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Opening extract from

A Near Thing for Captain Najork

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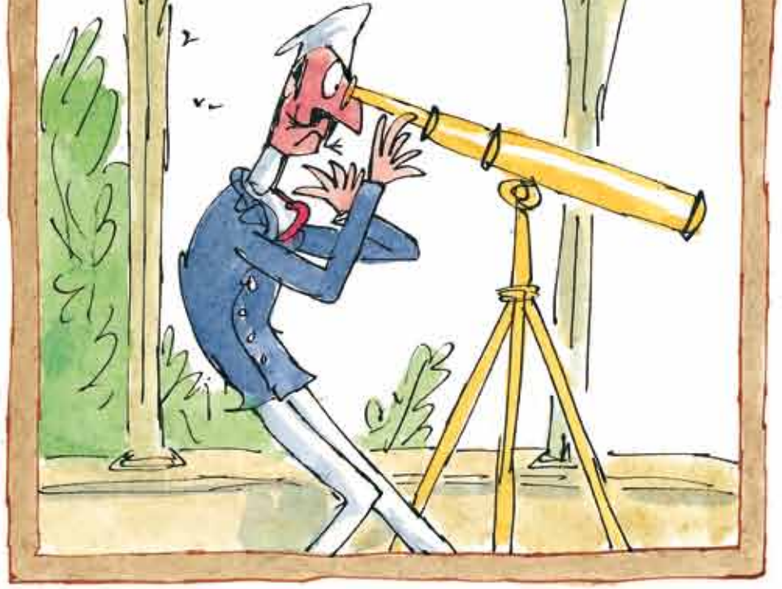
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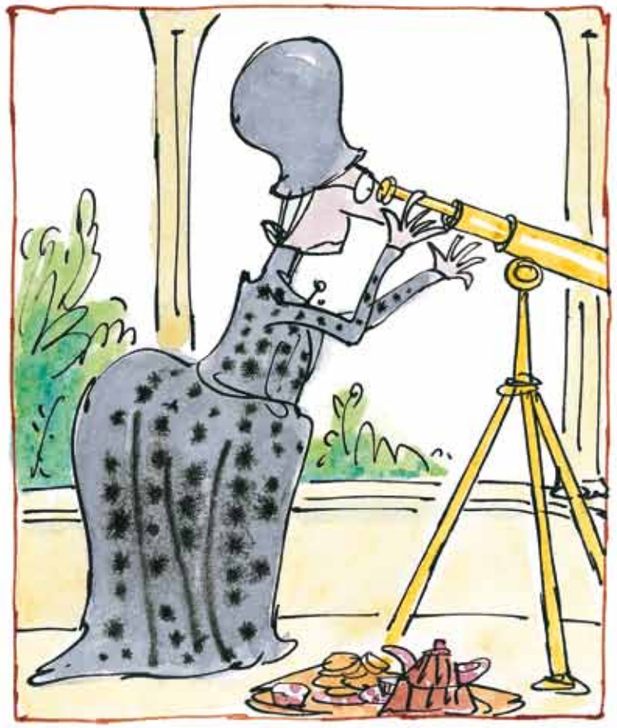


Captain Najork was in the observatory looking through his telescope at the girls' boarding-school across the river when the frog hopped past. "Follow that frog!" he shouted to his hired sportsmen as he hopped into his pedal-powered snake, and away they undulated.

Captain Najork had not forgotten the time when Tom had beaten him and his sportsmen at womble, muck and sneedball. "I'd like to try some new games on him," said the Captain. "I'd like to see how good he is at thud, crunch and Tom-on-the-bottom."

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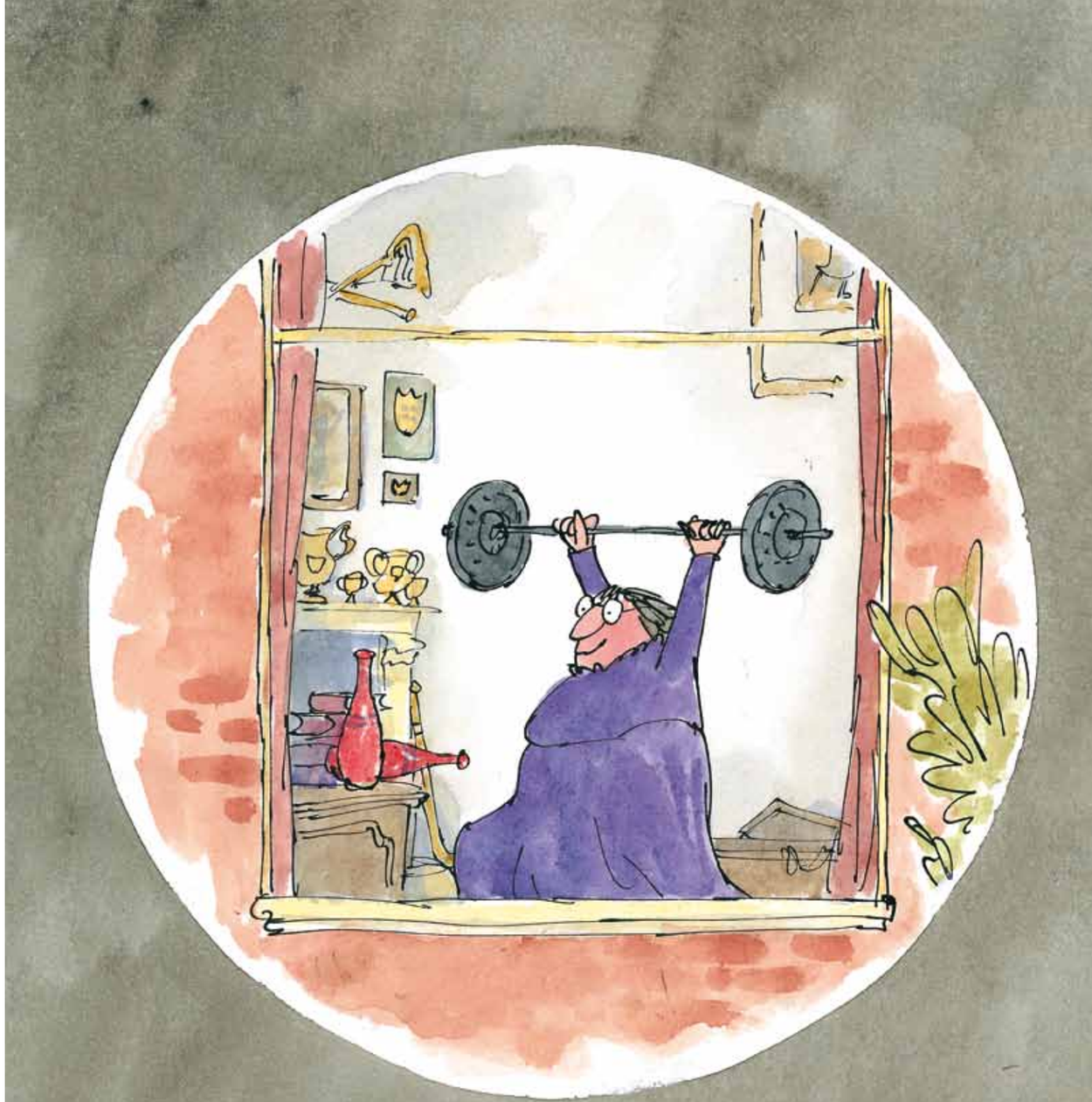


Aunt Fidget Wonkham-Strong Najork came up the observatory stairs singing "Heart of Oak". She had tea and scones for the Captain's elevenses – but he was not there.

She looked out of the window and saw that the Captain's snake was gone.

She looked through the telescope and saw the Headmistress of the girls' boarding-school practising two-handed clean-and-jerks with her bar-bells.

"Aha!" said Aunt Fidget Wonkham-Strong Najork.



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