



Marvellous Medicine Number Two

They were in the kitchen now and the big saucepan was on the stove. All the things Mr Kranky had bought were lined up near the sink.

‘Come along, my boy!’ cried Mr Killy Kranky. ‘Which one did you put in first?’

‘This one,’ George said. ‘Golden Gloss Hair Shampoo.’ He emptied the bottle into the pan. ‘Now the toothpaste,’ George went on ... ‘And the shaving soap ... and the face cream ... and the nail varnish ...’

‘Keep at it, my boy!’ cried Mr Kranky, dancing round the kitchen. ‘Keep putting them in! Don’t stop! Don’t pause! Don’t hesitate! It’s a pleasure, my dear fellow, to watch you work!’

One by one, George poured and squeezed the things into the saucepan. With everything so close at hand, the whole job didn’t take him more than ten minutes. But when it was all done, the saucepan didn’t somehow seem to be quite as full as it had been the first time.

‘*Now* what did you do?’ cried Mr Kranky. ‘Did you stir it?’

‘I boiled it,’ George said. ‘But not for long. And I stirred it as well.’

So Mr Kranky lit the gas under the saucepan and George stirred the mixture with the same long wooden spoon he had used before. ‘It’s not brown enough,’ George said. ‘Wait a minute! I know what I’ve forgotten!’

‘What?’ cried Mr Kranky. ‘Tell me, quick! Because if we’ve forgotten even one tiny thing, then it won’t work! At least not in the same way.’

‘A quart of brown gloss paint,’ George said.

‘That’s what I’ve forgotten.’

Mr Kilby Kranky shot out of the house and into his car like a rocket. He sped down to the village and bought the paint and rushed back again. He opened the can in the kitchen and handed it to George. George poured the paint into the saucepan.

‘Ah-ha, that’s better,’ George said. ‘That’s more like the right colour.’

‘It’s boiling!’ cried Mr Kranky. ‘It’s boiling and bubbling, George! Is it ready yet?’

‘It’s ready,’ George said. ‘At least I hope it is.’

‘Right!’ shouted Mr Kranky, hopping about.

‘Let’s test it! Let’s give some to a chicken!’

‘My heavens alive, why don’t you calm down a bit?’ Mrs Kranky said, coming into the kitchen.

‘*Calm down?*’ cried Mr Kranky. ‘You expect me to *calm down* and here we are mixing up the greatest medicine ever discovered in the history of the world! Come along, George! Dip a cupful out of the saucepan and get a spoon and we’ll give some to a chicken just to make absolutely certain we’ve got the correct mixture.’

Outside in the yard, there were several chickens that hadn’t had any of George’s Marvellous Medicine Number One. They were pecking about in the dirt in that silly way chickens do.

George crouched down, holding out a spoonful of Marvellous Medicine Number Two. ‘Come on, chicken,’ he said. ‘Good chicken. Chick-chick-chick.’



A white chicken with black specks on its feathers looked up at George. It walked over to the spoon and went *peck*.

The effect that Medicine Number Two had on this chicken was not quite the same as the effect produced by Medicine Number One, but it was

very interesting. ‘*Whoosh!*’ shrieked the chicken and it shot six feet up in the air and came down again. Then *sparks* came flying out of its beak, bright yellow sparks of fire, as though someone was sharpening a knife on a grindstone inside its tummy. Then its legs began to grow longer. Its body stayed the same size but the two thin yellow legs got longer and longer and longer ... and longer still ...

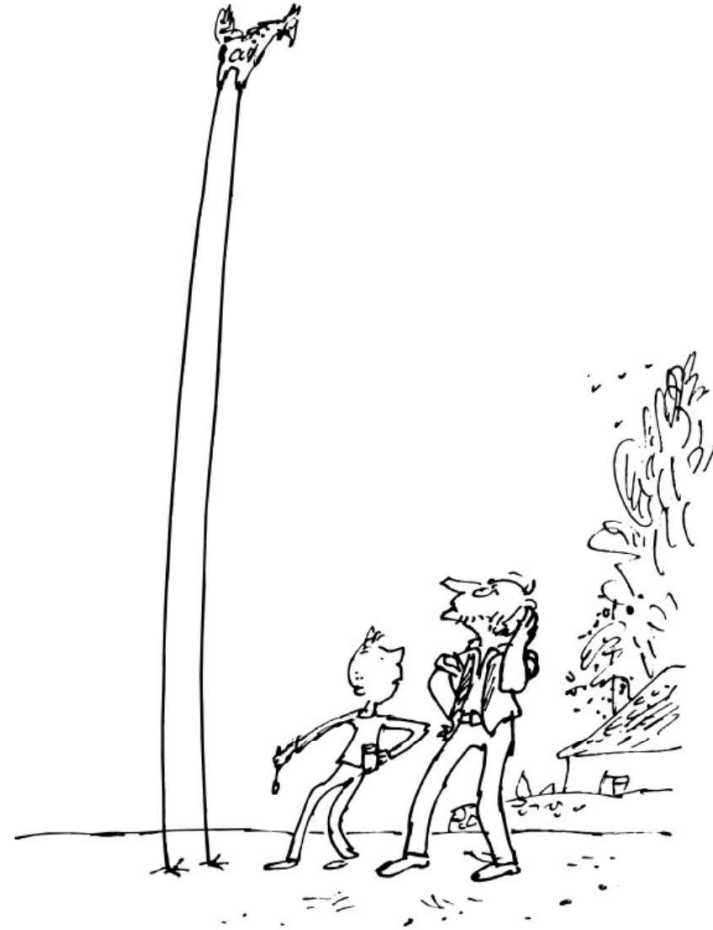
‘What’s happening to it?’ cried Mr Killy Kranky.

‘Something’s wrong,’ George said.

The legs went on growing and the more they grew, the higher up into the air went the chicken’s body. When the legs were about fifteen feet long, they stopped growing. The chicken looked perfectly absurd with its long long legs and its ordinary little body perched high up on top. It was like a chicken on stilts.

‘Oh my sainted aunts!’ cried Mr Killy Kranky. ‘We’ve got it wrong! This chicken’s no good to anybody! It’s all legs! No one wants chickens’ legs!’

‘I must have left something out,’ George said.



‘*I know* you left something out!’ cried Mr Kranky. ‘Think, boy, think! What was it you left

out?’

‘I’ve got it!’ said George.

‘What was it, quick?’

‘Flea powder for dogs,’ George said.

‘You mean you put *flea* powder in the first one?’

‘Yes, Dad, I did. A whole carton of it.’

‘Then that’s the answer!’

‘Wait a minute,’ said George. ‘Did we have brown shoe-polish on our list?’

‘We did not,’ said Mr Kranky.

‘I used that, too,’ said George.

‘Well, no *wonder* it went wrong,’ said Mr Kranky. He was already running to his car, and soon he was heading down to the village to buy more flea powder and more shoe-polish.



Task - please answer these questions.

1. What had George forgotten to put in Marvellous Medicine Number 2?
2. On page 2, why was Mr Kranky '*hopping about*'?
3. What happened to the white chicken with the black specks on its feathers?
4. Why was a chicken with long legs no good?
5. What else has George forgotten to put in Marvellous Medicine Number 2?