CHAPTER VII

How mother took credit for something she hadn't done

Several weeks after Bruno arrived at Out-With with his family, he realized he must find something to do or he would go mad. He remembered Herr Roller back in Berlin, a man who argued with himself in the street and once invited a cat to tea.

'You shouldn't laugh at poor Herr Roller,' Mother told Bruno. 'He suffered a terrible injury during the Great War.'

Bruno did not fully understand, but he feared that if he didn't occupy himself, he might also go mad. So he planned to build a swing on a large oak tree. He found some rope in the basement but needed a tyre.

Outside, he saw Gretel talking with Lieutenant Kotler. Bruno disliked the officer but had no choice.

'I wondered if I could ask you a favour,' said Bruno.
'You can ask,' replied Kotler.
'I wondered whether there were any spare tyres around.'
'The only spare tyre I've seen belongs to Sergeant Hoffschneider,' Kotler joked, making Gretel laugh.

Finally, Kotler ordered Pavel, the waiter, to help Bruno. Together they carried a tyre to the tree, and Bruno built the swing. At first, it was a success, but when he swung too high, he fell, cut his knee badly, and nearly fainted.

Pavel ran to him.
'You were going too high,' said Pavel quietly.
'And I did,' said Bruno.
'You certainly did.'

Pavel carried him inside, cleaned the wound, and bandaged it.
'There,' he said. 'All better, eh?'

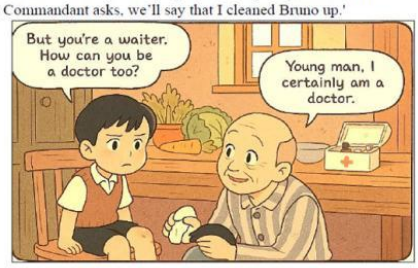
What do the following words mean in the extract below? Choose the appropriate words from the list.

> Several weeks after Bruno arrived at Out-With with his family, he realized he must...
> ...built the swing. At first, it was a success, but when he swung too high, he fell, cut his knee badly, and nearly fainted.

1. go mad [1.]
2. suffered [2.]
3. ordered [3.]
4. fainted [4.]

Bruno stared at him. 'But you're a waiter. How can you be a doctor too?'
'Young man, I certainly am a doctor,' said Pavel.

When Mother returned, Bruno explained everything, but she insisted:
'If the Commandant asks, we'll say that I cleaned Bruno up.'



CHAPTER VIII

Why Grandmother stormed out

The two people Bruno missed most from home were Grandfather and Grandmother. They lived in a small flat near the fruit stalls. Grandfather was almost seventy-three, which Bruno thought made him the oldest man in the world. Grandmother was sixty-two, but she never seemed old. She had long red hair, green eyes, and loved to sing at family parties.

'What's that?' she always cried. 'Is it a song you're wanting? Why, I couldn't possibly. I'm afraid, young man, my singing days are far behind me.'

'Sing! Sing!' everyone would shout, until she laughed and finally gave in:
'La Vie en Rose, E-flat minor. And try to keep up with the changes.'

Grandmother also wrote small plays for Bruno and Gretel. She gave them costumes: crowns, spears, turbans, even gladiator armor. Bruno loved dressing up, even if she kept the best lines for herself.

5. Choose the **four** true statements. [4]

- [ ] **A.** Pavel's assistance makes Bruno question his actual professional background.
- [ ] **B.** Mother intends to explain Pavel's assistance directly to the Commandant.
- [ ] **C.** Bruno believes his grandfather is older than anyone else alive.
- [ ] **D.** Grandmother's appearance makes Bruno believe she is younger than sixty-two.
- [ ] **E.** Grandmother initially pretends to be unwilling to perform for her family.
- [ ] **F.** Grandmother's performances usually begin without encouragement from the family.
- [ ] **G.** Bruno enjoys participating in the theatrical activities organized by his grandmother.
- [ ] **H.** Grandmother allows Bruno and Gretel to perform the most important lines.

But the last play ended in disaster. Father had just become "Commandant," and on Christmas Day he wore his new uniform. Everyone applauded, but Grandmother looked sad.

'I wonder—is this where I went wrong with you, Ralf?' she asked. 'Dressing up like a puppet on a string.'

'Now, Mother,' said Father. 'You know this isn't the time.'

'Standing there in your uniform, as if it makes you something special. Not even caring what it stands for.'

'But Nathalie,' said Mother, 'don't you think Ralf looks very handsome in his new uniform?'



'Handsome?' cried Grandmother. 'You foolish girl! Is that what matters in the world? Looking handsome?'

'Do I look handsome in my ringmaster's costume?' asked Bruno.

'Children, upstairs,' said Mother quickly.



As Bruno left, he heard Grandmother shout, 'Ashamed! That a son of mine should be—'

'A patriot,' cried Father.

'A patriot indeed!' she answered, before storming out.

Bruno missed her very much and decided to write her a letter, telling her about Out-With, the fence, and the people in striped pyjamas.

Choose an appropriate option from the list that completes each gap in the following text.

During a Christmas celebration, Grandmother openly [6.] Father's promotion, despite the admiration expressed by the other guests. She believes that his military uniform merely [7.] an appearance of importance while concealing what his position represents. When Mother praises Father's appearance, Grandmother [8.] the idea that looking attractive is more important than moral responsibility. Father attempts to [9.] his position by describing himself as loyal to his country, but Grandmother remains unconvinced. Later, Bruno decides to [10.] grandmother about his new surroundings through a letter.

LIVEWORKSHEETS