

# BADGER GIRL



BBC Television for Schools: a Look and Read book by Andrew Davies



Norman

Debbie

Kiran



Who are these?



Who is this?



Who are these?



Stripey the Superbadger



Jane Miles

## Chapter one    **Sounds in the night**

The small bus moaned and groaned up the steep road over the moor.

"Look at that!" said Kiran. "Real country, this is! Great, isn't it, Debbie?"

"You must be joking, mate!" said Debbie and popped her bubblegum.

Kiran and Debbie had been picked by their school to go on a country farm holiday on Dartmoor. They hadn't been to the country before, and Debbie didn't like the look of it. What she liked was noise and people and crowds, chip shops and Space Invaders. And she couldn't see any of these things on Dartmoor.





The bus stopped at the top of the hill.

"Here you are," said the driver. "Out you get."

So there they were, standing in the middle of nowhere feeling a bit lost, till at last

a Land Rover came along. In the Land Rover were Mrs Rudge, who owned the farm, and her son Mick, a big boy in a black leather jacket.

"Hello," said Mrs Rudge. "You must be Debbie and Kiran. Hop in then."

"Look at her hair!" said Mick, laughing. "A stripe down the middle, like a little badger. Hello, Badger Girl!" Debbie popped her bubblegum.

"A badger with bubblegum, what next?" said Mick.

"Don't you mind him," said Mrs Rudge.

"He's always joking." She waved to a woman who was taking photographs of ponies.

"That's Jane Miles, the photographer.

She's promised to help with your projects."



The farm was called Home Ridge. It was the only house for miles around, but Debbie soon felt better when she saw the warm fire and the big plate of cakes Mrs Rudge had ready for them. There was another boy staying at the farm. His name was Norman, he had been there a week already, and he thought he knew everything about farms. After tea, Norman showed Debbie and Kiran round the farm and told them all he knew about cows and goats and sheep and lambs and chickens.





Then Mick took them up on to the moor to see the wild ponies. Kiran tried to ride one, but it dodged him and he fell flat on his face.

"You can't ride these," said Mick. "They're not tame. I can see you kids are Trouble with a big 'T'!"

But Debbie could see how much he liked the ponies. He had names for all of them, and they stood still and let him stroke them.

"See?" said Mick. "You've got to be quiet and gentle."

After supper, they sat by the fire and Mick and Norman told stories about the Beast of Dartmoor.

"He's like a dog, but big as a lion," said Norman.

"Kills sheep," said Mick.

"Some people say it's a wolf!" said Norman.

Debbie and Kiran said they didn't believe a word of it, and Mick laughed.

Then they went to bed. Debbie was so tired that she went straight to sleep.

Suddenly, she woke up. It was very early, and something was creeping round outside. Something that snuffled and scratched round the walls.

Maybe it was the Beast!

She crept out of bed.

Then she tiptoed to the door,  
lifted the latch ... and opened it.



## Chapter two **Stripey**



There on the path was a strange creature. It wasn't scared of Debbie, but it didn't look fierce at all.

It looked at her with friendly black eyes.

Its face was a bit like a dog's, but with a longer nose. And Debbie saw that it had a stripe right down the middle of its head, a bit like her.

It was a badger. A real one.

"Hello, mate," whispered Debbie. "What's your name?"

The badger sniffed and snuffled in a friendly way.

"Do you want to be my friend then?" asked Debbie.

"OK. I'll call you Stripey. How about that?"

The badger didn't want to go in the house, but he seemed to want to stay with Debbie. She took him across to an empty pig pen. When she opened the gate he went in and sniffed around in the straw.



"That's right, mate, you have a good snuffle!"  
said Debbie. "See you later, Stripey."  
She felt happy and excited.  
She had always wanted a pet of her own.

At breakfast that morning, she did not say anything  
about Stripey. But she did ask Mrs Rudge if she had  
ever seen badgers round the farm.

"Used to," said Mrs Rudge. "Not anymore though."<sup>1</sup>  
"Farmers dug them out," said Mick. "Bad animals,  
badgers. They spread diseases. Fierce too.  
Bite your leg off. If you see a badger round here,  
you tell me, and I'll shoot him."

After they had done their morning jobs the three  
children were all together again.



"Listen," said Debbie. "I've got a secret. Promise not to tell anyone?" They promised and she took them to the pig pen. Stripey peered up at them.

"There he is," said Debbie. "My mate Stripey. My pet

"You can't have a badger for a pet," said Norman.

"They're wild animals!"

"He looks tame to me," said Kiran.

"Well, I think we ought to tell Mick and Mrs Rudge," said Norman.

"You promised!" said Debbie fiercely.

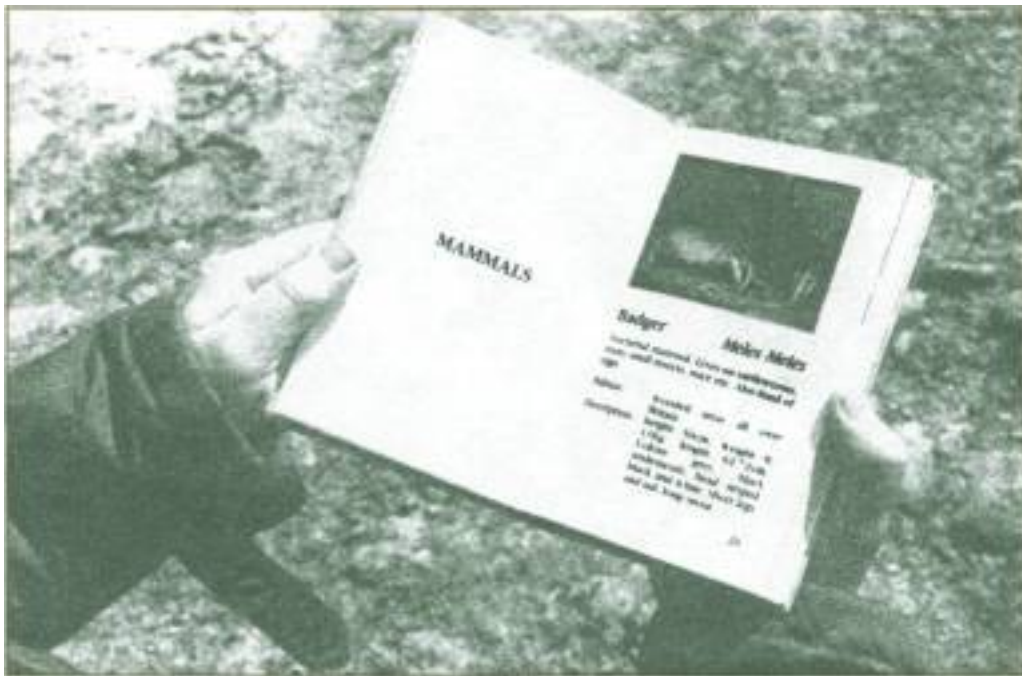
"He looks hungry," said Kiran.

"I wonder what badgers eat," said Debbie.

"Do you know, Norman?"



"I'll look it up in my animal book," said Norman.  
He soon found the place:



BADGER: Nocturnal mammal. Lives on earthworms, roots, small insects, mice, etc. Also fond of eggs.  
"Eggs," said Debbie. "We've got plenty of eggs. I'll get him some."

Debbie brought some eggs from the farmhouse. Stripey lumbered over to the eggs, sniffed at them and started to eat them.

"Look at that!" said Kiran.  
"He's as bad as Norman - he's eaten the lot!"





Then he turned in alarm. Mrs Rudge and Mick were standing right behind them.

"So that's what all that badger talk was!" said Mick.

"My friend Mr Barker might be interested in a stuffed badger!"

"Don't let Mick shoot him!" said Debbie. "He's my pet!"

"I won't," said Mrs Rudge. "But that's a wild animal, not a pet. That badger's got to go by tomorrow morning!

Don't worry, mate," whispered Debbie to Stripey.

If you're going, I'm going with you!"



## Chapter three **Running away**



Next morning, Jane Miles, the wildlife photographer came to the farm. She had come to take the children out to show them how to take pictures. But she found Norman rushing round in a panic.

"Debbie and Kiran have gone!" he yelled.

"And so has that badger!" called Mick from the yard.

"What badger?" said Jane Miles.

"Debbie found a badger and Mrs Rudge wouldn't let her keep it and now she's run away with it and so has Kiran and we don't know where they've gone and they'll get lost!" said Norman.

"We'll go up on the moor and look, shall we?"  
said Jane Miles.

"Well, don't expect me to help," said Mick.

"I've got a job on for Mr Barker."

"But we've got to find them!" said Norman. "They might get lost on the moor. The Beast might get them!"

"Now, don't get in a panic," said Mrs Rudge.

"They can't have gone far. That badger will soon run away, and Debbie will come home with her tail between her legs!"

"Right, Norman," said Jane Miles. "I've brought a camera for you. We can take photos and look for Debbie and Kiran at the same time."

When Norman went to get his anorak, he found a note in his pocket. It said:



"Paper trail," said Norman to himself.

"Just like her, that is. Goes against the Country Code." But he thought he would look for the trail just the same.

Debbie and Kiran had gone a long way by this time.

Debbie had got up very early. She woke Kiran up and told him about the note and the paper trail.

Then she let Stripey out of his pen.



Debbie and Kiran followed him up on to the moor, leaving a paper trail as they went. Soon they were far away from the farm. Debbie and Kiran had no idea where they were. But they were not scared. "Where do you think we are?" said Kiran. "Stripey knows what's what," puffed Debbie. "I bet he's taking us home to meet his family!"



They came over the top of the ridge. Down below was a wooden hut halfhidden by branches. Stripey trotted down the path to the hut and went inside.

"Look!" said Kiran. "He's gone in!"

"I told you he was taking us home," said Debbie.

The children followed.

"Hello!" said Kiran. "Anyone there?"

No answer. They tiptoed into the tiny hut.

It was snug and dry, with a bed and a table and pictures of badgers on the walls.

"It *is* Stripey's house!" said Debbie.

"Nice place you've got here."

"Ssh!" said Kiran.

They stood still. There were heavy footsteps outside. And then the door creaked open!



## Chapter four    **The Badgerman**



"And what can I do for you?" said a quiet voice. There in the doorway stood a man with the oldest hat and coat Debbie had ever seen.

"Sorry mister," said Debbie. "We weren't stealing or anything. We just followed Stripey."

"And who is Stripey?"

"He's my pet," said Debbie proudly.

"Well, well," said the man. "I think we ought to talk about that. My name's Sam North, but people round here call me the Badgerman."

"That's funny," said Debbie. "They call me Badger Girl." Mr North told them that he used to be a scientist at the zoo, and that badgers were his special subject. But now he had come to live on Dartmoor to study badgers in the wild, and protect them from their enemies.



"What enemies?" said Kiran. "You mean like the Beast?"

"No." said the Badgerman grimly.

"Men! They trap badgers and dig them out of their setts, and sometimes they make their dogs fight them."

"That's horrible!" said Kiran.

"Well, that's what happened to your friend Stripey," said the Badgerman. "And that's why I like badgers better than people. He's all right now. He's half tame though. Not ready to go free yet. But he will, when I find him a really safe place."

"But I want him to be my pet!" said Debbie.

Mr North smiled and shook his head.

"Friend, maybe. Not pet. Badgers are wild animals, they have to be free. You wouldn't like to be a pet, would you?"

"Don't know," said Debbie. "Suppose not."

She was thinking that Mr North was a strange sort of man, but she thought she could trust him.

"Well," said the Badgerman. "I'd better see about getting you two home."

Norman and Jane Miles were still out on the moor. They had not seen the other children or the badger, but Norman had seen some of the pieces of paper Debbie had dropped.

"I'll go this way, shall I?" he said. Jane Miles was looking through her camera.

"All right," she said. "Don't go too far away. I hope you get some good pictures."





Norman followed the pieces of paper, but it was a windy day, and soon he lost the trail. And when he turned round he could not see Jane Miles or remember which way he had come. He walked on, very worried, and then he came round a bend and saw two men with a white van. They were giving oats to some ponies. "You're not supposed to feed them," said Norman. The tall man looked fiercely at him, but the bald one smiled.

"Clever boy," he said. "It's all right.

We're RSPCA men. On the lookout for pony rustlers. Seen any, son?"

"No," said Norman. "But I'll keep my eyes open."

"Come on Mr Barker, let's go," said the tall man, and they got into the van.

"Wait a minute!" Norman shouted. "I'm lost!"

But the van drove off and left him.



## Chapter five      **Lost on the moor**

Norman watched the van disappear round a bend. "Don't panic," he thought. "I've got to find the trail again." He looked all round and saw a piece of paper where the van had stood.

"Oh, great!" he said. But when he picked the paper up, he found it had writing on it, and it wasn't Debbie's. It was no use to Norman, but he put it in his pocket and walked on, hoping he was going the right way.



Then he heard a sound behind him like an animal. A large animal. He was scared to turn round. "Oh no, he thought. "It's the Beast- and I'm on my own!"

But it wasn't the Beast. It was Stripey.

"Wait for me," shouted Norman, as the badger trotted off. Norman ran after him, and just over the next hill he saw Debbie, Kiran and Mr North.

"Straight over that ridge," said Mr North.

"You'll see the farm from there."

"What about a cup of tea?" asked Debbie.

"I told you. I'm not fond of people. I like animals best.

But you can come and see me and the badger again if you like. Goodbye," said Mr North.

"He seemed a funny sort of man," said Norman.

"He's all right, he's the Badgerman!" said Kiran.

"I met two RSPCA men looking for pony rustlers," said Norman. "Maybe that's what your Badgerman does. Maybe he's a crook who steals animals!"



"Pony rustlers on Dartmoor?" said Debbie laughing.

"You must be out of your tiny mind - or you're making it up!"

"You watch it, Badger Girl!" said Norman. "I know what's what. The RSPCA men left this paper behind."



"Doesn't say anything about RSPCA," said Debbie.

"You *are* out of your tiny mind!"

Norman looked cross and put the paper in his pocket again. When they got back to the farm, Mrs Rudge and Jane Miles looked pleased to see them.

"No harm done," said Mrs Rudge, when she heard their story. "But no more wandering off, please."



Later on, Kiran saw something in the paper.

## "MORE PONIES STOLEN"



It was about pony rustling, and there was a photograph with it.

"There you are," said Norman. "I told you I know what's what! I bet that Badgerman is the rustler! We ought to tell the RSPCA men!"

"If they *are* RSPCA men," said Debbie.

"Let's see that piece of paper again."

They looked hard at it.

"Barker and Deal," said Kiran. "Mick works for a man called Barker!"

Mick was in the yard.



"Mick," said Debbie. "Is Mr Barker in the RSPCA?"

"Him?" Mick laughed. "Not exactly!"

"Is he a bald man with a white van?" said Norman.

"That's right," said Mick. "What about him?"

"I saw him," said Norman. "He was telling me about pony rustling."

Mick stared at him. "Now listen, you kids," he said.

"You forget about pony rustling.

Mr Barker was having a joke. You forget about ponies and stick to badgers. Got it?"



## Chapter six    **The secret passage**

"Are you thinking what I'm thinking?" said Debbie.

"Mick knows something about pony rustling," said Kiran.

"And Barker and Deal are part of it too."

"No, they're not," said Norman. "They're RSPCA men. They told me. I know what's what."

"Have another look at the bit of paper," said Kiran. "That word says EXPORT, and this one must be LIVESTOCK."

"What's livestock?" asked Debbie.

"Animals, Badger Girl," said Kiran. "It means they don't look after animals. They buy them and sell them - or steal them!"

"I don't believe it," said Norman.

"Let's find out," said Debbie. "We'll follow Mick and see where he's going."

Kiran was the first to see Mick. "Look, there he is, going up Cross Tor!"



Cross Tor was a very steep hill with a tiny church on the top. They watched Mick climbing till he was nearly at the church, then he was gone.

"He's disappeared!" said Norman.

"He's not a magic man," said Debbie. "He'll be back.

After a few minutes, they saw Mick again.

He was coming out of the church. Then he ran down the steep hill on the other side.

"After him!" said Debbie.

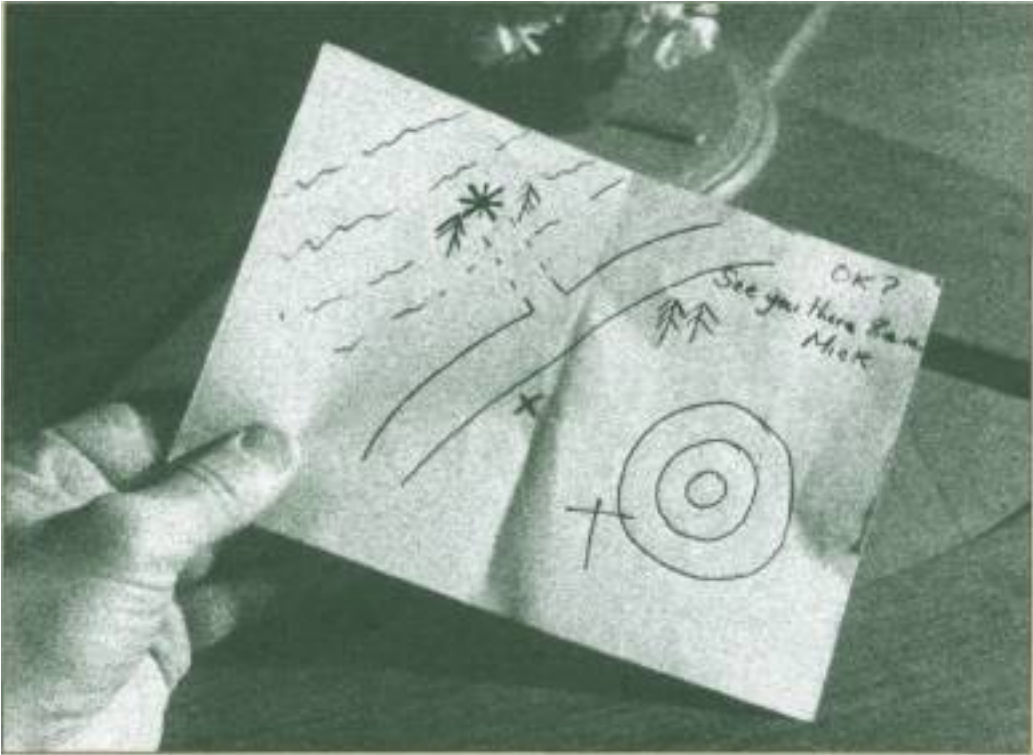
"No," said Kiran. "Let's see how he got in."

They climbed the hill and, just where Mick had disappeared, there was an opening behind a bush.



Kiran pulled the branches back and there was a door! A secret passage! Debbie switched her torch on and the three children crept in. It smelt damp and cold and creepy as they climbed the steep steps.

Then they were in the church. It was the smallest church they had ever seen, like a tiny toy church. They looked all round, and then they found a piece of paper. On the paper was a map with two marks on it. One was a cross and the other was a star.



And on the top it said:

"OK? See you there 8 am. Mick".

"Let's take it," said Debbie.

"No, let's copy it and see who comes for it," said Norman.

Norman had just finished when Debbie said,

"Quick! Someone's coming."

They tiptoed into the secret passage and shut the door, just as two men came into the church. Barker and Deal!





"Here's the note!" said Barker.

"I don't get it," said Deal.

"It's simple, Mr Deal," said Barker. "That's where he's bringing the ponies, and here's where we bring the big van."

Then Debbie forgot to be quiet and popped her bubblegum.

"What's that?" said Deal.

"Quick!" said Kiran. Norman, Debbie and Kiran raced down the steps, pushed through the bushes, and then they were out, running down the hill as fast as they could go.

"Only kids," said Barker, at the church door.

"Only kids?" said Deal. "Kids can be a real pain."

"Don't you worry, Deal. Let Barker look after things. Tomorrow those ponies will be over the sea in France."

## Chapter seven **Mick's map**

The three children were safe home again.

In the barn they talked about what they had seen.

"Maybe I was wrong," said Norman. "Barker and Deal weren't real RSPCA men at all."

Debbie popped her bubblegum to help her think.

"Pony rustlers," said Kiran. "They must be pony rustlers. They'll take the ponies away in a van."

"Let's look at Mick's map," said Debbie.

They looked at the copy of his map and then at a real map.

"Look at this!" Kiran said. "That's Cross Tor."



So they must be keeping the ponies here, in this wood.<sup>1</sup>

"And this must be the road the van will drive on," said Debbie.

"How can we stop them?"

"Let's go and see the Badgerman," said Kiran.

"Sorry if you came to see Stripey," said the Badgerman.

"He's wandered off again. Getting ready to go back to the wild."

The children told him about Barker and Deal.

"Yes," said the Badgerman grimly. "That sounds like pony rustling all right."

"But what do they do with the ponies?" asked Kiran.

"Horsemeat, I'm afraid," said the Badgerman.

"They take them over the sea to France."

"But that's horrible!" said Debbie. "And how could Mick... Mick loves the ponies!"

"Maybe he doesn't know what happens to them," said the Badgerman.

They showed the Badgerman Mick's map with the cross



"Right," said the Badgerman.

"I'll be there tomorrow with the police."

On the way back to the farm, they met Jane Miles.

She had brought the photos that she and Norman had taken on the moor. They told her about Barker and Deal.

"That's funny," she said. "That van keeps turning up in the photographs."





Mick came in for his tea. "Hello, Badger Girl. How's your mate?" he said to Debbie.

"All right," said Debbie.

"Didn't really mean it about shooting him," said Mick.

Debbie thought hard. Mick was nice really.

"Mick!" she said. "You know pony rustlers. Do you know what they do with the ponies?"

"Sell them for riding ponies up North."

"No, they don't. The Badgerman told us. They go for horsemeat. Isn't it terrible?"

Mick looked very angry. "I don't believe it," he said, and he walked out of the door and up on to the moor, where the ponies were.



"He's really fond of them," said Debbie.

"I don't see how he could be one of the rustlers."

"Maybe we got it wrong," said Norman.

"Oh, no!" said Kiran suddenly. He was looking at the map and at Jane Miles's photograph. "I think we got Mick's map wrong. Look! There are two churches.

One on top of Cross Tor and the other next to Brock Tor. There's the road."

"And that bit must be the lake," said Debbie.

"So here's where they'll bring the ponies," said Kiran. Debbie groaned.

"Oh, Kiran. That means the police will turn up at the wrong place!"



## Chapter eight     **Finding the ponies**

Next morning Debbie woke up very early. Mick had already gone off on his bike. She called softly to the boys.

"Come on," she said. "We haven't got time to go and talk to the Badgerman. We'll have to go straight to Barker's secret meeting place by the lake."

"Oh, no," said Norman, rubbing his eyes.

"Can't we wait till after breakfast?"

"Might be all over by then," said Debbie.

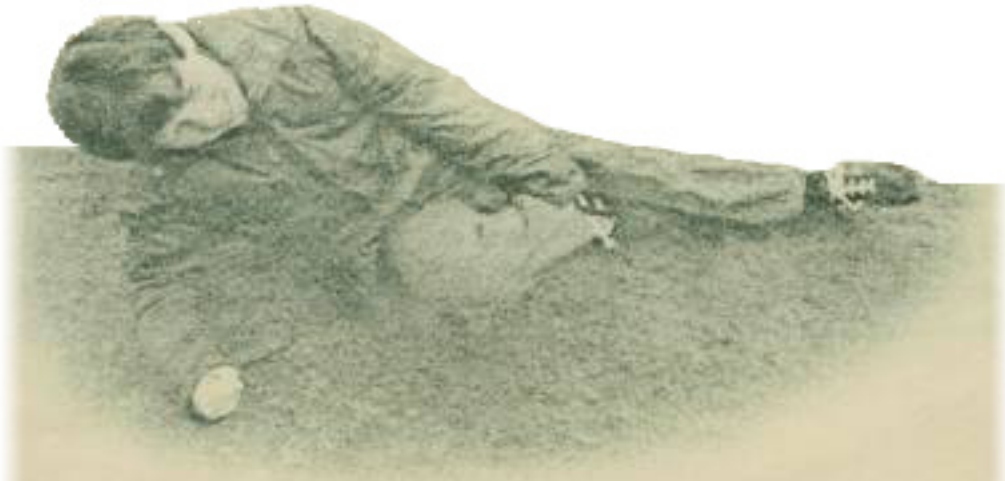
"Come on. We don't want to miss them."

So with Norman still half asleep and grumbling, they tiptoed out of the farmhouse and set off across the moor, following the tracks of Mick's motor bike.

Debbie and Kiran went fast, and soon Norman was getting left behind.

"Oh, hurry up, Norman!" called Debbie.

"I'd be all right if I had some breakfast inside me," grumbled Norman. But just then he tripped and fell over. He had hurt his ankle.



"You'd better go on," he said. "I'll follow you.  
Can't go fast with this ankle."

"All right," said Kiran. "You take it steady."

Debbie and Kiran trotted on and soon Norman was just a tiny dot in the distance.

Meanwhile, the Badgerman was waiting for them in another part of the moor. The two policemen with him did not look very pleased. It looked as if they had come for nothing. Jane Miles was waiting too with her camera.

"I'm sorry," said Mr North after a while.

"I'm sure this is the place the children said."

"Well," said Jane Miles. "Something's gone wrong.

No ponies, no rustlers, and no children.

Do you think the whole thing was a joke?"





"I'm sure it wasn't," said the Badgerman.

"I think we should wait a bit longer." But the policemen shook their heads and went off. They were thinking about a nice cup of tea at the police station.

Debbie and Kiran had followed the tracks to the meeting place by the lake. They hid behind a rock and watched.

"We're too late!" said Debbie. "No Mick, no Barker, no Deal.

"But look down there!" whispered Kiran.

Debbie looked. Down below were some ponies, eating oats.

"Let's creep down," said Kiran. "We'll get them away before Barker and Deal get here!"

Just as they reached the ponies, they heard heavy footsteps.



"Well, well, well. Grab 'em Mr Deal!"

"I think we've seen these kids too often," said Deal. Debbie and Kiran tried to get away but the men were too strong. They pushed the children into the small van and drove right round the lake to a little hut.

"Inside," said Deal, and pushed the children inside.

"By the time they get out, we'll be on our way to France," smiled Barker.

"If they ever do get out," said Deal.

But someone else was near the hut. Someone with a stripe down his head.



## Chapter nine      **Panic on the lake**

When Barker and Deal got back to the ponies, Mick was waiting for them. He was angry.

'You told me you would sell them for riding ponies!'" he shouted.

"More money in meat!" said Deal grinning.

"I'm going to let them go then," said Mick.

"Better not try," said Deal, lifting his big stick.

Mick couldn't fight the two men on his own.

He got on his motor bike and raced along the road.

Think he'll go to the police?" asked Deal.

"Not him," said Barker. "He's the one who caught the ponies for us, isn't he? He can't do anything about it now."

Mick didn't know what to do.

He didn't know where the children were, but he was sure they were in trouble somewhere. Now he knew what Barker and Deal wanted to do with the ponies, he had to find a way to stop them.

But how?

There was only one person who could help now.



Much later, Norman reached the lake.  
His ankle was better, but he had lost the track, and he couldn't see Debbie and Kiran anywhere. But there was a wooden hut. Maybe there was someone there who had seen something. He knocked on the door.

"Hello," he said. "Anybody in?"

"Yes us! Let us out!" yelled Debbie and Kiran.

And Norman pulled back the bolt and opened the door.

"Quick!" said Debbie. "We've got to get across the lake again!"

It was too far to go right round the lake on foot, but by the shore there was a rowing boat.

"I can row. I've got a book about boats," said Norman. "Come on!"





Mick rode as fast as he could to the Badgerman's hut.  
He raced up to him on his bike, all out of breath.



"Quick!" he said. "Pony rustlers. You've got to help!"  
"I went to Cross Tor with the police," said the  
Badgerman. "No one there."  
"You went to the wrong place!" said Mick.  
"They're in the wood by the lake! Get the police again  
and come as quickly as you can!"  
"Where exactly?" said Mr North.  
"You'll see!" shouted Mick, and he started his motor  
bike and rode off again.

Norman did really know about boats. He made Debbie and Kiran put life jackets on, then he started to row over to the other side of the lake. Norman was a good rower, but the wind was very strong and there was a current in the water. At the end of the lake there was a dam, and on the other side of the dam was a big drop.

The boat was halfway across before the children saw how near to the dam they were.

"Pull with your right oar, Norman!" shouted Debbie.

"I'm trying to... It's this wind!" yelled Norman.

"We're too close to the dam!" shouted Kiran. "We'll go over the top if we don't do something!"

Then they heard the sound of a motor bike getting nearer.



## Chapter ten      **Stripey the Superbadger**



"Help!" shouted the children. "Mick! We're going to go over the dam!"

Norman was doing his best to pull on the oars, but they were getting nearer to the dam all the time.

"Hold on!" shouted Mick as he drove his motor bike towards the lake.

He found a life belt with a long rope.

Mick threw the life belt and Kiran grabbed it.

Just in time. The boat was nearly going over the edge, but Mick pulled hard and held it steady.

Then he pulled it back to the shore. They were safe.

"Thanks, Mick, you saved our lives," said Norman.

"Never mind about that," said Mick. "We've got to try and save the ponies. Hurry up!"



They ran to where they had seen Barker and Deal with the ponies. Norman was hopping and limping, trying to keep up. Would they get there in time? None of them saw Stripey the badger trotting through the trees after them.

"We're too late," groaned Debbie. "Look!" Barker and Deal were standing by the big van, pushing ponies on to it.

"We'll have a go!" said Mick, and he ran down the hill straight at Barker and Deal.



"Deal with him, Mr Deal," said Barker.

"My pleasure, Mr Barker," said Deal.

Mick was a strong boy but Deal was much bigger and stronger.

"Anyone else want to try?" said Barker, grinning.

"Me!" yelled Kiran, and rushed at him, but Barker threw him down easily.

"That's that then," said Barker. "We'd better get going now. Very nice to meet you all!"

Then he heard grunting and sniffing. He turned round. It was Stripey the badger.

"Oh good!" he said. "I've always wanted a stuffed badger. Lend me your stick, Mr Deal.

I'll knock him on the head."



But he did not know how strong and fierce a badger can be. As Barker came towards him with the stick, Stripey went for him and knocked him head over heels. "Help! Help!" yelled Barker in a trembly voice. Deal let go of Mick and went to help but he stopped when he saw Stripey's fierce face and sharp white teeth. The two other men had seen enough, too. They ran off into the trees. Then Debbie heard the sound of a car. It was the police. Then the Badgerman and Jane Miles arrived.



"Well done, all of you," said the Badgerman.

"You've saved the ponies."

"Not us really," said Debbie.

"It was Stripey the Superbadger!"

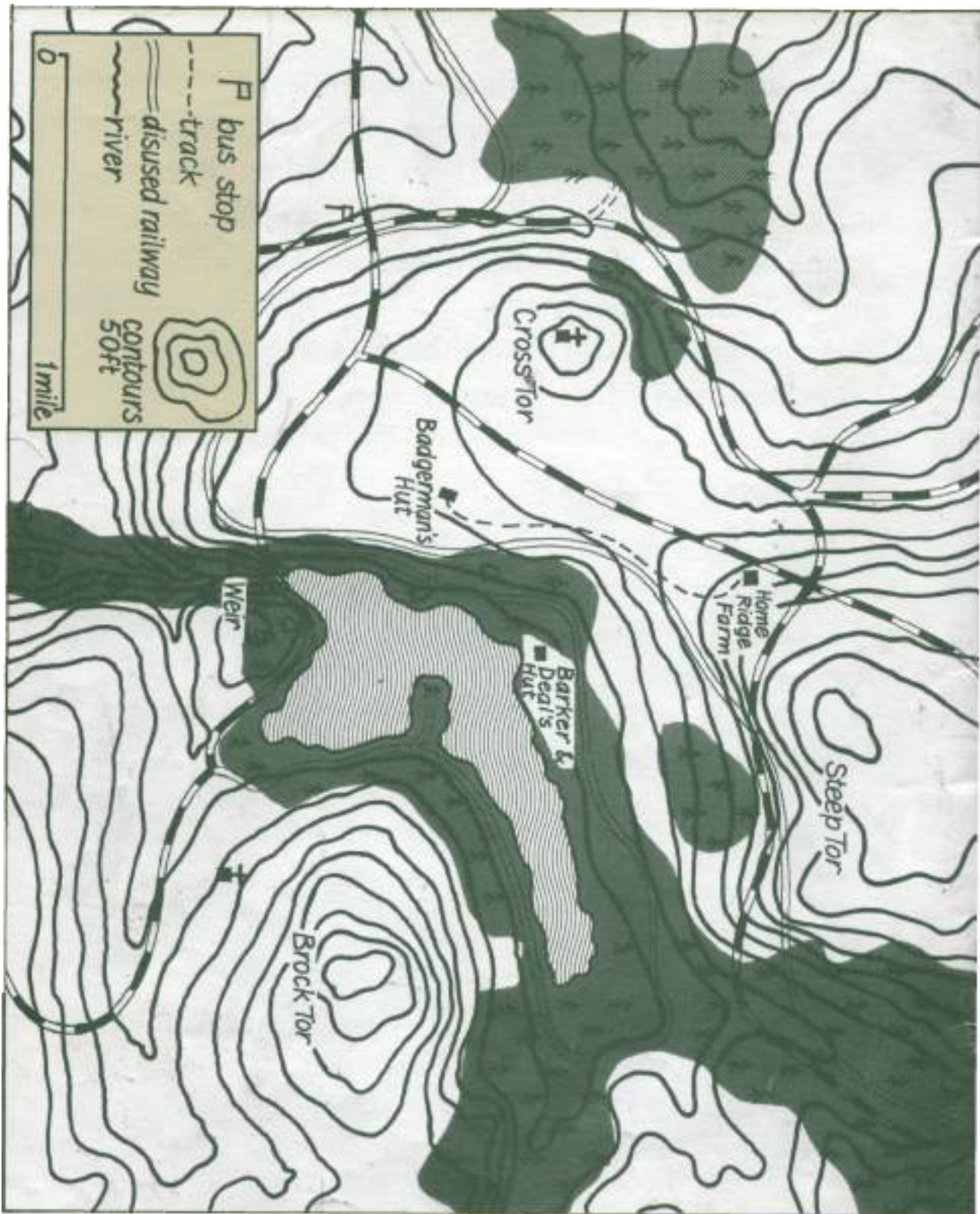
It was nearly the end of the holiday. Jane Miles and the Badgerman took the children deep into a secret wood. "Quiet," said the Badgerman. They heard grunting and snuffling. Then they saw him. Stripey the Superbadger was with his new family. He had gone back to the wild. "Stripey!" called Debbie softly. He stopped and looked at her with his friendly black eyes. Then he trotted off to his real family.

Debbie knew now that he would never be her pet. He had his own mate now, his real badger girl. And she would go back to her own family, and the chip shop, and the Space Invaders. "Bye Stripey mate, see you next year."



Ernest Neal





LOOK AND READ  
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