

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

The Escape

by Miriam Silver

He started early and took the dog, Jumble, going straight to the kitchen where he collected some bread, apples and biscuits determined never to return again.

“Everyone’s busy, no one appreciates me, only you,” he said to his four-legged friend, “not my fault, was only helping,” he added, dejected.

His mind was made up, he was going to disappear, get away from school reports, broken windows, washing, bedtimes and grown ups and comfortingly patted his pockets.

Cheered up at the thought of food he walked determinedly towards the woods where he enjoyed the proceeds, shared a crust with his only friend then carried on until he found a bridge over the stream. Feeling satisfied he played Poo sticks and began to plan his future which included finding, preferably, an island, or if not that, at least somewhere where he would fish, murmuring, “not Ginger’s turn yet.”

Remembering their weekly arrangements, bow and arrow in exchange for knife he walked on purposely. His eyes were fixed ahead on the distant horizon when a stone in his sandal caused him to stop and while he sat down he realised he could do with a bit more food.

“Should’ve taken more, that stuff hadn’t amounted to nearly enough for a real explorer, still, I’m a good fisherman,” and with that thought put his mind onto making a rod, trying not to think of the one confiscated by his father.

After tramping for what seemed a long time out of the woods, over sheep-cropped fields whose nibbling of the grass made him feel even more hungry he bravely carried on thinking of all those explorers who went for days in the desert without food or drink, they didn’t give up.

Reaching another stream, into which Jumble went and was quickly over the other side ignoring his master’s shouts, “come back Jumble, good boy, good boy.” All of which fell on deaf ears making William run alongside until a shallow spot allowed him to wade in and find his pet eating something he’d found and was comfortably sitting in the sun.

“All right for you,” he said addressing the dog, “I’ve gotta discover an island ‘cos I’ve left home and I’m an explorer and I’m wet and hungry, come on.”

After crossing several fields, he sat down, exhausted.

‘Didn’t realise disappearing and exploring could be so difficult,’ he thought as he lay down, tying Jumble up, while blaming his father, that rod, food...

“Are you ok?” a kindly voice was addressing him, a prone, wet boy jumped up, ready to protest.

“Yea! I’m just resting , on my way...” interrupting his flow as he saw a man holding fishing gear looking down at him in a concerned manner.

“Well, shouldn’t you be at school or at home or something?” he asked, noting that in spite of looking wet and a wee bit bedraggled the boy was, at the least well, Bonny!

That was all our hero needed, a sympathetic ear and out it poured.

“Nah! I’m disappearing, no one’ll notice, cos’ no one wants me, report awful, no pocket money, we’ll wasn’t my fault Jumble chased the cat, he broke the greenhouse glass, Ginger used my arrow, missed, but I got the blame, so I decided

to leave and be an explorer, an' well, I got wet chasing Jumble an' I was just drying out and fell asleep I s'pose! And I'm hungry."

The man looked sympathetic and explained he understood handing him a sandwich, "get that down you, then perhaps..."

"Suppose I'd better get back, it's Ginger's turn, the knife, yer know!"