

Paul Delaney's 'Character portraits'

From 'SPARROWLEGS'

Until that cold, February morning. A thin cloak of fog was lifting when I saw him for the first time. Standing in my front garden, my hands trembled with sharp, painful cold.

He was in a silver wheelchair, with a thick, red blanket draped over his knees. Somebody was pushing him up the path of 'Shell Green' cottage. I held my breath. Tears invaded the whites of my eyes. I tore up my welcome card I'd made for the Harvey boys.

Slumped in that rickety old chair, an old aged pensioner sat. On the top of his bald head, a few tangled hairs blew in the wind like grey, dancing spiders. He was covered in long, thin wrinkles, etched into his face like deep scars. He was half asleep. Half dead I suppose.

Peering at him, I slowly shook my head. My mouth closed as my eyes narrowed. A long, unhappy sigh escaped through my dry lips. I released a sad, cloudy breath into the cold air.

Sitting in a tall, wooden armchair, a living skeleton glanced up at us. An enormous knitted cardigan hung from his shoulders like a grey, baggy ship's sail. His long, bony hands trembled a little.

Carved into his face, deep wrinkles stretched wide. A large pair of black spectacles rested upon his short, fat nose. And his dark, sunken eyes peered through thick lenses, like magnifying glasses.



From 'THE MAGICAL AND MYSTERIOUS
MADAME MISTRAL'

An old woman, short in stature, suddenly appeared. She walked through a long, lilac curtain, its material covered in a swarm of silvery stars. Hobbling along on an old, wooden crutch, she dragged her slippers through the grass.

Wrapped around her head was a tight, yellow headband, with four different rubies set into an ornate silver clasp on the front. Long dyed brown hair, tinged with streaks of gold, framed her wrinkle-infested face. Deep, dark shadows lay under her eyes, hanging still like silent, sleeping slugs.

A long, crooked nose was standing to attention in the middle of her ancient face. Several stray hairs protruded out of its nostrils, like tiny, silver springs. Enormous bronze earrings swung from her ears, dangling down in a perfect, symmetrical line.

'It's your mum in a few years' time, Herb!' Trevor chuckled, nudging into Herbert's arm. Herbert pushed out a long sigh, turning his eyes towards the old lady. Madame Mistral peered at everybody. Her old, wise eyes burned bright like two hot sparklers on bonfire night.

From 'MY TOILET IS A MURDERER!'

As he twisted six long, silver screws into the base, I pulled my glasses from my pocket. Peering through them, I had a good look at the new machine.

It did look impressive. For a start it was black, not white, with a shiny silver lid trapping the deadly smells below. On the top, a large computerized LCD control panel sat, surrounded by an oval of bright silver buttons. Two small loudspeakers jutted out from the sides of it and tangled, coloured wires dangled from the top like soft spaghetti.

Grinning, Dad looked up, flashing those stained teeth of his. 'It's even got its own remote control and computerized speech,' he beamed, thrusting a black plastic box into my hand.

Staring at it, my eyes widened reading the words underneath the little buttons. 'Seat up/down' said one. 'Seat heater' said another. 'Super flush' and 'Atomic bottom wash' said others. 'Space-age technology' Dad had said. True, I thought.



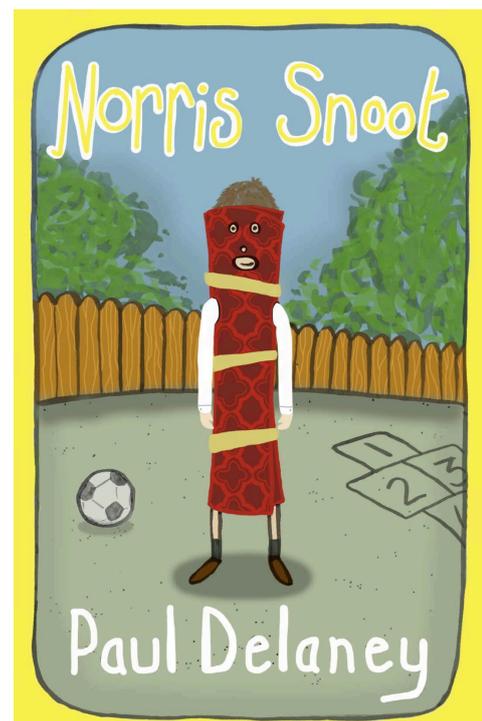
From 'NORRIS SNOOT' (Coming soon!)

Harvey stomped and stamped his way around the classroom. He pushed into other children, grunting like a wild beast.

He had a round, chubby face, with black, beady eyes, all sunken in fat. He was a Great white shark, swimming around in a shoal of goldfish. His neck was the thickness of a small ham. His arms looked as if he'd borrowed them from some sort of enormous troll.

Mr. Hooper lay down on a long, leather couch, his shiny black shoes hanging off the end. He sported a grey pin striped suit; complemented by a smart, snow white shirt and a plain pink tie. On the front of his jacket, several different coloured pens and pencils stuck out of his top pocket like an ammunition pouch.

Neat, silver hair, as thick as fuse wire, but thinning on top, sat on the top of his thin, wrinkled head. A large, wavy moustache hung under his nose, rather like a sleeping, silver snake.



Please visit www.pauldelaneypoetry.co.uk for more details about my work!

Why not book a day with Paul Delaney in your school?

Look at what the children say...

What the children say...

"I've started writing my own poems now!"

"I bought his poetry book - it was awesome!"

"I love all the different voices that Paul uses!"

"He's really funny. In fact, he's epic!"

"The day was fun and informative because of the advice that we got on how to write our own stories and poems. The humour and excitement added to the fun and I would definitely want him to come in again!"

"He must be clever, he plays the Piano as well!"