

Bonnie from
The Good Neighbours of Crook Farm
By Andrea Louise Watson

It is 1985 and Bonnie is 10 years old. She lives with her single Dad Martin in an annex next to her Nana Nora whom she adores.

She is a bright, intelligent, very sensitive and a little shy. She is a daydreamer and doesn't feel like she fits in with the kids at school.

One Sunday night whilst playing hide and seek with her Dad she discovered a ottoman which had pictures of her Nana as a little girl, a bravery award from Churchill in her Nana's name and a teddy bear with a necklace hidden inside.

Nana Nora went mad when she found out they had opened the ottoman and she promised she would never open it again and they would never speak of what she found. Bonnie however kept the teddy bear in secret and wore the necklace for school the next day

In this scene she is explaining to her Dad why she has got sent home and suspended for a week.

Bonnie

I'm so sorry Dad, please don't be mad at me, it wasn't my fault.

Last night I took Nana's teddy bear from the ottoman, but I had to. I know I said I would put everything back just as I found it, but it was talking to me and it didn't want to be in the dark box. I know I'm too old for Teddy Bears, but they don't belong in boxes the same way that real bears shouldn't be in a cage. I hid it under the covers when Nana came to kiss me goodnight and when I brought it back out, there was a tear in the stitching and I felt something inside the bear. It was this necklace!

She shows her Dad the necklace around her neck she has been hiding under her jumper

I put it on and I forgot I was wearing it when I went to school this morning. Miss Utley, or Miss Ugly as we call her, was teaching us English She is mean and horrid and a least 110. Her breath stinks. She always gets kids to read out loud from the book. This morning, she pointed her long boney finger at Dennis and made him stand up and read.

You know little Dennis! He came to my birthday. He has a hearing aid and stutters. She had this smirk on her face when he stood up. I could feel how nervous he was and I was willing him to be able to read out loud.

I kept chanting really quietly
"You can do it Dennis, You can do it Dennis"

Dad, he couldn't get started. He stuttered on the first word. And the class was silent and I thought it would be OK. Then SHE started scolding him,

(She does an impression of Miss Ultley)

"Come on Dennis, your wasting everybody's time"

The harder he tried the worse it got for him

"Are you a baby Dennis? Are you a baby that can't read?"

She started laughing. No, not laughing, cackling like the witch she is! She stood up and pointed at him and the whole class started laughing and I could feel Dennis's utter despair. Dad, I could really feel how humiliated he was! It hurt my head. I felt it was going to pop. I sprang up and I shouted

"STOP IT AND LEAVE HIM ALONE, YOU EVIL, EVIL WITCH"

Well, the whole class went silent again and all eyes were on me. She smiled out of the corner of her mouth and I knew, I just knew she had something bad in store for me. I was terrified when she slowly came gliding over to me. Suddenly her black eyes widened and she look excited the closer she got. Then I realised, my necklace must have fallen from under my uniform and she could see it. The charm seemed to glow and throb the closer she got. I knew she was going to take it off me.

"What does Miss Mitchell have around her pretty neck? She knows jewellery isn't allowed at school"

Just as she was about to grab it from my neck something pushed her away. It wasn't me, I swear it wasn't me. She was still a foot away and she went flying backwards right to the front of the class and she was only stopped by her desk. I can't push that hard. I'm not the hulk! She crumpled on the floor and that's when the head came into the class and you know the rest. I'm not allowed back to school for a week.

But that is OK Dad, we need to look at the bigger picture. We must go to Pickering and find out why this necklace has powers and why Nana won't talk about her past. You do believe me don't you?