VINTAGE

THE TWIN

GERBRAND BAKKER

Contents

About the Book

When his twin brother dies in a car accident, Helmer is obliged to return to the small family farm. He resigns himself to taking over his brother's role and spending the rest of his days 'with his head under a cow'.

After his old, worn-out father has been transferred upstairs, Helmer sets about furnishing the rest of the house according to his own minimal preferences. 'A double bed and a duvet', advises Ada, who lives next door, with a sly look. Then Riet appears, the woman once engaged to marry his twin. Could Riet and her son live with him for a while, on the farm?

The Twin is an ode to the platteland, the flat and bleak Dutch countryside with its ditches and its cows and its endless grey skies.

Ostensibly a novel about the countryside, as seen through the eyes of a farmer, *The Twin* is, in the end, about the possibility or impossibility of taking life into one's own hands. It chronicles a way of life which has resisted modernity, is culturally apart, and yet riven with a kind of romantic longing.

About the Author

Gerbrand Bakker worked as a subtitler for nature films before becoming a gardener. *The Twin* is his prizewinning debut novel.

The Twin

Gerbrand Bakker

Translated from the Dutch by
David Colmer

VINTAGE BOOKS
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1

I'VE PUT FATHER upstairs. I had to park him on a chair first to take the bed apart. He sat there like a calf that's just a couple of minutes old, before it's been licked clean: with a direction-less, wobbly head and eyes that drift over things. I ripped off the blankets, sheets and undersheet, leant the mattress and bed boards against the wall, and unscrewed the sides of the bed. I tried to breathe through my mouth as much as possible. I'd already cleared out the upstairs room – my room.

'What are you doing?' he asked.

'You're moving,' I said.

'I want to stay here.'

'No.'

I let him keep the bed. One half of it has been cold for more than ten years now, but the unslept side is still crowned with a pillow. I screwed the bed back together in the upstairs room, facing the window. I put the legs up on blocks and remade it with clean sheets and two clean pillowcases. After that I carried Father upstairs. When I picked him up off the chair he fixed his eyes on mine and kept them there until I was laying him in bed and our faces were almost touching.

'I can walk,' he said, only then.

'No you can't.'

Through the window he saw things he hadn't expected to see. 'I'm up high,' he said.

'Yes, that's so you can look out and see something other than just sky.'

Despite the new room and the clean sheets and pillowcases, it smelt musty, *he* smelt musty and mouldy. I opened one of the two windows and used the hook to set it ajar. Outside it was quiet. A fresh chill was in the air and there were only a few crumpled leaves left on the topmost branches of the crooked ash in the front garden. Off in the distance I saw three cyclists riding along the dyke. If I had stepped aside he would have seen the three cyclists as well. I stayed put.

‘Get the doctor,’ Father said.

‘No,’ I replied, turning to walk out of the room.

Just before the door closed, he shouted, ‘Sheep!’

In his former bedroom there was a rectangle of dust on the floor, slightly smaller than the dimensions of the bed. I cleared out the room, putting the two chairs, the bedside cabinets and Mother’s dressing table in the living room. In a corner of the bedroom I wriggled two fingers in under the carpet. ‘Don’t glue it,’ I heard Mother say an eternity ago as Father was about to go down on his knees with a jar of glue in his left hand and a brush in his right, our heads already spinning from the pungent fumes. ‘Don’t glue it, ten years from now I’ll want new carpets.’ The underlay crumbled under my fingers. I rolled up the carpet and carried it through the milking parlour to the middle of the yard, where suddenly I didn’t know what to do with it. I let it drop, just where I was standing. Startled by the surprisingly loud bang, a few jackdaws flew up out of the trees that line the yard.

The bedroom floor was covered with sheets of hardboard, rough side up. After quickly vacuuming the room, I used a broad, flat brush to paint the hardboard with grey primer, without bothering to sand it first. While doing the last section, in front of the door, I noticed the sheep.

Now I’m in the kitchen, waiting for the paint to dry. Only then will I be able to get the gloomy painting of a flock of black sheep down off the wall. He wants to look at his sheep, so I will hammer a nail into the wall on one side of the window and hang the painting for him. The kitchen door is open and the bedroom door is open too. From where I am sitting, I can look past the dressing table and the two bedside cabinets at the painting on the wall, but it is so dark and discoloured that I can’t make out any sheep at all, no matter how hard I try.

2

IT'S RAINING AND a strong wind has blown the last leaves off the ash. November is no longer quiet with a fresh chill in the air. My parents' bedroom is my room now. I've painted the walls and ceiling white and given the hardboard sheets a second coat of primer. I've moved the chairs, Mother's dressing table and the bedside cabinets upstairs. I put one bedside cabinet next to Father's bed and stowed the rest in the spare room next to his bedroom: Henk's room.

The cows have been inside for two days now. They're restless during milking.

If the round hatch on top of the tanker had been open this morning, half the milk would have shot out like a geyser, that's how hard the tanker driver braked to avoid the rolled-up carpet that was still lying in the middle of the yard. He was swearing quietly to himself when I came into the milking parlour. There are two tanker drivers, and this was the older one, the gruff one. More or less my age, I think. A few more years' driving and he can retire.

Apart from the bed, my new bedroom is completely empty. I'm going to paint the woodwork: windows, door and skirting boards. I might do it the same colour as the floor, but I'm not sure yet. I have a bluish grey in mind, the colour of Lake IJssel on a summer's day with ominous storm clouds in the distance.

In what must have been late July or early August, two young lads went by in canoes. That doesn't happen often, the official canoeing routes don't pass my farm. Only ambitious

canoeists get this far. It was hot and they had taken off their shirts, the muscles in their arms and shoulders gleamed in the sunlight. I was standing at the side of the house, unseen, and watched them trying to cut each other off. Their paddles slapped against the yellow water lilies. The canoe in front turned sideways and got trapped with its nose against the bank of the canal. The lad glanced up. ‘Look at this farm,’ he said to his friend, a redhead with freckles and sunburnt shoulders, ‘it’s timeless. It’s here on this road now, but it might just as well be 1967 or 1930.’

The redhead subjected my farm, the trees and the field the donkeys were grazing at the time to a careful appraisal. I pricked up my ears. ‘Yes,’ he said after a long while, ‘those donkeys are old-fashioned, all right.’

His friend backed his canoe away from the bank and turned it in the right direction. He said something in reply, something I couldn’t make out because a redshank had started to kick up a fuss. A late redshank: most of them are gone by the end of July. The redhead set off after him slowly, still staring at my two donkeys. I was stuck with nowhere to go, there was nothing I could possibly be working on around that side of the house. I stood there motionless and held my breath.

He saw me. I thought he was going to say something to the other lad, his lips parted and he turned his head, but he didn’t say a word. He looked and left me unseen by his friend. A little later they turned into Opperwoud Canal and the yellow water lilies drifted back together. I walked up on to the road to watch them paddle off. After a few minutes I could no longer hear their voices. I tried to see my farm through their eyes. ‘1967,’ I said quietly, shaking my head. Why that particular year? One of the boys had named the year, the other, the redhead with freckles and burnt shoulders, had seen it. It was very hot that day, mid-afternoon, almost time to bring in the cows. My legs felt

unexpectedly heavy and the afternoon was empty and lifeless.

3

DRAGGING A GRANDFATHER clock up a staircase is a hellish job. I use rugs, pieces of foam rubber and long, smooth planks. Everything inside the case pings and rattles. The ticking of the clock drove me mad, but I didn't want to stop it every night. Halfway up I have to rest for a few minutes. It might drive him mad as well, but then of course he'll have his painted sheep to calm him down again.

'The clock?' he says, when I come into the bedroom.

'Yep, the clock.' I put it right behind the door, pull up the weights and give the pendulum a nudge. Immediately, the bedroom is filled with time, slowly ticking away. When the door is shut, Father can count the hours.

After a glance at the clock face, he says, 'I'm hungry.'

'I get hungry too sometimes,' I say. The clock ticks on calmly.

'The curtains are closed,' he adds.

I walk over to the window and open the curtains. It's stopped raining and the wind has died down a little. The water in the ditch is up and flowing over the causeway. 'I have to do the windmill,' I say to myself and the window. Maybe I'm saying it to Father too.

'What?'

'Nothing.' I set a window ajar and think of the bare spot in the living room.

In the kitchen I make a cheese sandwich and wolf it down. I can hardly wait. With the water still dripping through the coffee maker, I go into the living room. I am alone, I'll have to do it alone. I lift the sofa on to one of the rugs I used for

the clock and drag it through the hall to the scullery. I carry the two armchairs out of the front door and set them at the side of the road. The rest goes in the scullery with the sofa. I have to empty the sideboard completely before I can slide it. Then, finally, I'm able to wriggle my fingers in under the carpet. This one was more expensive and doesn't crumble in my hands. As I roll it up, I consider keeping it – can't I put it to some use somewhere? Nothing springs to mind. The roll of carpet is too heavy to pick up: I haul it up the gravel path and over the bridge to the road. When I come back I notice the telephone in the hall and ring the council to tell them I've left out some bulky rubbish. The coffee is steaming on the warming plate.

On my way to the windmill I see something I've seen several times in the last few days – something disturbing. A flock of birds flying neither north nor south but all directions at once, swerving constantly. The only noise is the sound of flapping wings. The flock is made up of oystercatchers, crows and gulls. That's what's strange: never before have I seen these three species flying together. There's something ominous about it. Or have I seen it before without it leaving me with such an uneasy feeling? After watching longer, I see that it's actually four species: between the large herring gulls there are also black-headed gulls, which are a good bit smaller. They skim past each other every which way, there are no separate units, it's as if they're confused.

The windmill is a small, iron Bosman windmill. 'Bosman Piershil' is written on one side of the iron tail. 'Pat. No. 40832' on the other. I used to think Pat was the name of the maker, short for Patrick, but now I know it stands for patent. If the tail is at right angles to the vanes the windmill seeks the wind automatically and keeps turning and pumping water until you fold the tail forward along the guide rail. But now I fold the tail back, using a bar attached for that

purpose. It’s a beautiful, slender windmill, with something American about it. That’s why Henk and I used to come here so often in the summer, because it seemed foreign and because of the concrete base built in the ditch and because we loved the smell of grease. Things were different here. Every year a Bosman man would come to check the windmill and even now, years since the last Bosman man came, everything runs smoothly. I stop for a moment to watch the water bulge in the canal.

I take the long way back and count the sheep. They’re still all there. Twenty-three, plus the ram. The ewes’ rumps are red, I’ll take the ram away soon. They walk off at first, then follow me when I get closer to the causeway. I stop at the gate. About ten yards from me they stop too, lined up on either side of the square-headed ram, staring at me. It makes me feel uncomfortable.

I see the rain-sodden carpet in the yard and decide to take that up to the road as well.

Just before milking I give the gravel in the front garden a quick rake. It’s already getting dark. The two boys from next door, Teun and Ronald, are sitting under the carpet – the expensive one – which they have half unrolled and thrown over the two chairs. Not so long ago they came to the front door around seven p.m. to hold up red hollowed-out sugar beets and croak out a song. The soft light from inside the beets made their excited faces look even redder. I rewarded them with two Mars bars. Now they’ve got torches. ‘Hey, Helmer!’ they shout through the hole they’ve cut in the carpet – with a knife? – ‘This is our house!’

‘Great house,’ I shout back, leaning on my rake.

‘We’ve even got light!’

‘I noticed.’

‘And there’s a flood too!’

‘The water’s already going down again,’ I reassure them.

‘We’re going to sleep here.’

‘I don’t think so,’ I say.

‘I think so,’ says Ronald, the youngest.

‘No, you’re not.’

‘We’re going home soon,’ I hear Teun whisper to his little brother. ‘We haven’t got anything to eat.’

I look up at the window of Father’s bedroom. It’s dark inside.

4

‘I WANT TO celebrate St Nicholas,’ he says.

‘St Nicholas?’ There haven’t been any St Nicholas celebrations in this house since Mother died. ‘What for?’

‘It’s nice.’

‘And how do you imagine it?’

‘You know,’ he says, ‘the usual.’

‘The usual? If you want to celebrate St Nicholas, you have to buy presents.’

‘Yep.’

‘Yep? How are you going to buy presents?’

‘You’ll have to buy them.’

‘For myself as well?’

‘Yep.’

‘Then I’ll know what I’m getting.’ I don’t want to have long conversations like this with him. I want to look in briefly and get away fast. The ticking of the grandfather clock fills the room. A window-shaped block of light shines on the glass of the case and reflects on the sheep painting, making it a lot less gloomy. It’s a strange painting. Sometimes it looks like winter, sometimes summer or autumn.

When I’m about to close the door, he shouts, ‘I’m thirsty.’

‘I get thirsty too sometimes.’ I close the door firmly behind me and walk downstairs.

Only the sofa has made it back to the living room. On the bottom shelf of the built-in linen cupboard in my bedroom I found a big piece of material. Mother might have been planning to make a dress from it, although it seems a bit large for that. It’s perfect for covering the sofa. The floor is

primer grey. When the bedroom door is open, the colour is continuous over the freshly painted sill. I've done the skirting boards, window frames and doors with primer as well. The sideboard is somewhere else, with the low bookcase on top of it. I've thrown all the flowering plants on the muck heap. That didn't leave much. When I go to buy paint, I'll have to look for venetian blinds or roller blinds as well; the heavy dark-green curtains in the bedroom and living room leave me gasping for breath, and I have a vague suspicion it's not just because of the years since they were last beaten. I took the remaining contents of the linen cupboard upstairs and brought my own clothes downstairs.

There are cats here. Shy cats that shoot off. Sometimes it's two or three, a few months later it will be nine or ten. Some are lame or missing their tails, others (most, actually) are incredibly mangy. It's impossible to keep tabs on them: it's no surprise if there's ten, but two is just as likely. Father used to solve the cat problem by shoving a litter in a gunny sack, adding a stone, and tossing the sack in the ditch. Long ago he would also stuff an old rag in the sack after first drenching it with some liquid from the poison cabinet. I don't know what it was, that liquid. Chloroform? But how did he get his hands on a bottle of chloroform? Were you able to go out and buy things like that thirty years ago? The silver-grey cabinet with the skull and crossbones on the door is in the barn and hasn't contained poison for a long time: poison is out of fashion. I keep paint in it.

Last spring I saw him shuffling around the barn with saucers of milk. I didn't say anything, but sighed deeply, so deeply he must have heard. Within a few days he had the kittens drinking from a single saucer of milk. He grabbed them and stuffed them in a bag. Not a gunny sack, we don't get them any more. It was a paper feed bag. He tied the bag on to the rear bumper of the Opel Kadett with a piece of rope about three feet long.

Seven years ago when his licence needed renewing they made him do a test. There were all kinds of things wrong with him and he failed. Since then he hasn’t been allowed to drive. He still climbed into the car. There was a green haze on the trees that line the yard and narcissuses flowering around the trunks. I stood in the barn doorway and watched him start the car, which immediately shot off, throwing him back against the seat, then jerking him forward so that he hit his head on the steering wheel. Then he reversed without looking over his shoulder or in the rear-view mirror. He did that for a while: driving forward, changing into reverse (the gearbox howled) and backing up, turning the steering wheel just a little. Up and down and back and forth until a cloud of exhaust fumes hung between the trees. He climbed out of the car, untied the paper bag very calmly and tried to throw it on the muck heap. He had to pick it up again no less than three times, his arms were no longer strong enough for a hearty swing. ‘Good riddance to bad rubbish,’ he said, coming into the barn. He wiped his forehead and rubbed his hands together in his one-chore-out-of-the-way gesture; it made a rasping sound.

It took me a while to get moving. Slowly I walked over to the muck heap. The bag wasn’t right at the top, it had slid down a little, and not just from gravity, but partly from the movement inside. I could hear very quiet squeaking and almost inaudible scratching. Father had made a mess of things and I could fix them for him. Damned if I would. I turned and walked away from the muck heap until I had gone far enough to be well out of earshot and then stayed there until there were no more sounds and no more movement.

He wants to celebrate St Nicholas, because ‘it’s nice’.

5

I DON’T KNOW what’s going on here, but now a hooded crow is staring at me from a branch in the bare ash. It’s the first time I have ever seen a hooded crow around here. It’s magnificent, but it is really getting on my nerves, I can hardly get a bite down. I go and sit somewhere else, with a view out the side window. There are four chairs around the table, I can sit where I like, the other three aren’t used.

I always sit where Mother used to sit, on the chair closest to the stove. Father sat opposite her, with his back to the front window. Henk sat with his back to the side window and could look through to the living room when the doors were open. I sat with my back to the kitchen door and often saw Henk as a silhouette, because of the light shining through the window behind him. It didn’t matter, my spitting image was opposite me and I knew exactly what he looked like. I’m back in my old spot at the kitchen table now and I don’t like it. I stand up, push my plate across the table, and walk around to sit down on Henk’s chair. Now I’m visible once more to the hooded crow, which turns its head slightly to get a better look at me. Being watched reminds me of the sheep that stood there staring at me a few days ago, all twenty-four of them. It gave me the feeling that the sheep were my equals, that they weren’t just animals looking at me. I’ve never felt like that before, not even with my two donkeys. And now this strange hooded crow.

I slide my chair back, walk through the hall to the front door and step out onto the gravel path. ‘Kssshh!’ The crow cocks its head and moves a leg. ‘Go!’ I shout, and only then

do I look around uncomfortably. Weird, semi-elderly farmer shouts at something invisible from his open front door.

The hooded crow stares at me condescendingly. I slam the front door. When quiet has returned to the hall, I hear Father saying something upstairs. I open the staircase door.

‘What d’you say?’ I yell.

‘A hooded crow,’ he calls.

‘So?’ I yell.

‘Why chase it away?’ Whatever else, he’s not deaf.

I close the staircase door and go back to the kitchen table, sitting in Father’s place, with my back to the front window. I chew my sandwich stolidly while doing my best to ignore Father, who’s still talking away.

In the space of ten minutes I’ve sat on every chair. If someone saw me, they’d think I was trying to be four people at once to avoid eating alone.

Before doing the woodwork, I painted the living room walls and ceiling white. I needed two coats to cover the pale rectangles that emerged when I took down the paintings, photos and samplers. After buying paint and a new brush from the painter’s, I visited the DIY shop, where I found wooden venetian blinds that fitted the bedroom and living-room windows exactly. Apparently the dimensions they used a hundred and fifty years ago are still common today. Before putting up the blinds, I took the plants I’d left on the windowsills and threw them on the muck heap as well. Now it’s empty and bluish grey in both rooms and the light enters in horizontal strips. Instead of pulling up the blinds in the morning, I just rotate the narrow slats.

I go upstairs with a box of nails, a hammer and a big, heavy potato crate.

‘What are you doing?’ Father asks.

I take the paintings, photos and samplers out one by one and start hanging them. ‘You think St Nicholas is nice,’ I say,

‘but we can make it nice in here too.’

‘What are you doing downstairs?

‘All kinds of things,’ I say. I hang the first photos up around the painting of the sheep, but soon have to move on to the other walls. Framed photos of Mother and Henk, champion milkers with rosettes, our grandparents and me, samplers made for our birth (not one, but two) and Father and Mother’s wedding. The paintings include six watercolours of mushrooms, a genuine series.

‘What’s the idea?’

‘This way you’ll have something to look at,’ I say.

When they’re all hung, I look at the photos more closely. There is one of Mother in an armchair. She has seated herself like a real lady, hands clasped respectably in her lap and legs pressed modestly together and angled slightly – obliging her to turn her upper body a little. She’s looking at the photographer in a way that doesn’t suit her at all, with an expression that combines arrogance with a hint of seductiveness, an impression reinforced by her angled legs. I take the photo down from the wall and lay it in the empty potato crate, together with the nails and the hammer.

‘Leave her here,’ Father says.

‘No,’ I say. ‘I’m taking her back downstairs.’

‘Have we got any mandarins?’

‘Would you like some mandarins?’

‘Yes.’

I fold out the stand on the back of the frame and put Mother on the mantelpiece. Then I get two mandarins from the scullery and take them upstairs. I put them on the bedside cabinet and walk over to the window. The hooded crow is still in the ash: from here I’m looking straight out at it.

‘Does that hooded crow look at you?’ I ask.

‘No,’ says Father. ‘It looks down a bit more.’

Suddenly I remember what I had forgotten. I go downstairs and into the kitchen. In the corner next to the

bureau is Father’s shotgun. I pick it up, wondering whether it’s loaded. I don’t check it. It feels odd to be holding it. In the old days we weren’t allowed to touch it, later I didn’t want to. I take the gun upstairs and lean it against the side of the grandfather clock. Father has fallen asleep. He is lying on his back, his head has drooped to one side, a thread of dribble is trailing onto the pillow.

6

MOTHER WAS AN outrageously ugly woman. Someone who hadn't known her would probably consider the photo on the mantelpiece laughable: bony, pop-eyed farmer's wife with thrice-yearly hairdo does her best to assume a dignified pose. I don't laugh at the photo. She's my mother. But sometimes I have wondered why Father – who, when awake, no doubt lies there staring at the handsome figure he cut in those ancient photos – ever married her. Or rather, now that I've been looking at her photo for a while and thinking about the man upstairs, I wonder why *she* married him.

There isn't much else left on the mantelpiece, which is black marble. A bronze candlestick holding a white candle, and an old pencil box with a picture of a belted cow on it. All the other knickknacks are in a box in Henk's bedroom, along with other superfluous stuff. Henk's room has become a storeroom. His bed, which has never served as a visitor's bed, is hemmed in by all kinds of things he also saw and knew. His bedroom has become one big gathering point for the past, and the living museum piece in the adjacent bedroom just keeps on breathing. Breathing and talking. Even now, here, I can hear him muttering. Is he talking to the hooded crow? To the photos, or the six watercolour mushrooms?

Henk and I were born in 1947; I'm a few minutes older. At first they thought we wouldn't live to see the next day (24 May), but Mother never doubted us. 'Women are made for twins,' is what she supposedly said after putting us on the breast for the first time. I don't believe it: statements like

that always emerge from a mass of events and comments finally to remain as sole survivor. Plenty of other things must have been said at the time and this was most likely a variation on something Father or the doctor said. Mother probably didn't say much at all.

I have a memory I can't have. I see her face from below, above a bright, soft swelling. I'm looking at her chin and, especially, at her slightly bulging eyes, which are directed not at me but at a point in the distance, nowhere in particular: the fields, maybe the dyke. It is summer and my feet feel other feet. Mother was a taciturn woman but she noticed everything. Father was the talker and he hardly noticed anything. He always just yelled his way through.

Someone taps on the window. Teun and Ronald are standing in the front garden, shouting and gesticulating. I walk to the front door.

'Helmer! The donkeys are loose!' Ronald says, in a tone that tells me he wishes the donkeys got loose every day.

'They're still in the yard,' Teun says, in a tone that tells me that he too has heard what his little brother really wants.

They run ahead of me around the corner of the house. 'Take it easy!' I call.

The donkeys are between the trees, about five yards in front of the partly open gate. The rope that usually keeps the gate shut is dangling from the concrete post. I realise what has happened.

'Well,' I say. 'You'd better get them back in the paddock.'

'Who?' asks Ronald.

'Who do you think? You two.'

'Why us?'

'Because.'

Now that the donkeys have broken out, Teun and Ronald are scared of them. It's like taps: when you're little they're great things until you turn one on and have no idea how to

shut it off again and panic about all the water that comes gushing out.

‘Because?’ says Teun. ‘What’s that mean?’

‘It means,’ I say, ‘that I know that *you* opened the gate because you were too lazy to climb over it, and that Ronald followed you, and that *he* opened the gate a little bit more.’

‘Uh-huh,’ says Ronald.

Teun shoots him an angry glance.

‘Go on,’ I say. ‘Push.’

‘Push? The gate?’

‘No, push the donkeys.’ I stroll over to the gate, lift it and walk it around until it’s wide open. The boys don’t move and look at me disbelievingly and a little scared.

In the winter the donkeys often spend long periods in the donkey shed next to the chicken coop. Donkeys absolutely hate having wet feet. In the shed it’s dry and there’s a layer of straw on the ground. The shed is sixteen feet wide and twenty feet deep. It is open at the front, with an overhanging roof. The donkeys have a sixteen-by-fourteen stall and in the six feet that are left, at the front, there are hay bales and a bag of oats. I generally keep some sugar beets and winter carrots in a box. On a shelf I have a large knife, a currycomb, a brush, a coarse rasp, a hoof pick and a scraper. When the donkeys are inside, Teun and Ronald don’t let a day go by without visiting the shed. They sit on the hay bales or on the scattered straw in the stall. They like it most when it’s getting darker outside and I’ve turned on the light. Once I found them lying flat on their backs under the donkeys. I asked them why they were doing that. ‘We want to conquer our fear,’ said Teun, who was about six at the time. Ronald sneezed because the donkey’s long winter coat was hanging in his face. Now the donkeys are out they are afraid.

‘How?’ Ronald asks.

‘Nothing special. Just go and stand behind them and give them a push.’