

# **The Water Babies** by Charles Kingsley

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## Chapter One Lesson 1E

Once upon a time there was a little chimney sweep, and his name was Tom. That is a short name, and you will have heard it before, so you will be able to remember it. He lived in a great town in the North of England, where there were plenty of chimneys to sweep, and plenty of money for Tom to earn and for his master to spend.

He could not read nor write, and he did not want to. He never washed himself, for there was no water where he lived. He had never been taught to say his prayers. He never had heard of God, except in swear-words.

He cried half his time, and laughed the other half. He cried when he had to climb the dark chimneys, because he rubbed his poor knees and elbows raw. He cried when the soot got into his eyes, which it did every day in the week. He cried when his master beat him, which he did every day in the week. He cried when he did not have enough to eat, which also happened every day in the week.

And he laughed the other half of the day, when he was tossing pennies with the other boys, or playing leapfrog over the posts, or throwing stones at the horses' legs as they trotted by, which was excellent fun when there was a wall to hide behind.

Tom thought that chimney-sweeping, and being hungry, and being beaten must be what happened to all the children in the world, just like rain happens and snow happens and thunder happens. When the bad things happened to Tom, he just waited until it was over, like his old donkey did to a hailstorm. When the storm was over the donkey just shook his ears. When Tom's bad things were over Tom was as jolly as ever.

### **Questions**

- 1) Where did Tom live?
- 2) What did Tom do for a living?
- 3) Was Tom treated fairly by his master?
- 4) Was Tom clean or dirty, and how do you know?
- 5) Name one of the things that made Tom sad.
- 6) What is the simile to describe how Tom took his beatings?  
(A simile starts with 'like' usually).
- 7) What is a hailstorm?

Tom would think of the good times coming, when he would be a man, and he would own a chimney-sweeping business, and he thought about how he would sit in the pub with a pint of beer and a long pipe, and play cards for silver money, and wear fine clothes, and keep a white bulldog with one grey ear, and carry her puppies in his pocket, just like a man.

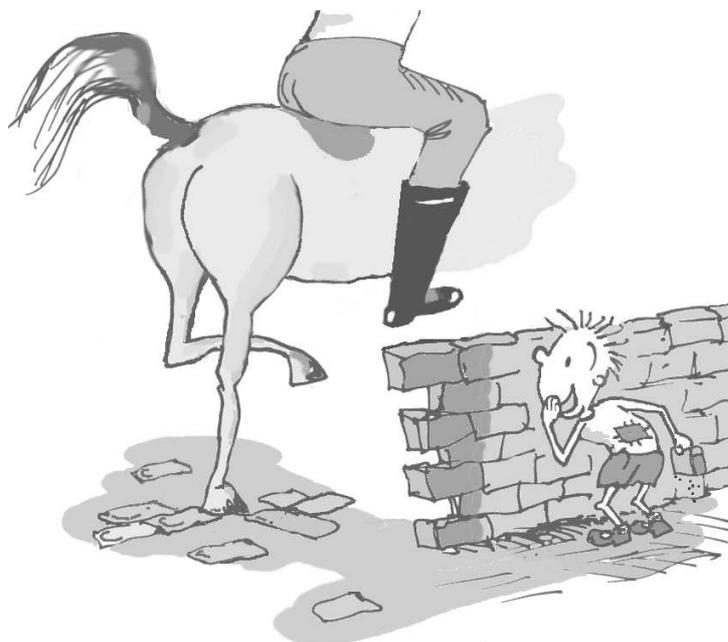
Sometimes his master let him have a drink of the dregs of his beer, and then Tom was the jolliest boy in the whole town.

One day a smart groom rode into the court where Tom lived. Tom was just hiding behind a wall, to throw half a brick at his horse's legs, but the groom saw him, and shouted to him to ask where Mr Grimes, the chimney-sweep, lived. Now, Mr Grimes was Tom's own master, and Tom was always polite to customers, so he put the half-brick down quietly behind the wall, and listened for his orders.

**Groom** A boy who looks after horses, or rides horses

#### Questions

- 8) What did Tom want to be when he grew up?
- 9) What kind of pet did Tom want to keep?
- 10) Where did Tom want to keep his bulldog puppies?
- 11) Did the groom know that Tom was going to throw the brick at him?
- 12) Give two examples which show what a rough boy Tom was.



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## Chapter One Lesson 2E

Mr Grimes was told by the man on the horse to come up the next morning to Sir John Harthover's house, because Sir John's old chimney-sweep had gone to prison, and the chimneys needed sweeping. When he had said this, the man rode away, without giving Tom time to ask what the sweep had gone to prison for, which Tom was interested in, as he had been in prison once or twice himself.

The man who rode the horse looked so very neat and clean, with his black leather boots, smart jacket, white tie with a smart pin in it, and clean round face, that Tom was disgusted at his appearance. Tom thought he was a show-off because he wore smart clothes which other people paid for. He went behind the wall to fetch the half-brick again, but then he remembered that the groom was a customer and he would get into trouble if he annoyed him, so he did not pick up the brick after all.

### Questions

- 1) What happened to Sir John's old chimney sweep?
- 2) Why had the man on the horse come to visit Mr Grimes?
- 3) What two adjectives describe the boots?
- 4) What adjective described the pin in the tie?
- 5) Why did Tom think the man was a show-off?



Tom's master was so delighted at his new customer that he knocked Tom down immediately, and drank more beer that night than usual, so he could be sure of getting up in time next morning. He thought the more a man's head hurts when he wakes up, the more glad he is to get up out of bed and have a breath of fresh air.

When the master did get up at four o'clock the next morning, he knocked Tom down again, in order to teach him that he must be an extra good boy that day, as they were going to a very great house, and they might make a lot of money if they did the job well

Tom also wanted to go to the great house, and he would have behaved his best, even without being knocked down. For, of all places upon earth, Harthover Place (which he had never seen) was the most wonderful, and, of all men on earth, Sir John (whom he had seen, having been sent to gaol by him twice) was the most awful.

#### Questions

- 6) Why did Tom not throw the brick?
- 7) Why did Tom's master drink more beer than usual?
- 8) Why did Tom's master hit Tom in the morning?
- 9) What did Tom think of Harthover Place?
- 10) Had Tom ever seen Harthover Place before?

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## Chapter One, Lesson 3E.

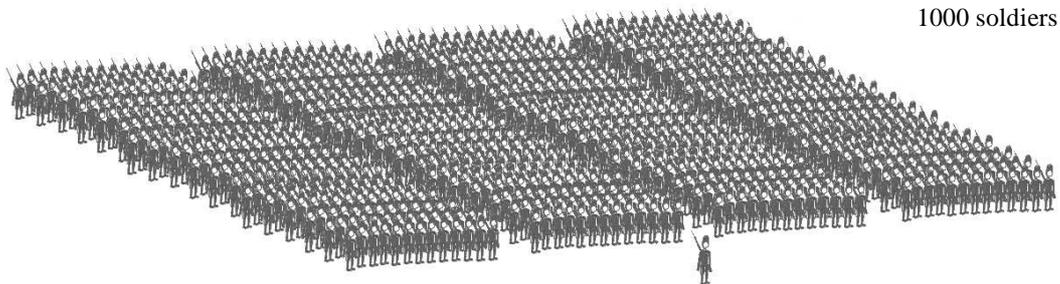
Harthover Place was a very grand place, with a house so large that ten thousand soldiers were able to fit in easily. Even though this is impossible, it is what Tom believed.

It had a park full of deer, which Tom believed to be monsters who liked to eat children. There were miles of land for birds and fish and wild pigs, which Mr Grimes and his friends poached. (Poached means to steal animals to eat them or sell them).

When Mr Grimes was poaching, he took Tom along, and Tom saw pheasants and wondered what they tasted like. There was a salmon-river, which Mr Grimes and his friends would have liked to poach from, but they did not do so. This was because it would have meant that they would have to get into cold water, and that is something they did not like at all.

### Questions

1. Did ten thousand soldiers really go in the house? Give a reason for your answer
2. Did Tom know what deer were like?
3. What does 'poach' mean?
4. Give the verbs in the following sentence (Words like 'run', 'sing')
5. When Mr Grimes was **poaching**, he took Tom along, and Tom saw pheasants and wondered what they tasted like



Harthover Place was a grand place, and Sir John was a grand old man. Even Mr Grimes respected him, for Sir John could send Mr Grimes to prison when he deserved it. He owned all the land about for miles and he as a jolly, honest, sensible squire. And, even more important to Mr Grimes, Sir John weighed at least fifteen stones and his chest was so big that nobody knew how many inches it was around it. He could have thrashed Mr Grimes himself in a fair fight, which very few folk round there could do, as Mr Grimes was a big man too. But remember, my dear little boy or girl, it would not have been right for him to thrash Mr Grimes. You can't do everything you would like to.

So Mr Grimes touched his hat to him when Sir John rode through the town, and he thought that made up for poaching Sir John's pheasants.

By now you may have realised that Mr Grimes had never been to school.

### Questions

6. Why did Mr Grimes not poach the salmon?
7. Give three compliments (nice things) made about Sir John.
8. How much did Sir John weigh?
9. What would Sir John have liked to do to Mr Grimes?
10. Had Mr Grimes been to school?



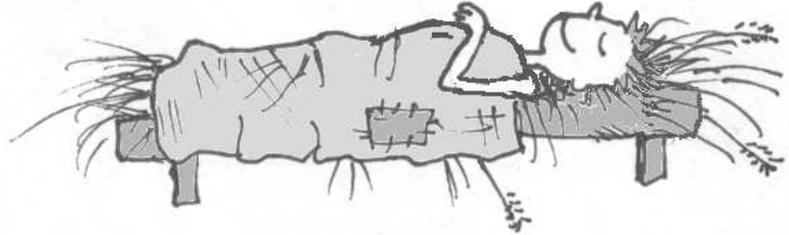
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## Chapter One Lesson 4 E

Now, I don't think you will ever have got up at three o'clock on a summer morning. Some people get up then because they want to catch fish, and some because they want to climb a mountain, and a great many more because they must get up then, like Tom had to.

But, I can tell you that three o'clock on a summer morning is the best time of all the twenty-four hours. I do not know why every one does not get up then. But instead of getting up early, people make themselves tired and bad-tempered by staying up late at night doing things that they might just as well do in the morning.



Tom went to bed at seven o'clock. At the same time, his master went to the pub. Tom slept like a dead pig, so when he got up at seven o'clock in the morning, he was as wide-awake as a gamecock (a male pheasant) who always gets up early to wake the hen pheasants (the female pheasants).

### Questions

- 1) What are three reasons given for why people might get up at three o'clock in the morning?
- 2) What makes people get tired and bad tempered?
- 3) What time did Tom go to bed?
- 4) At what time did Tom's master go to the pub?

Tom and his master set out. Grimes rode the donkey in front, and Tom walked behind with the brushes. They passed through the village, and out into the country. They plodded along the black dusty road, with no sound except for the groaning and thumping of a big steam engine in the next field.

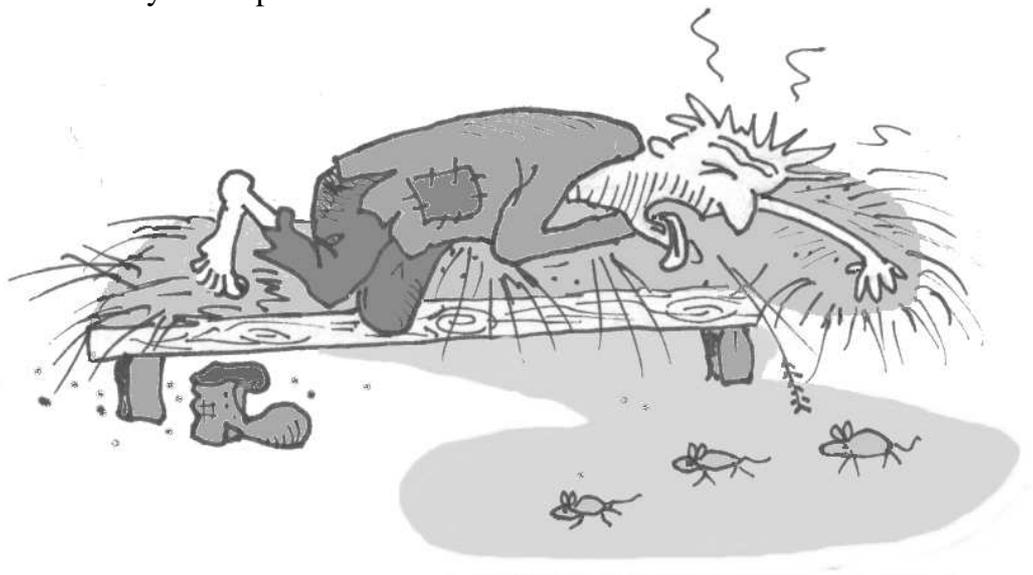
But soon the road grew white, and so did the walls. Next to walls grew long grass and pretty flowers. Instead of the groaning of the steam engine, they heard the skylark saying his morning prayers high up in the air.

Everything else was silent. For old Mrs Earth was still fast asleep. Like many pretty people, she looked still prettier asleep than awake. The cows were fast asleep. Even the clouds had lain down on the earth to rest.



### Questions

- 5) How did Tom sleep?
- 6) Who got to sit down, and who had to walk?
- 7) Why was the road black, then white further along?
- 8) Were the earth and clouds really asleep?



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## Chapter One Lesson 5 E

On they went, and Tom looked, and looked, for he never had been so far into the country before. He wanted to get over a gate, and pick buttercups, and look for birds' nests in the hedge, but Mr Grimes was in a hurry to get to work, and he would not have been very pleased about that.

Soon they came up to a poor woman, walking along. She had no shoes or socks, and she limped along because she was tired. She was a very beautiful woman, with bright grey eyes, and heavy black hair hanging over her cheeks. When Mr Grimes came up to her he called out to her, "This is a hard road for a sore foot like that. Do you want to ride on my donkey?"

But, perhaps, she did not like the look of Mr Grimes or his voice, for she answered quietly, "No, thank you; I'd rather walk with your little lad here."

"You may please yourself," growled Grimes, and went on smoking.

So she walked beside Tom, and talked to him.

### Questions

- 1) What are three things Tom wanted to do in the countryside?
- 2) Why did Tom decide not to look for birds' nests?
- 3) Why was Mr Grimes in a hurry?
- 4) From the sentence below, copy out each noun, and list the adjectives after it.

Start a new line for each noun.

She was a very beautiful **woman**, with bright grey **eyes**, and heavy black **hair** hanging over her **cheek**

At last, at the bottom of a hill, they came to a spring coming out of a low cave of rock. A great fountain rose, bubbling, and gurgling and very clear when you looked in it. The stream ran away again under the road. It was a stream large enough to turn a water wheel on a mill.

Grimes stopped, and looked, and Tom looked too. Tom was wondering whether anything lived in that dark cave and came out at night.

But Grimes was not wondering at all. Without a word, he got off his donkey, and climbed over the low wall, and knelt down, and began dipping his sooty head into the spring - and he made it very dirty.

- 5) How do we know that woman was very poor?
- 6) From the sentence that follows, copy out each noun, and list the adjectives after it. Start a new line for each noun. There are **TWO** nouns and they are highlighted. This is a hard **road** for a sore **foot** like that
- 7) Did the woman decide to ride on the donkey or walk?
- 8) What is a water wheel?
- 9) Write out two verbs from the sentence below. The first one is highlighted:  
So she **walked** beside Tom, and talked to him
- 10) What did Tom wonder when he saw the cave?
- 11) What made the stream dirty?



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## Chapter One Lesson 6 E

Tom was picking the flowers as fast as he could. The woman helped him. She showed him how to tie them up, and a very pretty bunch they made between them.

But when Tom saw Grimes actually wash, he stopped, quite astonished. When Grimes had finished, and began shaking his ears to dry them, he said: 'Master, I never saw you do that before.'

'And you will not see me do it again, most likely. I did not do it to get clean, I did it to get cool. I don't need to wash like a smutty coal miner.'

'I wish I might go and dip my head in,' said poor little Tom. 'It must be as good as putting it under the town-pump.'



### Questions

- 1 What did the Irishwoman help Tom to do?
- 2 What made Tom astonished?
- 3 Copy out three verbs from this sentence:  
But when he **saw** Grimes actually wash, he stopped
- 4 What was it that Tom had never seen his master do before?
- 5 Why did Mr Grimes think he deserved to put his head in the water more than Tom did?

'You come along,' said Grimes; 'what do you want to wash yourself for? You did not drink half a gallon of beer last night, like I did.'

'I don't care what you say,' said naughty Tom. He ran down to the stream, and began washing his face.

Grimes was very sulky, because the woman was Tom's friend and not his, so he dashed towards Tom and picked him up from his knees, and began beating him. But Tom was used to that, and got his head safe between Mr Grimes' legs.

'Are you not ashamed of yourself, Thomas Grimes?' cried the woman over the wall.

Grimes looked up, startled that she knew his name; but all he answered was, 'No, and I never have been in my whole life,' and he went on beating Tom.

## Questions

- 6 Why was Mr Grimes startled when the Irishwoman asked him if he was ashamed of himself?
- 7 Copy out two nouns from the sentence below. The first one is highlighted. But Tom got his **head** safe between Mr Grimes' legs.
- 8 Copy out two verbs from the sentence below. The first one is highlighted. The Irishwoman **helped** him. She showed him how to tie them up.



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## Chapter One Lesson 7 E



'I know about you. I know what happened, at night time, two years ago.'

'You do?' shouted Grimes, and leaving Tom, he climbed up over the wall, and faced the woman.

'I saw what I saw; and if you hit that boy again, I will tell people what I know.'

Grimes seemed quite frightened, and got on his donkey without another word.

And she turned away, and went through a gate into the field. Grimes stood still a moment, then he rushed after her, shouting, 'You come back!' But when he got into the field, the woman was not there.

### Questions

- 1 Why did Grimes stop beating Tom?
- 2 Where did the woman go after Grimes got on his donkey?
- 3 Give two possible reasons why the woman could not be seen
- 4 Grimes was as silent as something that never makes a noise. What is it?
- 5 How far did they travel to find Sir John's house?



Had she hidden away? There was no place to hide in. But Grimes looked about, and Tom also, for he was as puzzled as Grimes as to how she could disappear so suddenly. But wherever they looked, she was not there.

Grimes came back again, as silent as a post, for he was a little frightened. He got on his donkey, filled a fresh pipe, and smoked away, leaving Tom in peace.

After travelling for three miles and more, they came to a house and gates at the entrance to Sir John's place.

The gates were very big, made of iron with stone gate-posts, and on the top of each gate-post was a most dreadful creature, all teeth, horns, and tail. It was the creature which had been on the flags and shields which Sir John's ancestors used in the Wars of the Roses; and very clever men they were to use it, for all their enemies must have run for their lives when they saw them.

### Questions

6 What were the gates like?

7 Where were the dreadful creatures? Give three places

8 Copy and add punctuation:

you do shouted grimes

9 . Find a verb in the sentence

'Then he rushed after her'.



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### **Lesson 8 E.**

Grimes rang at the gate, and out came a gamekeeper who opened it.

'I was told to expect you,' he said. 'Now you must keep to the main path, and do not let me find a hare or a rabbit on you when you come back. I shall look carefully for one, I'm telling you.'

'You won't find one if it's in the bottom of the soot-bag,' answered Grimes, and he laughed. The gamekeeper laughed too and said, 'If that's the type of person you are, I had better walk up with you to the hall.'

'I think you better had. It's your business to look after your game, man, and not mine.'

So the gamekeeper went with them, and Tom was surprised that the gamekeeper and Grimes chatted together all the way quite pleasantly. Tom did not know that a gamekeeper is only a poacher turned outside in, and a poacher is a gamekeeper turned inside out.

### **Questions**

- 1 Why did the gamekeeper ask Grimes to keep to the main path?
- 2 Explain the joke about the soot-bag in paragraph 3.
- 3 When the gamekeeper said "If that's the type of person you are", what kind of person does he mean?
- 4 Why was Tom surprised that the gamekeeper and Mr Grimes chatted so pleasantly?
- 5 What sentence means a gamekeeper and a poacher are the same as each other in some ways, and opposite each other in other ways? (The both know about animals and woods, but one is trying to take the animals and the other is trying to stop him).
6. Why did Tom tremble when he saw the deer's horns?