

The Zoo Just Outside of Liverpool

Scene 1

The back of a school bus, which is slightly dilapidated and unloved. The seats are adorned with rips and tears and the toilet appears to have been out of service for quite some time. One girl, MARY, is seated and holding something in her coat while the other girl, ANN, is standing in front of her, berating her about something...

ANN: *(Angrily)* Open that coat now!

MARY: No, you'll tell!

ANN: Mary, this isn't even funny! We're going to get in loads of trouble y'know. Everyone saw you run off from that goat pen and Mrs Taylor is coming to look for us.

MARY: No we're not. I haven't even got nothing.

A muffled bleating noise can be heard coming from inside the girl's coat.

ANN: Oh my days! You haven't...

MARY: *(Terrified)* Shush! She's here! *(MARY tightens her grip on her coat and leans over, trying not to be seen).* Ann! Hurry up and hide!

A tall woman with slightly greyed brown hair, wrapped up into a tight bun, enters the coach. She is wearing thick cut glasses and glances around the coach until she spots a glimpse of the two girls on the back seat.

MRS TAYLOR: *(Furiously)* You two! What on earth are you doing on this bus!? *(She begins to march towards the girls.)* Don't you dare run off from members of staff alone, I've got a right mind to...

ANN: Miss! She's really sick. She only ran off because she thinks she's going to chuck up everywhere! *(ANN glances at MARY and stares deeply into her eyes.)* Didn't you Mary?

MARY: *(MARY pauses before realising ANN is lying.)* Urrgghhhh! Ah Miss I'm dead sorry but the goats made me feel so sick. I can't keep it down.

MRS TAYLOR: For goodness sake, get off this coach and get to a bathroom girl!

MARY: Miss I can't walk I need to stay here.

MRS TAYLOR: Absolutely no chance. Stand up and walk right now. Ann, this doesn't concern you, off you go.

ANN turns and looks cautiously at MARY for guidance on what to do, MARY can only stare blankly back.

MRS TAYLOR: Come on, now please.

ANN sheepishly dawdles past MRS TAYLOR and leaves the coach. MRS TAYLOR begins to approach MARY at the back of the coach. MARY is frozen in fear.

MARY: Ahhh miss it hurts, I really can't move. Can't I just stay he-

MRS TAYLOR: Mary, absolutely not! *(The bleating noise from inside MARY'S coat begins interrupting MRS TAYLOR)*

MARY: *(Loudly, trying to cover up the sound coming from within her jacket.)*
Aahhhh!

MRS TAYLOR: If you're this sick we need to get you to a bathroom, immediately! Now up and walk! *(She grabs MARY by the arm and escorts her up the aisle of the bus. MARY is tightly holding the front of her jacket together, which is bulging slightly.)* Come now.

Scene 2

As MARY leaves the coach with MRS TAYLOR holding onto her arm and shuffling her quickly towards the nearby bathroom. She sees ANN gawking at her in terror.

MRS TAYLOR: Right, Mary. You go inside *(she motions towards the girl's bathroom door)* and I'll wait here. Do not leave my sight again young lady.

MARY says nothing, her arms still clutching the bump around her stomach. She proceeds into one of the bathroom stalls and opens her coat to let the contents land gently onto the top of the closed toilet seat. A tiny pygmy goat stands there and looks around, taking in its unfamiliar surroundings. It gives a curious bleat to MARY, as if to say 'what is happening'? MARY looks despondently back at it, unsure of what to do.

MARY: *(Whispering)* I only wanted to show you to my baby sister. It's impossible to take you back unnoticed now. Perhaps I should just turn myself in...

MARY turns to open the door but halts when she hears **ANN**.

ANN: *(From outside)* Mary!

MARY: Ann?

ANN: You do my head in you. Hurry up and give me whatever you've got before Taylor comes.

MARY: Ann, you are a proper lifesaver.

ANN: Hurry up!

MARY quickly grabs the baby goat and stands upon the toilet seat. Peering out of the window, she sees **ANN**, standing (arms folded) looking displeased and giving **MARY** a slight smirk through her frowning. **MARY** smiles and begins to pass the goat through the small opening. First its head and then its front hooves as it slightly flails around half in and half out of the window.

MARY: Can you reach him?

ANN: Are you messing? How tall do you think I am?

MARY: Come on or someone will see.

ANN: How do you know it's a 'he' anyway?

MARY: He's called Bill, the sign said so.

ANN: *(Sarcastically)* Unbelievable.

MARY: Just grab him! *(ANN can be heard jumping, trying to reach the goat until finally she pulls him through the window.)*

ANN: Got him!

MARY: Yes! Quick, take him back! Don't go around the front or Taylor will see you.

The sound of ANN scarpering can be heard and MARY breathes a large sigh of relief. MARY struts out of the bathroom where MRS TAYLOR is waiting impatiently outside.

Miss I feel a bit better now, thanks.

MRS TAYLOR: Mary, I didn't hear you talking to someone in there did I? It sounded suspiciously like there was a commotion going on inside that bathroom.

MARY: No Miss, I just wasn't well. That's all.

MRS TAYLOR: Hmm. Well, let's get a move on, I hear the baby goats here are adorable.

MARY: *(Pausing)* Okay Miss.

Section A

1. What type of text is this?
2. What is Mrs Taylor described as looking like?
3. Where were the two girls sat on the bus?
4. Where did Mrs Taylor lead Mary after taking her off of the coach?
5. How did Mary know the name of the goat?

Section B

6. Explain what the word 'dilapidated' means.
7. Explain what the word 'berating' means.
8. How did Mrs Taylor know to come looking for the girls?
9. Look again at the opening stage directions. What do you imagine has happened in the previous scene? Why?
10. Why does Mary tell Ann to hide in Scene 1?
11. How did Mary try to cover the noise coming from her jacket in Scene 1?
12. Explain what the phrase 'gawking at her in terror' means.
13. Read the stage directions beginning 'Mary quickly grabs the baby goat'. How do you think Ann is feeling during this scene? Refer to evidence in the text in your answer.
14. Which Phrase from Scene 2 suggests that Ann isn't tall enough to reach the window?

Section C

15. What evidence is there in the text from the first scene to suggest what Mary might have in her coat?
16. Why was Mary trying to stay on the coach during Scene 1?
17. List three examples of language that the author has used to show the girls were fearful of Mrs Taylor during Scene 1.
18. 'I really can't move. Can't I just stay he-' What does the dash and half-word imply in this dialogue?
19. What evidence is given in the text to show that Mary knew how Mrs Taylor would react?
20. Mary refers to Mrs Taylor as 'Taylor'. What does this suggest about how Mary feels about her?
21. What do you expect to happen next? Give a reason for your answer.
22. How do you predict that the scene would have gone if Mrs Taylor had found the goat rather than the girls passing it out of the window?

Section D

23. Why does Ann stare deeply into Mary's eyes in Scene 1?
24. Identify 3 examples of colloquialisms from within the text.
25. Why do you think the author chose to include very informal speech and colloquialisms? What effect does it have on the reader?
26. Describe how you would act if you were playing Mrs Taylor. Cover the following three areas: actions/expression, tone of voice, volume.