Ben's Story

By Pamela Rushby
Illustrated by Tom Jellett





Title	*Ben's Story*
Levels	23–24/25
Running words	1143

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Chapter 1

A Problem

When I started at this new school, I knew they'd find out about me. I didn't expect it'd be on the very first day. But it was.

The teacher, Mr Lee, introduced me. "This is Ben," he said. "I know you'll make him welcome."

"Hi, Ben," everyone said cheerfully.

"Hi," I mumbled. I didn't expect to be here long enough to make friends.



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"Now, where shall we put you?" Mr Lee said. "Ah, next to Jon, I think. You'll look after Ben, won't you, Jon?"

The kid called Jon said "Sure," and grinned, but I didn't smile back.

I sat down and looked around the room. It didn't look much different to all the other classrooms I'd been in. And I'd been in a lot of classrooms.

My family moves around a lot, so I've been to ten different schools, and I'm only nine. Maybe that was the reason I had a problem. A big problem.



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Chapter 2

What I Did in My Holidays

Mr Lee fussed around for a while, marking the roll. Then he handed out paper and pencils, and wrote something on the whiteboard. "There you go," he said. "Two pages from each of you, please, before lunch."

The class groaned. "Not 'What I Did in My Holidays', Mr Lee!" they protested. "Not again!"

Mr Lee grinned. "At least you'll all have something to write about," he said. "You all did *something* in your holidays!"

The class groaned again, but they all started work. I picked up my pencil and tried to look as if I was thinking.



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Beside me, that Jon kid was writing away. I couldn't believe it – he'd filled half a page already.

Mr Lee walked around the room. He stopped beside me and said, "Not started yet, Ben?"

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"No," I said.

"So what did you do during the holidays?" Mr Lee asked.

"Nothing much," I said. "Well, I went up north to Kennedy five times."

"*Five times*?" said Mr Lee. "That's a long way to go!"

"My dad drives trucks," I said. "I go along with him for company."

"You could write about that, couldn't you?" said Mr Lee.

"Yeah," I said. "I guess I could."

"Off you go, then," said Mr Lee, and he walked away.



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I could see that Jon kid was looking at me, and I could also see he'd filled a whole page by now.

"Show off!" I thought.



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