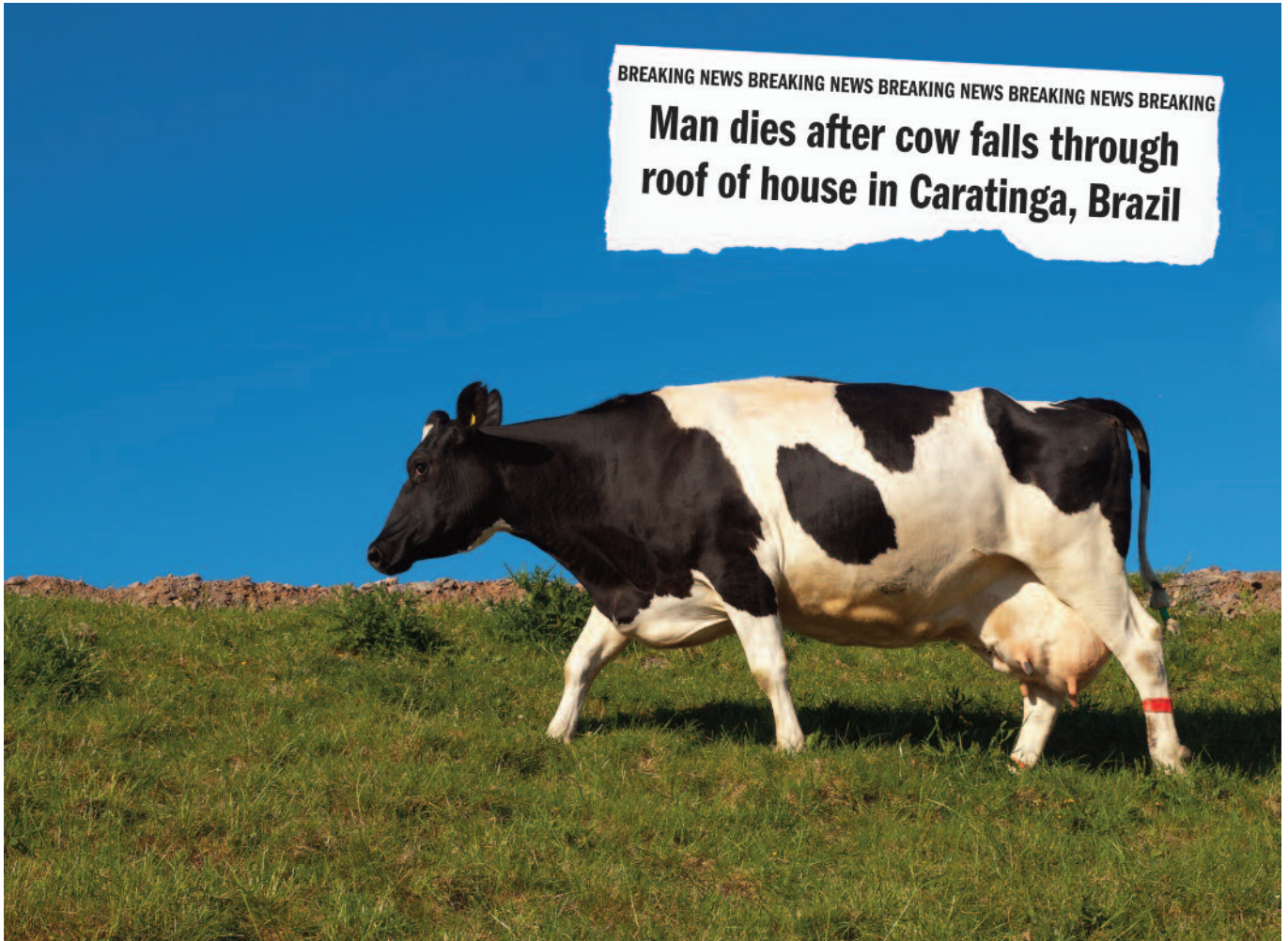


extra fingers

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Phew, that's good!

UNCLE STEVE, reading to Amelie from *ABC News* online: "Listen to this, Amelie. A man has died after a cow fell through the roof of a house in Caratinga, Brazil. Here, I'll read it to you. 'A cow has fallen through the roof of a house in Brazil, killing a man and narrowly missing his wife. The cow was grazing on a hill behind the house in the town of Caratinga when it stepped onto the asbestos roof which collapsed under its weight. A 45-year-old man was lying in bed when the

animal fell on him. He was taken to hospital but died a day later. Local media say it is the third such incident in the region in the past three years.'"

AMELIE: "Whoah! Did the cow live?"

UNCLE STEVE: "Oh yes. The cow managed to survive. Well, we think it did."

AMELIE: "Phew! That's good."

Hip-hippers

AMELIE, with a green birthday ribbon proudly pinned to her chest: "Look, Dad! I got a ribbon for my birthday."

DAD: "Oh yes! So you did."

AMELIE: "There were so many people who had birthdays last month that they had to have two birthday lines and two hip-hippers."

DAD: "Two what?"

AMELIE: "Hip-hippers. The people that go 'hip-hip hooray'. They had to have two of them."

DAD: "Oh. And who normally gets to do that?"

AMELIE: "The Year Ones."

Not that big a deal

WAVERLEY [Amelie's friend] to Amelie, during a discussion they were having about movies:

". . . Oh that movie! Oh yeah, I know that movie. It's got lots of swear words in it."

AMELIE: "Has it?"

WAVERLEY: "Yeah. It's got the f-word, it's got the s-word, it's got the big e-word . . ."

AMELIE, very vaguely: "Oh, right."

WAVERLEY: "There were other words as well but I can't remember what they were now."

ISABELLA, butting in: "You don't even know what the f-word is, do you, Amelie?"

WAVERLEY, before Amelie could answer, suddenly feeling the need to spell things out more clearly for her struggling friend: "You know, f-u-c-k."

AMELIE, again very woolly with her response: "Oh, right."

WAVERLEY: "You do know what it means, don't you?"

ISABELLA, quickly interrupting: "She doesn't."

AMELIE: "Yeah I do."

WAVERLEY: "Alright then, whisper it to me."

AMELIE, walking over to where Waverley was and whispering windily into her ear: "Pss-swhss-swhss-swhss-swhss-swhss-swhss."

WAVERLEY: "What was that? I couldn't hear what you were saying. It was just, like (*makes the sound of the wind*)."

ISABELLA: "She doesn't know, Waverley."

AMELIE, stropily: "I do!"

ISABELLA: "No she doesn't."

WAVERLEY: "Oh, well anyway, my mum says one of those words all the time. It's not that big a deal."

Don't you think the ones off to the side should get a go?

I'd been discussing a referendum for a republic and voting in elections with Isabella.

ISABELLA: "Dad, if I didn't know which party to vote for out of the two main ones then I

think I'd vote for the one off to the side."

DAD: "You think so, do you?"

ISABELLA: "Yeah. You know that really big sheet of white paper you get?"

DAD: "Hmm-hmm."

ISABELLA: "Well, I think I'd give one of the ones on it that are a bit off to the side a go. Because the ones we see all the time on television are always getting a go. All you ever get are Liberal and Labor all the time. Whereas the others ones, the ones off to the side a bit, don't ever get much of a go. Hardly ever!"

The splits might have made him happy

ISABELLA: "Dad, what did Frankenstein actually look like?"

DAD: "Well . . . I'd have to speculate."

AMELIE: "He was really tall."

DAD: "Yes, he was definitely very tall."

ISABELLA, referring to her audio version of the book: "I didn't hear that."

DAD: "Whatever an average human looked like or could do physically, Frankenstein's monster would have always been able to exceed that."

AMELIE: "What does that mean?"

DAD: "It means that Frankenstein's monster was always able to do better than what the average person could do. Frankenstein's monster was always that bit more able. So he was a bit taller, more agile -"

AMELIE: "What's that mean?"

DAD: "It means he could bend better; he was more flexible. You know, he could bounce around and jump better."

AMELIE: "Would he have been able to do the splits?"

DAD: "Who? Frankenstein's monster?"

AMELIE: "You said he was really flexible."

DAD: "Yeah, probably. I don't know."

ISABELLA: "I don't think Frankenstein's monster would have been able to do the splits."

AMELIE: "Yeah."

ISABELLA: "No. He's a monster."

AMELIE: "So. Dad said he was good at everything."

ISABELLA: "Yeah, but not the splits."

AMELIE: "The splits is part of everything, Issy."

DAD: "Well, he was very sad. I don't think pulling off the splits would have been high on his agenda."

AMELIE: "You don't know that, Dad. He had a lot of time on his hands and he was really sad a lot of the time so if he did the splits that might have made him happy."

[Frankenstein]
had a lot of time
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Music practice

DAD: "Issy, look at yourself. You don't know what to do with yourself, do you? You're just walking around the house doing absolutely nothing while you wait for the time to be picked up and taken to your rehearsal for tomorrow's concert when you could be doing

Bob or George?

KARIN: "I've got a question for you, girls. What's the nearest star to our solar system? We were talking about it the other day."

ISABELLA and **AMELIE**, together: "Ah, the Sun?"

KARIN: "No, beyond our solar system."

AMELIE: "Um . . . Jupiter?"

KARIN: "No, that's actually within our solar system and it's a planet. It goes around the Sun like the Earth does."

AMELIE: "Oh. I don't know the names of the stars."

DAD: "Well, this is just one particular star. We're not talking about all of them."

KARIN: "No, it's about the same size as our Sun."

AMELIE: "Yep."

KARIN: "And it's not in this solar system. We've got our sun and all the planets going around it."

AMELIE: "Yeah."

KARIN: "And Earth is one of those planets. And the next solar system to us, the closest one, has a star at the centre of it and they're about the same size as our sun."

ISABELLA: "Wait. Is it two stars conjoined?"

DAD: "Not joined, darl. Trapped in each other's orbit."

AMELIE, frustrated: "I don't know the names of the stars! Is it Bob? Is it George?"

something much more constructive like, for instance, your oboe practice. Don't you think it would be a much better idea if you used this time to do your oboe practice?"

ISABELLA: "No. Not really."

DAD: "Why not?"

ISABELLA: "Because I don't feel like doing it right now. I have makeup on and I don't want it getting all cracked."

DAD: "Alright. Well when then? When do you think you'd like to do your oboe practice? You'll be at rehearsal all the way through from 1pm to about 9.30pm tonight so when do you think you'll get it done? Hmm? Do you honestly think you'll want to do your oboe

practice when you get home very late tonight? After all that rehearsing?"

ISABELLA: "Maybe."

DAD: "Oh, Issy. I don't think so."

ISABELLA: "Actually, Dad. I won't be able to do my oboe practice then anyway because that's when I'll be hugging Grandma and Aunty Jen after they've arrived from Sydney."

DAD: "What?"

ISABELLA: "That's when I'll be hugging Grandma and Aunty Jen after they've arrived from Sydney. Or at least that's when I'll be trying to hug Grandma and Aunty Jen. If you've got some other idea where I have to

do my oboe practice instead then, I suppose, I won't be able to do that, will I? It's pretty much up to you, Dad."

Pineapple, pineapple, pineapple

ISABELLA, as she was about to sneeze:
"Pineapple, pineapple, pineapple. Oooh, that was lucky."

DAD: "Why'd you do that for?"

ISABELLA: "It stops you from sneezing."

DAD: "Does it? How do you know that?"

ISABELLA: "Pretty simple, Dad. I just tried it then and it worked."

He's over there doing the splits

At this moment in Amelie's life, just about everything has a gymnastics context . . . even when playing with her dolls.

AMELIE, as girl doll one to girl doll two:
"What are you doing?"

AMELIE, as girl doll two: "Oh, nothing much. I'm just thinking about my boyfriend. He's over there doing the splits."

THE LAST WORD

He's actually known

AMELIE, watching her sister, Isabella, do a Google search on my name: "Oh my goodness! He's actually known."