

## The Goloknip Stories

by Roderick Ramage

### ABC, ADE

'Oh no, not you too. I want to be on my own.'

Ben had been sent to his room and was crying his eyes out. This was new to the goloknip and yo shimmered a bit less than usual while yo tried to work out what had happened. After a few minutes yo brightened and began to shimmer an ah-ha I think I know that's up colour. Ben's sobs slowed down as he watched the goloknip change and his eyes opened wide when he heard yo's question.

'What did your mum say?'

'She said she hates me.'

Ben began to cry again.

'I bet she doesn't.'

'She does. She said so.'

'Did she now?'

'Yes she did. I always tell you everything. I'd never lied to you.'

'I'm sure you wouldn't, Ben, but I bet what she said is not what you think she said.'

Ben replied between his renewed sobs.

'Yes she did. She said she hated me and that means she doesn't love me and ... except when my room is tidy.'

The goloknip looked round the room in a way that Ben did not like. He could see in yo's colour what yo thought of the clothes on the floor and toys and books everywhere.

'You know what I think?'

'No.'

Ben expected yo to say that his mum was right, but yo didn't.

'Obviously a case of ABC ADE.'

'But those aren't proper words.'

'Aren't they? Well they should be because they are what I mean.'

Ben did not know whether to cry again or tell the goloknip to speak sense. The goloknip answered it for him.



'Do you really think that our mum wanted to make you cry?'

'She would if she hates me, like she said.'

The goloknip looked at him very sharply, so, if Ben was about to start to cry again, he didn't.

'What did she say?'

'I've told you lots of times. She said she hates me.'

'Now Ben, what were her exact words?'

The goloknip's colour was now quite stern, and Ben sat very still and quiet.

'What did she say before?'

'She was going on about my room.'

'And?'

'Um, er, she was going on that I never tidy it, even when she asks me to. She's always getting at me about it.'

The goloknip looked round the room again, and Ben realised that he had said the wrong thing. He did not realise that he has actually said the right thing.

'Is this what she said? "Ben, your room is a disgrace. It's so bad that the fireman would refuse to rescue you if the house caught fire." was that it?'

Ben laughed.

'Don't be silly.'

'Did she say "I hate it when you get your room in a mess and you don't tidy it"?''

Ben wiped his eyes but did not say anything.

'Or something like that?'

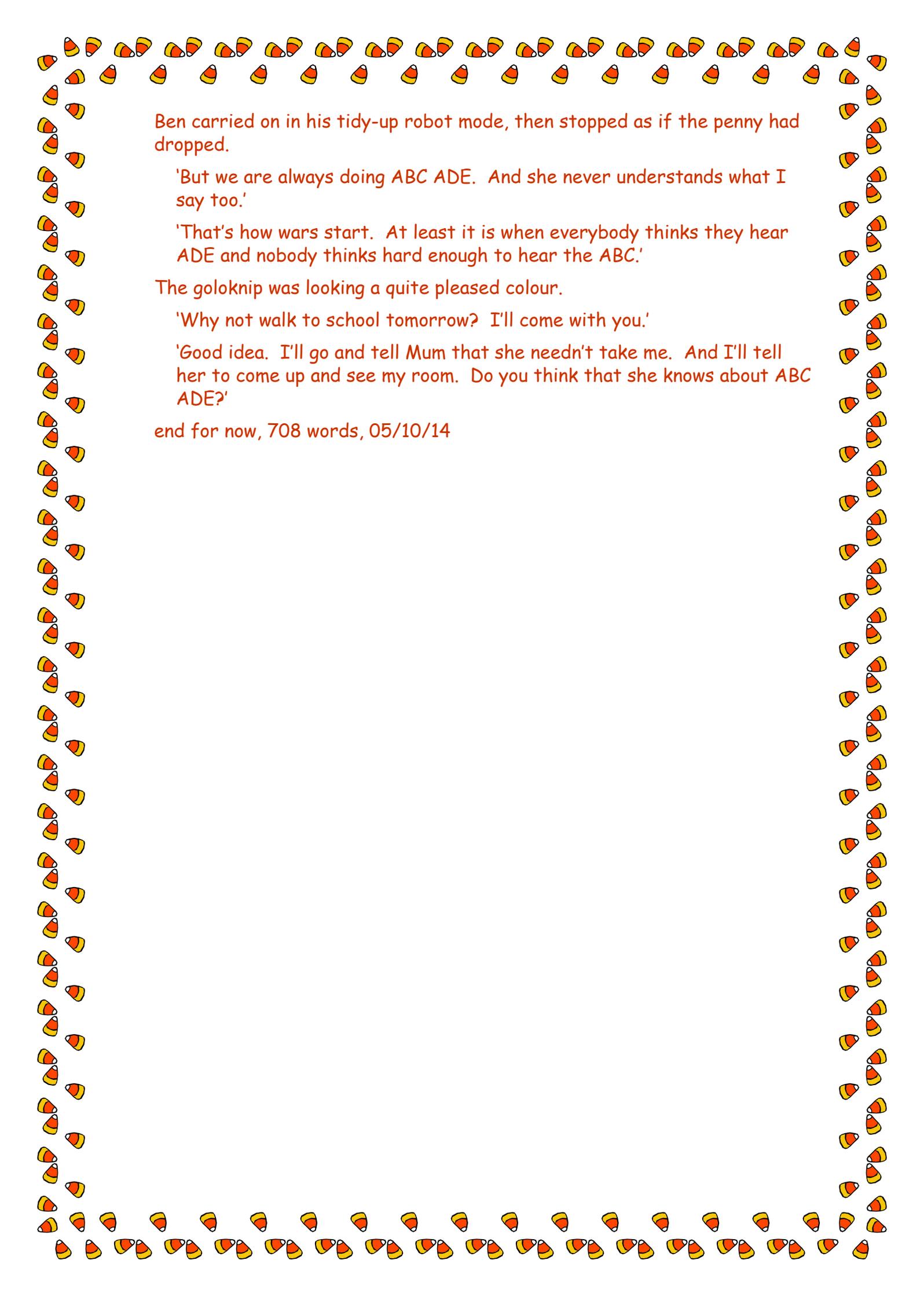
'Well yes, something like that.'

'That, Ben, is ABC. Your mum said ABC, she hates your untidy room. Not you, but your room and you not tidying it.'

Ben looked a bit surly as though he was not sure whether to agree or not, but somehow, while they were talking, toys were going back in the box, clean clothes into drawers and dirty one into the linen basket and books were going back on the shelf. Ben was not sure how. Perhaps he had turned into a tidy-up robot.

'What about the ADE?'

'ADE is what you thought you heard. ADE is "I hate you". You forgot about the "is when" and the "get your room in a mess and don't tidy it" didn't you?'



Ben carried on in his tidy-up robot mode, then stopped as if the penny had dropped.

'But we are always doing ABC ADE. And she never understands what I say too.'

'That's how wars start. At least it is when everybody thinks they hear ADE and nobody thinks hard enough to hear the ABC.'

The goloknip was looking a quite pleased colour.

'Why not walk to school tomorrow? I'll come with you.'

'Good idea. I'll go and tell Mum that she needn't take me. And I'll tell her to come up and see my room. Do you think that she knows about ABC ADE?'

end for now, 708 words, 05/10/14