children

0-5 5-7 7-9 9-12 12+

Opening extract from

Draglins: Lost!

Written by

Vivian French

Illustrated by

Chris Fisher

Published by

Orchard

All text is copyright of the author and illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.



CHAPTER ONE

Dennis was flinging his possessions round his bedroom.

"Where IS it?" he muttered, and dived underneath his sleeping mat. When Dora appeared in the doorway, all she could see were his feet.

"What are you doing?" she asked. "We're going to be late for school if you don't hurry!"

Dennis struggled out and glared at her. "I can't come 'til I've found Slump's bootball. He lent it to me yesterday, and I PROMISED I'd bring it back today!"

"Danny and Daffodil are playing bootball by the front door," Dora told him. "Maybe they've got it."

"WHAT?" Dennis shot past her. "I'll KILL them! They never asked if they could borrow it!"

*

Dora sighed as she heard sounds of battle from outside Under Shed. She enjoyed school, but it was so difficult to get there on time. Every morning she hoped that she, Daffodil, Danny and Dennis would get there early so she could talk to her friend Violet before school began, but it never happened. She was lucky if they arrived before the bell went; usually they scraped in as Mrs Gage was taking the register.

Dora trailed back to the kitchen. Aunt Plum, who was trying to persuade Pip to take his cough mixture, saw her face. "At least they're all outside now," she said encouragingly. "Oh, don't forget to tell Mrs Gage that Pip's not at all well today."



Pip coughed loudly.



"Poor little Pip." Dora gave her small cousin a kiss. "Are the uncles around? I haven't said goodbye to them."

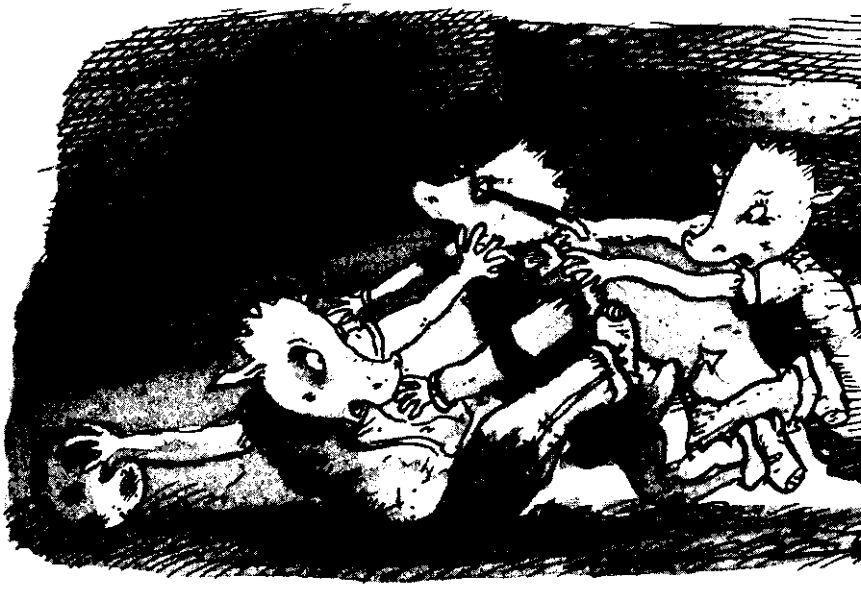
"They've gone Collecting," Aunt Plum said. "They went off into the Underground early this morning – Uncle Plant says they might bring back some peazles!"

Dora trotted out of the house trying not to worry. She liked to have all her family – Aunt Plum, Uncle Damson, Uncle Plant and Uncle Puddle, Pip and her brothers and sister – safely at home, where she could keep an eye on them. Outdoors was full of dangers, and although Under Shed was well hidden by an old and dilapidated garden shed covered in brambles and ivy, Dora always feared the worst. She had spent the first years of her life at the top

of a safe warm tenement flat, and the move to the uncles' house had given her hundreds more things to worry about. Dennis and Daffodil, who thought Under Roof was the most boring place in the whole wide world, had been thrilled by the move, and Danny had been pleased as well. It was only Dora who spent her time agonising over all the dreadful things that could happen.

"The uncles will be safe if they all keep together," she told herself. "At least – I hope they will."

Dora found Dennis, Danny and Daffodil



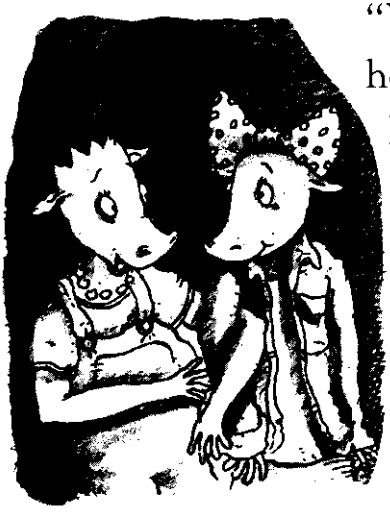
still in a squirming heap. Asking them to stop had no effect at all, so in desperation she decided to try a trick that sometimes worked when Pip wouldn't do what he was told. Heading for the Underground, she called back over her shoulder, "I've got a secret!"

At once the fight broke up, and her sister and brothers raced after her, Dennis clutching Slump's precious football.

"What? What is it?" Dennis panted.

"The uncles have gone to collect peazles," Dora said.





"Wow!" Daffodil hooked her arm through Dora's. Peas were her favourite food, and she could never eat enough of them. "Brilliant news! Peazle soup tonight!"

Dennis stopped dead, and began straightening his spectacles. "That's not much of a secret," he complained. "I thought it would be something interesting."

Danny, who knew how Dora's mind worked, grinned at him. "Dor wants to get to school," he explained.

Dennis frowned. "I'm not Pip," he said crossly.

Dora felt it would be unwise to say that sometimes he was far more trouble than Pip. "If we hurry, we might get there before the bell goes," she encouraged, but Dennis went on fiddling with his glasses and didn't move.

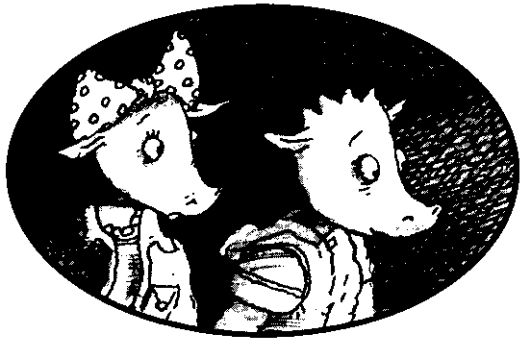
Danny, who liked school almost as much

as Dora did, slapped Dennis on the back. "Thought you were going to challenge Slump to a kicking match?"

"Dennis can't kick nearly as far as I can," Daffodil interrupted, and seizing the ball she kicked it into the Underground as hard as she could.

"OI!" Dennis yelled, and charged after it, Daffodil close behind him.

"Phew!" Danny said, and he and Dora hurried after them.




SCHOOL CLOSED TODAY. ONE DAY HOLIDAY. SEE YOU ALL TOMORROW!
Mrs Gage
P.S. If you're reading this note you can't have been paying attention during last Tuesday's assembly!