



Mr Benn, Queen' s Guard





It was a hot sunny day on Festive Road. People were mowing their lawns and children were playing soldiers, pretending to march in a parade. Mr Benn was reading a history book about Queen Victoria's Coronation. He wondered what it would be like to be at the palace on such an important and exciting day. Then he thought about the special costume shop that he knew. I think it's time for another adventure, thought Mr Benn, and he set off for the shop.





Inside the shop, as if by magic, the shopkeeper appeared.

“Good morning, Sir,” he said. “What would you like to try today?”

“I’d like to try the Queen’s Guard outfit,” replied Mr Benn.

“Certainly Sir,” said the shopkeeper, and pointed to the changing room.

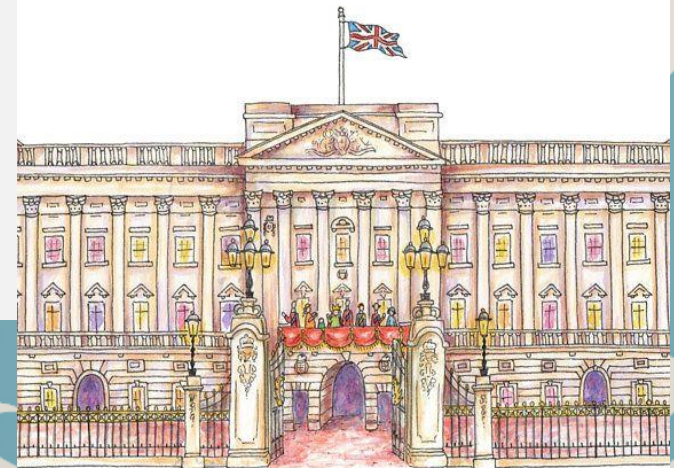
Mr Benn changed into the Guard’s outfit. He looked at himself in the mirror and then headed for the door that always led to adventures.



The Shopkeeper



On the other side of the door, Mr Benn found himself in a huge courtyard, as large as two football fields. At one end of the courtyard was a tall and beautiful building. It had stone statues standing along each wall, and an enormous doorway which towered above Mr Benn's head. "That must be the Royal Palace," thought Mr Benn. The whole courtyard was surrounded by tall, black and gold railings. Beyond the gates, Mr Benn could see that the streets were full of people, cheering and waving flags.





As he looked around the courtyard, Mr Benn noticed that guards wearing the same red coat and bearskin hat as he was, were rushing about, shouting orders to each other and looking very worried.

Mr Benn marched up to one of the guards, who was standing near the gates. "Why is everyone rushing around looking so worried?" he asked.





"Don't you know Sir?" replied the guard. "The Coronation parade to Westminster Abbey, where Victoria will be crowned Queen today, is supposed to start in five minutes, but not one of the horses will stand up!"

The guard explained that they had been practising so much for the great parade, that now all of the guards' horses were exhausted. "Without the horses," said the guard, "none of us guards will be able to ride, and there will be no way to pull the Queen's carriage to the Abbey!"



