

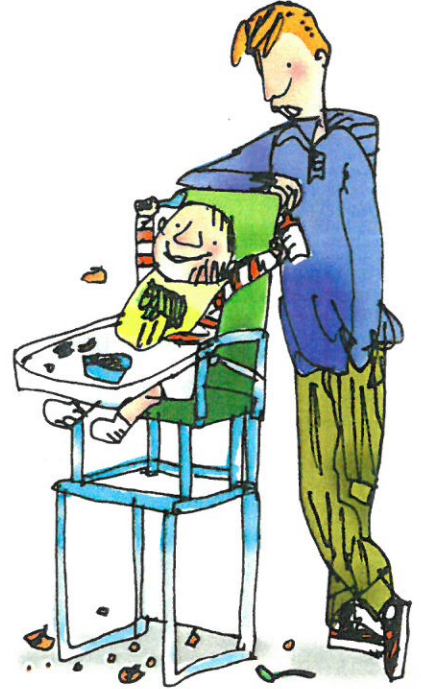
# Do we have to keep it?

## Introduction

*Do you have any brothers or sisters?*

*How do you feel about them? Dan Reed has a new baby in his family and he's not sure how he feels about it. The baby needs lots of attention from everybody, needs feeding all the time and even wees on his trousers!*

*He says he doesn't like the baby but do you think he really means that?*



Story written by Gill Munton  
Illustrated by Tim Archbold

## Do we have to keep it?

I'm Dan Reed.

I'm almost ten, and I live at  
fifteen, Fleetwood Street.

And I've got ... a baby!

Well, Mum and Dad have.

And I'm not feeling very happy.

I did tell Mum that I wanted a stick insect,  
but no, she went and got a baby.

And no, it cannot go back to the shop!



This baby! It looks very funny.

You want to see it!

Mum sits on the settee,  
and sticks the baby on her knee.

It digs its heels into her legs,  
and then it kicks with both feet  
and twists its body.

It's not a baby at all - it's an eel!



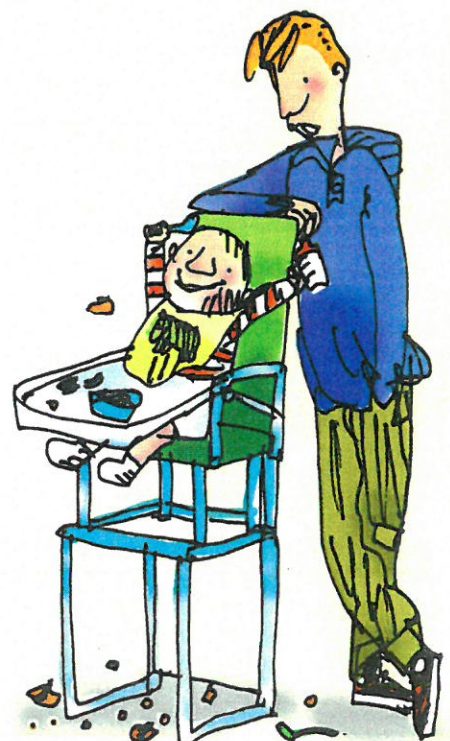
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Then the baby needs feeding.

It seems to need feeding every three seconds,  
it's so greedy.

Bits of mashed up beef and carrot,  
yuk, and milk, milk, milk.

Oh, yes, and it's got this silly bib  
with a green sheep on it!



Then Mum dumps the baby on my knee,  
so she can wash up the lunch dishes.

The next thing is, it's sick on the sheep bib,  
or it wees on my best combats!

I ask Mum, do we have to keep it?



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My sister Sheena (she's sixteen)  
is just a creep. She gives the baby a  
big sloppy kiss, then mops it up with  
a flannel, and puts it in its buggy.

We set off along Fleetwood Street.

Sheena wheels the buggy, and I pretend  
I'm not with them.

If we meet Val from next door,  
she greets us with,

"Oh! He's just sooooo sweet!"

No one tells me I'm sweet.

(Not that I want them to.)



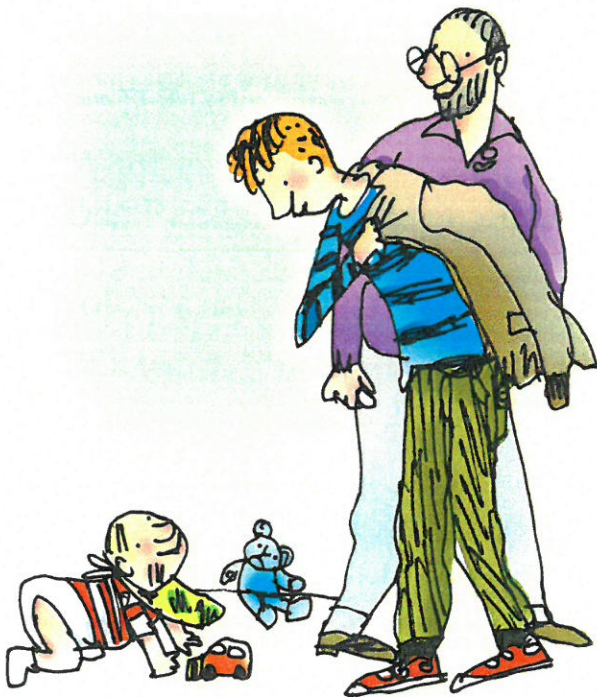
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When we get back, it's six o'clock and  
the baby has to go to bed. Mum sticks it  
in its cot - and sings to it!  
It's got a pink teddy  
that bleeps if you press its tummy.



When it's asleep, at last,  
we have a bit of a rest from it.  
Then it's "Eeeeeeeeee! Wheeeeeeee!"  
and guess what - it's been sick on the sheets.

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Yippee! I'm going out for a meal  
with Dad today.  
Just him and me. No baby ...

But I may get the baby a new toy, or a silly hat.  
I've got a funny feeling that I'll miss him, just a teeny-weeny bit.

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## Questions to read and answer

*(Children complete without your help.)*

1. What number is Dan's house in Fleetwood Street?  
Dan Reed lives at number **ten** / **six** / **fifteen** Fleetwood Street.
2. What sort of pet did Dan want?  
Dan wanted a **puppy** / a **kitten** / a **stick insect**.
3. What food did the baby like?  
The baby liked **ham and eggs** / **mashed up beef and carrots** / **bread and jam**.
4. What animal is on the baby's bib?  
The baby has a bib with a **green sheep** / a **pink pig** / a **red hen** on it.
5. Who does Dan go out for a meal with?  
Dan goes out with **the baby** / **his dad** / **his sister**.