



She pressed heavily down on the latch and leant against the thick black wooden door, slightly bruising herself on the centuries old studs that protruded from its crusty beams.

The door shuffled and scraped open, revealing Great Aunt's library - panelled walls and shelves and shelves of books from floor to ceiling. A cloud of warm dust hung in the sunlight over the familiar bijouterie table with the ancient ivory fan, the matching ivory-coloured gloves and the pill box. Before she knew it, she found herself at the shelf, splitting the slim volumes with her fingers, her quick digits finding the slightly worn corners of the coveted book. Catching her breath, she muddled through the pages with excited desperation, until she came upon the Tailor and his scissors, scissors that snip thumbs. She shivered with delight and with the book already open she leant gently into the wall panels, sliding down until she hit the floor with a controlled thump.

Cheeks aglow, she was found an hour later by her Mother who rolled her eyes at her eldest daughter's magnetic attraction to "that Compendium of Horror stories...."

GORY STORY PICK-UP-PAIRS: THE INSPIRATION

The inspiration for *Gory Story Pick-Up-Pairs* originally came from 'Struwwelpeter', an 1845 German children's book by Heinrich Hoffmann comprising of ten illustrated and rhymed stories, mostly about children coming to a sorry end after not heeding warnings for their safety. Composed for his three-year-old, each has a clear moral that demonstrates the disastrous (often deathly) consequences of misbehaviour in an exaggerated way and is part of a wider genre of 'Cautionary Tales'.

As a child I was equally horrified and delighted by each of the tales. They made an impression on me that has lasted to this day and terrified my younger sibling for years. A similar theme ran through other rhyming family favourites featuring loud characters such as the bully 'Bad Sir Brian Botany' (A.A. Milne) and Albert who foolishly provoked a lion and had to live (or die) with the consequences (Marriott Edgar). As a family, we have always taken great delight in composing poems, songs

and skits, especially on long car journeys and family occasions. I was therefore interested in attempting to compose both the limericks and create the Illustrations for this project.

I initially considered a re-version in book form of the original 'Struwwelpeter' using Hoffman's texts, but this has been attempted a number of times with limited success. The other possibility was some kind of literacy aid for EYFS but as the project developed, this idea, combined with feedback from focus groups, evolved into a plan for a card game.