**George’s Marvellous Medicine**

*GRANDMA rings her bell. GEORGE sighs, then opens the curtain and goes in to her.*

GEORGE

Yes, Grandma?

GRANDMA

You know what's the matter with you, George?

GEORGE

What, Grandma?

GRANDMA

You're growing too fast. Boys who grow too fast become stupid and lazy.

GEORGE

But I can't help it if I'm growing fast.

GRANDMA

Of course you can. Growing's a nasty, childish habit.

GEORGE

But we have to grow, Grandma. If we didn't grow, we'd never be grown-ups.

GRANDMA

Rubbish, boy, rubbish. Look at me. Am I growing? Certainly not.

GEORGE

But you did once.

GRANDMA

Only very little. I gave up growing when I was extremely small.

GEORGE

But how do I stop myself growing?

GRANDMA

Stop eating chocolate. Eat cabbage instead.

GEORGE

Cabbage? I don't like cabbage.

 GRANDMA

It's not what you like or don't like. It's what's good for you that counts. From now on you must eat cabbage three times a day. Mountains of cabbage! And if it's got caterpillars in it, so much the better!

GEORGE

Urgggh!

GRANDMA

Caterpillars give you brains. Slugs too.

GEORGE

Not slugs! I couldn't eat slugs.

GRANDMA

Whenever I see a live slug on a piece of lettuce, I gobble it up quick before it crawls away. Delicious. (She smacks her lips) Delicious. Worms and slugs and beetley bugs. You don't know what's good for you.

GEORGE

You're joking, Grandma.

GRANDMA

I never joke, George, never! Beetles are best of all. They go crunch. *(She gnashes her teeth)* Mmmm!

GEORGE

Urgggh! Stop it, Grandma! *(He edges away)*

GRANDMA

You're trying to get away from me, aren't you? Come closer. Come closer, and I will tell you secrets. *(A throaty whisper, leaning forward)* Some of us know secrets that would make your hair stand straight up on end and your eyes pop out of their sockets… We know how to make your nails drop off and teeth grow out of your fingers. We know how to have you wake up in the morning with a long tail coming out from behind you. Come here, and I'll show you!

GEORGE

No, Grandma! Stop!

GRANDMA

We know secrets, my dear, about dark places where dark things live and squirm and slither . . .

*GEORGE tears himself away*

If doesn't matter how far you run, you won't ever get away . . . (She cackles)

*Another flash of lightning and clap of thunder. GEORGE runs, panting, outside.*