



Like all good magicians, Mold had a vast supply of tricks up his sleeve, conjured from the everyday.

Amaretto biscuits whose paper you lit, and which shot up into the sky like titchy hot-air balloons, falling back to earth in a wispy question mark of ash.



A miniature stream train that huffed and puffed around the dining room table if you filled it with water. weedkiller that spelled out our names in the grass in the night, because the fairies had paid a visit. Mold's windows were dotted with Witch Balls: ancient, cany-coloured spheres, employed to ward off any witches, should they appear at the glass.





At this table, a meal was never simply a meal. It was another opportunity for a story, a tall tale to soften the various injustices involved in being a child.

On bacon and marmalade sandwiches: 'I got this recipe from a prince in Dar es Salaam; I saved from the jaws of python, and in exchange he gave me this exquisite combination.'



French onion soup: 'A nun in Burgundy served me this; a Mother Superior who smuggled ice cream in her bloomers in the war. She didn't flinch as it melted down her legs.'



Mold understood that going back to boarding school aged ten was tough, that the memory of the supper you'd get the night before would keep you going for weeks when you were homesick. He'd been there himself. Roast chicken and roast potatoes? Done. Cream of tomato soup? Of course.

Chocolate bombe? Tick. With extra cream, please.



The Red Tupperware Box that appeared at his house at the end of every lunch and dinner heralded the most important and longed-for bit of the meal. Its functionality belied the glory of what lay inside. If you had been good at the table, you could collect it from the kitchen and bring it to the dining room while the grown-ups were having their coffee. The Box contained chocolate. Lots of it, in appealing child-sized bars, nothing fancy, but always compelling. Flake, Toblerone, Aero, Curly Wurly, KitKat.





Mold died when I was thirteen years old. He would be over the moon that today children are making recipes inspired by his characters, and that the Marvellous Children's Charity and its heroes walk alongside the BFG and the Enormous Crocodile in this book. Like his beloved widow Liccy, Mold knew first-hand the devastating impact of sick children, and had the utmost respect for those that cared for them.

Now it's your turn for sweet imaginings and flights of fancy. For Fizzwinkles, Swudge and Dandyprats. **Onward with the feast!** 





















