

## The Goloknip Stories

by Roderick Ramage

### look Mum no hands

Ben lay in his bed still wearing his clothes, feeling sorry for himself, with the light off and the curtains drawn. It was daytime but he was not very well. He had bandages on his right knee, one elbow and both his hands and a bump on his head. And it hurt. His Mum called him her poor little injured soldier. She was too worried to be cross with him.

He knew it was his fault and, because he hurt everywhere, he did not mind being in bed. Just as his eyes were half closing and he was about to fall asleep he saw a shimmering, heard a quiet pop and there was the goloknip sitting on his bed. Not on the edge of his bed, where his Mum had been reading a story to him, but right in the middle above his tummy. The goloknip did not weigh anything so it did not matter.

'Hello, Ben. You look as though you have been in the wars.'

'My Mum said that I am her little injured soldier and you said I've been in the wars, but I haven't. I fell off my bicycle.'

'That's what they call an "idiot", Ben, I mean an "idiom". '

'An "idiom". What's that?'

'What your Mum said is an idiom and so is what I said. It is when you say something that does not mean what it says but everyone knows what it means. Got it?'

'Sounds more like "idiot" to me.'

The goloknip saw the book on the bed that Ben's Mum had been reading to him and grew an arm to pick it up and a head with eyes to look at it.

'The Brave Tin Soldier' by Hans Christian Andersen. That's a good story to read to a poor little injured soldier. Did you enjoy it.'

Ben was almost too tired to reply.

'Yes.'

Then his eyes closed, but he could still see the goloknip. It was shimmering a get better colour and he felt comfy lying there watching it.

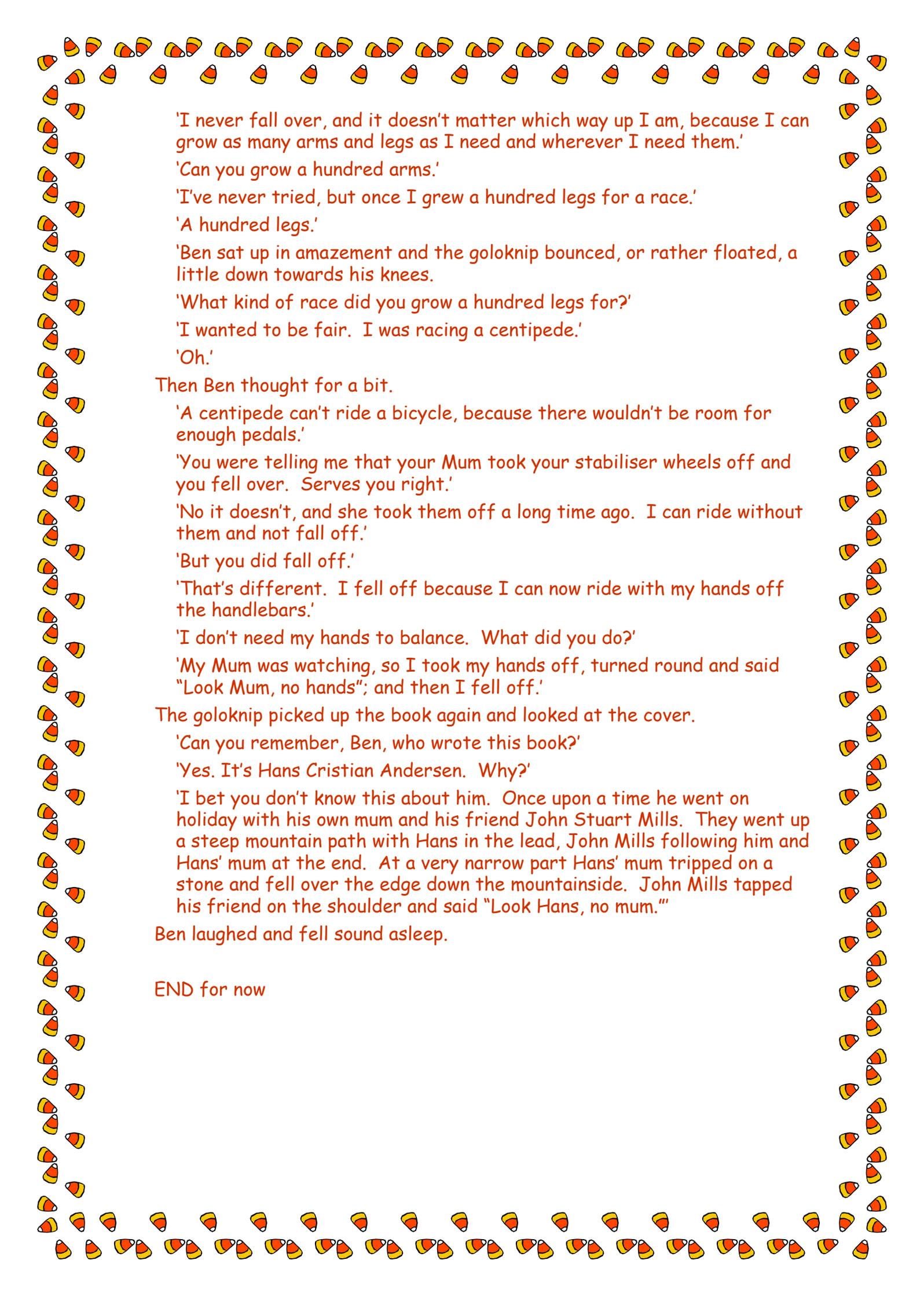
'Just a minute, Ben, what did you think just then.'

Only the tiniest patch of cross colour showed on the goloknip and it quickly reverted to its get better colour. Ben was almost too tired to think, but he did manage to think that he was watching "yo".

'"Yo", that's better, Ben.'

It was darker outside when Ben woke up again, and the Goloknip was still there.

'Now I'll tell you what happened. I can balance my bike now without the stabiliser wheels. Do know what stabiliser wheels are? They stop you falling over.'



'I never fall over, and it doesn't matter which way up I am, because I can grow as many arms and legs as I need and wherever I need them.'

'Can you grow a hundred arms.'

'I've never tried, but once I grew a hundred legs for a race.'

'A hundred legs.'

'Ben sat up in amazement and the goloknip bounced, or rather floated, a little down towards his knees.

'What kind of race did you grow a hundred legs for?'

'I wanted to be fair. I was racing a centipede.'

'Oh.'

Then Ben thought for a bit.

'A centipede can't ride a bicycle, because there wouldn't be room for enough pedals.'

'You were telling me that your Mum took your stabiliser wheels off and you fell over. Serves you right.'

'No it doesn't, and she took them off a long time ago. I can ride without them and not fall off.'

'But you did fall off.'

'That's different. I fell off because I can now ride with my hands off the handlebars.'

'I don't need my hands to balance. What did you do?'

'My Mum was watching, so I took my hands off, turned round and said "Look Mum, no hands"; and then I fell off.'

The goloknip picked up the book again and looked at the cover.

'Can you remember, Ben, who wrote this book?'

'Yes. It's Hans Cristian Andersen. Why?'

'I bet you don't know this about him. Once upon a time he went on holiday with his own mum and his friend John Stuart Mills. They went up a steep mountain path with Hans in the lead, John Mills following him and Hans' mum at the end. At a very narrow part Hans' mum tripped on a stone and fell over the edge down the mountainside. John Mills tapped his friend on the shoulder and said "Look Hans, no mum."'

Ben laughed and fell sound asleep.

END for now