

ON MY OWN by CLARE PRICE

William is fishing on the riverbank. He seems at home away from everyone.

WILLIAM.

(Casting rod into river)

I hope it doesn't rain. Well, this is how father does it. Sits here and waits. Wish he was here to ... um ... *(Looks in bag)* ...

Have a sandwich. Only cheese left. That will do for supper. Better not eat any. I'll be really hungry later. Let's hope I catch a fish. Can't be that difficult. I'll cook it.

(Gleefully gets out matches)

I managed to take Mr Wiggins matches last night when he wasn't looking during a 'lights out' dormitory round. I hate boarding school. That's why I'm here. *(Sets the scene)*

You see I escaped. Climbed out of the dormitory window. No one saw me. I planned it well. I took extra sandwiches at tea, and hid them with my bag and new rod by the back of the kitchen block. I'm hoping to get to Auntie Lil's. She lives in the Cotswolds.

It will take me a while but if I follow the river I'll not go far wrong. *(Notices rod movement)*

Hey, I think I've caught something. *(Stands up and struggles to get fish on to bank-side and kills it)*

Now for the fire and I suppose cut the fish open. *(Prepares the fish and lights fire with sticks and matches)*

(Placing fish on fire)

You see, they didn't like me at boarding school. I've lived abroad all my life and I'm used to being free. I don't need other boys. I'm independent. Father thought I ought to mix but I don't want to mix. Aunt Lil will understand. She didn't want me to go away to school.

(Looks at fish)

This looks cooked. *(Attempts to eat bit of fish which burns his mouth)* Ooh! *(Blows on it)*

Father says I'll grow up to be a waster. He thinks I don't know what I want to be. *(Eats fish heartily)*

This tastes really good. *(Has an idea)*

I'll tell Aunt Lil, I'll tell father and that awful school. I know what I want to do and it doesn't need a boarding school to be it. I'll be a cook ... *(Finishes his fish and wipes hand across face with a satisfied grin)*