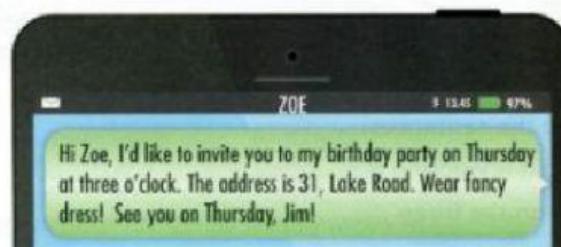


The fancy-dress shop

Last Tuesday, Jim sent Zoe a text message about his party. It said:

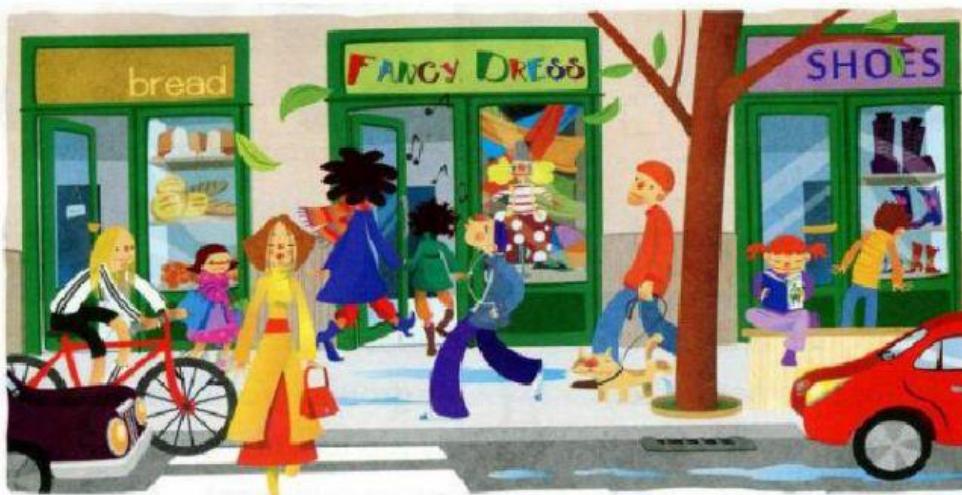


‘Great!’ thought Zoe. ‘Parties are always fun, but a fancy-dress party is very exciting!’ She went to tell her mother about Jim’s text.

‘It’s fun to dress up,’ said Zoe. ‘I haven’t got any fancy-dress clothes.’

‘Well,’ her mum answered, ‘We can go to the new fancy-dress shop in the town centre. They’ve got lots of exciting things to wear there.’

So after lunch, Zoe’s mother drove her to the fancy-dress shop in Duck Street!



When Zoe walked into the shop, she laughed! ‘There are hundreds of things that I can wear here! Look, Mum! A firefighter’s jacket and helmet, a fantastic snowman’s costume, a nurse’s uniform, circus clown’s trousers, a ready cool panda costume! I can’t choose!’

‘How about this pineapple costume?’ Zoe’s mother said. ‘Oh look! These kangaroo and kitten costumes are brilliant, too!’

‘Ermm . . . no. I don’t want any of these.’

‘Then what about this doctor’s coat?’ Zoe’s mother asked.

‘Ermm . . . no.’ But then Zoe saw a pirate’s costume. She loved it.



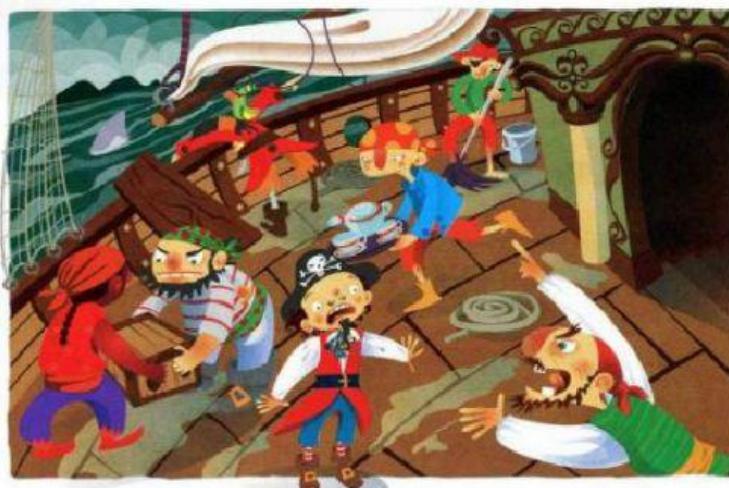
‘That’s the best one! Can I try it, please?’ she asked the man in the shop.



‘Yes! You need a moustache and a beard for that costume, too. Here! Put them on,’ he said, and gave her a curly moustache and a long black beard. ‘There’s a room at the back of the shop with a big mirror in it.’

Zoe carried the clothes and the beard and the moustache to the small room at the back of the shop and put on the trousers, boots, shirt, scarf and hat. Then she put on the moustache and beard. She smiled at her face in the mirror. ‘I love this!’ she thought. ‘Yes. This is great. I’d like to be a pirate for one afternoon.’

Suddenly, Zoe felt the wind in her face. She looked down at her feet. They weren’t on the floor of the small room at the back of the fancy-dress shop in Dock Street. She was on the big ship in the sea. Pirates ran up and down the ship. They all looked very busy.



‘Come on!’ one of the pirates shouted at her. ‘We want some more treasure. Quick! Climb that sail and look for ships!’

But Zoe couldn’t move! ‘Am I dreaming?’ she thought.

‘What’s the matter?’ the angry pirate said. ‘You aren’t afraid of climbing the sails, aren’t you?’

‘Yes, I am!’ Zoe answered.

‘Then jump into the sea with the sharks!’ he shouted. ‘We don’t want any frightened pirates on this ship!’

‘This is getting scary! Where am I?’ Zoe thought.

But then the pirate stopped shouting and looked at her carefully. ‘I don’t know you. Where did you come from? Did you come from another pirate ship?’ she asked.

‘No. I came from the fancy-dress shop in Duck Street,’ Zoe said quietly. ‘And I’d like to go back there now, please. I don’t want to be a pirate for an afternoon.’

Then a huge wave splashed her face and hair. Water dripped off the end of the nose and off her moustache and beard. Her pirate hat, shirt and scarf got very wet, too.

She looked down at her feet again, but she didn’t see the ship. She saw the floor of the shop. ‘Mum!’ she called. ‘Come here quickly!’

‘How did your face and all your pirate clothes get wet?’ her mother asked.

‘Don’t ask me, Mum. I don’t know!’ Zoe said. ‘But I know I don’t want to wear this pirate costume again. Please give it back to the man.’

‘All right. Would you like to change it for the alien costume?’

‘No, Mum!’ Zoe said and laughed. ‘I don’t want to go the moon! Can I put on the kitten costume, please? Then chicken can come and play with me in our garden!’

