

# ***Barry Baxter and Mary Dove***

by Terry Moston



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Additional Reading  
for Class 7

## *Illustrations*

Ateliergeinschaft Schwanke / Raasch

## Barry Baxter and Mary Dove



“It’s twenty past eight!” shouted Mrs Baxter, “Get up, Barry!”  
“Aargh!” thought Barry and jumped out of bed. He pulled on his clothes and ran to the bathroom, The door was locked\*. “Pat! Come on out!” he shouted, but didn’t wait for an answer. Pat always took another five minutes after Barry shouted at her. When he talked to his mother about Pat, Mrs Baxter said “Girls aren’t like boys. They need more time in the bathroom.” Barry decided he didn’t understand girls. Barry ran into the kitchen to get his breakfast. Tea and cornflakes - that was his usual breakfast. Barry was finished in three minutes. He ran up\* to the bathroom. The door opened and his sister Pat came out. Barry ran past her into the bathroom, cleaned his teeth\*, got his school bag, ran out of the house and through the park and arrived at school at one minute to nine.

The first lesson at school on Thursdays was Geography. The Geography teacher Mr Dewhurst didn't have the right books that morning.

"3G, I need some books from the book room," he said. Everybody\* in the class put their hands up. Everybody wanted to get the books for the teacher. All the special textbooks, all the maps, all the exercise books and all the paper\* in the school were in the book room. It was at the other end of the school and it took live minutes to walk there and five minutes to walk back. And there were often other pupils there. With luck, you needed all the lesson at the book room when a teacher needed some books.



"The new boy - Barry, can you go for me, please?" he said. "Here's a chit\* for Mr Jameson. We need a map of Britain for this class. And I want some books on South America for 5C in the next lesson. Do you know where the book room is?" Barry said yes and Mr Dewhurst gave him the chit.

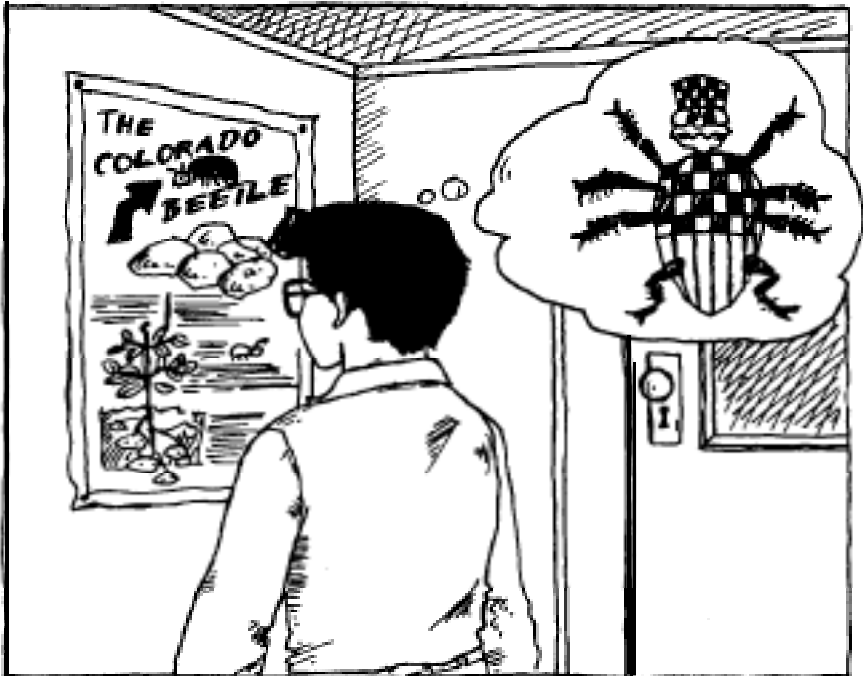
Barry walked slowly through the school. He walked past room after room. There were little windows in the doors and through them he saw teachers and their classes. Some were quiet, some weren't so quiet.

There were no other pupils at the book room this morning. Old Jameson was there every morning. He always had a brown overall\* on and always had a pencil behind his ear. Barry saw the smoke from a cigarette in the room. There were lots of boxes on the floor.

“Yes?” said Jameson.

“Books for Dewhurst,” said Barry.

“Mr Dewhurst to you, son,” said Jameson. “Give me the chit. Wait here.” Jameson went back into the book room. He started to look for the things.



Barry looked for a place to sit. Here in the corridor\* there wasn't a chair, so Barry looked at the posters on the wall. “Lock your bike!” shouted one poster. “Be a blood donor\*! Give blood so that others may live,” shouted another poster. A third poster showed a picture of a Colorado beetle\*, “These beetles eat potato plants\*. When you find one, please take it to the nearest police station,” it read. Barry had a picture in his head of a Colorado beetle in prison\* uniform.

Then he heard\* somebody in the corridor. He turned and saw a girl with long blonde\* hair\*. She had a book chit in her hand. She looked at him; her eyes were blue-grey. She was, in Barry's eyes, the most beautiful girl in the world.



"Jameson is so slow, isn't he?" she said to Barry.

"Oh, er, yes," Barry said. Jameson came back with the map and the books.

"Here's the map of Britain," he said. "Be careful with it. It's very old."

"Thanks," said Barry.

"And here are the books on South America. What class are they for?" he asked.

"5C," answered Barry.

The girl gave Jameson her chit and he went off again. The girl smiled at him.

"My name's Mary. I'm in 4B," she said. "What's your name?"

"Barry. Barry Baxter," said Barry.



"Are you in the fifth year?" she asked. Immediately\* Barry knew why she asked this. A fourth-year girl never spoke to a boy in the third year. As soon as a boy said he was in the third year, she never spoke to him again. It was the end for him for ever.

"5C," said Barry. He was hot and his shirt felt\* too small.

Mr Jameson came back.

"Tell your teacher we haven't got any more Roman History books, Mary. They haven't come in yet," he said.

"OK. Goodbye, Barry. See you," she said and left.

“Who was that?” Barry asked when she had gone.

“Mary. Mary Dove. 4B,” said Jameson. “Do you know her?”

“Know her? No, no,” said Barry.

“Well, get back to your class. Mr Dewhurst is waiting for those books, young man,” said Jameson and went back to the boxes on the floor.

Barry walked slowly back to his class. Mary didn't know what class he was in because he was new at the school. He was tall and people often thought he was older than his 14 years. Barry didn't learn much Geography in the last ten minutes of that lesson or much French in the second lesson or much Maths in the third lesson. He spent the whole morning in a dream. “What a beautiful girl,” he thought over and over again. “Mary.”

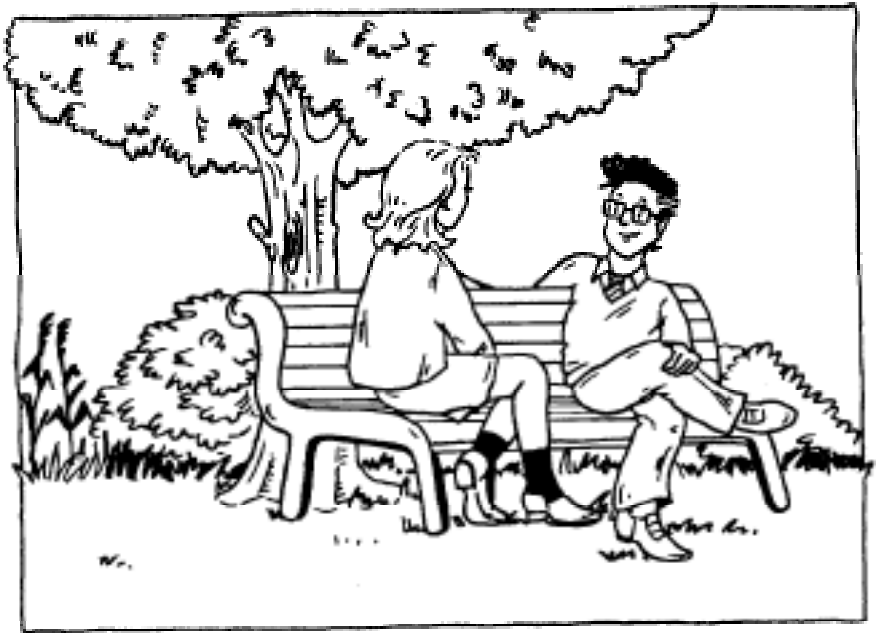


At twelve-thirty, the bell went for the lunch hour. Barry had sandwiches today and decided to eat them in the park. He had a favourite place, by the lake\*. It was a beautiful day. The sun shone and the birds sang. Barry finished his food and sat on the seat in the park. He always liked the sun on his face.



“Hello, Barry,” said a voice. “What are you doing here?” Barry sat up quickly and looked up into the beautiful face of Mary Dove, the girl with the long, blonde hair.

“Can I sit here?” she asked and sat down. “I love it here, don’t you?” she said. “It’s so quiet and there are no little kids\*. The school is full of little kids. I can’t stand them, can you?” she said. Barry tried to listen to her. Now and then, he said, “Oh, yes?” or “Right,” but he didn’t hear her words. He just looked at her lovely face.



“So what do you do after school? she asked suddenly.

“What? Oh, this and that,” said Barry. “She wants to hear that I go to a judo class or drive a sports car or play the guitar in a rock group,” thought Barry. “I can’t tell her that I do my homework and then I watch television with my parents and then I go to bed!”

“Have you got a girlfriend?” she asked.

“Not now,” he said. “I can’t say I’ve never had one,” he thought. Mary smiled at him.

“There’s a good film on,” she said, looking at him.

"She's asking me for a date\*," thought Barry. "This beautiful girl from 4B is asking me - Barry Baxter in 3G - for a date."

"Do you want to go?" he asked. "I mean, with me?"

"Mmm, yes, please, Barry," said Mary.

"Friday?"

"OK." He didn't know he was so brave\*. He had asked her . . . and she had said yes.



They walked back from the park together. Mary left him at the fourth year corridor. Luckily\*, the third year and fifth year corridors were at the other end of the building. Barry said goodbye and walked on. When he reached the third year corridor, he looked behind him. Nobody was looking. He walked quickly along the corridor and went into his class. The room was full of pupils. Before the lessons, they stole\* books and bags and fought\* on the floor.

"Kids!" thought Barry. "They're just little third year kids. Huh!" Barry no longer belonged to this world. He was half adult already. He had his first date.

At four o'clock, Barry waited for five minutes and then left the third year corridor carefully. Nobody saw him. He walked home through the park. He went into his house and dropped his school bag on his bed. The next thing he heard was his mother's voice.

"Barry! Your tea's on the table!" It was half past five.

"I haven't done my homework. I've just dreamed about Mary and her long, blonde hair for an hour," he thought as he went down to the kitchen.

Barry ate his egg on toast.

"Your grandmother isn't very well," his mother said when Barry was finished.

"Oh?" said Barry.

"Dad and I are going to visit her. On Friday," she said. Barry knew what was next.

"Come with us, Barry," said his mother. "People don't live for ever, you know. And your grandmother is over seventy."

"Er, yes, mum. You're right. I'd love to come with you," he said quickly.

"But on Friday, I've got to . . ." He didn't know what to say.

"You're so selfish\*, Barry! What have you got to do?" asked his mother.

Barry had to think quickly. And it had to be good. It had to be a good excuse\*. This was the most important excuse of his life\*.



“What can I say?” he thought. Suddenly, he had it. “I’ve got to give blood,” he said.

“Give blood? You mean, you’re going . . .”

“That’s right,” said Barry. “I’m going to be a blood donor. And I’ve got a date, I mean an appointment\* on Friday.”

Mrs Baxter was confused\*. On the one hand, she didn’t like the idea. Were 14 year-old children allowed to give blood? She didn’t know. On the other hand, she liked the idea of blood donors.

“Friday evening. That’s the only time I can go. I’ll come with you next time,” said Barry.

“OK,” said Mrs Baxter. “Next time.”

“Hooray\*!” thought Barry. “It worked!”

On Friday morning, Barry used his father’s razor\* on his 14 year-old’s moustache\*. There were only two pimples\* this morning.

“Not bad,” he thought. “I can wear my red jacket this evening. I’ve got five pounds in my money box. That’ be enough.” He didn’t like his money box. It was a Mickey Mouse money box for kids, but it had a key and he could get his money out when he wanted it. The money was for a new model plane, really. But this date was more important.



On Friday morning in class, Barry felt happy. He answered lots of questions. After lunch he helped Glen Howard with his maths homework.

"It was easy, really," Barry explained. "I did it in ten minutes." He told Glen the answers and Glen wrote them down. Maths with Mr Burnett was the last lesson that Friday. Mr Burnett came into the room with a young man.



"This is Mr Trent. He's a student\* teacher from the college\*. He wants to watch our maths lessons for a week. Eh, Mr Trent?" said Mr Burnett. Mr Trent, a young man with a red face, laughed nervously\* and sat down on a chair at the back of the class, just behind Barry. That lesson Mr Burnett told lots of funny little stories; the student teacher laughed and thought Mr Burnett was always funny like this, but he wasn't. Barry laughed at Burnett's stories, too.

"Only two more hours and I can see Mary," he thought happily. There was a knock\* at the door.

"Come in!" said Mr Burnett. The door opened and a girl's voice said, "Excuse me, sir. Is this 3G?"

"Yes, this is 3G. Come in. What can I do for you?" said Mr Burnett.

"I've got a message\* for Mr Trent from his college. Is he here?" said the girl.

"Yes, he's at the back there," said Mr Burnett.

The girl walked to the back of the class. Barry looked up from his book. The girl stood next to his desk and looked down at him. It was Mary Dove. Barry's mouth opened but no words came out. Mary said nothing; she turned and shook\* her long, blonde hair and walked past him to the student teacher. ▣

<b>appointment</b>	Termin	<b>lake</b>	See
<b>beetle</b>	Käfer	<b>life</b>	Leben
<b>blonde</b>	blond	<b>lock</b>	abschließen
<b>blood donor</b>	Blutspender	<b>luckily</b>	glücklicherweise
<b>brave</b>	mutig	<b>message</b>	Nachricht
<b>chit</b>	Berechtigungs- schein	<b>moustache</b>	Schnurbart
<b>college</b>	Hochschule	<b>nervously</b>	nervös
<b>confused</b>	verwirrt	<b>overall</b>	Kittel
<b>corridor</b>	Korridor, Gang	<b>paper</b>	Papier
<b>date</b>	Verabredung	<b>pimple</b>	Pickel
<b>everybody</b>	alle	<b>plant</b>	Pflanze
<b>excuse</b>	Ausrede	<b>prison</b>	Gefängnis
<b>felt</b>	past of feel fühlen	<b>razor</b>	Rasierer
<b>fought</b>	past of fight kämpfen	<b>selfish</b>	selbstsüchtig
<b>girlfriend</b>	Freundin	<b>shook</b>	<i>past of shake</i> schütteln
<b>hair</b>	Haar(e)	<b>stole</b>	<i>past of steal</i> stehlen
<b>heard</b>	<i>past of hear</i>	<b>student</b>	Student
<b>hooray!</b>	Hurra!	<b>teeth</b>	Zähne
<b>immediately</b>	sofort	<b>up</b>	hinauf
<b>kid</b>	Kind, Blage	<b>voice</b>	Stimme
<b>knock</b>	Klopfen		

## Exercises

### a.

1. Why couldn't Barry use the bathroom?
2. How long did Barry need for breakfast?
3. Was he late for school?
4. What did Mr Dewhurst need from the book room?
5. Why did pupils like going to the book room?
6. Did Mary get the books for her teacher?
7. Why did Mary like the park?
8. Where did Barry and Mary want to go on Friday?
9. What did Barry's parents want to do on Friday?
10. Who had a message for Mr Trent?
11. Why did Mary say nothing to Barry?

### b.

1. Why do you think there was a system of "chits" for the book room?
  2. Describe Mr Jameson and his job.
  3. Describe Mary.
  4. Why did Mary think Barry was in the fifth year?
  5. Why did Barry spend the morning "in a dream"?
  6. Why didn't Barry say he had never had a girlfriend?
  7. "Mary left him at the fourth year corridor. Luckily, the third year and fifth year corridors were at the other end of the building." Why "luckily"?
  8. What did Barry think of the pupils in 3G Why?
  9. "Barry had to think quickly. And it had to be good. It had to be a good excuse. This was the most important excuse of his life." Why was it so important?
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1. What kind of posters were in the corridor near the book room? Are there any posters like that in your school? What are they?
  2. Can you write the story in your own words? Here is some help.  
One day, the teacher needed some books . . .  
Barry met . . .