

Betsy the Cow



And

Rover the Dog



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| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Betsy and The County Show | 2 |
| Betsy and The Circus | 24 |
| Going Shopping for Mummy | 44 |

BETSY AT THE COUNTY SHOW

Once upon a time there was a farmer called Mr Hebblethwaite, who lived at Hill Top Farm.



Now Mr Hebblethwaite had a cow called Betsy. And Betsy gave the best milk, with the richest cream, of any cow on the farm. Indeed, there was only one thing wrong with Betsy.

She was so small.

Now that wouldn't have mattered one little bit, if it hadn't been for one thing, the one thing that Betsy would never be able to do because she was so small.

One morning, as she was standing in her stall at the farm, she heard Mr Hebblethwaite coming down the yard outside. Then she heard him call out to the cow-hand,

'Joe ! Are you there, lad?'

'Aye, I am that,' said Joe. 'What is it, Mester 'Ebblethwaite?'

'Joe, I want you to get a couple of cows ready for the County Show next week!'

Betsy pricked up her ears. She'd always longed to go to the County Show and perhaps (who knows?) win the First Prize for the Best Cow.

Then she heard Joe call out, 'Which two cows did you mean, Mester 'Ebblethwaite?'

Betsy held her breath.

'Why, Daisy and Lulu Belle. of course!' said Mr Hebblethwaite.

Betsy was so disappointed. She did so want to go to the County Show, but she knew why Mr Hebblethwaite couldn't take her.

Every morning for the next week Joe came into the byre and led out Daisy and Lulu Belle. Betsy knew what was going to happen next. He would be starting to scrub their coats, comb out their tails, and polish their hooves and their horns until both cows shone like a new pin.

Saturday morning came at last, and Betsy woke to the sound of an engine in the distance. The sound came nearer and then she knew what it was. It was the lorry climbing the hill to the farm. She heard the engine going 'Brrm! Brrm!' as it climbed the hill, getting louder as it drew nearer. Then came the 'clackety-clack' of the farm-gate being opened, and then the lorry backing up into the yard.

The roar of the engine stopped, she heard the driver's door clang, and then came the thump as the tail-board of the lorry was lowered. And now Joe's footsteps could be heard coming down the yard, and a few moments later the clip-clop of hooves as he led out Daisy and Lulu Belle.

'Clip-clop! Clip-clop!' went their hooves up the yard, and then 'Thump! Thump! Thump!' up the tail-board of the lorry. Then came a bang as the tail-board was fastened, then the clang of the driver's door, then the 'Whirr! Whirr!' of the engine starting, and then the sound of the engine dying away in the distance.

And now Betsy was so dreadfully unhappy that she began to cry, and a great big tear ran down her nose and fell into the straw.

And from the spot where it had fallen there came a faint 'Ting!' like the sound of a tiny bell. Betsy looked down and saw that where the tear had fallen there was a beautiful fairy, no bigger than your thumb.

And now the fairy flew up and landed on Betsy's horn, close to her ear. Then Betsy heard a beautiful small voice saying,

'Whatever's the matter, Betsy?'

Betsy was so surprised that her tears stopped at once.

'I only wanted to go to the County Show!' she said.

'And why can't you go?' the fairy asked.



'It's because I'm so small, you see!' said Betsy.

'Oh, is that all?' the fairy said. 'We'll soon put that right! Come with me!'

And she waved her tiny wand, touched the rope that was fastened to the ring in the wall, and the rope fell out of the ring at once. Then the fairy led Betsy out into the yard, and said to her,

'Now I want you to stand quite still, close your eyes and say after me,

Hi diddle dee!

Riddle me ree!

I wish I were as big

As I'd like to be!'

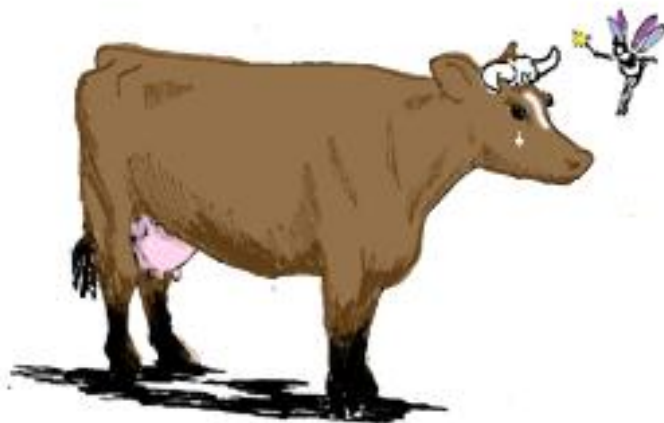
So Betsy stood quite still. closed her eyes
tight, and said,

Hi diddle dee!

Riddle me ree!

I wish I were as big

As I'd like to be!



And before she could open her eyes, she had such a strange feeling. like pins and needles all over her body, and now when she opened her eyes she could see the ground getting farther away. She was growing bigger!

And then she remembered that cows don't only have to be big to go to the County Show, and she began to cry again, even harder than before.

'Whatever's wrong now?' the fairy asked.

'Well, fairy, it's ever so good of you to make me bigger. But I just remembered. All the cows at the County Show have to be as clean as a new pin. And I'm all dirty from the fields.'

'Oh, is that all?' said the fairy. Never mind! Just close your eyes and say after me,

Hi diddle dee!

Riddle me ree!

I wish I were as clean

As I'd like to be!

So Betsy closed her eyes, hoping that this would happen. After all, she said to herself, if this lovely fairy can make me bigger, perhaps she can make me clean as well. So she kept her eyes tightly closed, and said,

Hi diddle dee!

Riddle me ree!

I wish I were as clean

As I'd like to be!

And, before she could open her eyes again, she felt a strange sort of tickling all over her

body. And when she opened her eyes this time, she saw thousands and thousands of gnomes, elves and goblins running all over her, and scrubbing and cleaning and combing and polishing until in no time at all she was as clean as a new pin.

And then. once more, she remembered something else about the County Show, and this time she really sobbed because she was so sad. The fairy waved her wand and dried Betsy's tears in an instant, and said, 'Whatever's wrong now, Betsy?'

'Well, fairy,' said Betsy. It's ever so good of you to make me bigger. And it's ever so good of you to make me so clean. But I just remembered. Cows have to be taken to the County Show in a lorry, because it's twenty miles away.'

'Oh, is that all?' said the fairy. 'Never mind!
Just close your eyes once more and say after
me,

Hi diddle dee!

Riddle me ree!

I wish I were

Where I'd like to be!

So Betsy closed her eyes hoping that the
good fairy could make this happen. too.
Then she drew in her breath and said,

Hi diddle dee!

Riddle me ree!

I wish I were

Where I'd like to be!

And, before she could open her eyes again, she heard the sound of a brass band coming from somewhere in the distance and she smelled the smell of trodden grass. And this



time, when she opened her eyes, Hill Top Farm had gone, and she saw at once that she was standing outside a large show-ground. And then she noticed that in front of her Mr Hebblethwaite was leading Daisy and Lulu Belle through the open gates of the show-ground.

Then she felt someone slap her on her side and a voice said 'Hup there!' so she ran forward and joined Daisy and Lulu Belle. But Mr Hebblethwaite never noticed her because he was marching forward like a soldier, proud and erect, leading his cows into the County Show.

Then they all paraded right round the prize ring and then stopped and everyone stood quite still, with Mr Hebblethwaite still with eyes forward and head erect.

And now all the judges, in their long white coats, came and checked all the cows, inspecting their hooves and their horns, examining their tails to make sure they had been properly combed, and looking at their teeth and their legs.

Then when all the cows, including Betsy, had been examined, the men in the white coats went back to the table with all the prizes on it in the middle of the field. And then the loudspeakers crackled and a loud voice said, 'Ladies and gentlemen ! The unanimous verdict of the judges is that the First Prize for the best Dairy Cow at this year's Show goes to Mr Hebblethwaite of Hill Top Farm!'



The crowd roared and applauded for quite a long time and Betsy noticed that Mr Hebblethwaite's neck was all red. Then the loudspeakers crackled again, and the voice said,

'And the name of the winning cow belonging to Mr Hebblethwaite of Hill Top Farm is - !

Then the voice stopped and the loudspeakers crackled again, And now a gentleman in a long white coat came running over to Mr Hebblethwaite.

'I'm sorry, Mr Hebblethwaite! We didn't make a note of the name of the winning cow !'

And now Mr Hebblethwaite took off his cap and he began to scratch his head.

'Ah, well,' he said. 'But, you see, I don't rightly know which cow you picked !'

'Oh, Mr Hebblethwaite, there was only one cow in it! The finest dairy cow I've ever seen! The one at the back! The third one!'

Mr Hebblethwaite wheeled round with his mouth open, and now he was really scratching his head as he looked at his cows. Only now there was one cow more than he had brought that morning.

'Third one?' he said. 'Third one?'

'That's the one!' said the judge, pointing to Betsy.

At first, Mr Hebblethwaite could hardly speak, but then he managed to say,

'A bit bigger, and I'd have said it was Betsy!'

'Betsy?' said the judge. 'Thank you very much, Mr Hebblethwaite!'

And he turned quickly and ran back to the table to speak to the announcer. The loudspeakers now crackled again, and the voice said,

'Ladies and gentlemen! The name of the winning cow, belonging to Mr Hebblethwaite of Hill Top Farm, is Betsy!'

Now the crowd really did roar, and two gentlemen in white coats came over to Mr Hebblethwaite who was now standing by Betsy and still scratching his head. The two gentlemen shook hands with him and then one of them hung a garland of flowers about Betsy's neck, and the other fixed on Betsy's forehead between her horns the large blue and white rosette which proclaimed that she was the First Prize Cow at the County Show. And now Mr Hebblethwaite was asked to

lead Betsy once more round the prize ring while everyone cheered and congratulated him, and then it was time to go, and to join Daisy and Lulu Belle.

Then just as they were leaving the showground, Mr Hebblethwaite was stopped by a friend who wanted to congratulate him, And just for a few moments Betsy was left alone, and she heard a tiny voice in her ear,

'Betsy!'

'Oh, it's you, fairy!' said Betsy. 'Look! I did it! I won the First Prize!'

'So I see,' the fairy said, with a smile. But now it's time to go ! You must be back at the farm before Mr Hebblethwaite gets there!'

'Oh, I don't mind that now! said Betsy. 'It's been a wonderful day, and I'm so happy!'

'I'm glad,' said the fairy. 'But now you must close your eyes and say after me

'Hi diddle dee!

Riddle me ree!

I wish I were back

Where I ought to be!'

Betsy closed her eyes and said,

'Hi diddle dee!

Riddle me ree!

I wish I were back

Where I ought to be!'

And before she could open her eyes again, she knew by that warm smell of hay which she knew so well that she was back in the byre at Hill Top Farm.

Mr Hebblethwaite and his many friends searched for Betsy for hours without success, and in the end they had to report one missing dairy cow to the police before they left for home.

So it was much later that day that Mr Hebblethwaite walked sadly down the yard and into the byre. And what he saw there made him scratch his head more furiously than he had scratched it all that day.

For there, in her own stall, was his Betsy, the same small sweet Betsy he had left that morning. But now there was a beautiful garland round her neck, and on her forehead between her horns was the blue and white rosette which said to everyone that this was Betsy, the First Prize Cow at the County Show!



BETSY AT THE CIRCUS

Do you remember the time when Betsy went to the County Show?

Well, here's another story about Betsy. This time it's a rather sad story but, like all the best stories, it has a happy ending.

A year or two after Betsy won the First Prize at the County Show, she was passing the window of Mr and Mrs Hebblethwaite's cottage when she heard someone crying. No, not just crying. Sobbing.

So Betsy moved a little nearer and looked in at the window. And there was Mrs Hebblethwaite sitting at the kitchen table, and crying as if her heart would break.



Betsy wondered what could have done this, but then she heard Mrs Hebblethwaite say to Mr Hebblethwaite,

'Oh, Albert, how did it happen? Where can we find the money? We shall have to sell the farm and all the animals! And all for a miserable two hundred pounds! Isn't there anything we can do?'

And then Betsy saw Mr Hebblethwaite going to his wife to comfort her, and she ran from the window before she could be seen.

Sell the farm? Sell all the animals? What was to be done? She just didn't know.

But straight away she knew what she was going to do. I'm not staying here to be sold, she said to herself. I'm off! She had no idea where she could go, but she knew that she couldn't stay there, to be sold to some stranger. But her mind was made up. She would go. She would leave Hill Top Farm where she'd been so happy, and try her luck in the world outside.

She got as far as the farm gate, and stopped. How was she to get out with the gate fastened? And then the good dog Rover,

always on guard to keep the farm safe, came out and barked at her,

'Where do you think you're going, Betsy?'

So Betsy had to tell him the dreadful news, and Rover said, 'Quite right! I'm not staying here, either, or I might be sold, too!'



Then Rover, who was a very clever dog, stood on his hind legs against the gate and with his front paw unfastened the gate-catch.

'Just lean against the gate, Betsy,' he said. So Betsy leaned against the gate, and opened it

so that they could both go through. And then Rover who, besides being clever, was a well-trained dog, said 'Now lean against it and close it, will you?'



Then they were both free to go without being seen, except by Rory the rooster on his usual perch on the farm wall. Rory stretched his neck to sound a warning because he knew that

animals were not supposed to come through the gate on to the lane. But then he noticed that Rover was holding one paw to his lips,

so he said, 'All right, I won't crow this time, but what are you two up to?'

So Betsy and Rover told Rory about the farm and all the animals being sold, and that was why they were leaving.

'Me, too! said Rory, and he fluttered down from his perch on the farm wall. 'I'm not staying here to be sold! Nobody knows what the next master would be like!' So the three friends set off down the lane, but they had no idea where they might be going.



Then, after a little while, Rory said, 'This is no use, you two! You'll have to go more slowly! I can't keep up with you!'

But Betsy said, 'We must hurry, or we might be missed, and then people would come looking for us. Tell you what, Rory, why don't you jump up on Rover's back? You're not very heavy,



and he could easily carry you.' So Rory fluttered up on to Rover's back, and they set off again.



But they hadn't gone very far before Rover had an idea.

'Look. that was a good idea you had, Betsy. Why don't I jump up on your back, too, and then we shan't have to worry about keeping up with each other!'

'I don't mind,' said Betsy. 'I can easily carry the two of you. But Rory will have to get down first until you're up on my back, and then he can jump up again on yours.'

So that was what they did, and they went on until they came to the cross-roads where the lane left the main road and there they stopped, because they had

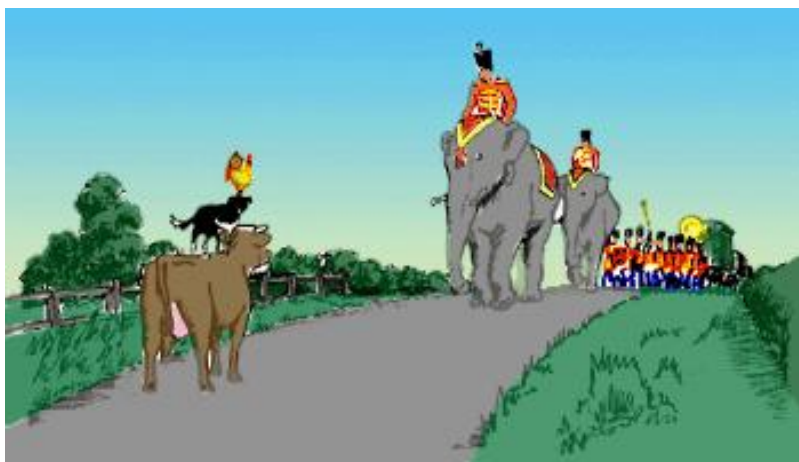


to decide which way to go next.

And while they were standing there trying to make up their minds, they heard the sound of music. It sounded like a brass band. Now this was unusual because brass bands aren't often to be seen in the countryside where the farms and the animals are found. But the sound of music was coming nearer so they stood there and waited to see what it was.

And then round the corner not far off they saw a wonderful sight. It was a band, after all, with all the bandsmen in smart uniforms with a man walking in front whose uniform was even smarter. The three friends stood rooted to the spot as the band drew nearer. Then the gentleman in front turned and gave a signal to the bandsmen, and they stopped and lowered their instruments.

And then the three friends saw that at the back of the band there was a steam engine and a line of caravans. Whatever could it be?



They soon found out, for the gentleman in the splendid uniform came over and said, 'That's a splendid act you've got there. I've never seen that act before.'

Betsy said, 'Act? I'm sorry, I don't understand!'

The gentleman replied, 'I must introduce myself so that you'll see why I like your act. I'm the ringmaster in charge of this circus, and we're just on our way to our next engagement. But I'm always interested in new acts, and yours is a new one. Would you like to join our circus and show off your act?'

And now the three friends understood why there was a band and a traction engine and caravans. They'd often hear about circuses, but this was the first one they'd seen. So Betsy said, 'Do you mind if I talk about this to Rover and Rory?'

But Rover said at once, 'I don't need to talk about it! I'd love to be in a circus! What do you say, Rory?'

'Me, too!' said Rory.

And the ringmaster said, 'Good! You'll give one performance every night and the pay will be two hundred pounds a week! Come along, then! We haven't much time!' And the three friends took their places behind the band, and the band struck up the music again as they set off.

When they got to their destination the circus hands unpacked the wagons and started to put up the big top, the huge tent where all the acts were going to take place. And while they did so Betsy took his two friends aside and said,

'I expect you heard what the ringmaster said. Two hundred pounds a week. When we get it, we must get back to Hill Top Farm, and then the farm and the animals won't have to be sold after all!'

'I had exactly the same idea!' said Rover.

'Me too! Let's hope we're not too late!' said Rory.

'Good!' said Betsy. 'Now all we have to do is find out what the ringmaster wants us to do in our act.'

And what they had to do was very simple. First Betsy, had to march into the ring alone while the music played. Then she would go off and Rover would come on alone and then he would go off. Then Rory would come on and do the same. Then the next

time Betsy would come back again with Rover on her back, and then they would go off and Rover would come on with Rory on his back. Then they would go off and then the last time they would come on again with Rover on Betsy's back and Rory on Rover's back.

'It doesn't sound much of an act to me,' said Rover.

'Well, that's what he said,' Betsy replied. 'We must just wait and see!' So the first night came and the big top was packed with children and their parents, all excited to see what would happen.

And first the clowns and the tumblers came on to show them what to expect, and then the ringmaster appeared and said,

'Now, children. and parents! Tonight we are opening with an act that has never been seen in a circus before! So may I ask you to welcome The Three Faithful Farm Friends!'



And Betsy appeared and marched round the ring, and all the parents and children were surprised to see

only one Faithful Farm Friend, and some of them began to laugh and to wonder what was going on. And then Rover appeared and marched round and they wondered still more. And then Rory appeared and marched round and they began to laugh aloud. Was that all?

But next Betsy appeared with Rover on her back, and the children clapped and cheered. But when they went off and The Three Farm Friends appeared again with Rover on Betsy's back and Rory on Rover's back they stood up and cheered and shouted 'More! More!' And The Three Farm Friends had to march round again and then again, and then the circus got under way.

So the ringmaster had been right. There never had been an act like that in a circus before and all that week, the big top was fuller than ever as the news spread about this new act.

But when the end of the week came, Betsy asked the ringmaster if they would have their money, and explained about Hill Top

Farm being sold up and how they must get back as soon as possible to stop the sale.

The ringmaster was very sad to lose his new act, but he said,

'I do understand! And there's no time to be lost! So here's your money and an extra hundred pounds because your act filled the big top every night. And I'll get one of the hands to take you back home in his waggon!'

Betsy was delighted because she had been worrying about the long walk back to Hill Top Farm. So they thanked the ringmaster and said goodbye to all the friends they had made, and off they went.

But when they came to the lane leading to Hill Top Farm they saw vans lining the road, and wondered why. And the circus hand

said, 'It looks as though the sale has started. We'd better hurry!'

He drove straight to the farmhouse and pulled up outside the cottage, and Betsy, Rover and Rory climbed out.

'Right then,' said the circus hand. 'I'll be off! Good luck! And here's the money!' And Betsy took it in her mouth and went straight to Farmer Hebblethwaite's window. And there was Mrs Hebblethwaite crying as if her heart would break, and the only comfort she and Mr Hebblethwaite had was that all their friends had come to the sale and promised to bid high for the farm and the animals so that the Hebblethwaites should not suffer too much.

But her tears ceased on the instant when Betsy stuck her head in at the window and dropped the money on the table.



'Oh, look!' she said to her husband. 'It's a miracle! It's a miracle! It's a miracle!'

But Mr Hebblethwaite was busy counting the money. And

when he had finished he said, 'You're right! It is a miracle!' We don't have to sell the farm and the animals after all!

His friends were all delighted to hear the news, and they cheered him before they climbed into their vans and drove off.

And to this day Mr Hebblethwaite, who loves his small Betsy more than ever, has never known where Betsy got the money, because she told Rover and Rory that they mustn't to say a word about it.

And they never did . . .

GOING SHOPPING FOR MUMMY

One day Mummy said to the children, 'Do you think you could go to the shops for me?'

And, of course, they said together, 'Yes, Mummy!' And do you know why? Because Mr Brown, who kept the grocery shop in the village, always gave a few sweets to any child who went into his shop on an errand for Mummy, or Daddy, or even a neighbour.

So Mummy said, 'I've written on this piece of paper the shopping I want, in case you forget anything. You'll see that it says

A pound of lump sugar;

A pound of carrots;

A fly-swatter; and

A can of machine oil.

I've wrapped the money up in this other sheet of paper and I want you to ask Mr Brown to wrap the change up in the same sheet of paper. so that you can bring it safely home!'

The children couldn't help but wonder why Mummy said all this, because they'd done this sort of shopping so often that they were



quite used to it.

So they trotted off to Mr Brown's shop at the top of the village green, and marched into the shop with the basket that Mummy had given them. And, to show what a clever girl she was, Jenny said to Mr Brown.

'Mr Brown, could Mummy please have

A pound of lump sugar

A pound of carrots

A fly-swatter, and

A can of machine oil.

Here's the list in case I've forgotten anything, And would you put the shopping in this basket, and wrap the change in this piece of paper, please?'

So Mr Brown put the shopping in the basket and wrapped the change up in the paper, and then the children waited until he'd put a few sweets in their hands, and they both said, 'Thank you, Mr Brown!' as they'd been taught, and off they went, eating their sweets.

But they hadn't gone very far when Johnny said, 'Jenny, let's not go back down the village green. It's so boring! Let's go back down the lane! It isn't far!'

Well, that seemed a good idea. so they set off down the lane. But before they'd gone very far, who should jump over the hedge but a horse? And the horse said.

'You can't go down this road!'

And Jenny said, 'Why not?'

And the horse said, 'Because this is my road!'

And Johnny said, 'But we want to go home to our Mummy!'

And the horse said, 'Then you must pay!'

And Jenny held the change in her hand as tightly as she could, and said,

'But we haven't any money!'

And the horse said, 'Then you must give me that pound of lump sugar I see in your basket!'



So they had to give the horse the lump sugar before he would let them go on down the lane.

But they hadn't gone very far when who should jump over the hedge but a donkey? And the donkey said,

'You can't go down this road!'



And Jenny said, 'Why not?'

And the donkey said, 'Because this is my road!'

And Johnny said, 'But we want to go home to our Mummy!'

And the donkey said, 'Then you must pay!'

And Jenny held the change in her hand as tightly as she could, and said,

'But we haven't any money!'

And the donkey said, 'Then you must give me that pound of carrots I see in your basket!'

So they had to give the donkey the carrots before he would let them go on down the lane.

But they hadn't gone very far down the lane when this time who should jump over the hedge but a cow? And the cow said.

'You can't go down this road!'

'Why not?'

'Because this is my road!'

'But we want to go home to our Mummy!'



'Then you must pay!'

But Jenny still held the change in her hand as tightly as she could, and said,



'But we haven't any money!'

And the cow said, 'Then you must give me that fly-swatter I see in your basket, to tie on my tail to keep off the flies!'

So they had to give the cow the fly-swatter before she would let them go on down the lane.

But they hadn't gone very far down the lane when this time who should jump over the hedge but a pig? And the pig said.

'You can't go down this road!'



'Why not?'

'Because this is my road!'



'But we want to go home to our Mummy!'

'Then you must pay!'

But Jenny still held the change in her hand as tightly as she could, and said,

'But we haven't any money!'

And the pig said, 'Then you must give me that can of machine oil I see in your basket, to cure my squeaking!'

So they had to give the pig the can of machine oil before he would let them go on down the lane.

But now they'd lost all their shopping and they knew that Mummy would be very cross because they hadn't come straight home, so they both began to cry.

But as they were passing the farm gate who should be standing there but the good dog Rover? And Rover said, 'Whatever's the matter, children? Why are you crying?'

So they had to tell Rover all about the naughty animals who had stolen Mummy's

shopping. And Rover said, 'Is that all? We'll see about that! Come with me!'

And he led them back up the lane until they came to the pig. And Rover stood in front of the pig, looked him straight in the eye, gave a loud 'Whoof!' and said,

'You
naughty



pig! Give back that can of machine oil at once!'

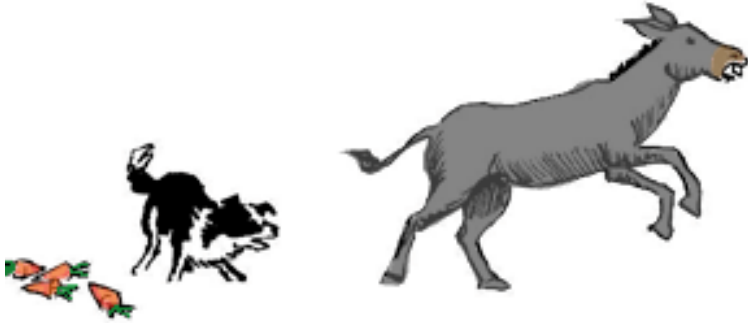
So the pig had to give it back, and they went on up the lane until they came to the cow.



And Rover stood in front of the cow, looked her straight in the eye, gave a loud 'Whoof!' and said, 'You naughty cow! Give back that fly-swatter at once!'

So the cow had to give it back, and they went on up the lane until they came to the donkey.

And Rover stood in front of the donkey, looked him straight in the eye, gave a loud 'Whoof!' and said,



'You naughty donkey! Give back that pound of carrots at once!'

So the donkey had to give them back, and they went on up the lane until they came to the horse.

And Rover stood in front of the horse, looked him straight in the eye, gave a loud 'Whoof!' and said,

'You naughty horse! Give back that pound of lump sugar at once!'



So the horse had to give back the sugar.

You can imagine that the two children were very grateful, and they began to thank Rover for all he'd done for them. But Rover lifted a paw and said, 'That's all right! It's my job to look after things and take care of people. But now I must see you safely home so that your shopping isn't stolen again!'

And when they were safely home, the children told Mummy all about their adventure and how all her shopping would have been stolen if it hadn't been for the good dog Rover.

And Mummy was so pleased with him that she gave him a big plateful of dinner and a big juicy bone.