

8-9yrs Prose Reading

The Many Worlds of Albie Bright by Christopher Edge

‘What are you doing for your science project then?’ I ask him, trying to change the subject.

Wesley scowls. ‘She’s got me growing cress in a cupboard- again. It’s the same project I’ve done since Year 1. But this time I’ve got a plan.’ He leans forward with a dangerous gleam in his eye. ‘When we go on our science trip tomorrow I’m going to find out the truth about the duck-billed platypus and you’re going to help me.’

I don’t like the sound of this. Tomorrow Miss Benjamin is taking Class 6 on a school trip to the Clackthorpe Museum of Natural History and Mechanical Wonders. According to Kiran, this is the same school trip that the class has been on for the past few years. He says it’s called a museum but that it’s really just a big house filled with loads of old junk. It used to belong to a Victorian explorer called Montague Wilkes, who left Clackthorpe to explore the world and sent everything he found back home again before he carked it in the middle of Australia. I’ve had a look on the museum’s website and most of the things he found seem to be stuffed animals. I’d even spotted what looked like a duck-billed platypus stuck in a glass jar and I now had the horrible feeling that this was part of Wesley’s plan.

‘Er, I don’t think I’m going to be able to make it to the museum tomorrow. It was my mum’s funeral yesterday-‘

Nearly as fast as an atom whizzing round the Large Hadron Collider, Wesley’s fist shoots out to me a dead arm.

‘Ow!’

‘You’d better help me tomorrow,’ Wesley warns me, ‘or else. And don’t think you can use your mum as an excuse. Loads of people haven’t got a mum, but you won’t catch me crying about it.’