PERCY PARKS

Percy Parks was born in an exclusive maternity hospital in PARADISE. His parents Peter and Penny were ecstatic. “He’s going to be as great a blogger as we are!” they said delightedly to each other. Peter had three hundred thousand subscribers and Penny had a hundred more than him. She wrote about fashion, clothes, jewellery, houses, palaces and people. Peter wrote about travel and his blogs made people long to visit the exotic places he went to with their customs and their homes. Almost from birth, Percy went with them accompanied by his Nanny Jane and Doctor John. He delighted his parents when he was five and said, “I want to be a blogger too!”

Unfortunately, the brilliant child they thought would follow in their footsteps turned out to be average – average in everything, in sport, at school – his essays only got five out of ten, it seemed he did not have much imagination or was able to express his thoughts in an interesting way. “He’ll never be a blogger,” said his father to his mother.” “No,” she agreed sadly. But they loved him dearly as he was an

affectionate, kind and friendly little boy.

The Parks lived in the affluent suburb of Fairlands in Fairview Road. Daddy was a billionaire, not from blogging which was his passion, but from his Aunt Jessica who had never married but had become very wealthy through her business acumen. She had had a flair for fashion and started designing, making and selling dresses and investing her profit wisely. After some years, she bought the rather grand house in which the Parks now lived. It was set in four acres of land with wonderful views of the distant sea. Percy had his own horse called Beauty and although Daddy and Mummy also had horses and there was a stable lad, Percy washed and groomed Beauty every day. He adored her.

When Percy was twelve and riding his bike from school, he passed the Anglican church of St Helen's. It was a hot day, and the arched doors of the entrance were open. The organist was practising for the Sunday service. Percy had never been inside the church, or any church for that matter,

as his parents had no interest in them except Daddy who mentioned the architecture of the 12th century cathedrals in the countries they visited. He knew that thousands of his subscribers would be very interested, and the interiors were very photogenic. Percy leant his bike against the stone wall surrounding the church and walked inside. Mister Rycroft was playing the triumphant Easter hymn Jesus Christ is risen today. Hallelujah! He got up to leave, and Percy went up to him. “That was wonderful, Sir,” he said. “Is it an organ and is it difficult to play?” “Yes,” Mister Rycroft answered. “It’s an organ and it’s difficult to play but if you work hard enough you will manage it.” Percy went home and burst into the sitting room. “Daddy and Mummy!” he shouted, “Please can I learn the organ?” And he told them how he had met Mr Rycroft and that he was sure he would teach him. “He’s such a nice man. He showed me how the organ works. It’s not a bit like a piano, it’s far more complicated and you can also play it with your feet!”

The next day his parents visited Father Ambrose, a plump, short priest with a genial look, in the Rectory House. He led them into a spacious lounge with comfortable country style furniture. “Would you like some tea” he asked. “Clara, my wife, has just baked some of her famous muffins.” “Thank you very much,” replied Mummy. “That would be very nice and to meet your wife as well.” Tea arrived and it was some time before Daddy and Mummy got down to speaking about what they had come for. “Only a pleasure,” said Father Ambroise with a smile. “Mr Rycroft will be glad to teach him.” “I don’t expect Percy to do very well,” said Daddy, “he only manages to be average in everything he does. But he’s a lovely boy and appears to be very keen.”

After school the next day, Percy went to the church for his first music lesson. “Hello Percy,” said Mr Rycroft, “today we are going to do three things. Firstly, we are going to the hall to sit at the piano and do some exercises. These you must practise every day. Your Dad says he has bought you a piano and it will be in your room when you get back. Secondly, we will sit at the table over there and I will explain how music is

written, and give you some exercises to do at home, and thirdly, we will go to the Sanctuary, and I will explain how the organ works, and you can try playing the pedals, setting the stops and moving between the keyboards." It took the whole afternoon, but an excited Percy reached home, ran to his room, saw his shiny black piano and rushed back to thank his parents for "such a wonderful, wonderful gift!" He waited impatiently for the week to pass. Doing the exercises Mr Rycroft had left him and practising the two scales and two arpeggios he had been taught. "We had better build a music room in the garden. If I hear another note, I shall go mad!" said Mummy to Daddy.

Percy mastered a great deal over the next two years. "Where there's a will, there's a way!" exclaimed Daddy to Mummy. Two years later when Percy was about to matriculate, he came home and said, "You must please come to Sunday Service. I shall be playing the organ." His parents were amazed and even more amazed as he played the voluntaries and hymns with confidence. "He's a natural," said Father Ambroise after the service to Percy's

proud parents, “You must all come because he will be playing for the next month. Poor Ken Rycroft and his wife haven’t had a long holiday away for years.” During that month, Percy and his parents listened as Father Ambroise preached. He was a fine preacher. It was no wonder that the church was full every Sunday. One Sunday he said, “if you want to be a Christian all you have to do is ask God to forgive your sins and thank him for giving you eternal life when you die. If you believe this, come up to me and I will pray for you. There was a minute’s silence, and Percy left the organ and walked to the front. And then his parents rose and joined him at the front. After church, the members greeted them, and they had many invitations to visit from their new friends. The Parks soon became active members of the church family.

And did Percy ever write a blog? Yes! He wrote about cathedrals he visited in distant lands, about why they were built, their beautiful stained-glass windows. He wrote about music, musicians, conductors and composers. He

wrote fluently and passionately and far exceeded his parents as a blogger.