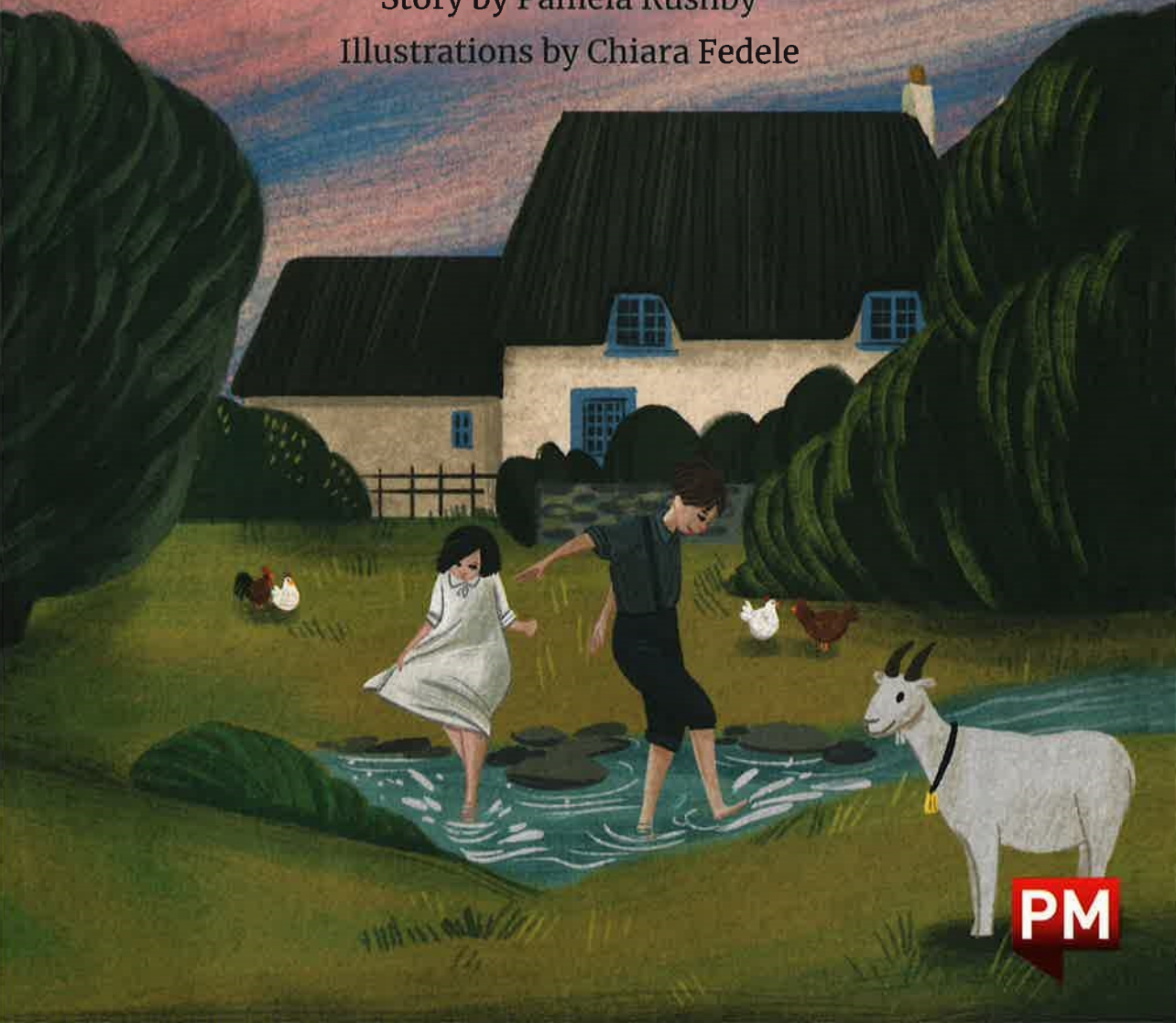


# A Safe Place in the Country

Story by Pamela Rushby

Illustrations by Chiara Fedele



**PM**

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## Author's Note

*In 1939, at the beginning of World War II, the British government made a plan to move children far away from British cities that were in danger of being bombed.*

*Over three days, thousands of schoolchildren and their teachers travelled by trains, buses and boats to safe places out in the country. They were placed in private homes.*

*The children often didn't know where they were going, who they would stay with or when they would go home again.*



These were some of the British children who were moved to the country in September 1939, before World War II began.

## Chapter 1

### A Plan to Leave London



Late one evening, Kenny came downstairs for a drink of water. He stopped on the stairs. His mum and dad were talking. Kenny listened.

“It’s called ‘Operation Pied Piper’,” his dad said to his mum.

“The government wants to move schoolchildren and their teachers out of London. They want to send them to safe places in the country before the war starts.”

“How soon do they want to do this?” asked Kenny’s mum, her voice shaking.

“Very soon,” said his dad. “The question is, should we send Kenny and Brenda away?”



“They’re only nine and five,” said Kenny’s mum.

“I don’t like to send them away without us. But maybe we should, if they’ll be safer in the country.”

Kenny froze. The country? By themselves? He’d never been to the country before. All he knew was that there were trees and animals and small villages.

He didn’t want to go and leave his mum and dad.

He especially didn’t want to go with his little sister, Brenda. She could be a pest, sometimes.

“They should go. Then we’ll know they are safe,” said Kenny’s dad.

Kenny gulped. He backed quietly up the stairs.

Like it or not, it seemed as though Kenny and Brenda were going to the country.

## Chapter 2

### Marching to the Station



Things moved quickly. Just a few days later, Kenny, Brenda and their mum walked to the school gate. There, they met a group of other students and their parents. The teachers were there, too.

Each child carried a bag with a change of clothes, a toothbrush, a comb and a facecloth. Labels with their name, address and school were pinned to their coats. They had been told to bring enough sandwiches to last all day.

The teachers formed the children into a line. Mr Waverley, the head teacher, stepped to the front. He carried a sign with the words “Lambeth Primary School” on it.

