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MATTY DOOLIN

CATHERINE COOKSON

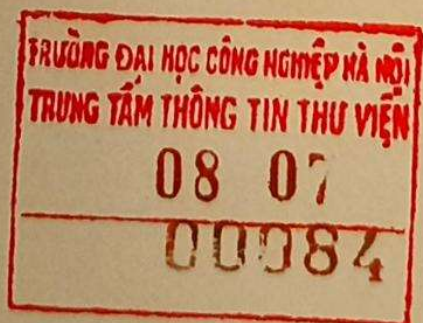
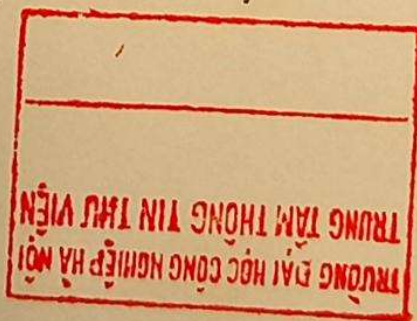


MATTY DOOLIN

What do you want to do when you leave school? Be a pilot, a doctor, a footballer, a teacher, a pop singer? It's a question that everybody asks young people. Some of them know what they want to do, others don't.

Matty has always known what he wants to do. When he leaves school, he wants to work with animals and get a job on a farm. But he lives in a town in the north-east of England, a long way from any farm. He'll have to get a job in ship-building, like his father. He's only fifteen and his parents say he can't leave home yet. They also say he's too young to go on a camping holiday with his friends Joe and Willie.

Matty is very unhappy. And he's in trouble about his dog Nelson, too. 'That dog has got to go!' his mother says, when Nelson tries to eat her hat and his father's best shoes. Poor old Nelson! He barks a lot, has a bad leg, and can't see very well in one eye. But Matty loves him dearly . . .





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Human Interest

Matty Doolin

Stage 2 (700 headwords)

Retold by
Diana Stewart

Illustrated by
Sarah Green



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CATHERINE COOKSON

Matty Doolin

Retold by
Diane Mowat

Illustrated by
Sarah Geeves



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CONTENTS

STORY INTRODUCTION	i
1 Matty and Nelson	1
2 Camping	10
3 Blisters and storms	18
4 Helping on the farm	26
5 A night on the hills	31
6 A new life for Matty	38
GLOSSARY	42
ACTIVITIES: Before Reading	44
ACTIVITIES: While Reading	46
ACTIVITIES: After Reading	48
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	52
ABOUT BOOKWORMS	53

Matty and Nelson

‘Now, Doolin, what are you going to do?’ said Mr Funnell. ‘You’re fifteen and you’re leaving school in three weeks’ time. Have you got any plans for a job?’

Matty Doolin looked at his feet. He was a big, strong boy who wasn’t afraid of fighting, but he found it difficult to talk. He could never find the right words.

‘I don’t know, sir. My Dad wants me to get a job in ship-building, like him.’

Mr Funnell was a teacher, but he also helped the children to find jobs when they left school.



‘My Dad wants me to get a job in ship-building.’

‘Well, that’s a good job, isn’t it?’ He waited, but Matty was silent. ‘Don’t you want to do that, then?’

‘No, sir.’ Matty’s face was unhappy. ‘I want . . . I want to work with animals. I’ve always wanted to do that.’

‘Why don’t you get a job on a farm?’ said Mr Funnell.

‘You don’t know my Dad, sir.’ Now Matty found the words to explain his troubles. ‘He says I’m stupid. There are no farms near here and he says I can’t go away and live and work on a farm because my Mum says I can’t leave home when I’m only fifteen.’

Mr Funnell looked at Matty kindly. ‘Well, talk to your parents again. Explain to them how you feel. Then, if they agree, I can help you to find a job on a farm.’

But Matty wasn’t very good at explaining his feelings, and he was already in trouble at home because of his dog Nelson, and because of the camping holiday.

The camping holiday was Willie’s plan. He, Matty, and Joe were best friends. When school finished, they wanted to go camping in the hills before they all had to begin work. But Matty’s parents said that Matty couldn’t go.

That Friday afternoon the three boys walked home from school together.

‘Can’t you ask your Mum and Dad again about the camping?’ said Joe. ‘Willie and I can’t go without you.’



'It's no good. They won't listen.'

'It's no good,' said Matty angrily. 'They won't listen. They just say that it's too dangerous for us to go camping in the hills by ourselves. And they're angry with me because of Nelson, too. They say that Nelson's got to go.'

'Why don't you find another home for him?' said Willie. 'He's not really *your* dog, is he? You found him in the street and you've only had him for a few weeks.'

But Joe and Willie didn't understand how Matty felt about animals. Matty really loved Nelson. It was true that Nelson was not a beautiful dog. He was old, had a bad leg, and couldn't see very well in one eye. But he loved Matty as much as Matty loved him. It was also

The Children of the New Forest

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

Retold by Rowena Akinyemi

England in 1647: King Charles is in prison, and Cromwell's men are fighting the King's men. These are dangerous times for everybody.

The four Beverley children have no parents; their father died while fighting for the King. Now Cromwell's soldiers have come to burn the house – with the children in it.

The four of them escape into the New Forest – but how will they live? What will they eat? And will Cromwell's soldiers find them?

On the Edge

GILLIAN CROSS

Retold by Clare West

When Tug wakes up, he is not in his own bedroom at home. The door is locked and there are bars across the window. Loud music hammers through the house and through his head. Then a woman comes in and says that she is his mother, but Tug knows that she is *not* his mother . . .

Outside, Jinny stares through the trees at the lonely house on the hill. She hears strange noises, but she turns away. After all, it's none of her business . . .