

Matilda lived in Dull-on-Sea, a gloomy seaside town - too busy in the summer...



and in winter it shut down.

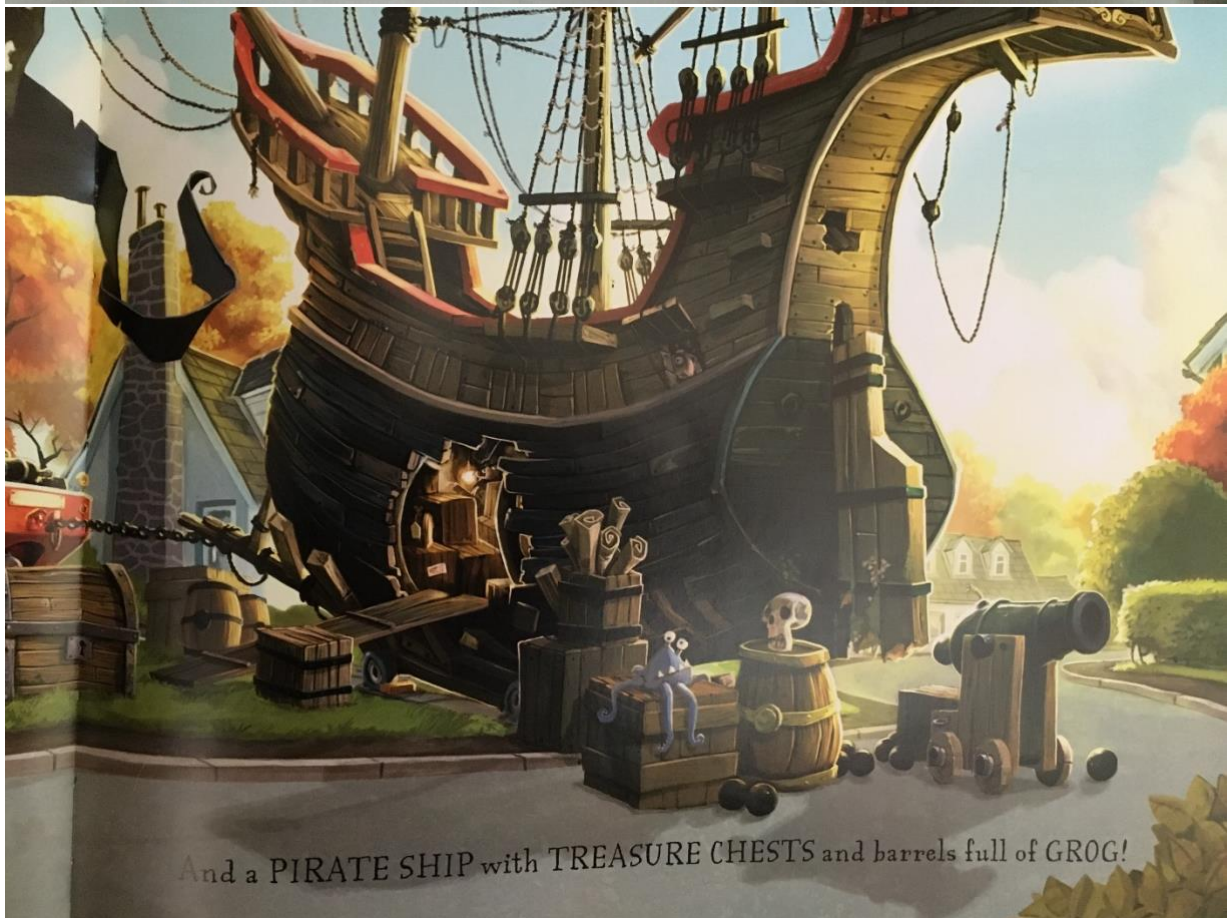


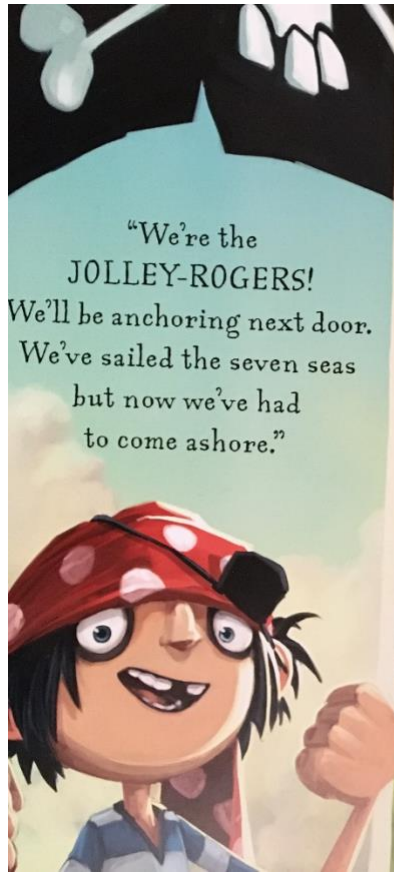
There weren't too many kids around -
just Tilda on her street.
The lawns were mowed,
the cars were washed,
the hedges trimmed and neat.



The house next door had been for sale
since Tilda was a baby.
She hoped a family would move in
with a girl her age
or maybe...







"We're the
JOLLEY-ROGERS!
We'll be anchoring next door.
We've sailed the seven seas
but now we've had
to come ashore."



"I feel a little landsick,
but Mum says it'll pass.
That's my mother over
there, digging up
the grass."



"That's Dad over
yonder - the captain
of our crew.
He likes to shout

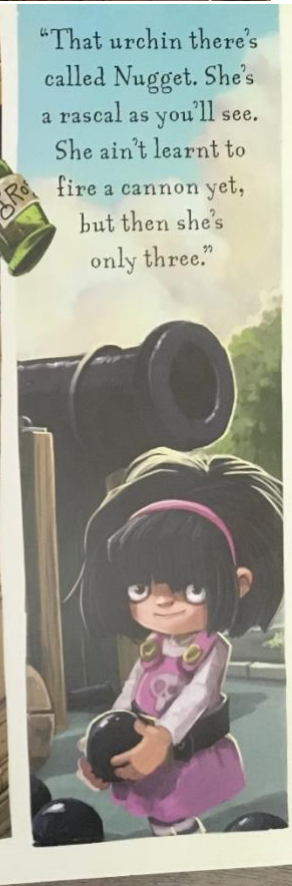
OO-ARR!

a lot...

... 'coz that's what
pirates do."



"Grandpa won't set foot on shore.
He's allergic to dry land.
The last time that he left the ship
the King chopped off his hand!"



"That urchin there's
called Nugget. She's
a rascal as you'll see.
She ain't learnt to
fire a cannon yet,
but then she's
only three."

Next morning, Tilda blurted:

Life's not
BORING
any more!



Isn't it
FANTASTIC
that those pirates
moved next door?

But Mum
and Dad
were not
impressed...



The neighbourhood will sneer.
The way they dress - the way they speak!
They won't fit in round here.
Their lad is always playing with
the most alarming toys...



We'd rather you
were friends with
NORMAL girls
and boys.





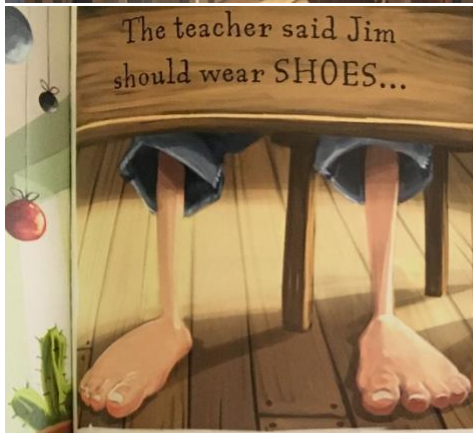
But that very day young JIM LAD came to Matilda's school. Though NO ONE else would sit by him...

Matilda said...

You're COOL!

You ain't so bad yerself, my lass.

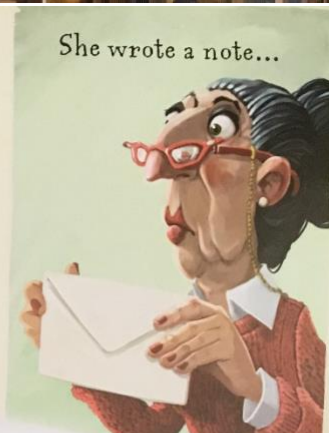
For a landlubber, that's rare. I'm a SCURVY SEA DOG, but ye'll be alright sitting there!



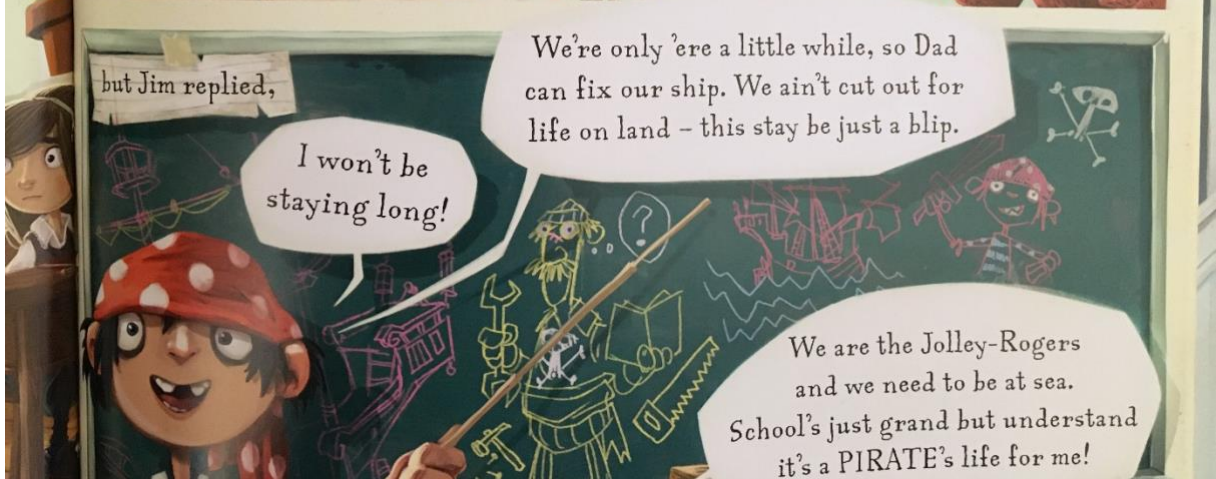
The teacher said Jim should wear SHOES...



and his uniform was wrong.



She wrote a note...



but Jim replied,

I won't be staying long!

We're only 'ere a little while, so Dad can fix our ship. We ain't cut out for life on land - this stay be just a blip.

We are the Jolley-Rogers and we need to be at sea. School's just grand but understand it's a PIRATE's life for me!

After school, a neighbour came around for cake and tea. Her name was Mrs Bumble from number thirty-three.

Miss Pinky called the council, to see what they could do.

She didn't live through two world wars, to have PIRATES spoil her view!



Isn't it DISGRACEFUL, on such a lovely street? You'd think that they would TRY to keep their garden looking neat!





They have to go!

said Miss Divine who lived at number eighty-nine.

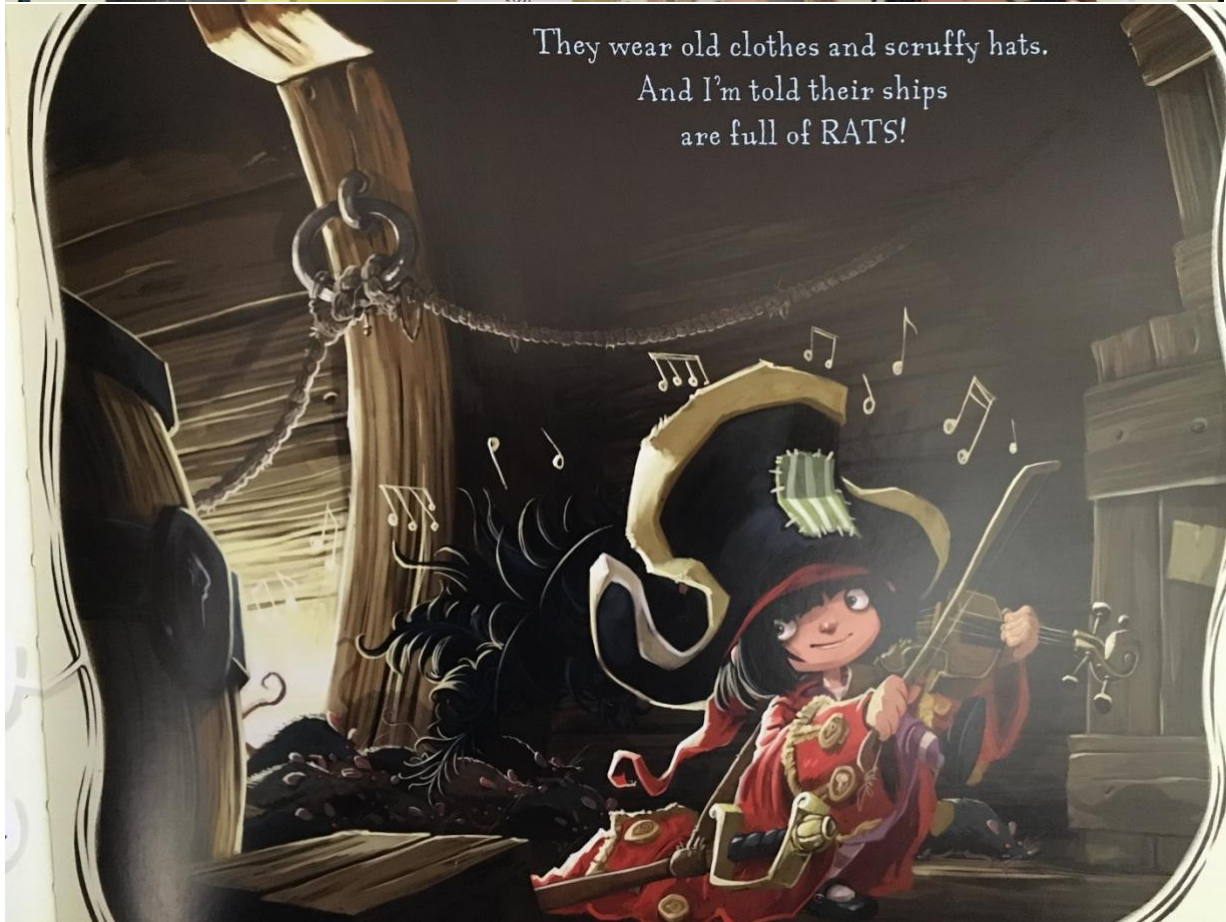


Their teeth are black...

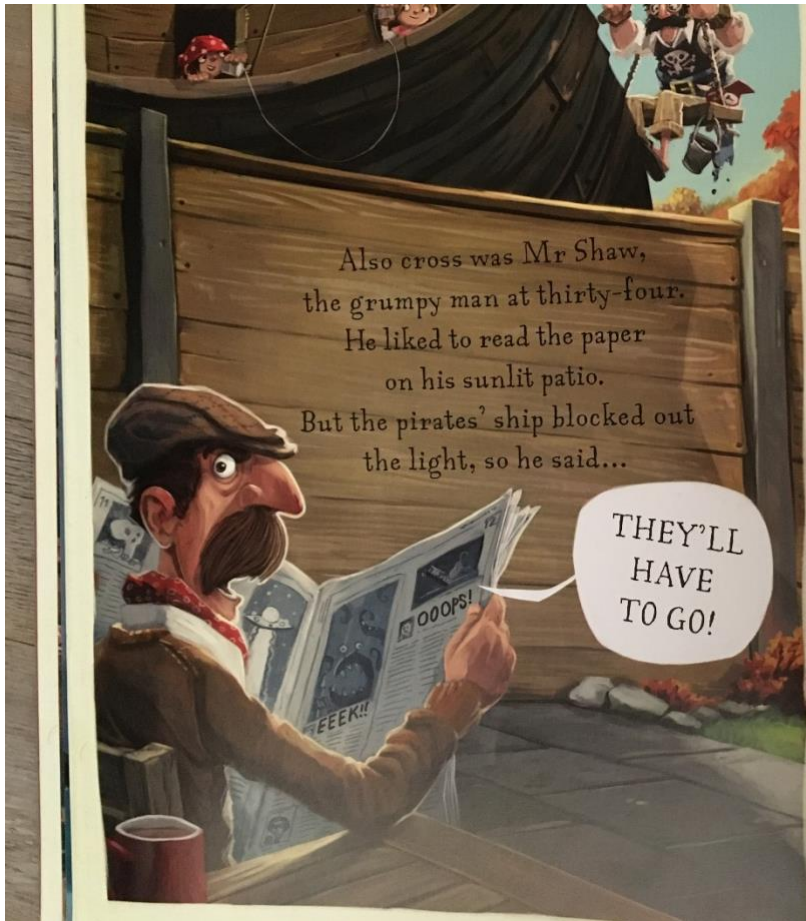
their nails are too!
This dirtiness just will not do.

They never wash.
Their kids have lice.
They really don't smell very nice.

Um... thanks.

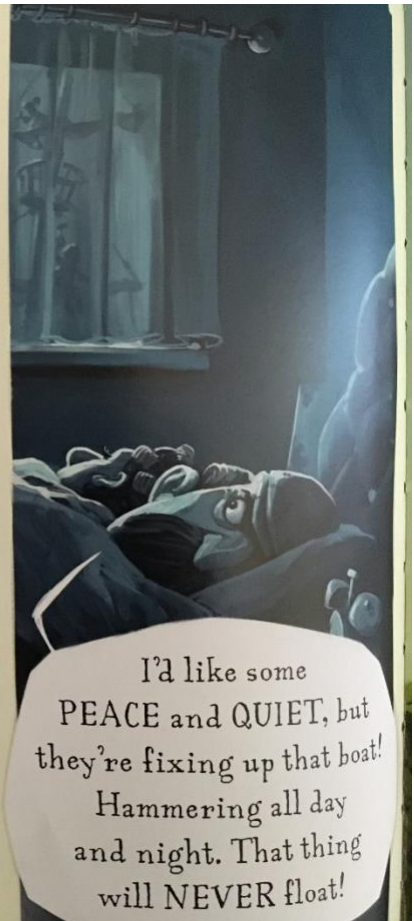


They wear old clothes and scruffy hats.
And I'm told their ships
are full of RATS!



Also cross was Mr Shaw,
the grumpy man at thirty-four.
He liked to read the paper
on his sunlit patio.
But the pirates' ship blocked out
the light, so he said...

THEY'LL
HAVE
TO GO!



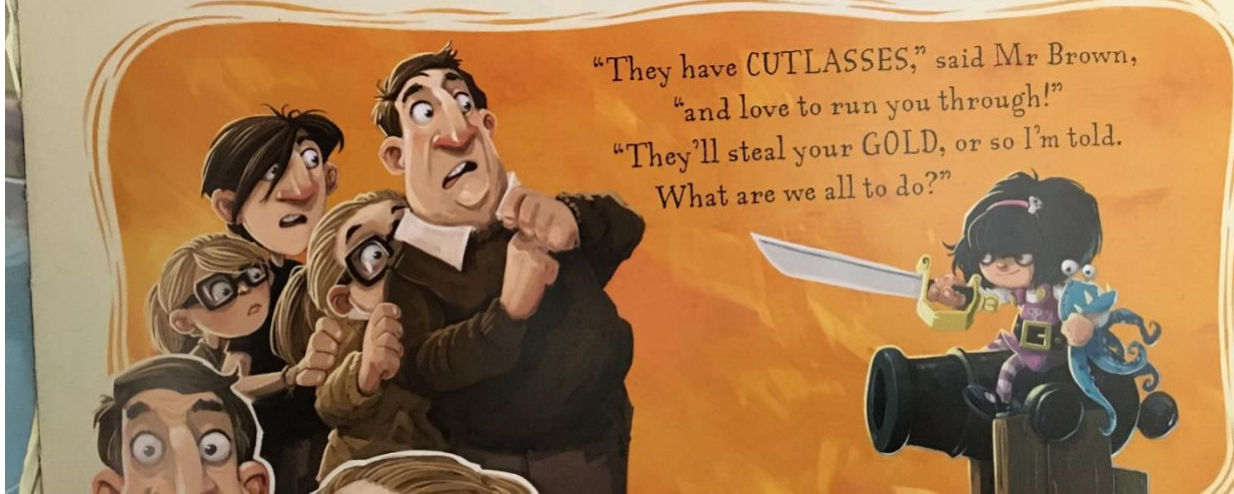
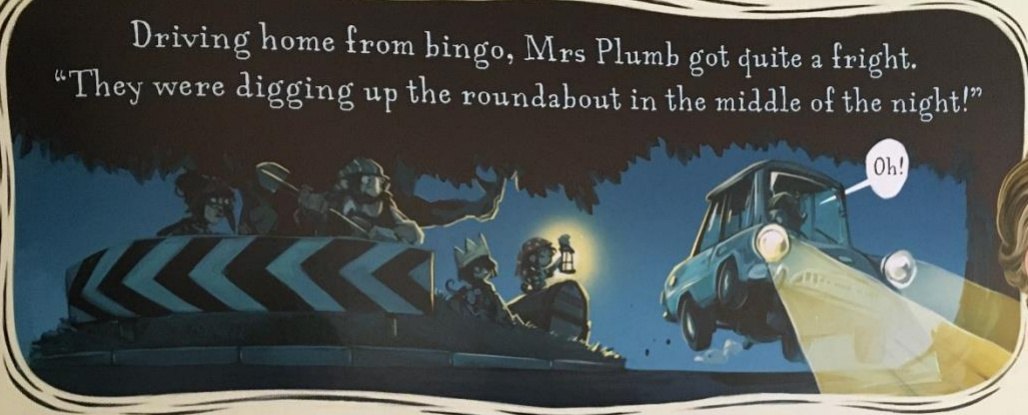
I'd like some
PEACE and QUIET, but
they're fixing up that boat!
Hammering all day
and night. That thing
will NEVER float!



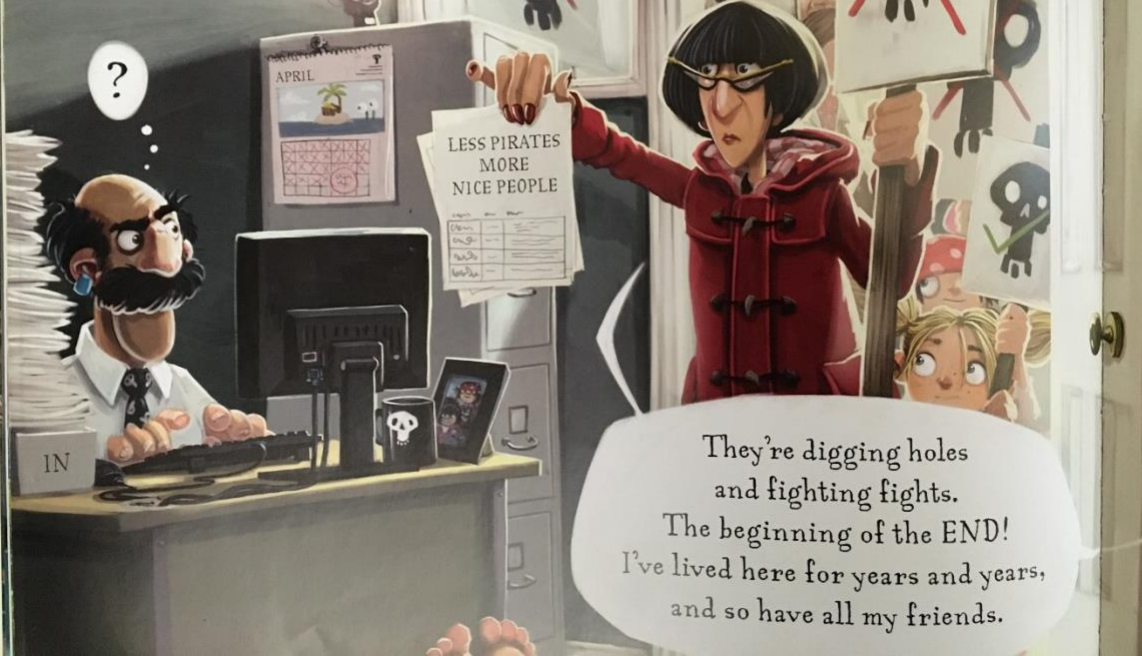
The two Miss Yates
at eighty-eight,

told everyone who
passed their gate:

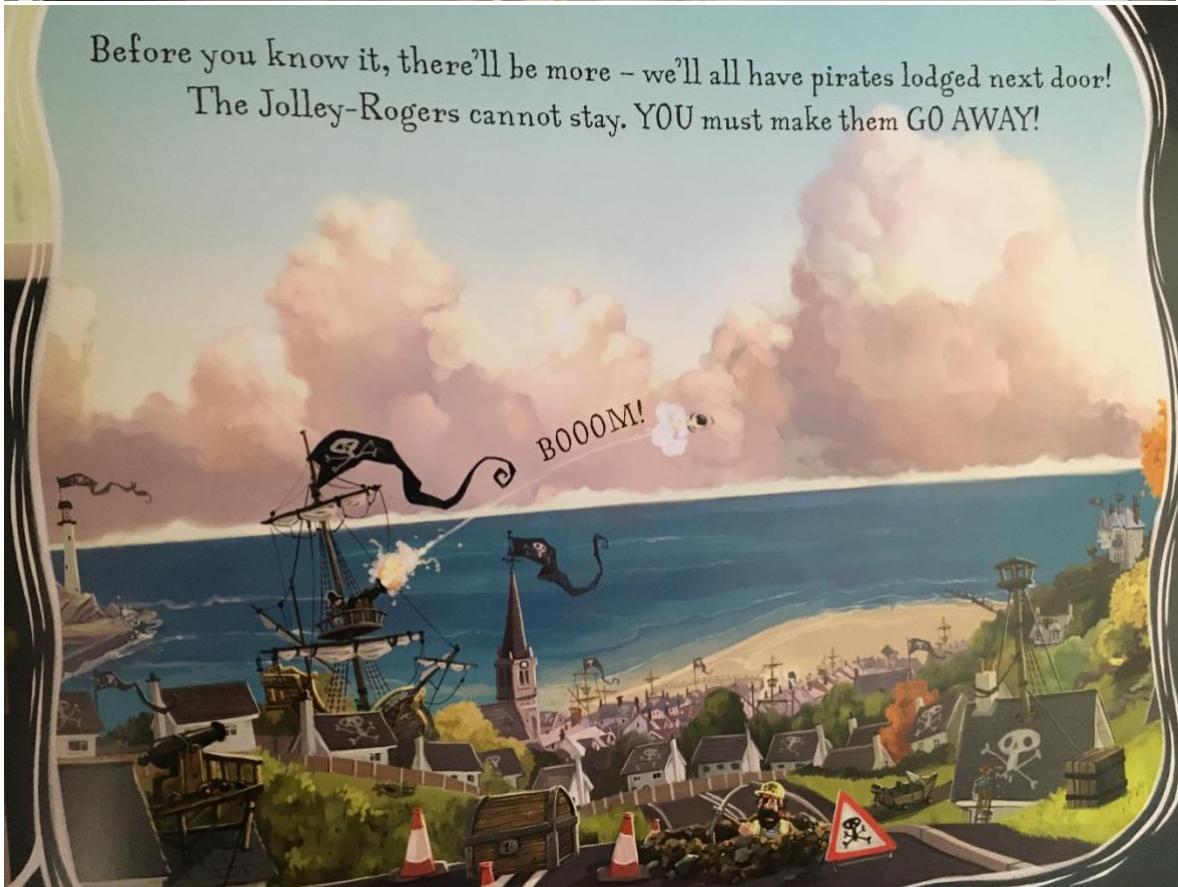
"We saw them
grab the POSTMAN.
They made him
walk the plank!
It's lucky he can swim
but we're afraid his
postbag sank."



Mrs Bevan from
eighty-seven marched
down to the Town Hall.
She'd collected a petition -
fifty signatures in all.



Before you know it, there'll be more - we'll all have pirates lodged next door!
The Jolley-Rogers cannot stay. YOU must make them GO AWAY!



That night there was a tapping
at Matilda's window pane.
Outside was Jim.
He whispered:

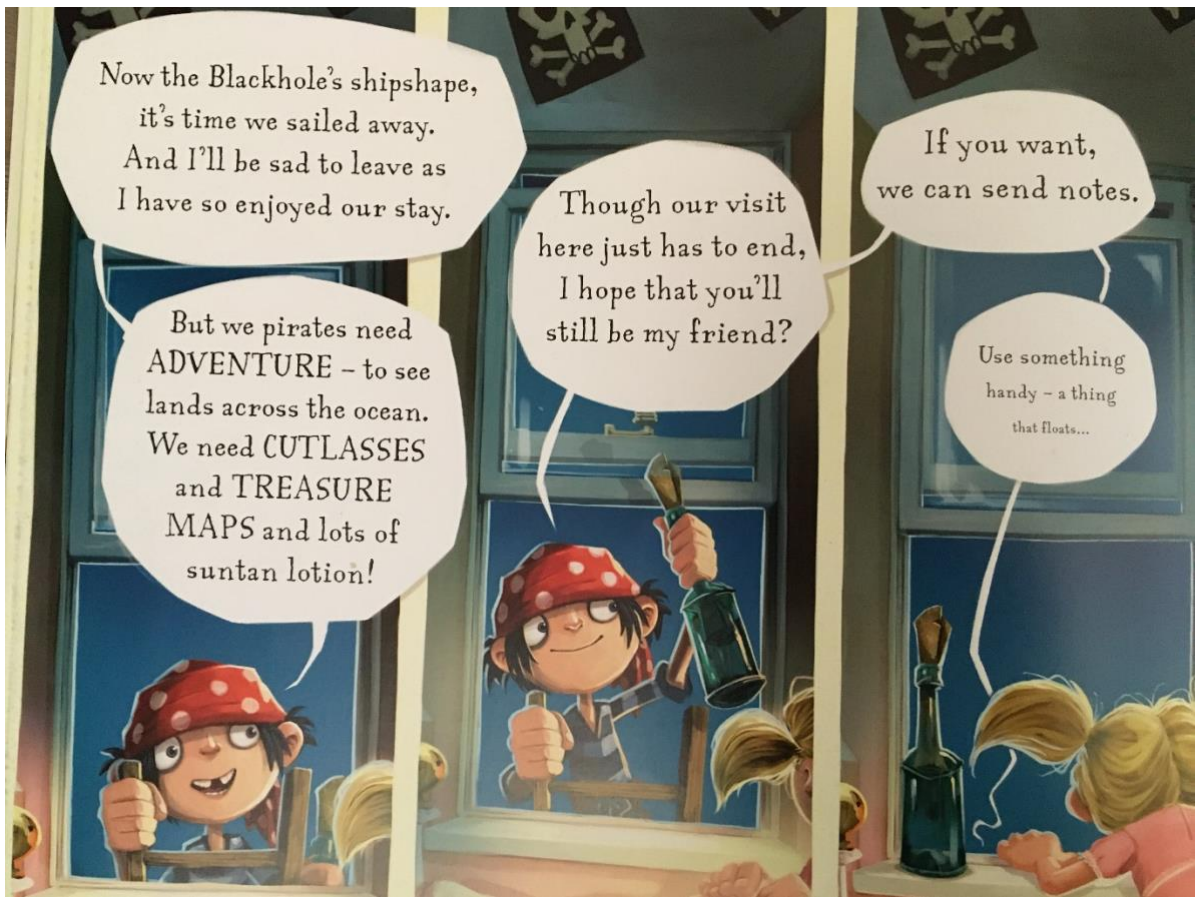
I've got
something
to explain...



"Whenever we
stop somewhere new,
the neighbours are unkind.
To show them pirates
aren't so bad, we leave
some things behind."

Shhh!







Matilda woke next morning,
puzzled by what Jim had said.
She vowed she'd keep in touch with
as she struggled out of bed.

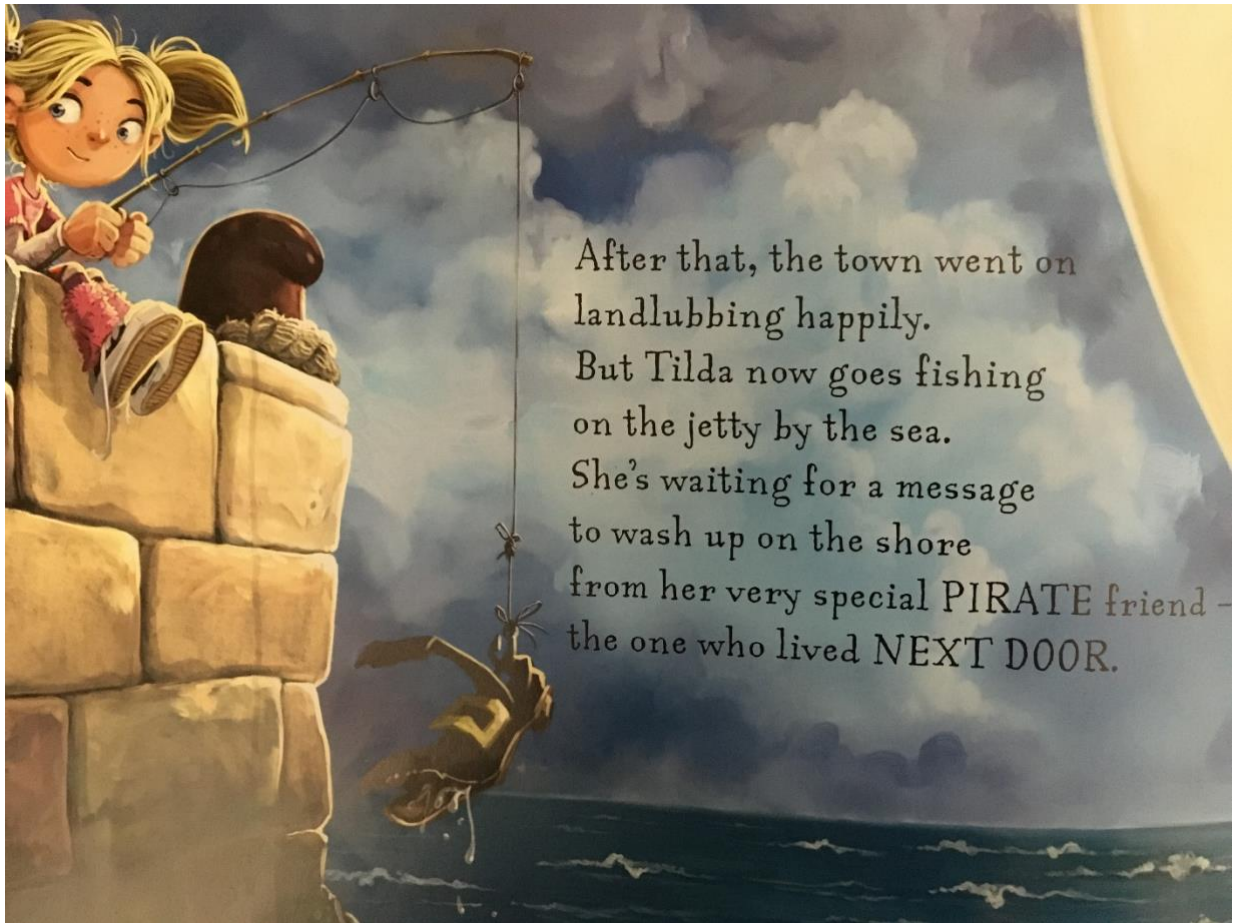


She opened up her curtains,
as she stretched and had a yawn,
and there, to her amazement,
was a CROSS on every lawn!

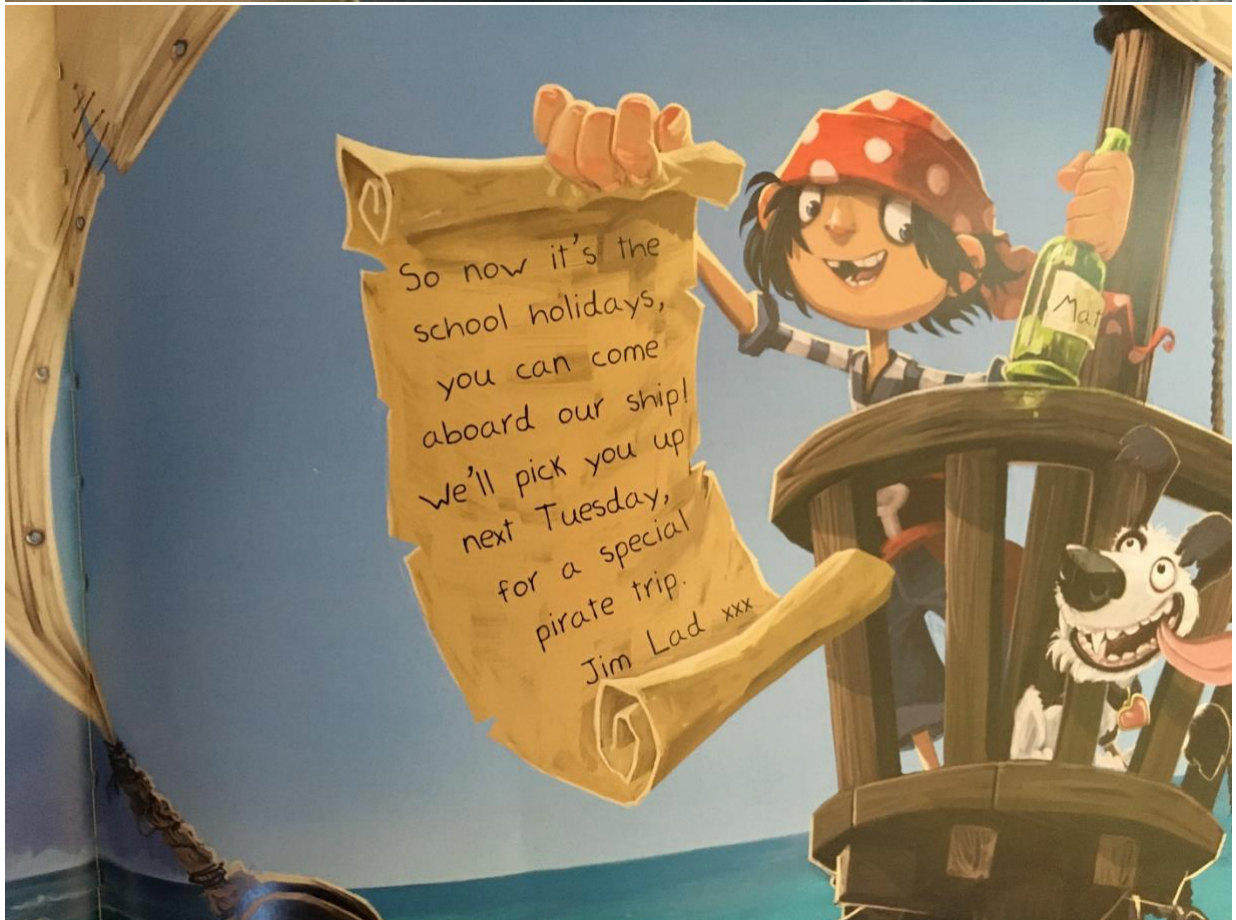








After that, the town went on
landlubbing happily.
But Tilda now goes fishing
on the jetty by the sea.
She's waiting for a message
to wash up on the shore
from her very special PIRATE friend -
the one who lived NEXT DOOR.



So now it's the
school holidays,
you can come
aboard our ship!
We'll pick you up
next Tuesday,
for a special
pirate trip.
Jim Lad xxx

