



## Chapter Two How did that happen?

Mondo stood glumly beside the goldfish pond the following morning, a soft, quiet morning with mist drifting around the trees. One of the fish had died and floated below him in the greenish water, pale belly up. Mondo's arm ached and a feeling of dismay seemed to pulsate through his entire body.

There was a noise from the direction of the garage and Annie appeared, dressed for gardening in her old trousers and gumboots. She looked ready for anything, with her pink protective gloves, trowel, fork and bucket. She was humming as she eyed the rose bushes, took out her clippers and began cutting off dead heads.

Mondo heard the roar of the lawn mower and Gordon appeared, pushing it, his sleeves rolled up and a baseball cap on his head. He steered the mower on to the grass and switched it off.

'That grass is too wet now,' he said. 'I'll do it after.'

He strolled about the garden, looking at the plants, but came to a standstill when he reached the fish pond.

'Blast, there's a dead goldfish in the pond!'

'That pond needed cleaning out ages ago!' said Annie with more than a hint of annoyance.

Muttering to himself, Gordon strode off in the direction of the garage while Annie walked over to the pond, scooped out the dead goldfish with her trowel and put it in her bucket along with the dead flowers. Then she looked at Mondo, made a little questioning noise in her throat and knelt down beside him, looking him over carefully. She stroked his sore arm with her gloved hand and small flakes of red paint floated to the ground.

'How did that happen, I wonder?' she said aloud.

Mondo found her attention strangely comforting. It wasn't often that either Gordon or Annie came anywhere near him.

'Hey, Mum...what are you doing?' came a cheery voice from the footpath.

Annie turned as her young daughter, Pearl, came up the driveway, back from the supermarket, swinging a bag of bread in one hand. Pearl was smiling and her long, dark braids bounced on her shoulders as she ran across the lawn.

'Hello, dear . . .' Annie turned thoughtfully, 'I was looking at our gnome. He's lost paint on one side, as if he's been hit or scraped with something...I suppose it's just general wear and tear...'

'Mondo, his name's Mondo, Mum,' said Pearl bending over and peering at Mondo's arm, her bright eyes puzzled. 'That's funny, I saw the Jenkins' gnomes lying under their letter-box when I went past their place but they're normally by the front door. What's going on with the garden gnomes around here?'

Annie's eyes narrowed, she took a deep breath and let out an exasperated sigh. 'I wouldn't be surprised if was those Harris boys from Number 10. They're always up to something. I often see them loitering around after dark! Now, just what were they up to last night.'

Mondo listened gloomily, realising that Jugsy and Alfred had only just made it back home the night before. He wondered how many of them would be fit and able to assemble under the bridge that evening.

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## CHAPTER 2: How Did That Happen Activities

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### REMEMBERING - Where is the action taking place

1. Draw pictures of what the humans are doing in this chapter.
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### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the story

2. Show that you understand these words from this chapter by writing down what the word means, using it in a sentence of your own and drawing a picture or diagram - **glumly, muttering, gloomily**
  3. Draw a diagram, a comic strip or write a short poem showing that you know why Mondo's arm ached and a feeling of despair fill his body.
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### APPLYING - Using what you know from the story

4. Write the version of last night's events that is going on in Annie's head involving the Harris boys from Number 10 and the Evans Street gnomes.
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### ANALYSING - Breaking down the chapter to show how it works

5. Use a flow chart (story web) to show the plot development in this chapter.  
Problem: Is there a problem in this chapter and if so, what is it?  
Feelings: How do the main characters feel about this problem?  
Action: What do they do about the problem?  
Outcome: What is the result - Problem solved? New problem?
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### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

6. Design a way for the Evans Street gnomes to be able to communicate with each other during the day. Include diagrams and labels to explain your great ideas.
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## BIG PICTURE ACTIVITIES

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### Character Profiles

Start Character Profiles for the humans in the story. List all the character traits that are mentioned for each character. When you have enough information, start to draw pictures of what they look like.

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### Story Map

Add the additional information from this chapter about the fishing pond and and the front yard setting where Mondo lives during the day.

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## Chapter Three

### The Second Attack

The night was cold and light from a big yellow moon glittered on the flowing ripples of the stream. Huddled together under the shadow of the footbridge to Riverside Park, the gnomes talked in muted voices. Jugsy was there but Alfred had remained at home, too exhausted and sore to move. Balto was furious about his treasured marbles while Dex sat hugging his knees, his small dark face thoughtful. Erris fiddled around, cleaning out his pipe. Porto just tugged at his beard, saying very little, and Ninbur stood guard, his steely eyes flicking here and there.

Mondo was trying to formulate a plan. 'There are too many of them for us to attack. We should spy on them and pick them off one by one when they're alone.'

'What about my marbles?' whispered Balto angrily. 'I want them back!'

'Freeze!' hissed Ninbur suddenly. 'Someone's coming!'

All the gnomes gripped their weapons more tightly and shrank back into the deep shadows by the bank. Someone was coming, stepping slowly and carefully, their footsteps rustling in the long grass. Big Ninbur darted out from under the bridge and ran along the bank while the others waited, scarcely breathing. Moments later they saw two figures moving towards them out of the darkness. Ninbur had a supporting arm around Alfred – yes, it was Alfred – who hobbled painfully, leaning on his walking stick. Mondo realised that he had been gripping Porto's arm too tightly and let go, while the others breathed huge sighs of relief.

Alfred sat down carefully, placed his walking stick on the ground beside him and leaned back. 'I had to come!' he panted regaining his breath, 'because I don't want any more fighting . . . it's not going to benefit any of us.'

'But they stole my marbles! They're nothing but low-life criminals and thieves!' blurted Balto. 'I want my marbles back!'

Mondo nodded earnestly in agreement. 'We can't just let them get away with this! They started the war!'

Alfred shook his head and said, 'No – I'm older than you and I have memories of what real war is like. You don't want that, none of us wants that. We could all end up at the rubbish dump, ground into tiny little pieces, completely destroyed. But we do need help and there is an alternative. I think someone's got to go and see the Old Gnome.'

There was a long silent pause. Mondo had heard about the Old Gnome and knew that for as long as anyone could remember, gnomes had gone to him whenever there was a problem that couldn't be solved. The Old Gnome was famous for his wise words and his decisions were accepted as law!

A loud drumming on the bridge above them broke their silence. It was the sound of many pairs of boots running - the blue hats – and there was much shouting and nasty laughter.

'There they are, skulking in the shadows, the wussies! Get them!' the blue hats yelled as they raced to get across the bridge and climb down the bank.

Ninbur turned and spoke calmly but with a fierce glint in his eye. 'Alfred's right. Someone's got to go and find the Old Gnome and ask for help. Mondo, Erris, Dex, it's up to you young ones. Go ... go right now and we'll do everything we can to hold them off while you get a decent start.'

Mondo frowned, blinked and glanced towards Erris and Dex who stood, like him, frightened and confused. He was very conscious of the fast-approaching blue hats. 'But where do we go and how do we get there?'

Alfred whispered, 'Go towards the hills . . . his cave is beside a waterfall and . . . there's something about bells.' He pushed them on their way. 'Run, run, my friends and God speed!'

Ninbur whirled his club and roared loudly, making everyone jump - even the blue hats paused. Mondo, Erris and Dex melted backwards to the other side of the bridge, crept silently along the bank, then ran. They didn't stop running for a long time.

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Next morning, on her way to the playground in the park, Pearl found Alfred on the riverbank. He was minus his walking stick and his feet dangled in the water. Jugsy was lying further up the bank, missing an arm, and there were other gnomes scattered about, some that Pearl had never seen before. One of them had the top of his blue hat cut clean off and the other was face-down in mud.

A quick search confirmed that Mondo was not amongst them. Pearl scrambled back up the bank, sprinted home and stared in dismay at the empty spot beside the fish pond.

'Mum, Mum, Mondo's gone - and there's a big mess of gnomes by the river!' she yelled, bursting into the kitchen where her mother was busy cooking.

Annie stopped what she was doing and stood with both hands on her hips, her dark eyes smouldering, all thoughts of blueberry pie gone from her mind.

'It must be those trouble-making, mischievous Harris boys! Who else could it be? I've had enough,' she said untying her apron and reaching for her coat. 'It's time for a little neighbourly intervention!'

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## CHAPTER 3: The Second Attack Activities

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### REMEMBERING - Where is the action taking place

1. Draw a picture of the new setting under the footbridge leading to Riverside Park where the second attack takes place. Make sure you include all the details in the chapter.
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### UNDERSTANDING - Show that you understand the story

2. Show that you understand these words from this chapter by writing down what the word means, using it in a sentence of your own and drawing a picture or diagram - **huddled, mischievous, glint, intervention**
  3. Draw a diagram, a comic strip or write a short poem showing that you understand Mondo's plan for attacking the blue hats.
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### APPLYING - Using what you know from the story

4. The Evans Street gnomes decide to go to war with the blue hat gnomes. Write another article for the 'Gnome News' reporting the outcome that Alfred predicts. Come up with an attention grabbing headline.
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### ANALYSING - Breaking down the chapter to show how it works

5. Use a flow chart (story web) to show the plot development in this chapter.  
Problem: Is there a problem in this chapter and if so, what is it?  
Feelings: How do the main characters feel about this problem?  
Action: What do they do about the problem?  
Outcome: What is the result - Problem solved? New problem?
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### CREATING - Coming up with new ideas

6. Design a blue hat gnome detector that gives the Evans Street gnomes an early warning about the approaching enemy.  
Include diagrams and labels to explain how it works.
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## BIG PICTURE ACTIVITIES

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### Character Profiles

There is a lot more information in this chapter about the personalities of the Evans Street gnomes. Add everything you can find about each one to your character profiles. There is also some more information about what sort of person Annie is.

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### Story Map

Add the footbridge to Riverside Park into your Story map with drawings, diagrams and labels to record what happened there.

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