

The Wish

-Roald Dahl

In this blog post, we try to explore the brief summary and the plot, character, and setting of the story "**The Wish**" written by Roald Dahl. We suggest that during reading this story, assume that you are a young child with an imagination of a long carpet that covers your whole hall.



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About Writer

Roald Dahl(1916-1990) was a British novelist, short story writer, and screenwriter. He wrote stories for both adults and children. He was considered one of the most beloved storytellers.

His Fanstic Novels:

- James and the Giant Peach
- Matilda
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Characters of the Story

Character list	Roles
Young Child (unnamed)	The main character of the story. The story fully is based on his imaginative gameplay which he wants to complete and get his wish or a puppy as a gift on his birthday.
Child's Mother (unnamed)	In the story, the child's mother is shown at the last when the child started to cry after losing the imaginative gameplay.

Setting of the Story

The setting of the story that the writer initially presented was the child who was sitting on the stair of the front door and suddenly noticed that a large carpet covered the whole length of the hall. The child wants to play an imaginative game with the carpet and get his wish or puppy on his birthday.

Plot of the Story

- **Introduction:**
 - Noticed an enormous carpet covering the whole hall which was a mixture of black, red, and yellow in color.
 - The child want to play a game with his imagination and considering that the carpet was alive.
- **Challenges and Rewards**
 - The child imagine the black color was the snake biting him, red was the red part of red-hot lumps of coal that burnt him completely, and yellow was the safe zone

- He believed that if he crossed the carpet from inside to outside then he will receive a puppy on his birthday.
- **In-during Journey**
 - The child found that this imaginative game was easy in the initial phase but later the game was difficult for him to continue and win.
 - He was holding his arms out sideways to assist his balance and started moving ahead in his imaginative games carefully without touching the black and red color.
- **Climax**
 - In the end, the child can't hold his balance in the safe zone (yellow) and falls into the black color (unsafe zone of the game) and started crying.

Brief Overview of the Story

The writer **Roald Dahl** uses the character of the curious and imaginative and frightening young boy to explore our childhood innocence through this story. The story is completely based on the imagination of this young child. He thought to play a game with the carpet which was red, black, and yellow in color. He imagined the carpet was alive and the red part of the carpet was red-hot lumps of coal that burnt him completely if he touched it, the black part of the carpet was interpreted as poisonous snakes which bite him and lead him to die, and the yellow was the safe zone of the game where he was only allowed to walk on.

He started the game to play. In the beginning, the imaginative game was easy to play for him but later he found that it was not easy as it looks. He was holding his arms out sideways to assist his balance and started moving ahead in his imaginative games carefully without touching the black and red color. But at last, he has fallen down onto the black color (unsafe zone) due to his unbalanced body posture. Then, after he started crying. The story ends with the scene in which his mother walks outside the house to look for him.

Main Summary of the Story ' The Wish'

At the very beginning of the story, the writer presents the child (main character) who is sitting on the stairs of the front door. He was fascinated and curious about the scab that was lying on his kneecap. He explored around the edge of the scab with the nail slightly. The whole hard brown scab came off beautifully and painlessly and leaving an interesting little circle of smooth red skin. He starts rubbing it but it didn't hurt him.

Then he put the scab on his thigh and flipped it with his finger. The scab landed on the edge of the enormous carpet which was red, black, and yellow in color. The color of the carpet drew the attention of the child. He thought to play a game with the color of the carpet. In his mind, he imagined the red part of the carpet as red-hot lumps of coal which burnt him completely if he touched it (red color of carpet). And the black part of the carpet is interpreted as poisonous snakes (mostly adders or cobras) which bite him if he touched it (black color of carpet). And The yellow was the safe zone of the game where he was only allowed to walk on. He imagined that if he cross the carpet without touching black and red ones then he will get the puppy on his birthday tomorrow.

He climbed higher up the stair to obtain a better view of the carpet color i.e. black, red, and yellow. and to make a game plan of how to achieve his goals (wish of reaching to another side of the carpet and getting a puppy). He put his chin on the banisters and start thinking about his game plan. He noticed that the yellow was a bit thin in some places and there were also one or two widish gaps between two yellow colors (safe zone of the game). But didn't seem too difficult to reach another side of the carpet. He had only the fear of black color where the poisonous snakes were ready to bite him.

He came down the stairs and took the first foot into the yellow part of the carpet and also brought the second one as there was enough space to put both feet together. He looked curious about completing the games. He was holding his arms out sideways to assist his balance and started moving ahead in his imaginative games carefully without touching the black and red color.

Halfway across he began to wobble. But anyway he keeps his balance by waving his arms around. He became quite tired as he was standing on his toe all the time, arms out sideways and clenched hand. After that, he found a big island of yellow where he rested. He wished to stay forever on this big safe yellow island but the fear of not getting the puppy forced him to continue the game.

He again went ahead. Once he had a choice of ways, whether left or right. He choose the left because it seemed more difficult where there was a bit thin of yellow color along the carpet. But there was not much black in that direction. The black was what had made him nervous. He took a hurried look at his back to see how far he had come. Nearly halfway.

He was in the middle and couldn't turn back. He continued ahead. Once he put his foot carefully on the little piece of yellow. But this time his foot was just a centimeter away from black. He became panicked after seeing a small line that only separated the toe from the black. He sensed that the snake

raised its head and was ready to bite him. He started saying "I'm not touching you! You mustn't bite me! You know I'm not touching you!" due to the extreme fear of the snake (black color). After minutes, he dared to move again.

The next step was really difficult from the previous one. There was the deep curling river of black that ran clear across the width of the carpet. He was forced by his position to cross this widest part. First, he thought to jump over it, but he couldn't be sure of landing accurately on the yellow part. He very carefully raised the foot with long breaths and stretched out his foot tip over the curling river of black to reach another yellow edge of the carpet.

After that, he leaned forward to transfer his weight to his front foot. He tried to bring the back foot up as well but failed due to the very wide apart between the two feet. He tried to get back again but couldn't do that either. He was doing the splits and he struck. He saw the deep curling river of black underneath him. He got into a very bad state now. He wobbled and waved his arms to keep his balance but that seemed to make it worse. When he tried to move slightly right, he fall down onto the black color of carpet and start crying. The story ends with the scene in which his mother walks outside the house to look for him.

Main Theme

We find several themes in this story but three are major ones.

- **Fear leads to failure:** Due to the fear of the black part of the carpet (poisonous snakes), he doesn't take the right decision or path which is necessary for success or complete the gameplay.
- **Overconfidence leads to underestimating the risk:** Due to overconfidence, he leads to underestimating the risk associated with games. As a result, he fails to attain his goals(complete the game and get a puppy on his birthday)
- **Greed makes a man blind and foolish, making him easy prey for death.** As shown in the story, the greed of getting a puppy makes him blind and ignored the risk associated with the games. As a result, he falls on the black part of the carpet (or died due to snake bites).