

*Stig of the Dump*

It was getting late in the autumn evening, and it was already dark and gloomy in the pit. Barney knew there was a way out right at the other end of the pit, and by going a long way round he could get back to the house. There were rustlings in dry leaves and muffled sounds from the middle of bramble patches, but somehow Barney found he didn't mind. He felt the hard stone in his pocket and thought of Stig in his den under the cliff. You weren't likely to find anything stranger than Stig wherever you looked. And, well, Stig was his friend.

When he got back to the house his Grandmother and his sister Lou were just coming in from feeding the hens.

'Where have you been all the time?' asked his Grandmother.

'I went to the chalk pit,' said Barney.

'All by yourself!' exclaimed Lou.

'Yes, of course,' he said.

'What have you been doing?' his Grandmother asked.

*The Ground Gives Way*

'Well, I fell and bumped my head.'

'Poor old Barney!' said Lou, and laughed.

'But it was all right,' Barney went on.

'Because I met Stig.'

'Who's Stig?' they both asked together.

'He's a sort of boy,' replied Barney. 'He just wears rabbit-skins and lives in a cave. He gets his water through a vacuum cleaner and puts chalk in his bath. He's my friend.'

'Goodgracious!' exclaimed his Grandmother.

'What funny friends you have, dear!'

'He means he's been playing Cave Men,' Lou exclaimed helpfully. 'Stig's just a pretend-friend, isn't he, Barney?'

'No, he's really true!' Barney protested.

'Of course he's true,' his Grandmother smiled. 'Now, Lou. Don't tease Barney!'

'Let's pretend Stig's a wicked wizard who lives in a cave and turns people into stone,' Lou began eagerly. She was always inventing stories and games like that.

'No,' said Barney quietly, feeling the