

she had liked being with boys and girls her own age. She liked singing the song about the dawner and having her own little cupboard. "I didn't like it as much as I thought I would," she answered honestly, "but maybe it will get better when we have Show and Tell."

2 SHOW AND TELL

Ramona looked forward to many things—her first loose tooth, riding a bicycle instead of a tricycle, wearing lipstick like her mother—but most of all she looked forward to Show and Tell. For years Ramona had watched her sister Beezus leave for school with a doll, a book, or a pretty leaf to share with her class. She had watched Beezus's friend Henry Huggins carry mysterious,

lumpy packages past her house on his way to school. She had listened to Beezus talk about the interesting things her class brought to school—turtles, ballpoint pens that wrote in three different colors, a live clam in a jar of sand and seawater.

Now at last the time had come for Ramona to show and tell. "What are you going to take to show your class?" she asked Beezus, hoping for an idea for herself.

"Nothing," said Beezus, and went on to explain. "Along about the third grade you begin to outgrow Show and Tell. By the fifth grade it's all right to take something really unusual like somebody's pickled appendix or something to do with social studies. An old piece of fur when you study fur traders would be all right. Or if something really exciting happened like your house burning down, it would be all right to tell about that. But in the fifth grade you

don't take an old doll or a toy fire engine to school. And you don't call it Show and Tell by then. You just let the teacher know you have something interesting."

Ramona was not discouraged. She was used to Beezus's growing out of things as she grew into them. She rummaged around in her toy box and finally dragged out her favorite doll, the doll with the hair that could really be washed. "I'm going to take Chevrolet," she told Beezus.

"Nobody names a doll Chevrolet," said Beezus, whose dolls had names like Sandra or Patty.

"I do," Ramona answered. "I think Chevrolet is the most beautiful name in the world."

"Well, she's a horrid-looking doll," said Beezus. "Her hair is green. Besides, you don't play with her."

"I wash her hair," said Ramona loyally,

"and the only reason what's left of her hair looks sort of green is that I tried to blue it like Howie's grandmother, who has her hair blued at the beauty shop. Mamma said putting bluing on yellow hair turned it green. Anyway, I think it's pretty."

When the time finally came to start to school, Ramona was disappointed once more to see Mrs. Kemp approaching with Howie and little Willa Jean. "Mamma, come *on*," begged Ramona, dragging at her mother's hand, but her mother waited until the Kemps had caught up. Willa Jean was even sloppier this morning. There were crumbs on the front of her sweater, and she was drinking apple juice out of a nursing bottle. Willa Jean dropped the bottle when she saw Chevrolet and sat there with apple juice dribbling down her chin while she stared at Ramona's doll.

"Ramona is taking her doll to school for

Show and Tell," said Mrs. Quimby.

Howie looked worried. "I don't have anything for Show and Tell," he said.

"That's all right, Howie," said Mrs. Quimby. "Miss Binney doesn't expect you to take something every day."

"I *want* to take something," said Howie.

"My goodness, Howie," said his mother. "What if twenty-nine children each brought something. Miss Binney wouldn't have time to teach you anything."

"*She's* taking something." Howie pointed to Ramona.

There was something familiar about the way Howie was behaving. Ramona pulled at her mother's hand. "Come *on*, Mamma."

"Ramona, I think it would be nice if you ran in the house and found something to lend Howie to take to school," said Mrs. Quimby.

Ramona did not think this idea was nice

at all, but she recognized that lending Howie something might be faster than arguing with him. She ran into the house where she snatched up the first thing she saw—a stuffed rabbit that had already been given hard wear before the cat had adopted it as a sort of practice gopher. The cat liked to chew the rabbit's tail, carry it around in his mouth, or lie down and kick it with his hind feet.

When Ramona thrust the rabbit into Howie's hand, Mrs. Kemp said, "Say thank you, Howie."

"It's just an old beat-up bunny," said Howie scornfully. When his mother wasn't looking, he handed the rabbit to Willa Jean, who dropped her apple juice, seized the rabbit, and began to chew its tail.

Just like our cat, thought Ramona, as the group proceeded toward school.

"Don't forget Ramona's bunny," said

Mrs. Kemp, when they reached the kindergarten playground.

"I don't want her old bunny," said Howie.

"Now Howie," said his mother. "Ramona was kind enough to share her bunny so you be nice." To Mrs. Quimby she said, as if Howie could not hear, "Howie needs to learn manners."

Share! Ramona had learned about sharing in nursery school, where she either had to share something of her own that she did not want to share or she had to share something that belonged to someone else that she did not want to share either. "That's all right, Howie," she said. "You don't have to share my rabbit."

Howie looked grateful, but his mother thrust the rabbit into his hands anyway.

At the beginning, on that second day of kindergarten, Ramona felt shy because she was not sure what Miss Binney would think

about a girl who had been made to sit on the bench. But Miss Binney smiled, and said, "Good morning, Ramona," and seemed to have forgotten all about the day before. Ramona sat Chevrolet in her little cupboard with the duck on the door and waited for Show and Tell.

"Did anyone bring something to show the class?" asked Miss Binney, after the class had sung the dawnzer song.

Ramona remembered to raise her hand, and Miss Binney invited her to come to the front of the room to show the class what she had brought. Ramona took Chevrolet from her cupboard and stood beside Miss Binney's desk, where she discovered she did not know what to say. She looked to Miss Binney for help.

Miss Binney smiled encouragingly. "Is there something you would like to tell us about your doll?"



"I can really wash her hair," said Ramona. "It's sort of green because I gave her a blue rinse."

"And what do you wash it with?" asked Miss Binney.

"Lots of things," said Ramona, beginning to enjoy speaking in front of the class. "Soap,

shampoo, detergent, bubble bath. I tried Dutch Cleanser once, but it didn't work."

"What is your doll's name?" asked Miss Binney.

"Chevrolet," answered Ramona. "I named her after my aunt's car."

The class began to laugh, especially the boys. Ramona felt confused, standing there in front of twenty-eight boys and girls who were all laughing at her. "Well, I did!" she said angrily, almost tearfully. Chevrolet was a beautiful name, and there was no reason to laugh.

Miss Binney ignored the giggles and snickers. "I think Chevrolet is a lovely name," she said. Then she repeated, "Chev-ro-let." The way Miss Binney pronounced the word made it sound like music. "Say it, class."

"Chev-ro-let," said the class obediently, and this time no one laughed. Ramona's heart was filled with love for her teacher.

Miss Binney was not like most grown-ups. Miss Binney understood.

The teacher smiled at Ramona. "Thank you, Ramona, for sharing Chevrolet with us."

After a girl had showed her doll that talked when she pulled a cord in its back and a boy had told the class about his family's new refrigerator, Miss Binney asked, "Does anyone else have anything to show us or tell us about?"

"That boy brought something," said Susan of the springy curls, pointing at Howie.

Boing, thought Ramona, as she always did when those curls caught her attention. She was beginning to see that Susan was a girl who liked to take charge.

"Howie, did you bring something?" asked Miss Binney.

Howie looked embarrassed.

"Come on, Howie," encouraged Miss

Binney. "Show us what you brought."

Reluctantly Howie went to his cupboard and brought out the shabby blue rabbit with the damp tail. He carried it to Miss Binney's desk, faced the class, and said in a flat voice, "It's just an old bunny." The class showed very little interest.

"Is there something you would like to tell us about your bunny?" asked Miss Binney.

"No," said Howie. "I just brought it because my mother made me."

"I can tell you something about your bunny," said Miss Binney. "It has had lots of love. That's why it's so worn."

Ramona was fascinated. In her imagination she could see the cat lying on the carpet with the rabbit gripped in his teeth while he battered it with his hind feet. The look that Howie gave the rabbit was somehow lacking in love. Ramona waited for him to say that it wasn't his rabbit, but

he did not. He just stood there.

Miss Binney, seeing that Howie could not be encouraged to speak in front of the class, opened a drawer in her desk, and as she reached inside she said, "I have a present for your bunny." She pulled out a red ribbon, took the rabbit from Howie, and tied the ribbon around its neck in a bright bow. "There you are, Howie," she said. "A nice new bow for your bunny."

Howie mumbled, "Thank you," and as quickly as possible hid the rabbit in his cupboard.

Ramona was delighted. She felt that the red ribbon Miss Binney had given her old rabbit took the place of the present she had not been given the day before. All morning she thought about the things she could do with that red ribbon. She could use it to tie up what was left of Chevrolet's hair. She could trade it to Beezus for something

valuable, an empty perfume bottle or some colored paper that wasn't scribbled on. During rest time Ramona had the best idea of all. She would save the ribbon until she got a two-wheeled bicycle. Then she would weave it in and out of the spokes and ride so fast the ribbon would be a red blur as the wheels went around. Yes. That was exactly what she would do with her red ribbon.

When the noon bell rang, Mrs. Quimby, Mrs. Kemp, and little Willa Jean were waiting by the fence. "Howie," Mrs. Kemp called out, "don't forget Ramona's bunny."

"Oh, that old thing," muttered Howie, but he returned to his cupboard while Ramona walked along behind the mothers.

"Howie needs to learn responsibility," Mrs. Kemp was saying.

When Howie had caught up, he untied the ribbon and shoved the rabbit at Ramona.

"Here. Take your old rabbit," he said.

Ramona took it and said, "Give me my ribbon."

"It's not your ribbon," said Howie. "It's my ribbon."

The two mothers were so busy talking about their children needing to learn responsibility they paid no attention to the argument.

"It is not!" said Ramona. "It's my ribbon!"

"Miss Binney gave it to me." Howie was so calm and so sure that he was right that Ramona was infuriated. She grabbed for the ribbon, but Howie held it away from her.

"Miss Binney tied it around my rabbit's neck so it's *my* ribbon!" she said, her voice rising.

"No," said Howie flatly and calmly.

"Ribbons aren't for boys," Ramona reminded him. "Now give it to me!"

"It isn't yours." Howie showed no excitement, only stubbornness.



Howie's behavior drove Ramona wild. She wanted him to get excited. She wanted him to get angry. "It is too mine!" she shrieked, and at last the mothers turned around.

"What's going on?" asked Mrs. Quimby.

"Howie has my ribbon and won't give it back," said Ramona, so angry she was near tears.

"It isn't hers," said Howie.

The two mothers exchanged glances. "Howie, where did you get that ribbon?" asked Mrs. Kemp.

"Miss Binney gave it to me," said Howie.

"She gave it to *me*," corrected Ramona, as she fought back tears. "She tied it on my rabbit's neck, so it's my ribbon." Anybody should be able to understand that. Anybody who was not stupid.

"Now Howie," said his mother. "What does a big boy like you want with a ribbon?"

Howie considered this question as if his mother really expected an answer. "Well . . . I could tie it on the tail of a kite if I had a kite."

"He just doesn't want me to have it," explained Ramona. "He's selfish."

"I am not selfish," said Howie. "You want something that doesn't belong to you."

"I do *not*!" yelled Ramona.

"Now Ramona," said her mother. "A piece

of ribbon isn't worth all this fuss. We have other ribbons at home that you can have."

Ramona did not know how to make her mother understand. No other ribbon could possibly take the place of this one. Miss Binney had given her the ribbon, and she wanted it because she loved Miss Binney so much. She wished Miss Binney were here now because her teacher, unlike the mothers, would understand. All Ramona could say was, "It's mine."

"I know!" said Mrs. Kemp, as if a brilliant idea had come to her. "You can share the ribbon."

Ramona and Howie exchanged a look in which they agreed that nothing would be worse than sharing the ribbon. They both knew there were some things that could never be shared, and Miss Binney's ribbon was one of them. Ramona wanted that ribbon, and she wanted it all to herself. She

knew that a grubby boy like Howie would probably let Willa Jean drool on it and ruin it.

"That's a good idea," agreed Mrs. Quincy. "Ramona, you let Howie carry it halfway home, and then you can carry it the rest of the way."

"Then who gets it?" asked Howie, voicing the question that had risen in Ramona's thoughts.

"We can cut it in two so you each may have half," said Mrs. Kemp. "We're having lunch at Ramona's house, and as soon as we get there we'll divide the ribbon."

Miss Binney's beautiful ribbon chopped in two! This was too much. Ramona burst into tears. Her half would not be long enough for anything. If she ever got a two-wheeled bicycle, there would not be enough ribbon to weave through the spokes of a wheel. There would not even be enough to tie up Chevrolet's hair.

"I'm tired of sharing," said Howie.
"Share, share, share. That's all grown-ups ever talk about."

Ramona could not understand why both mothers were amused by Howie's words. She understood exactly what Howie meant, and she liked him a little better for saying so. She had always had a guilty feeling she was the only person who felt that way.

"Now Howie, it isn't as bad as all that," said his mother.

"It is too," said Howie, and Ramona nodded through her tears.

"Give me the ribbon," said Mrs. Kemp.
"Maybe after lunch we'll all feel better."

Reluctantly Howie surrendered the precious ribbon, and said, "I suppose we're having tuna-fish sandwiches again."

"Howie, that's not polite," said his mother.
At the Quimbys' house, Ramona's mother said, "Why don't you and Howie play with

your tricycle while I prepare lunch?"

"Sure, Ramona," said Howie, as the two mothers boosted Willa Jean's stroller up the steps, and he and Ramona were left together whether they wanted to be or not. Ramona sat down on the steps and tried to think of a name to call Howie. Pieface wasn't bad enough. If she used some of the names she had heard big boys use at school, her mother would come out and scold her. Perhaps "little booby boy" would do.

"Where's your trike?" asked Howie.

"In the garage," answered Ramona. "I don't ride it anymore now that I'm in kindergarten."

"How come?" asked Howie.

"I'm too big," said Ramona. "Everybody else on the block rides two-wheelers. Only babies ride tricycles." She made this remark because she knew Howie still rode his tricycle, and she was so angry about the

ribbon she wanted to hurt his feelings.

If Howie's feelings were hurt, he did not show it. He seemed to be considering Ramona's remarks in his usual deliberate way. "I could take off one of the wheels if I had some pliers and a screwdriver," he said at last.

Ramona was indignant. "And wreck my tricycle?" Howie just wanted to get her into trouble.

"It wouldn't wreck it," said Howie. "I take the wheels off my tricycle all the time. You can ride on the front wheel and one back wheel. That way you'd have a two-wheeler."

Ramona was not convinced.

"Come on, Ramona," coaxed Howie. "I like to take wheels off tricycles."

Ramona considered. "If I let you take off a wheel, do I get to keep the ribbon?"

"Well . . . I guess so." After all, Howie

was a boy. He was more interested in taking a tricycle apart than he was in playing with any ribbon.

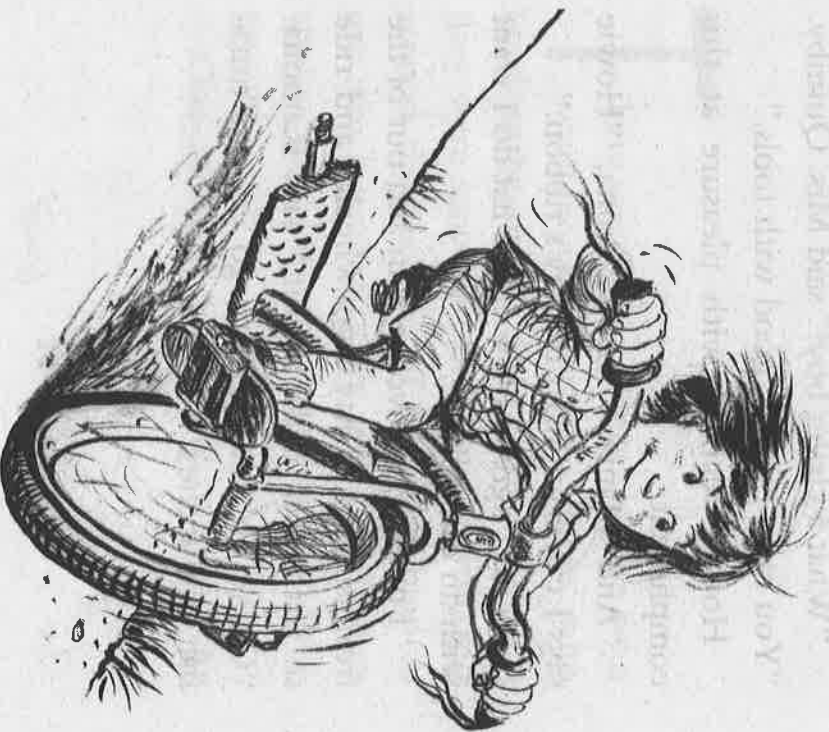
Ramona was doubtful about Howie's ability to turn her tricycle into a two-wheeler, but she was determined to have Miss Binney's red ribbon.

She trundled her tricycle out of the garage. Then she found the pliers and a screwdriver, and handed them to Howie, who went to work in a businesslike way. He used the screwdriver to pry off the hub. With the pliers he straightened the cotter pin that held the wheel in place, removed it from the axle, and pulled off the wheel. Next he returned the cotter pin to its hole in the axle and bent the ends out once more so the axle would stay in place. "There," he said with satisfaction. For once he looked happy and sure of himself. "You have to sort of lean to one side when you ride it."



Ramona was so impressed by Howie's work that her anger began to drain away. Maybe Howie was right. She grasped her tricycle by the handlebars and mounted the seat. By leaning toward the side on which the wheel had been removed, she managed to balance herself and to ride down the driveway in an uncertain and lopsided fashion. "Hey! It works!" she called out, when she reached the sidewalk. She circled and

pedaled back toward Howie, who stood beaming at the success of his alteration. "I told you it would work," he bragged. "I didn't believe you at first," confessed Ramona, who would never again be seen riding a babyish three-wheeler.



sandwiches are ready.”

“See my two-wheeler,” cried Ramona, pedaling in a lopsided circle.

“Well, aren’t you a big girl!” exclaimed her mother. “How did you ever manage to do that?”

Ramona came to a halt. “Howie fixed my trike for me and told me how to ride it.”

“What a clever boy!” said Mrs. Quimby.

“You must be very good with tools.”

Howie beamed with pleasure at this compliment.

“And Mama,” said Ramona, “Howie says I can have Miss Binney’s ribbon.”

“Sure,” agreed Howie. “What do I want with an old ribbon?”

“I’m going to weave it in and out of the front spokes of my two-wheeler and ride so fast it will make a blur,” said Ramona.

“Come on, Howie, let’s go eat our tuna-fish sandwiches.”

3

SEAT WORK

There were two kinds of children who went to kindergarten—those who lined up beside the door before school, as they were supposed to, and those who ran around the playground and scrambled to get into line when they saw Miss Binney approaching. Ramona ran around the playground.

One morning as Ramona was running