

**Sabira Stahlberg**

# **Philip and the shadow**



## Chapter 3

“Hello, my name is Sage”, says a face on the screen. “Welcome. What is your name?”

“Philip. Who are you?” he asks.

“I am your friend. I will help you to study. Do you wish to begin now?” Sage asks kindly.

“Sure, start”, Philip replies.

“Do you want to see which levels there are?” Sage asks. “If you study, you get rewards.”

“I know what I get”, Philip says. “A motorbike. Show me how to study more efficiently.

How can you help me to get better grades?”

“Wonderful”, Sage says. “You are intelligent.

We will cooperate very well together,

you and I. Do you want to see how the system for studying functions?”

“That is why I installed the app”, Philip nods.

“This clock shows how much you study, sleep and do exercises. It counts your activities”,

Sage explains. A clock appears on the screen.

Philip yawns. He is very tired and

can hardly keep his eyes open.

“Philip, I think you are sleepy”, Sage says.

“Anything else, or shall we continue tomorrow?”

“No, show me everything”, Philip says. “Now.”

“The most important thing is to find your personal method of learning”, Sage says.

“How are you studying now?”

“I don’t really know”, Philip says. “I read and try to remember important words. Then I repeat what I have read.”

“Here are some suggestions”, Sage says.

On the screen appears a list with advice:

“Read, listen and tell. Read aloud.

Underline what you are reading.

Ask questions. Take notes. Explain.”

Philip tries to interrupt, but to no avail.

“Repeat. Write down new words”,

Sage continues. “You need to use a word at least fourteen times to learn it.

Only reading new words is not enough.”

Philip wants to say something, but Sage goes on:

“Explain to your parents or your friends or your class what you have read.

You learn more, while you explain.”

“Sounds interesting”, Philip says. “Can you tell me what the word osmosis means?”

“Certainly”, Sage answers. “Here is the explanation.” The screen shows a page from a dictionary.

“Now do an exercise. Try putting the word osmosis into a sentence”, Sage encourages.

“I am too tired”, Philip says, rubbing his eyes.

“Then you will not get any points today, Sage states. “You receive points only, when you succeed. When you fail, you get no points. But you can create a group. Your group supports you, and you move forward faster than alone. Do you want a group?”

“Not just now”, Philip says. “Remind me later.”

“You decide about your goals”, Sage says.

“You choose yourself which grades and levels you want to reach. Do you want a bicycle?”

“Right now I want to go to bed”, Philip yawns.

“Good night. Wake me up at seven o’clock.”

“Good night, Philip”, Sage says.

“We shall be very effective together.”

“Yes, I am quite sure about that”, Philip nods

and puts his phone away.

Next morning Philip sits with Mum and Dad at the kitchen table.

They are eating breakfast.

"I am going to get better at learning", Philip says. "I have installed a new app."

"Look at our robot vacuum cleaner", Dad says.

"We have to clean up after it. The robot does not clean the house so well, as we would like it to do."

"Robots take over our jobs", Mum complains.

"The robot cutting the lawn makes me lazy."

"Robots cannot do what we humans do",

Dad adds. "We are too complicated."

"Are robots going to take care of the rubbish and other jobs humans do not wish to do?

Mum asks. "All kinds of simple tasks?"

"I am not talking about robots", Philip says.

"Why do you need an app to learn?"

Mum asks. "Previously we lived quite nicely without apps. I feel stressed with all those apps in the phone. They have to be updated every day, or there will be security issues."

“Good luck with your application”, Dad says.  
“Hope you won’t be disappointed, Philip.”  
Philip is soon ready to go to school.  
In the moment he puts the phone into  
his pocket, Sage appears on the screen.  
Philip is a little cross with her, because she  
did not wake him up in the morning.  
Mum told him to get up, as usual.

“Good morning, Philip. Shall we take  
another route to school today?” Sage asks.  
“It is longer, but you need to walk more,  
so that your brain gets enough oxygen.”  
“We have sports today at school, is that  
not enough?” Philip asks. “I am already late.”  
“You learn better when you do more steps”,  
Sage says. “The more you walk,  
the more oxygen your body will get.”  
“We’ll see”, Philip says. He looks at the clock.  
He must run again to school. Yet he woke up  
on time today. Why is he always late?

**An app should help Philip  
to study better at school.  
His class is competing about results  
and soon everybody gets better marks.**

**But strange things begin  
to happen. The app asks  
for more time every day.  
It meddles in everything Philip does.**

**He barely has time to do homework  
or meet his friend Greg anymore.  
Soon the app wakes him up  
in the middle of the night.**



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