

A fairer world

The big picture



Amy



Jess has been my best friend since we started at Westgate. We've had our ups and downs, of course, but basically I really care for her. It bothers me that she's losing so much weight, and that she's getting obsessed with fitness training.

Would you be concerned if a friend of yours was very unhappy? What do you think you could do to help? What advice would you give your best friends if they were getting too thin or too fat?

Amy Donny's written some very witty replies to the problem page letters he's received. He's so much wittier than the rest of us, isn't he?

Jess I used to think he was the biggest show-off in the school, do you remember?

Amy How could I forget? Even now that you two are an item, you aren't always that nice to him.

Jess He's the cleverest guy I know, and the kindest, most sympathetic friend too.

Amy Wow, can I have that in writing? You've given him quite a tough time recently.

Jess What are you getting at? I just told him we needed some more serious articles for XOL, and I meant it. The world's a mess and getting messier, and all we can do is complain about our pathetic lives. Most people aren't as lucky as we are.

Amy There's no need to get so heavy with me, Jess. You know what? I think you've become depressed. I can't understand it. You've just admitted you've got a great boyfriend. I'm your best friend and you can't get better than that! And yet you're more miserable than I've ever seen you. You've lost such a lot of weight too. I mean, just look at those baggy jeans! They're falling off you and what size are they?

Jess I'm not as skinny as you are, so you can't talk.

Amy Jess, that's just not true! You've become obsessed with fitness exercises and now you're fitter than you used to be, which is fine. But you're definitely thinner than me, and soon you'll be too thin.

Jess I've had this pair for ages. These are size 12, so I guess I could get a size smaller next time. Donny used to say I had a big bum.

Amy Well he won't be able to say that now. Look, let's forget XOL and go out. Maybe get you some new jeans? Would that cheer you up?

Jess I don't really approve of retail therapy, you know.

Amy Josie told me about a market stall where you can get the cheapest jeans in town. Hey, that's given me an idea. Maybe Josie will be able to do an article for you about designers in the denim industry. Hasn't her celebrity interviewee created her own jeans label now? All styles: bootleg, flared, skinny ... with a star or her initials on the back pocket. ... You don't know what I'm on about, do you? Look, let's ring Josie and ask her to join us for lunch. Donny and Spud too, OK?

Jess Well ... I was planning to go to the gym instead of having lunch but ...

Amy That's it! I'm not taking no for an answer. Come on, we can text the others on the way ...

Costing the earth

- Amy** Hi Josie! We're over here!
- Josie** Sorry I'm late. Haven't you ordered yet?
- Spud** No, and I'm starving. We were waiting for you.
- Josie** Can I show you what I've bought first? My mum said I wasn't allowed to spend any money today but I couldn't resist it. There are some unbelievable deals out there on the market. Look! I got these cool aged jeans for £10!
- Jess** It's crazy that you can buy jeans that look old already. When my dad was at university, he used to sit in the bath in new jeans, to make them fit tighter and feel softer. He said they didn't feel right at first!
- Josie** A group of uni students were demonstrating outside Gap, handing out these leaflets and shouting their heads off. I'm surprised they didn't get arrested for causing a disturbance.
- Jess** It's a free country. We're allowed to voice our opinions in public. What were they protesting about anyway?
- Josie** Ethical shopping or some rubbish like that. I don't care how things are made. Personally I can't see anything wrong with cheap clothes – the cheaper the better. How could kids like us afford fashionable clothes otherwise?
- Spud** They've chosen the wrong target, because Gap used to get their stuff from the dirtiest sweatshops in Asia but they don't now. They believe in fair trade and so their reputation's improved.
- Jess** Sorry, but have you read this leaflet? There are still thousands of sweatshops where little children and women work in the most dreadful cramped conditions, and they're not allowed to complain.
- Amy** Yeah but at least they can earn some wages that way, which is presumably better than earning nothing at all. I mean, I can sympathize with what you're saying, but really Jess ...
- Jess** The big chain stores can claim that all their products are made by fairly paid workers, but they don't own the factories. So they can't control what goes on. And those market stalls are even worse! How can they sell a pair of jeans for £10?
- Josie** No idea but I expect you're going to tell us.
- Jess** Well, you're charged £10 by the stallholder, so he probably paid £5 for them. Don't you see, that means a garment like that is probably made in a dingy little room somewhere in India by a woman who is paid less than a pound. I'm going to join that demonstration!
- Amy** Sit down, Jess, and don't get so agitated. We haven't had any lunch yet.

Josie



Isn't that typical of Jess? I buy a really cool pair of jeans and she tries to make me feel bad. She goes on at me about where they're made and how much the factory workers get paid. Why should I listen to her?

Where do you go to buy your clothes? Where's the best place for cheap but fashionable jeans? How much did you pay for the last pair of jeans you bought? What's the most you've ever paid for clothes?

Jess

I told you I wasn't hungry. This is more important and I'll get a good story out of it too. You can all come with me.

Spud

No way. I want my lunch.

Jess

Amy?

Josie

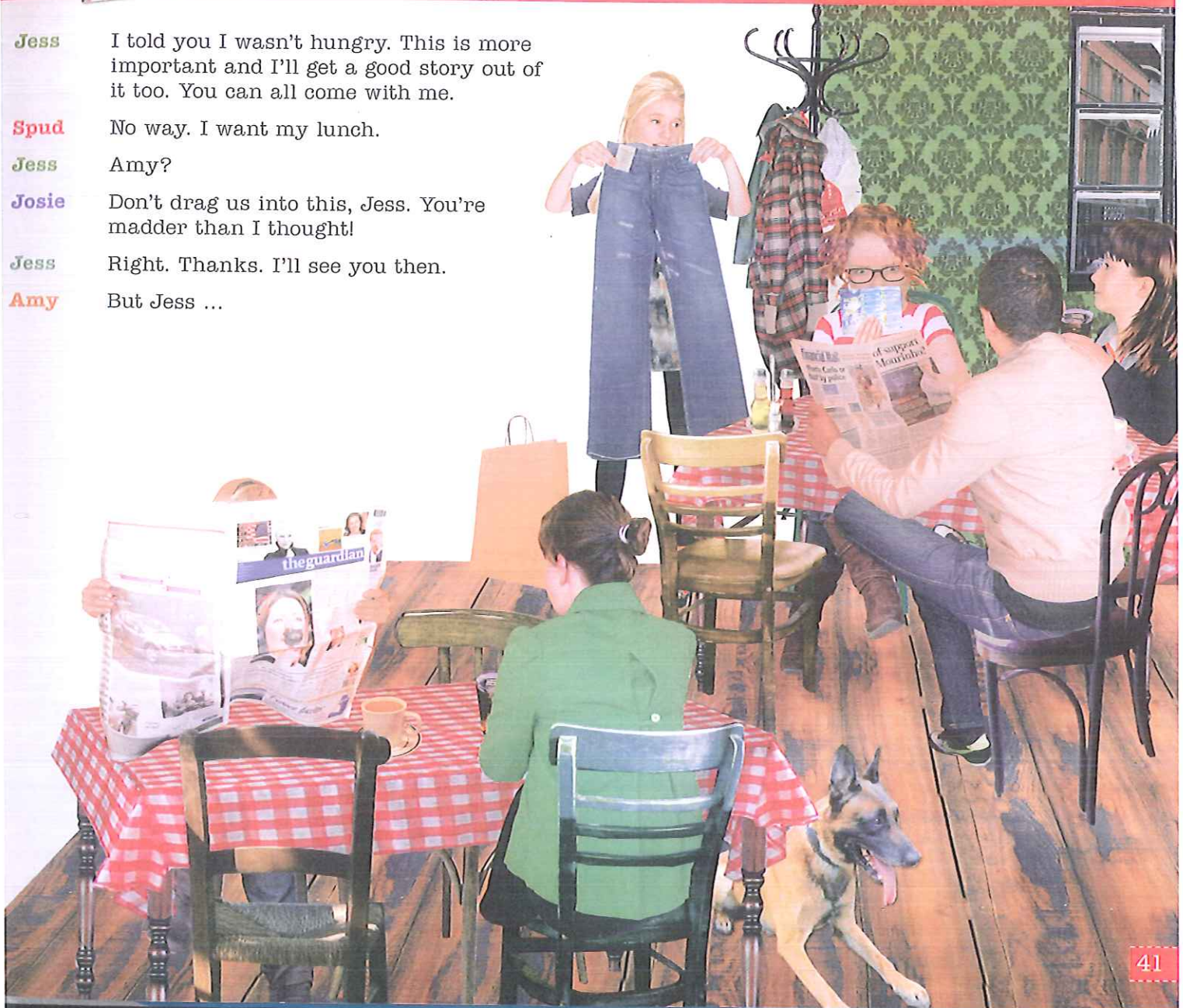
Don't drag us into this, Jess. You're madder than I thought!

Jess

Right. Thanks. I'll see you then.

Amy

But Jess ...



No sweat?





Everyone loves wearing jeans, and it's great when you manage to find a really cool pair that isn't too expensive. Most of us are interested in fashion and like having fashionable things. Not many of us stop to think where our clothes are made and who makes them.

Are there people in the Netherlands who campaign for ethical shopping? Do you ever wonder if the clothes you wear are made by child labour? Do you think you should?

J jeans are sexy, fashionable and they look good on nearly everybody. All the top designers bring out each season's latest fashions in denim, and we all want them. Denim jeans have come a long way since Levi Strauss first made them for workers because they were tougher and lasted longer. They're not made just for work any more: we've had bootleg, flared, skinny, baggy and all types of jeans. But what is the real cost of our jeans?

At XOL, we believe that fashion workers all over the world should enjoy the same conditions that we have here in Britain. The picture that is shown here is from Zhongshan, a town at the centre of China's jeans industry. Remember this girl the next time you're tempted by cheap deals. Join our fight for fairer fashion!

In a dark night in a southern Chinese town, mountains of jeans are piled across the factory floor. To make enough pairs, thousands of workers sweat through the night, rubbing and tearing the trousers to give them their fashionable 'second-hand' look.

Under bright electric lights in an old factory building, these jeans are given the vintage look. Loud machines peel layers off the denim, and a fine spray of nasty dust is sent into the air. The workers are racing to make the morning collection. They have left their poor

villages to work in Zhongshan and now they are helping to make China the world's biggest producer of jeans. The industry is thought to be worth tens of millions of euros every year. Yet the success story comes at a very high price.

The workers earn better wages than in the villages, but they risk serious injuries, as well as eye, back and chest problems. When the jeans are made, they are placed into giant washing machines with chemicals and stones. Later they are pulled out with bare hands and brought to a special room to dry. Temperatures go over 40 °C and the workers breathe in dangerous fumes.

Dou Yongwen, 22, has produced 10,000 jeans buttons almost every day for eight years, and his health has got worse every year. Recently, he punched a hole in his finger in a machine accident. 'Hopefully, in a couple of years, I will save enough money to open a button factory,' he says.

At Chinese New Year, the workers return to their villages, carrying things they did not have before – televisions, toys, mobile phones and yes, jeans – together with dreams of a better future that, for young men like Dou, has not arrived yet.

And all this, just so that they can have the same fashionable stuff as people in richer countries? Isn't the price too high?

Project Namwala

1 Namwala High School is a secondary school in Zambia, in the south of Africa. Its 1,200 pupils are boarders, as the nearest town is 200 kilometres away and often inaccessible due to bad roads. In recent years, this school has experienced problems maintaining its very high standards. In September 2004, Stiftsschule Einsiedeln, a grammar school in Switzerland, formed a partnership
5 with Namwala High School, and since then they have offered the so-called Namstift Scholarship. With their financial support, windows were repaired in classrooms and dormitories, toilets were fixed, sports facilities were built and much-needed teaching materials were bought. In 2006 and 2008, groups of Swiss pupils and their teachers visited Namwala to help with repair work and meet their African friends. Among other things they painted the classrooms with the Namwala pupils.

10 Dear friends

I was born on 22 February in 1992 at a place called St Mary's in Monze. My father died from HIV/AIDS related diseases in 2005. Now my mother is also taking care of four
15 cousins whose parents died in 2001. Life at home is not easy. During the holidays we sell mangoes to raise money for food. Mangoes are seasonal fruits that are available from December to March. My school life has been hard from the time my father died, but I was helped to continue with my education by different sympathizers.

20 In 2008, I passed to grade 10 in Namwala High School. This co-educational boarding school is very expensive and my mother was really struggling.

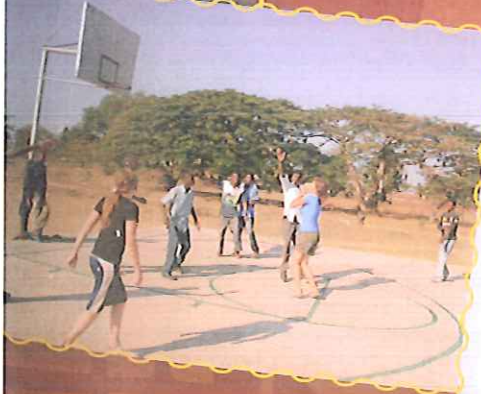
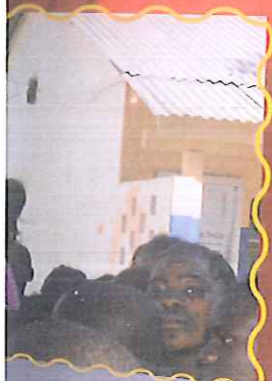
I was more than happy when you came to visit our school and I was approached about the Namstift Scholarship. My mother
25 said it was a prayer answered. We just don't know how to express our gratitude. I would also like to write in English to the pupils who came to our school and helped us so much. I am really impressed that you came so far to help us.

Greetings to my sponsors and all your family members.

Fenny Siampese



These letters are from two of the Namwala pupils who were awarded a Namstift Scholarship.



30 Dear friends

I am Honest Siapaka and was born in 1991. We are nine in our family and our tradition encourages people to raise cattle and do some farming, though it is a drought-prone area and very rocky. My parents had a few animals, which they have since sold to help me get educated and they currently have none.

I started school in 1998 and in 2007 qualified for Namwala High School, which is far away from my home. As I was at school my parents worked hard to get some money ready for the second term and they managed to pay for term three and term one of the eleventh grade. I am so grateful that this time I was picked for sponsorship under the Namstift Scholarship.

I promise to work hard and will not disappoint my sponsors. I hope to write more about my school life. Thank you for now, and greetings to all and once more thank you for everything. Are you coming this year again to visit the school?

Yours sincerely,
Honest Siapaka



Give a little, help a lot

A

> Fundraising



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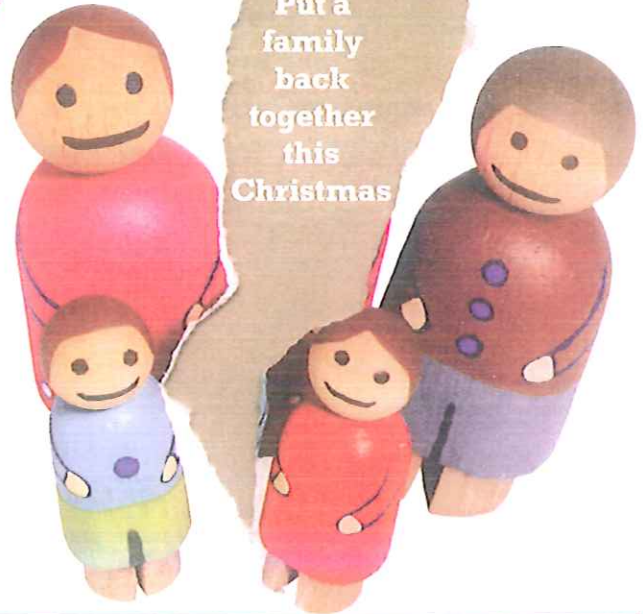
Give a little, help a lot.



give with confidence

B

Put a family back together this Christmas



All over the world, poverty and injustice are tearing families apart. But you can fund practical solutions to help put them back together.

In KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, 18-year-old Nomfundo is bringing up her five brothers and sisters alone after their parents died of HIV/AIDS.

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Any questions? Please get in touch ...

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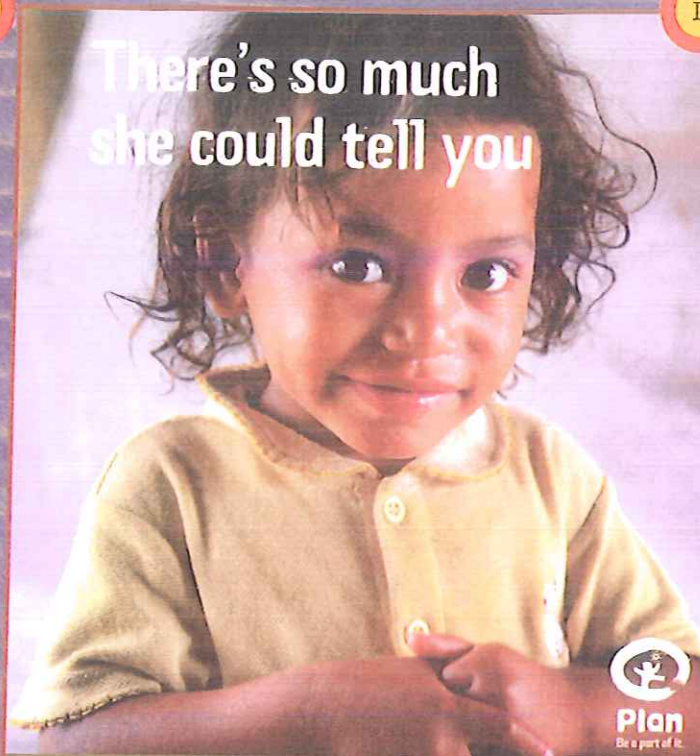
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CARE

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Life at Litton Mills

How young Robert Morley came to work in a northern cotton mill

The snow was just beginning to fall as the children climbed stiffly out of the carts. Robert Morley, who had most wanted to come, was the first to get out. He stood now, a small eight-year-old, at the front of the group of about forty children. Their heads, without hats and with hair untidy, were turning white as they stood, looking up at the huge, dark mill.

An elegant clock on the front wall of the stone building showed the time as half past three, yet the sun had long since gone from this deep dark valley. On the wall, Robert made out the words LITTON MILLS, cut into the hard stone. Litton Mills. In Miller's Dale. This was certainly it. This was the promised wonderful new home. So why was he feeling so frightened? There was a harsh shout from behind them and the children moved forward – life at Litton Mills had begun. The year was 1838.

Robert Morley had been born in about 1830, although there was no record of his birth. At the age of four, he had been taken to the workhouse at Saint Pancras in London. He remembered the journey there, in a carriage with a woman he thought was probably not his mother. The name Morley was not his own, either. One of the Churchwardens, who ran the Saint Pancras workhouse, had called him Morley. Robert knew not why, and did not care. He was motherless, fatherless, friendless, and why not nameless too? Saint Pancras

workhouse was a home for children whose parents had either died, or could not look after them. The Churchwardens of the workhouse fed and clothed the children, and were kind. Robert, although small in size, grew into a lively, strong-minded boy, hating the high walls and locked gates.

When, in the summer of 1838, there was talk of Apprentice Masters coming from northern cotton mills, Robert was very keen to be selected. He was not the only one. The boys and girls had been told, by the Churchwardens themselves, that this was the chance of a lifetime. The lucky children who were selected were going to live in the country, in the healthful fresh air of North Derbyshire. They would be free of the stink and the noise of London forever. They were going to learn to be cotton workers. They were going to have roast beef and plum puddings to eat, as much as they wanted, and money in their pockets. They were going to learn to read and write big words, and to speak like little ladies and gentlemen. They would ride horses in the hills, and feel the wind in their hair.

This seemed to be Robert's dream come true. The children talked of nothing else for weeks – how they were to ride on fine horses and eat meat, even for breakfast if they wanted! The stories became more and more fantastic, and the orphans' hopes and dreams more and more unrealistic. By the time the Apprentice Masters arrived, more than a hundred children wanted to go.

The Apprentice Masters seemed kind enough, as they looked up and down the pale, hopeful faces. The children had to sign a paper – if they were too young to write their name (for many were not yet seven), they could simply put a cross. This was what the Masters called 'an indenture', but that was a big word that the children did not need to understand. It just meant, the Masters went on with a friendly smile, that from this day until the age of twenty-one, each child had agreed to be an Apprentice at Litton Mills. Each boy or girl chosen was to have two new suits of clothing, one for work and one for Sunday best, a shilling each and a large piece of gingerbread.

At this last promise, the excited children started pushing forward to sign the indentures. Robert reached the long wooden table and stood with his shoulders as straight and strong as he could make them. A pen was pushed into his small hand, and he put a cross, quickly, before the watching Apprentice Master could change his mind. And with that, Robert Morley and forty other workhouse children believed themselves free.

Now, as the new apprentices moved forward into Litton Mills, they did not seem free at all. The mill manager who 'welcomed' them sounded angry and cruel. Many of the children started crying and were still sobbing silently as they lined up near the kitchen for their first meal. Hungry though they were, the workhouse children could hardly face the disgusting mess handed to them in wooden

bowls. It was a kind of watery soup, oily on the top, with pieces of fatty bacon floating in it. They were told to sit at long tables and eat. When Robert tried to speak, the man hit him hard across the back of his head. Silence and darkness fell.

Finally, a bell announced the end of the fourteen-hour working day in the Mill. There was a crashing and banging as over two hundred thin dark figures pushed in. One or two lamps were lit, and Robert could see the other apprentices. He was horrified. They looked exhausted. They were filthy, dark with oil and dust, and dressed in oily rags. Some wore wooden clogs, but a lot were barefoot. Many moved with difficulty; there were children with knees so badly bent backwards that they could hardly walk at all. Nearly all of the apprentices were covered in bruises or cuts. Yet they all hurried towards the kitchen and grabbed their food, which they ate like half-starved animals. Once they had eaten, they paused to look at the new apprentices. 'You'll eat it soon, and worse!' they laughed, showing black and broken teeth. 'Much worse! You'll pick worse than this out of the rubbish and eat that soon, just you wait!'

From *Life at Litton Mills*
by Annie Cornford

