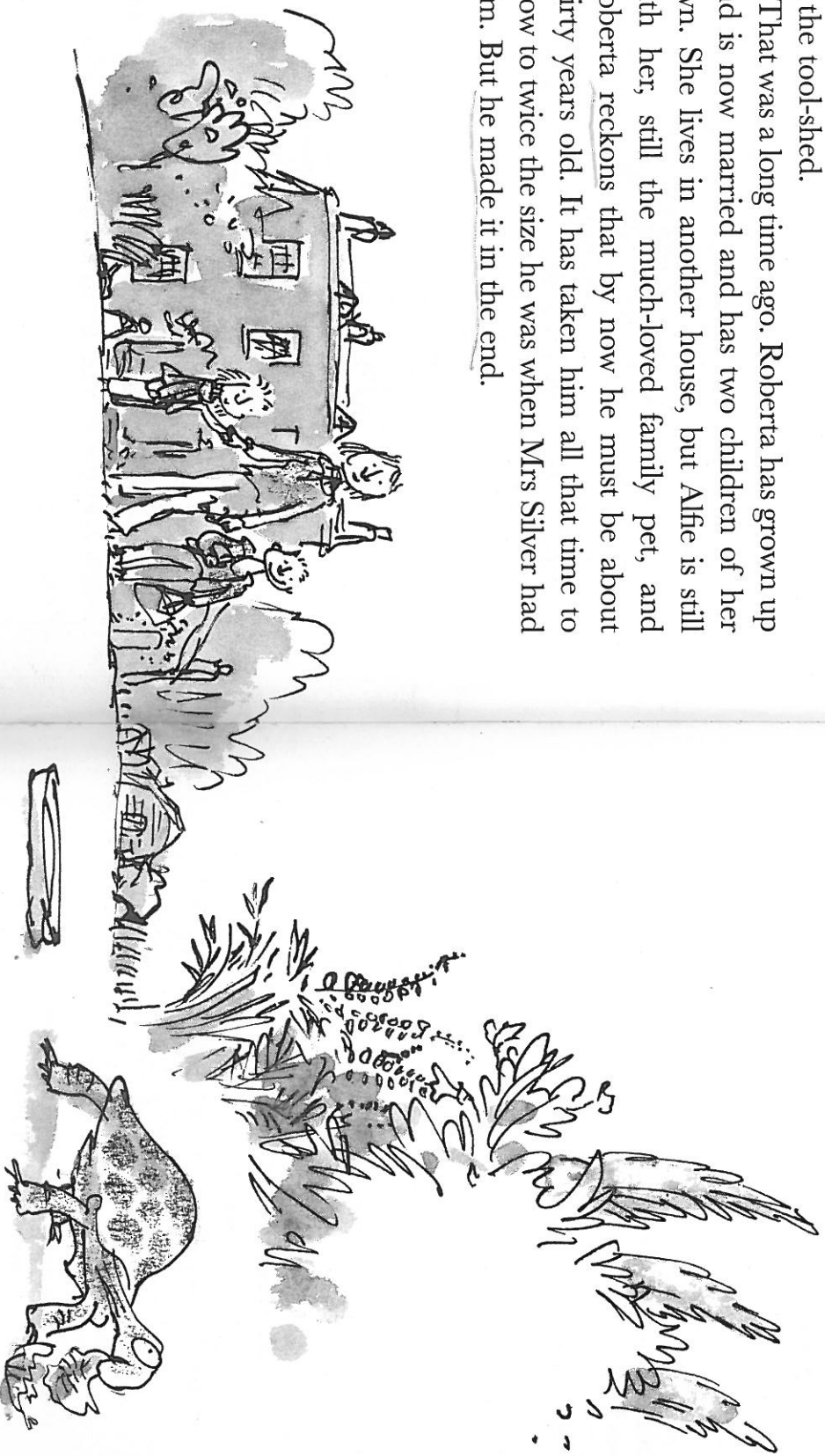


P.S. I expect you are wondering what happened to little Alfie, the first of them all. Well, he was bought a week later from one of the pet-shops by a small girl called Roberta Squibb, and he settled down in Roberta's garden. Every day she fed him lettuce and tomato slices and crispy celery, and in the winters he hibernated in a box of dried leaves in the tool-shed.

That was a long time ago. Roberta has grown up and is now married and has two children of her own. She lives in another house, but Alfie is still with her, still the much-loved family pet, and Roberta reckons that by now he must be about thirty years old. It has taken him all that time to grow to twice the size he was when Mrs Silver had him. But he made it in the end.

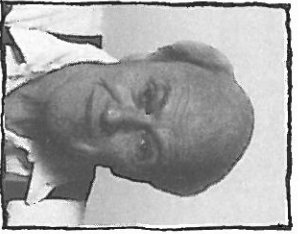


ROALD DAHL

BORN: Llandaff, Wales, 1916.

SCHOOLS: Llandaff Cathedral School,
St Peter's, Repton.

JOBS: Shell Oil Company representative in
East Africa, RAF fighter pilot in Second
World War, air attaché, author.



When Roald Dahl's own children were small, they used to keep a pet tortoise or two in the garden. This was long before they made it illegal to bring tortoises into England. As well as a writer, Dahl was a keen inventor and he did actually build the tortoise-catcher in this story – except that he used it for picking things up from the floor, to save bending his aching back!



Roald Dahl died in 1990 at the age of seventy-four.

This was the motto that he lived by:

My candle burns at both ends
It will not last the night
— But ah my foes and oh my friends
It gives a lovely light.

Find out more about Roald Dahl by visiting the web site at
www.roalddahl.com