




TV or not TV



Roald Dahl





The most important thing we've learned,
So far as children are concerned,
Is never, never, never let
Them near your television set.
Better yet just don't install
The idiotic thing at all.

In almost every house we been
We've seen them gaping at the screen.
They loll and slop and lounge about,
And stare until their eyes pop out.
Last week we saw, at someones place,
A dozen eyeballs on the floor.
They sit and stare and stare and sit,
Until they're hypnotized by it.
Until they're absolutely drunk,
With all that shocking, ghastly junk.
Oh yes, we know it keeps them still,
They don't climb out the window sill.
They never fight or kick or punch.
They leave you free to cook the lunch
And wash the dishes in the sink,
But did you ever stop to think,
To wonder just exactly what
This does to your beloved tot.

It rots the senses in the head.
It kills imagination dead.
It clogs and clutters up the mind.
It makes a child so dull and blind.
He can no longer understand
A fantasy, a fairyland.
His brain becomes as soft as cheese.
His powers of thinking rust and freeze.
He cannot think, he only sees.





Alright, you'll cry, alright, you'll say.
But if we take the set away ,
What shall we do to entertain
Our darling children? Please explain.
We'll answer this by asking you
What used the darling once to do?
How used they keep themselves contented
Before this monster was invented?

Have you forgotten, don't you know?
We'll say it very loud and slow.
**THEY USED TO READ! THEY'D READ AND READ,
AND THEN PROCEED TO READ SOME MORE.**



Great Scott! Gadzooks!!
One half their lives was reading books,
The nursery shelves held books galore.
Books cluttered up the nursery floor,
And in the the bedroom by the bed ,
More books were waiting to be read.

The younger ones had Beatrix Potter,
With Mr. Toad, the dirty rotter.
And Squirrel Napkin, Pigling Bland,
And Mrs. Figgywinkle, and
Just how the camel got his hump,
And how the monkey lost his rump,
And Mr. Toad and, bless my soul,
There was Mr. Rat and Mr. Mole.

Oh books what books they used to know,
Those children living long ago.

So please, oh, please, we beg, we pray,
Go throw your T.V. set away.

And in its place you can install,
A lovely bookshelf on the wall.



Then fill the shelves with lots of books
Ignoring all the dirty looks,
The screams, the yells, the bites, the kicks,
And children hitting you with sticks.



Fear not, because we promise you
That in about a week or two
Of having nothing else to do,
They'll now begin to feel the need
Of having something good to read.



And once they start, Oh boy! Oh boy!
You watch the slowly growing joy
That fills their hearts; they'll grow so keen,
They'll wonder what they'd ever seen
In that ridiculous machine,
That nauseating, foul, unclean,
Repulsive, television screen.
And later each and every kid,
Will love you more for what you did.

*"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are
honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure,
whosoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report;
if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise,
think on these things"*

(Phil.4:8).

