



The Goloknip Stories

by Roderick Ramage

train in the playground

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

Edward the Blue Engine shuffled round the school playground.

'Chuff, chuff, chuff. ... chuff, chuff.'

Ben was the front of the engine, his arms pumping up and down like the pistons driving the engine and Edward Smith behind him, both shuffling their feet in time to the chuff, chuff, chuff. Sometimes Edward's arms too pumped up and down like pistons and at other times he twisted round to shovel coal from the tender into the firebox. Today there were only two of them. On other days perhaps half the children would join the train and shuffle chuff, chuff, chuff round the playground like a long snake. There were two girls called Annie and Clarabel at the school and they would pretend to be coaches like the real ones in the book.

But today only Ben and Edward were playing trains.

The goloknip often came to school with Ben but had to be very careful not to be seen. Yo was not worried about being seen by the teachers, because grownups hardly ever noticed yo, but children often did. Babies always saw yo. The goloknip knew that yo would not be allowed to be friends with Ben if everyone back at home knew about yo. Yo would be kept in his own world and would not be allowed to visit ours.

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

Therefore only the quietest pop told Ben that the goloknip was there.

'They're teasing poor little Minnie again.'

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

'Ben, look, by the tree.'

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

Edward the Blue Engine rattled over some points, which Ben changed. Ben became a signalman just long enough to pull the lever to change the points, then went back to being the front of Edward the Blue Engine. It was now on the branch line to the tree.

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

Edward the Blue Engine went at full steam now, Ben's and Edward's feet shuffling loudly on the tarmac as they worked hard up the hill to the tree.



Amanda and her nasty gang had trapped Minnie against the tree and were dancing round teasing her. They were pretending to be cannibals getting ready to eat her. The teachers had not noticed, but Ben and Edward would go to the rescue.

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

Edward the Blue Train steamed straight through Amanda's gang, almost knocking one of them down, William Huskisson, before Ben slowed the engine and stopped next to Minnie.

'Quick, Minnie, jump on board and we'll drive you away.'

As quick as a flash Minnie jumped on the train behind Edward and the engine began to put on steam.

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

As they pulled away from the tree, arms pumping up and down like pistons at full pressure, Edward turned to Amanda.

'Stop doing that Amanda, it's not fair.'

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

As they steamed safely away, Minnie stopped crying and, looking up, thought that she saw something that shimmered an it's-all-right-now colour by Ben's shoulder.

'Chuff, chuff, chuff.'

'Oh, just look at that, little Minnie is playing trains with Ben and Edward. I wonder why. Ah ha, now what does she want?'

The head teacher came out looking rather cross and went over to the two teachers on playground duty.

'Where have you two been? I saw through the window that Amanda and her gang were bullying Minnie. You two were meant to watch out for that.'

'Well she's playing trains now with Ben and Edward. We were just saying so when you came out.'

'Hrm, well. So two of the children have stopped it this time. That is a good thing, but all the same you should have kept a better look out.'

The bell rang for the end of break and the train rattled over another set of points and joined the other children crowding back into class.

the end for now