



“Ye toads and vipers,” the girl said, as her granny often had, “Ye toads and vipers,” and she sniffed a great snuffle that echoed in the empty room. She was alone in the strange, cold, dark house. The carter, who had trundled her into London between baskets of cabbages and sacks of flour, had gone home to his porridge and beer. The flop-haired boy in the brown doublet, who had shown her a straw-stuffed pallet to sleep on, had left for his own lodgings. A tall, peevish man, who had called her to London but did not want her, had wrapped his disappointment around him like a cloak and disappeared up the dark stairway. Fie upon him!

Fie upon them all!

She was alone. Louise, her true and only friend, who had fallen asleep in the back of the cart, had been overlooked. No doubt Louise was on her way back out of town with the carter, leaving the girl here frightened and hungry and alone. What was she to do? She sat shivering on an unsteady stool and tears left shining tracks like spider threads on her cheeks.

Her name was Margret Swann, but her granny had called her Meggy, and she was newly arrived from Millford village, a day’s ride away. The bit of London she had seen was all soot and slime, noise and stink, and its streets were narrow and dark. Now she was imprisoned in this strange little house on Crooked Lane. Crooked Lane. How the carter had laughed when he learned their destination.

Startled by a sudden banging at the door and, in truth, a bit fearful, Meggy stood up quickly, grabbed her walking sticks and made her way to the farthest corner of the room. She moved in a sort of clumsy jig – reach one stick ahead, swing leg wide and drag it forward, over and over again – stick, swing, drag, stick, swing, drag. Her legs did not sit well in her hips – she had been born so – and as a result she walked with this awkward swinging gait.

The banging came again, and then the door swung open and slammed against the wall, revealing the carter who had fetched her to London.

He was not gone! Meggy’s spirits rose like bread dough and she moved towards the door.

“Well met, carter,” she said, “I wish to go home.”

“I were paid sixpence to bring you hither,” he said, grinning at the girl, “Have you another six for the ride back?”

“Nay, but my mother...”

He shook his head. “Your mother was right pleased to see the back of you.”

He turned, took two steps and lifted something from the bed of the wagon. Something that wriggled and hissed then leapt from his arms. Something that showed itself to be a large goose, her wings spread out like an angel’s as she made her waddling way over to the girl. Louise, Meggy’s goose and friend.

Meggy exhaled in relief and gladness. She bent down and looked into the goose’s deep, black eyes.

“Pray be not angry with me, Louise. In all the hurly-burly of arriving, I grew forgetful.”

Louise honked loudly and shook herself with such a shake that there was a snowfall of feathers.

	OPENING TASK	FOLLOW UP					
<b>Monday</b> <i>Vocabulary development &amp; Familiarisation</i>	<p>Skim the text. Can you quickly find the following words?</p> <table><tr><td><i>trundled</i></td><td><i>peevish</i></td><td><i>overlooked</i></td><td><i>unsteady</i></td><td><i>forgetful</i></td></tr></table> <p>Write each word and its definition. Write 3 synonyms and 3 collocations for each word. Explore and identify synonyms (same meaning) and antonyms (opposite meaning) and any collocations (words that are linked and commonly used together).</p>	<i>trundled</i>	<i>peevish</i>	<i>overlooked</i>	<i>unsteady</i>	<i>forgetful</i>	<p>Complete three out of these six stem sentences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I know this text is about...</li><li>2. I found this text....</li><li>3. I like this sentence...because...</li><li>4. This reminds me of.....</li><li>5. I have never heard of....</li><li>6. I already know about....</li></ol>
<i>trundled</i>	<i>peevish</i>	<i>overlooked</i>	<i>unsteady</i>	<i>forgetful</i>			
<b>Tuesday</b> <i>Fluency &amp; understanding</i>	<p>Read the text slowly to yourself. Can you visualise the room that Meggy is in? Can you picture what the characters look like?</p>	<p>Read the text again aloud. Summarise the text in a maximum of 3 sentences or draw a cartoon strip to show the main points.</p>					
<b>Wednesday</b> <i>Prosody (reading with appropriate pace and expression) and Prediction</i>	<p>Read the text aloud again to practise using expression.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. In the first sentence, what two emotions do you think Meggy is feeling? Give evidence for your answer.</li><li>2. Who do you think the ‘<i>peevish man</i>’ might be?</li><li>3. What could happen to Meggy and Louise next?</li></ol>					
<b>Thursday</b> <i>Word attack</i>	<p>Use the new vocabulary from Monday in sentences.  Look at the word ‘<i>imprisoned</i>’. Can you break it apart using your phonics skills? What is the root of the word? What other words can be made from that word?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Find and copy one word meaning ‘<i>noisy disorder</i>’.</li><li>2. Find and copy one word meaning ‘<i>breathed out</i>’.</li><li>3. Find and copy the metaphor used to describe Meggy’s tears.</li><li>4. Which two synonyms most closely match the meaning of ‘<i>lacking total control of movement</i>’?</li></ol>					
<b>Friday</b> <i>Focused Comprehension Skills</i>	<p>Answer the following questions using details from the text:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Who is Meggy and where is she from?</li><li>2. How did Meggy get to London?</li><li>3. How far did she live from London?</li><li>4. What other characters have appeared?</li><li>5. When do you think this story is set?</li></ol>	<p>Extra Challenge. Use evidence from the text in your answers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Why do you think the ‘<i>peevish man</i>’ is disappointed?</li><li>2. ‘<i>She moved in a sort of clumsy jig...</i>’ What is being describing about Meggy here?</li><li>3. Explain why might it not be possible for Meggy to return home?</li></ol>					