

BBC Television for Schools

A Look and Read book
by Christopher Russell

FAIR GROUND!



Drawings by Martin Salisbury



Who are these?



Chapter one **Trouble in the tea-leaves**

Ozzie Watson was putting up a poster. It was for the travelling fair. Ozzie liked fairs. He liked the music and the lights, the rides and the side-shows. Ozzie lived over a sweetshop with his mum, Mrs Watson. His mum owned the sweetshop. She also owned Watson's Field. That was where the travelling fair stayed for a week every Easter. Ozzie and his mum were very happy about that.

But Mr Grant wasn't at all happy.
"The fair?" he said. "That noisy messy thing!
All that loud music keeping the town awake.
All those flashing lights. All those
great lorries messing up the place. All . . ."



"Oh, do be quiet, Robert," said his friend, Mrs Leach.
"We need action not words. A petition, that's the thing."
She walked away. Mr Grant followed her.
So did Sherry, Mr Grant's dog.

Mum had come out of the shop.

"What's a petition?" asked Ozzie.

"It's a piece of paper lots of people sign when they want to make something happen," said Mum. "Or stop something. Mr Grant and Mrs Leach like petitions.

But they mean well."

Mum said that about everybody.

A big sleek car pulled up and a big sleek man got out of it.
He smiled at Mum.

"Oh," said Mum, "Mr Turnbull. Do come in."

Mr Turnbull looked at the poster.

"Do you like fairs?" asked Ozzie.

"Very much," said Mr Turnbull.



Ozzie didn't know Mr Turnbull very well.

Still, if he liked fairs he must be all right.

"Thurstons have been bringing an Easter fair to Watson's Field for two hundred years," said Mum.

"That's tradition. I like tradition."

"So do I," said Mr Turnbull. "But, as you know, I'd also like to buy Watson's Field."

"No, Mr Turnbull," said Mum. "I've told you before. I can't sell it. It's the only place in town the fair can go. What would happen if I sold it?"

"You'd make a lot of money," said Mr Turnbull, and he laughed.

"Yes," said Mum. "But what about Bert Thurston's fair?"

"Trust me," said Mr Turnbull.

"The fair will be safe. Think it over."

He gave Ozzie some money on his way out.

"For the fair," he said.

Mr Turnbull was definitely all right.

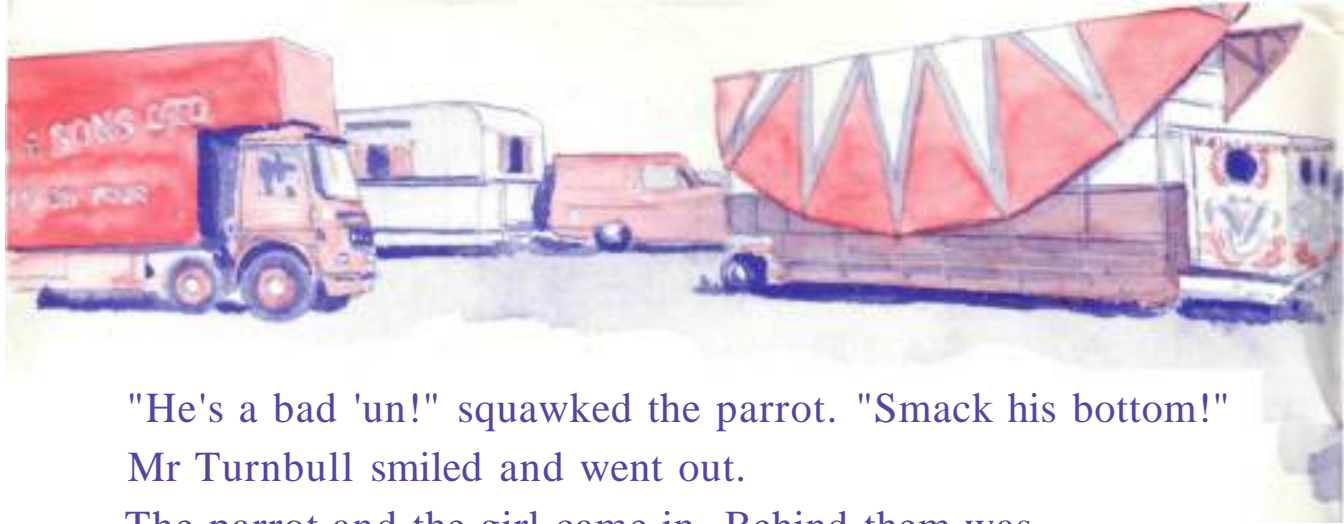
There was a loud squawk.

Mr Turnbull jumped.

In the shop doorway there was a parrot.

The parrot was sitting on a girl's shoulder.





"He's a bad 'un!" squawked the parrot. "Smack his bottom!"
Mr Turnbull smiled and went out.

The parrot and the girl came in. Behind them was
a man just as big as Mr Turnbull. But not as sleek.
It was Bert Thurston, the showman in charge of the fair.
He had come to give Ozzie's mum a week's money for
using Watson's Field.

"Bert!" cried Mum.

"Jean!" cried Bert.

"Good to see you again!" They both said that.

"Hello, Rachel," said Ozzie.

"Hello, Squirt," said the girl.

Rachel was Bert's daughter. She was quite a lot older
than Ozzie. And every year she seemed
to grow up more than he did. It wasn't fair.

"Hello, Captain Cutlass," said Ozzie to the parrot.

"Bless my boots!" he squawked. "He's a good 'un!"

"Of course he is," said Bert. "The Watsons are all good 'uns!"

Ozzie, Rachel and Captain Cutlass
went to watch the lorries and trailers and caravans
pulling on to Watson's Field.



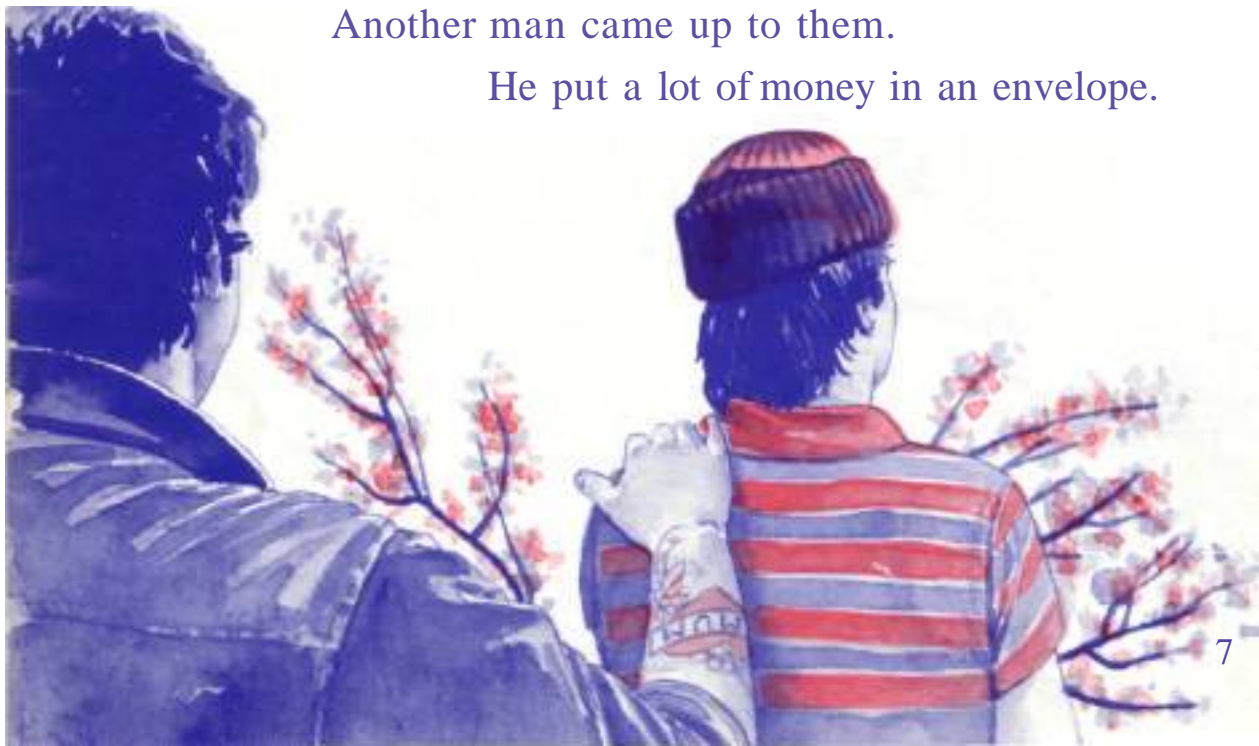
They took some chocolate toffees with them.

"You may be a squirt," said Rachel,
"but your mum sells good toffees."

In the trees on the other side of the field,
two men were also watching the fair pulling on.
One of them had a tattoo on his arm.

Another man came up to them.

He put a lot of money in an envelope.



On the envelope was some writing:

He gave the envelope to the man with the tattoo and walked away.



After the fair had pulled on to Watson's Field, Ozzie had a cup of tea in Bert and Rachel's caravan.

"By the way," said Rachel, "I'm taking over from Gran this year. I'm going to be Madam Varadi, the fairground fortune-teller."

"Can you really tell fortunes?" asked Ozzie.

"Course she can't," said Bert.

"It's just a bit of fun. Pays well too."

Rachel gave Bert a look. She swirled her tea round in her cup and tipped it out. Then she stared at the tea-leaves.

"Mucky pup!" squawked Captain Cutlass.

Rachel kept staring at the tea-leaves.

"I see trouble," she said in a strange voice.

"Trouble in the tea-leaves."

"Don't talk nonsense," said Bert.

Then a brick crashed through the window.



Chapter two Comings and goings

Bert and Rachel rushed out of the caravan. There was nobody there. But Ozzie found a note tied to the brick.



"That's nice!" said Bert.

"Bless my boots!" squawked Captain Cutlass.

"I told you," said Rachel. "Trouble."

Bert told Ozzie it was time he went home.

"Come early in the morning," said Bert, "and you can watch the rides being built up."

On his way home Ozzie heard two voices behind a trailer.
Men's voices.



"The hired hands live in the small caravan," said one.

"Got the envelope with the money?"

"Yes," said the other. "Do we give it to them tonight?"

"Course we do," said the first voice.

"But will they clear off?"

"When they see how much money they're getting, they'll clear off tonight.

Thurston can't build up his rides without hired hands.

He'll be stuck and we'll be in.

It's a piece of cake.

Know what I mean?"

The first man laughed.

"And what about the dog?" asked the other man.

"Yes. We'll see about the dog first."

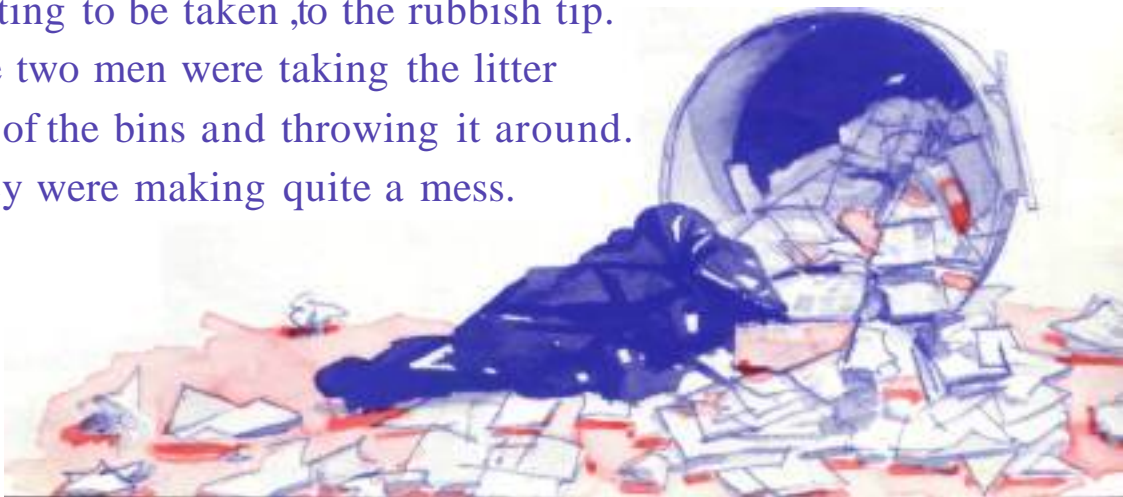


The men walked away. Ozzie had heard everything but it did not make sense. He crept after the two men.

Mr Grant was walking Sherry at the edge of the field. As Ozzie watched, the men went up to him and patted Sherry. Sherry wagged her tail. The men talked to Mr Grant and Mr Grant laughed. "Yes," he said. "A lot of money. Very expensive. But worth it." Ozzie walked slowly home. He was thinking.

Later that evening, just as Mum was closing the shop, Mr Grant called in. Sherry sat outside, waiting for her chocolate. But this week she didn't have to wait long. While Mr Grant was in the shop, a man gave Sherry a piece of chocolate. He had a tattoo on his arm. Sherry wagged her tail. She was quite happy to go where there was chocolate. When Mr Grant came out of the shop Sherry had disappeared.

That night, when the rest of the town was asleep, two men were very much awake. In a corner of Watson's Field were some bins full of litter, waiting to be taken to the rubbish tip. The two men were taking the litter out of the bins and throwing it around. They were making quite a mess.





Ozzie got up early in the morning and went to the fairground.

At the fairground he met Mr Grant.

Mr Grant hadn't found Sherry but he had found the litter.

"Look at this!" he said. "This is just the thing to make people sign our petition!

Where there's a fair there's always a mess."

"Perhaps the showmen didn't do it," said Ozzie.

"You should ask them."

They found Bert. He was

banging on the door of the small caravan.

He was looking for two of the hired hands.

At last he pulled open the caravan door.

There was nobody there.

Nobody, that is, except Sherry the dog.



Chapter three **Hired hands**

Bert stared at Sherry. Ozzie stared at Sherry.
Mr Grant stared at Sherry. Sherry wagged her tail.

"You stole my dog!" shouted Mr Grant and
he grabbed Sherry's lead.

"You haven't heard the last of this!" he said.

"And what about that litter?"

He marched off past Rachel and Captain Cutlass.

"Give us a kiss!" squawked Captain Cutlass.

But Mr Grant kept walking.

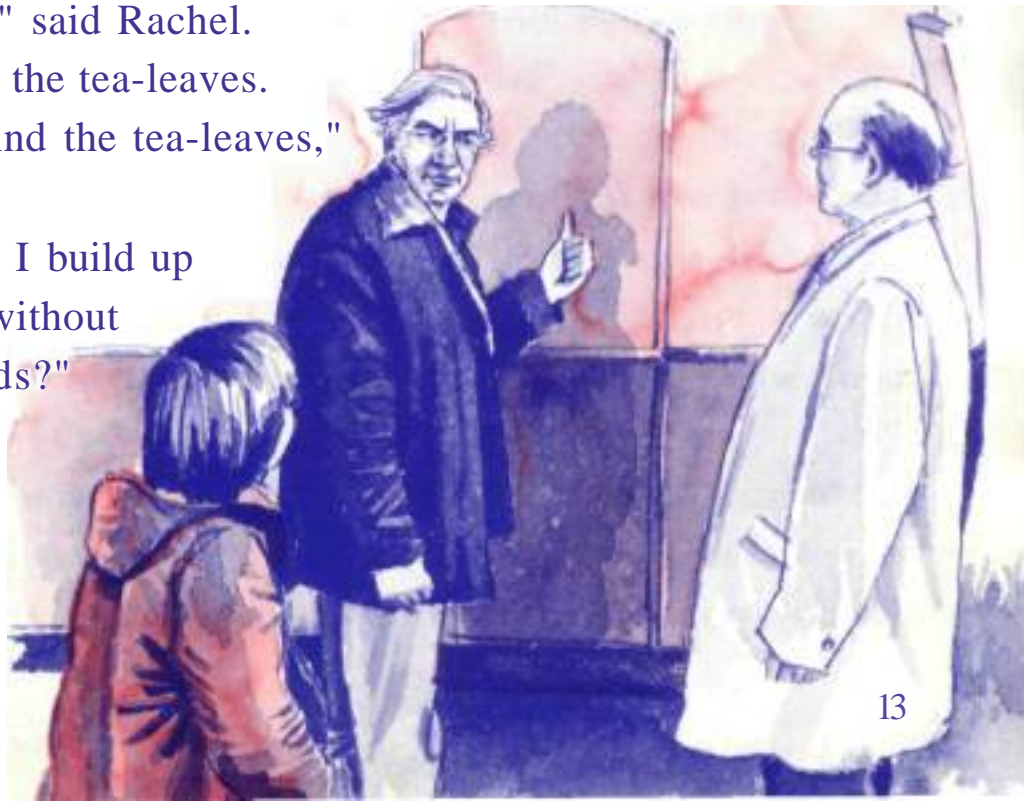
"Nice . . ." said Bert. "A brick through the window.
The place looks like a rubbish tip. I'm told I'm a thief.
And two of the hired hands have cleared off. Very nice!"

"Trouble," said Rachel.

"It was in the tea-leaves.

"Never mind the tea-leaves,"
said Bert.

"How can I build up
my rides without
hired hands?"





"Can we help, Guv?"

Bert turned round.

Two men were standing there.

"I'm Steve," said one.

"And I'm Sidney," said the other.

"We've just arrived in town, Guv," said Steve, "and we're looking for work.

Know what I mean?"

They put down their bags.

"He's a bad 'un!"

squawked Captain Cutlass.

"Smack his bottom!"

"I like budgies," said Sidney.

"Ever worked in a fair before?" asked Bert.

"All over the place," said Steve. "I've got a letter from the last showman we worked for, saying how good we are. It's in my bag."

"I'll see it later," said Bert. He was in a hurry.

"You're hired. Put your bags in the caravan and come with me. The first job is to build up the Twist."

"Twist, Guv?" said Steve. "It's a piece of cake.

I can build any ride you like. Just don't ask me to have a go on them, that's all. My stomach can't stand it."

He patted his stomach and laughed. "Know what I mean?"

Sidney picked up the bags. He had a tattoo on his arm.

While the rides and side-shows were being built up, Ozzie helped Rachel clear up the litter.

"I'd like to know who did this," said Rachel.

"Mucky pup!" squawked Captain Cutlass.

"Smack his bottom!"

"I don't trust those two men," said Ozzie.

"I think I heard them talking last night.

And I think I saw them with Mr Grant.

I think he's their friend. And I think they're helping him to make trouble."

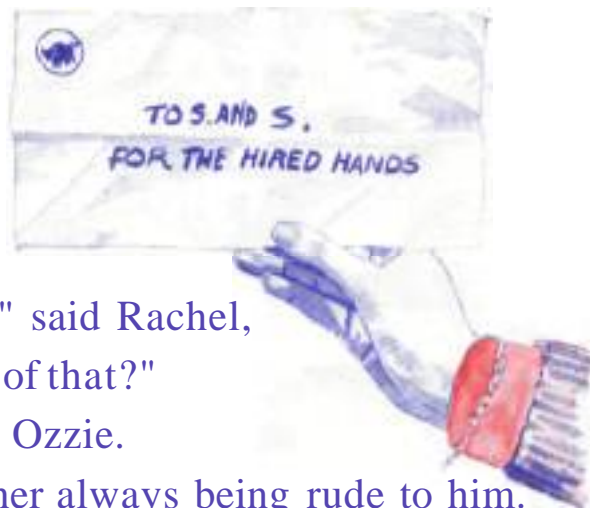
"You're doing a lot of thinking, Squirt," said Rachel.

"Hello, what's this?"

In the rubbish she had found an envelope.

There was an emblem on it: a bull turning round.

And some writing:



"Well, Mastermind," said Rachel,

"What do you think of that?"

"I don't know," said Ozzie.

He was fed up with her always being rude to him.

"Why don't you look in your crystal ball?"



"Right!" said Rachel. "I will!"

And she pushed the envelope into Ozzie's hand and marched off. Back in the caravan Rachel gazed into her crystal ball. She saw a man! So did Captain Cutlass
The parrot squawked. Rachel jumped.

Steve was standing behind her. He said he was looking for Bert.

"All done then?" asked Rachel.

"Yes," said Steve. "A piece of cake. It was a good job me and Sidney turned up when we did.

Know what I mean?"

"Yes," said Rachel.

"A very good job."

But she wasn't sure that it was.



Chapter four **In the dark**

That night the fair opened for the first time.

Ozzie was in a hurry to get there.

Then he saw Mr Grant and Mrs Leach in the street.

They were asking people to sign their petition.

"This fair is nothing but trouble," said Mr Grant.

"A nice town like ours wants peace and quiet," said Mrs Leach.

"Yes, but it also needs some action now and then," said a voice.

Ozzie looked up. It was Mr Turnbull.

"There's nothing like a whirl on the Swirl," said Mr Turnbull, and he smiled at Ozzie and gave him some more money.

"Have a good time at the fair," he said.

Mr Turnbull was all right.

But Ozzie didn't need any money at the fair that night.

Bert gave him a free ride on everything.



While Ozzie was having fun, somebody came to see Mum at the shop. Mr Turnbull.

"The answer's still no, I'm afraid," said Mum.

"I won't sell Watson's Field."

"I'm only trying to help," said Mr Turnbull.

"And I know you need the money."

"Thank you Mr Turnbull," said Mum, "but we'll get by. It's the fair that needs help at the moment."

"Ah yes, the petition," said Mr Turnbull. "Very sad."

Then he laughed. "Now Mrs Watson, forget the petition. Are you going to the fair with Ozzie?"

"Yes," said Mum, "tomorrow night."

"Tomorrow night?" said Mr Turnbull. "Well, have a good time. And if you change your mind about selling, just phone me. My number is on this card."

Mum put the card on a shelf without looking at it.

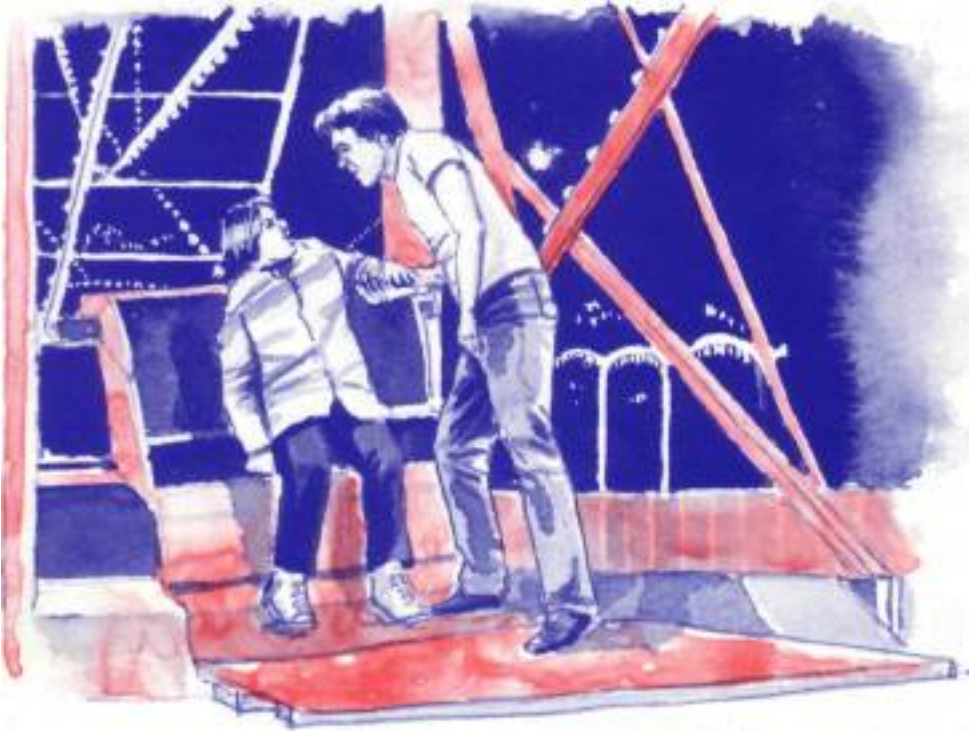


At Watson's Field
the fair was very busy.
Steve and Sidney
were busy too.
They were doing something
to the generators.
Without the generators
there would be no music,
no flashing lights, no rides.



Rachel was busy too.
She was Madam Varadi now and she had a customer in
her fortune-teller's tent. Rachel gazed into her crystal ball.
"Strange," she said. "I see nothing. Everything is dark."
And then everything *was* dark. The light in the tent went out,
"Nighty night!" squawked Captain Cutlass.
Rachel ran outside. Bert was there, very upset.
"Now what's gone wrong!" he shouted.
All over the fairground, music, flashing lights and rides
were coming to a stop. Some customers were stuck on rides.
There was nothing Bert could do.
There was nothing Ozzie could do either.
He was stuck at the top of the Big Wheel.
"Rachel!" he shouted. "Rachel, I'm up here!"
"Poor old Squirt," said Rachel.
"You have gone up in the world!"

Chapter five Come to the fair!



Steve and Sidney were very helpful. They mended the generators and everything was soon put right. Bert and Steve helped Ozzie off the Big Wheel.

"Glad I wasn't stuck up there," said Steve.

"My stomach can't stand that thing."

"What happened?" asked Ozzie.

"The generators were got at," said Steve.

"If you ask me, somebody wants to stop people coming.

Somebody wants to get rid of this fair. Know what I mean?"

Bert felt sure that Steve was right.

Next morning Rachel was in the caravan, staring at the tea-leaves again. Bert came in looking cross. "That's nice!" he said. "More of the hired hands want to leave. They're afraid of more trouble." "I'm not surprised," said Rachel. "This is bad ground. The tea-leaves said there'd be trouble. I see now, it's the ground." "You talk less sense than that parrot!" said Bert. "Watch it, watch it!" squawked Captain Cutlass. "We are not running away!" said Bert. "If there's trouble, we'll stick it out!" And he banged the door on his way out.





Steve and Sidney
were waiting for him.

"What next, Guv?" said Steve.

"Stick these up wherever you can,"
said Bert, and he gave them
a lot of posters.

On the posters was written:

COME TO THE FAIR
FREE RIDE TONIGHT!

At the edge of the field
Sidney stuck a poster on a tree.
Steve went into a phone box.

"Guv? . . . Steve.

Everything's going just great.
And we're all set for tonight.
What about the girl?"

"Yes." said the voice at the other end of the line. "Get the girl."

"It's a piece of cake," said Steve.

Ozzie got Mum to the fair early that night.

But he didn't get her on the Twist.

"Me and my stomach are staying on the ground!" said Mum.

She watched everybody whirling round. Steve and Sidney
were watching too. Then the two of them slipped away.

Rachel was busy in her tent. She was Madam Varadi, telling people's fortunes. She was sorting out her fortune-telling cards when her next customer came in. Only it wasn't a customer, it was Sidney.

"He's a bad 'un!" squawked Captain Cutlass.

"Smack his bottom!"

"Hello, Budgie," said Sidney.

"Your dad wants you," he said to Rachel.

"Right now? What for?" said Rachel.

"Dunno," said Sidney. "He just said go to the caravan. Now."





Rachel was cross but she went to the caravan.

There seemed to be nobody there.

"Dad?" called Rachel.

"Wakey, wakey!" squawked Captain Cutlass.

Suddenly somebody grabbed Rachel from behind.

Rachel didn't see who it was, but Captain Cutlass did.

"It's a piece of cake!" said a voice.

Rachel squirmed, Captain Cutlass squawked and flapped, but it was no use. Captain Cutlass was left on his own in the caravan while a car pulled away from the nearby trees.

Chapter six **Where is Rachel?**

Ozzie and Mum were having a good time at the fair. Everybody at the fair was having a good time, whizzing and whirling round on the rides.

"This is more like it," said Bert. "Bad ground indeed. Rachel should try tea-bags for a change!" And he laughed. "Of course, Rachel's Madam Varadi now, isn't she?" said Mum. "Where is she? I've always wanted to have my fortune told."



Sidney was gazing into Madam Varadi's crystal ball when Ozzie and Mum came into the fortune-teller's tent.

"Oh," said Ozzie. "Where's Rachel?"

"Dunno," said Sidney. "She's looking for her dad.

The budgie went too."

"Oh," said Mum. "I wanted her to tell my fortune."

"Well, I can tell you how to *make* your fortune," said Sidney.

"Sell this field to Mr Turnbull."

"How did you know I own this field?" asked Mum.

"Dunno," said Sidney. "Everybody knows it, don't they?"

Ozzie was staring at Sidney.

"But how did you know Mum's been asked to sell it?" he said.

"Nobody else knows that."



"Dunno," said Sidney and he tried to smile.
"Maybe I saw it in the crystal ball."

"Having trouble, Sidney?"
Steve had come into the tent.
"No." said Sidney. "They're looking for
Madam Varadi, that's all."

Steve was standing next to Ozzie.
Ozzie saw something stuck to Sidney's shoulder.
A small downy feather. Ozzie picked it off.
It was a parrot's feather.
Ozzie suddenly felt afraid for Rachel.
"I'm going to look for Rachel,"
he said. "Perhaps Bert knows
where she is."
He hurried out of the tent.



But Bert didn't know where Rachel was. Ozzie wasn't at all happy, but he wasn't sure what else to do. So when Mum said it was time to go home, Ozzie went.

"I can't think what Rachel's up to," said Mum as they unlocked the shop door.

"I don't think she's up to anything." said Ozzie.

Mum opened the door, then stopped.

"What's up, Mum?" said Ozzie.

Mum didn't answer. The shop was empty.

All their stock had gone. There was nothing left.



Then Ozzie saw the sweet wrappers.
Chocolate toffees. The ones Rachel liked.

"What's happened?"
said a voice from the doorway.

It was Mr Grant with Sherry.
"We seem to have been burgled,"
said Mum.

Ozzie quickly put out his hand.
He squashed the sweet wrappers into a ball.

"Well," said Mr Grant, "it must have been somebody
from the fair!"

Mr Grant turned to Mum.

"You think those people are your friends," he said.

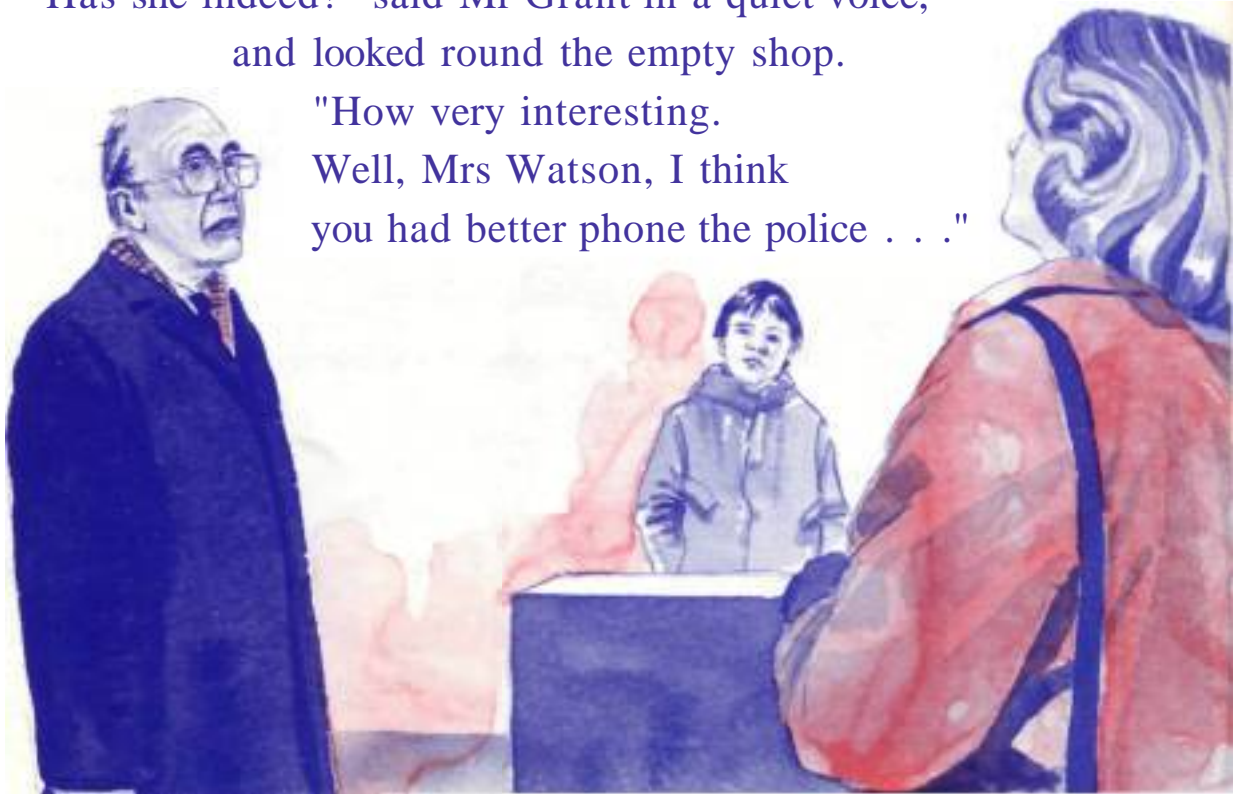
"But they're not. They must be laughing at you right now!"

"Rachel's not laughing," shouted Ozzie. "She's disappeared!"

"Has she indeed?" said Mr Grant in a quiet voice,
and looked round the empty shop.

"How very interesting.

Well, Mrs Watson, I think
you had better phone the police . . ."



Chapter seven **Ozzie thinks again**

All next morning Mum was very quiet.

"What did the police say?" asked Ozzie.

"They said it was a nice job," said Mum. "No fingerprints. Oh, Ozzie, do you think some of the showmen could have done it? Not Bert or Rachel, but some of the others?"

"You mustn't think that, Mum!" cried Ozzie.

"I just don't know what to think," said Mum.

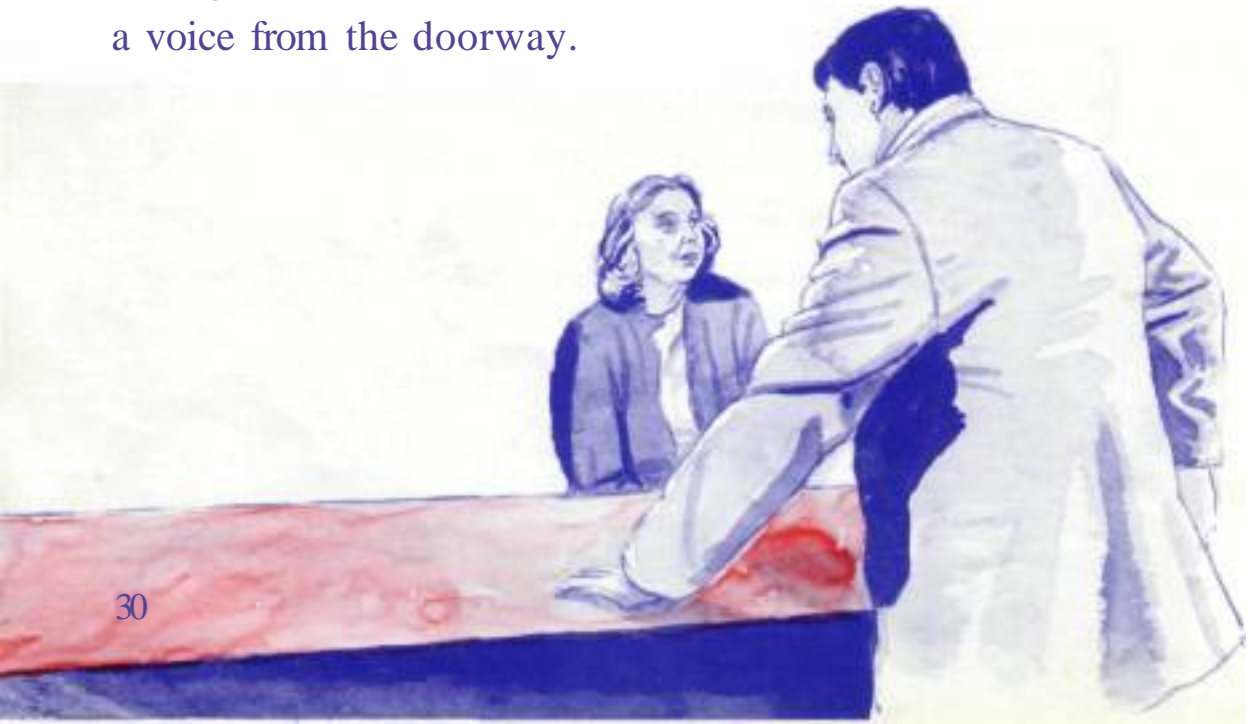
"There seems to be nothing but trouble at the moment. I think I might sell the field after all."

"No, Mum, you can't!" said Ozzie.

"But Mr Turnbull said the fair would be safe if I sold the field to him. You'd trust Mr Turnbull?"

"Yes," said Ozzie. "I'd trust Mr Turnbull."

"I'm glad to hear it," said
a voice from the doorway.



They both turned round, and there was Mr Turnbull.
"Mr Grant told me about the burglary," he said.
"Very sad. Of course there's a lot of talk in the town.
People think it's strange. All your stock and
the girl from the fair both disappearing at the same time.
It's just what Mr Grant needed. A lot of people
are turning against the fair now. I don't think
the town will want it back next year. Very sad."
Ozzie didn't think he looked very sad.

"Of course," said Turnbull, "if nobody wants
the fair to come back then everything's all right."
"What do you mean?" said Mum.
"Well," said Mr Turnbull, "Why keep the field if
there's no fair to use it? You could sell it
without feeling bad about it."

Then Mr Turnbull patted Mum on the shoulder.
"Of course you're still upset about the burglary," he said.
"Why don't you phone me later? You've got
my phone number, haven't you? It's on my card."
"Yes," said Mum. She took the card from the shelf.
It had an address and a phone number on it.
It also had an emblem in the corner: a bull turning round.
Ozzie didn't see the card.
"Give me a ring later," said Mr Turnbull.



He smiled at Ozzie.
"Can I give you
a lift anywhere?"
Mr Turnbull was being
very nice. Too nice?
Ozzie wasn't sure.
But he'd always wanted
a ride in a sleek,
expensive car
so he said, "Yes please,
to the fairground."
It was a short ride.

As Ozzie was getting out of the car he saw something.
He picked it up without Mr Turnbull seeing him.
It was one of Rachel's fortune-telling cards.
Now Ozzie was quite sure. Mr Turnbull wasn't
all right after all.



Bert was on his way to phone
the police about Rachel.
"You've got to listen!"
said Ozzie to Bert.
"I think Steve took Rachel.
I think Steve and Sidney
burgled our shop.

And I think Mr Turnbull planned it all, not Mr Grant.
He wants to get rid of the fair and buy our field!"

"You're another one who talks
less sense than that parrot," said Bert.
He wouldn't stop.

Then Bert saw Mr Grant
and Mrs Leach.

That stopped him.

Mr Grant was talking
to some people.

Mrs Leach was asking them
to sign the petition.

"Mrs Watson's shop
has been burgled," said Mr Grant.

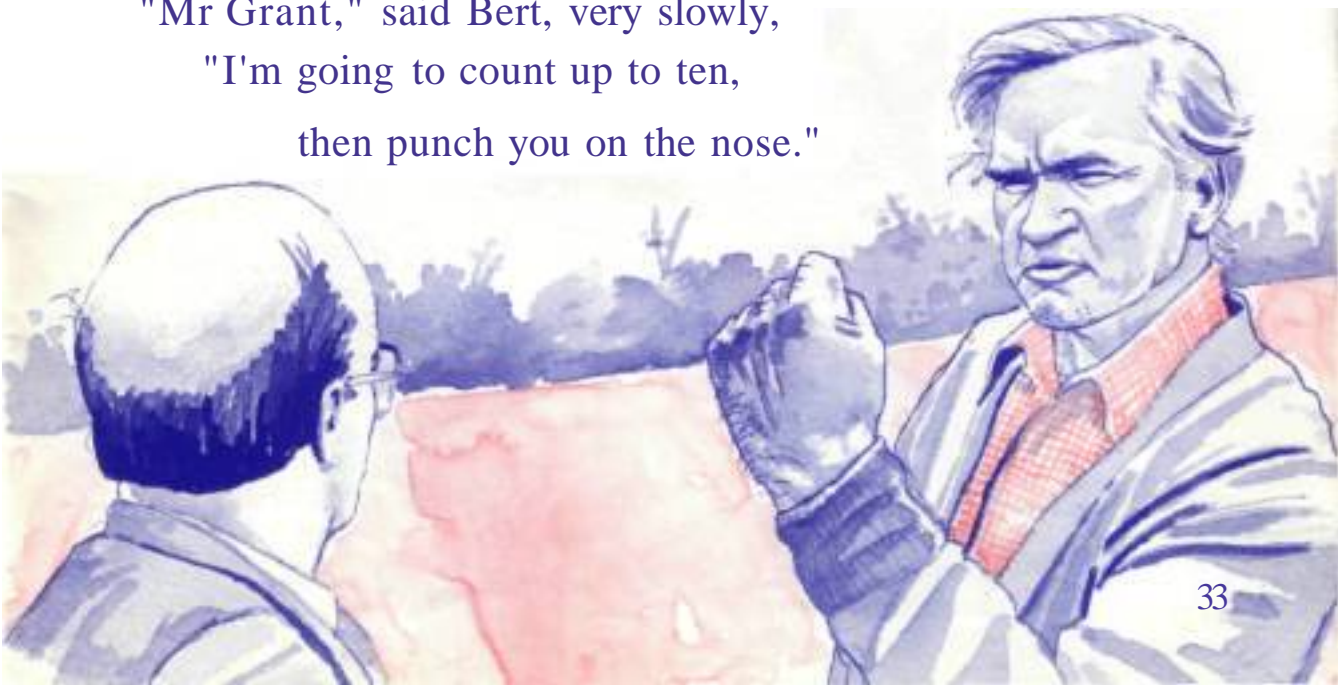
"All her stock has gone.

So has the girl from the fair.

What if they've gone together . . .?"

"Mr Grant," said Bert, very slowly,

"I'm going to count up to ten,
then punch you on the nose."



Chapter eight "A piece of cake!"

Bert was counting. "Seven . . . eight . . . nine . . ."

Mr Grant showed no sign of running away.

Bert started to move towards Mr Grant.

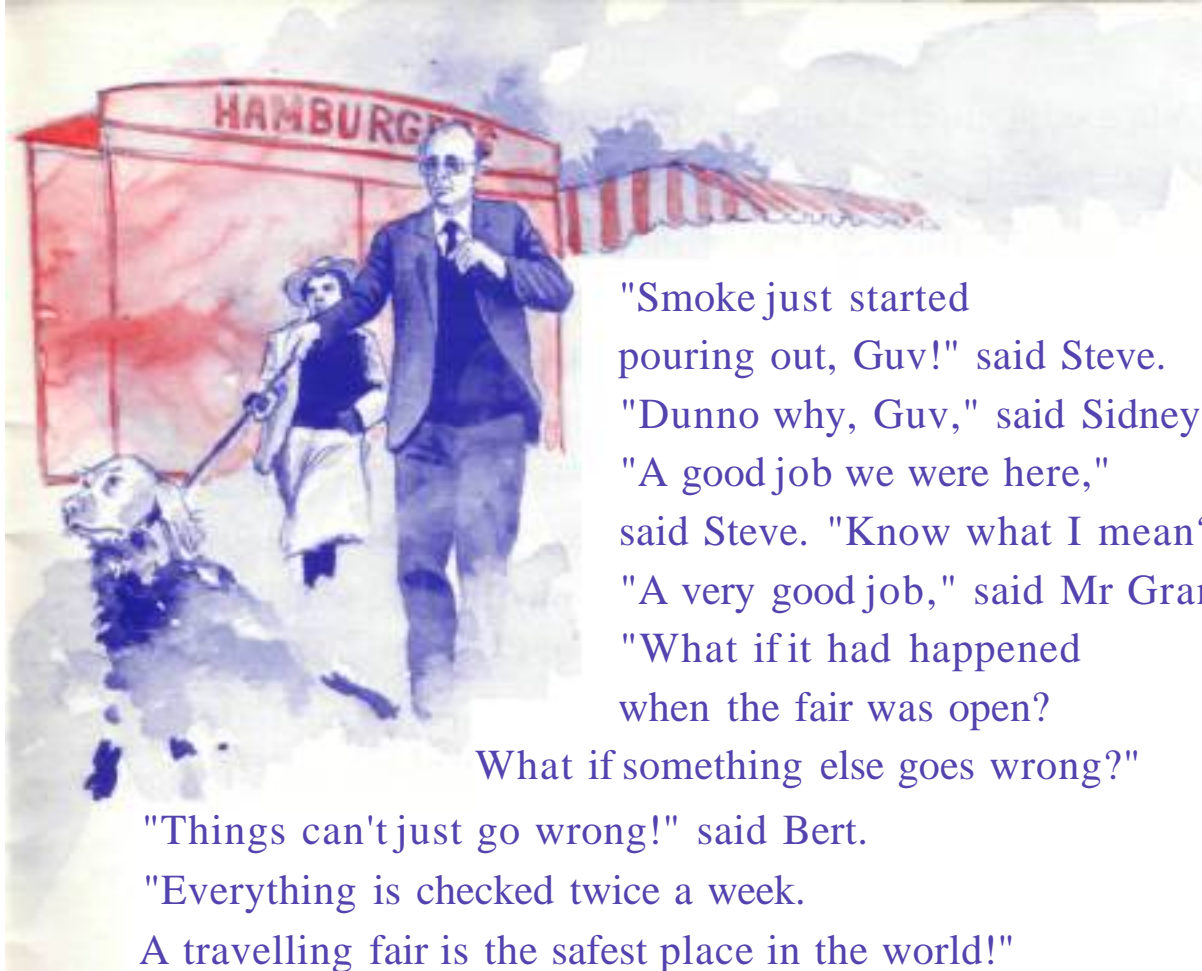
"Fire! Fire!"

They all looked round and saw smoke.

Everybody ran back to the fair.

They found Steve and Sidney busy with a smoking generator.





"Smoke just started pouring out, Guv!" said Steve.
"Dunno why, Guv," said Sidney.
"A good job we were here," said Steve. "Know what I mean?"
"A very good job," said Mr Grant.
"What if it had happened when the fair was open?"

What if something else goes wrong?"

"Things can't just go wrong!" said Bert.

"Everything is checked twice a week.

A travelling fair is the safest place in the world!"

"Rubbish!" said Mr Grant. "This fair is dangerous.

And I'm going to get it stopped. For good."

When Mr Grant and Mrs Leach had gone,

Ozzie made Bert a cup of tea.

Bert still wouldn't listen to Ozzie.

"Steve and Sidney?" he said. "Two of the best hands I've ever had."

Ozzie turned to Captain Cutlass. He was sure that the parrot knew something.

"What happened to Rachel, Captain?"

Captain Cutlass said nothing.

Ozzie asked again. "What happened to Rachel?"

Suddenly the parrot started to squawk.

"It's a piece of cake! It's a piece of cake!"

"It's a piece of cake!" cried Ozzie. "That's what Steve says!

Captain Cutlass must have seen what happened.

He was with Rachel, wasn't he? Now will you believe me!

Steve took her!"

"That," said Bert, looking at Captain Cutlass,

"is just a parrot. It talks nonsense."

"Steve took Rachel," said Ozzie, "And Turnbull must have driven her away. I found her card in his car!"

"Oh, go away, Ozzie!" shouted Bert. "And leave me in peace!"

"It's a piece of cake!" squawked Captain Cutlass.



Ozzie left Bert and ran home.

Mum was just going to phone Mr Turnbull. Ozzie stopped her.

"Mum, where's that card? The one Mr Turnbull gave you.

I need his address!"

Mum was surprised but she gave Ozzie the card.

Ozzie saw the emblem in the corner.

He had seen that bull before.

It was on the envelope

he and Rachel had found

in the rubbish.

No, Mr Turnbull definitely

was *not* all right.

"Mum, don't phone Mr Turnbull!" said Ozzie.

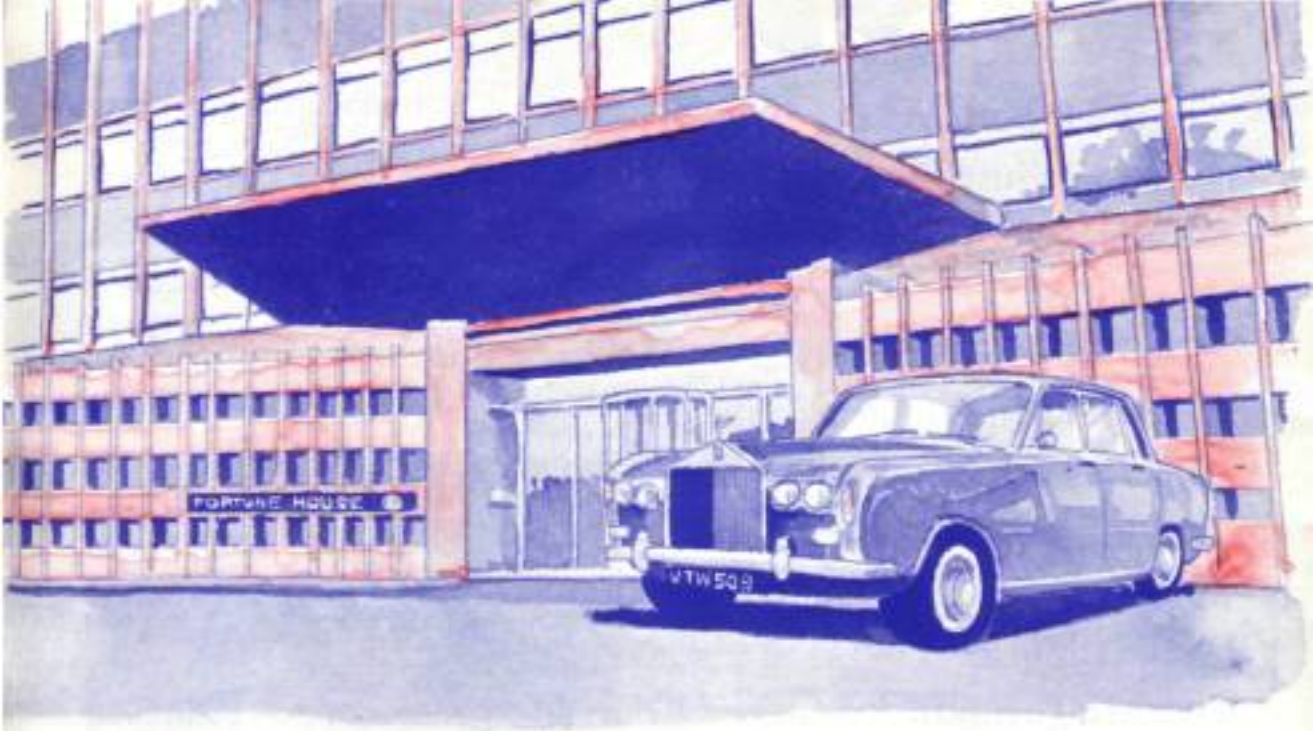
"I think he's got Rachel."

He pushed Turnbull's card, Rachel's card,

and the envelope at Mum.

"Take these things to Bert," he cried and rushed out of the shop.





Ozzic ran all the way to the address on Turnbull's card. It was an office block. Turnbull's car was outside.



Ozzie stopped to think. What next?

Suddenly something hit Turnbull's car.

Ozzie jumped.

Something else hit him on the shoulder.

It was a chocolate toffee.

Ozzie looked up and there, at the window, was Madam Varadi.

Chapter nine **Talk or ride . . .**

Now Ozzie knew what to do.

He crept in through the door of the office block.

He made his way up the stairs. He was in a corridor.

Then he heard a voice coming from one of the rooms.

A sleek voice. Ozzie stopped and listened.

It was Turnbull talking to somebody on the phone.



"You've done well, Steve," he said.

"After all the trouble you and Sidney have made the fair won't come back even if the town wants it. And the town won't want it. Grant and Mrs Leach will make sure of that. They don't know it, of course, but they've helped us a lot."

Turnbull laughed.

Ozzie kept on listening.

"Oh yes. I'm sure Mrs Watson will sell her field now," said Turnbull. "And it won't be very expensive.

As you would say, Steve, it's a piece of cake."

Turnbull laughed again.

"I've been waiting to get my hands on that field for years.

Now I can build an office block and a hotel on it, and sell them for a lot of money. Yes, I shall make a lot of money, Steve. You and Sidney will do very nicely too.

But first, I've one more job for you. We must move everything you stole from the shop.

Yes, send Sidney over right away.

You can stay with the fair till we get back. All right?"

He put the phone down.

Ozzie crept past the door of Turnbull's office.

The next door was locked and bolted on the outside.

He had a job to pull back the bolt. Then he turned the key and went in. The room was full of stock from the shop.

But there was no sign of Rachel.



"Hello, Squirt."

Ozzie jumped.

Rachel was behind the door.



"Thanks for coming," she whispered. "Let's get out of here."

But just as they started to leave, Turnbull came out of his office and started walking up and down the corridor.

Ozzie quickly closed the door.

"He's waiting for Sidney," whispered Ozzie.

"Great," said Rachel. "Now what do we do?"

Mum was asking the same thing.

She had found Bert

by the Big Wheel.

Captain Cutlass was with them.

Bert looked at the two cards and the envelope.



"This lot and a parrot." he said. "It's not much to go on, Jean."

"Wakey, wakey!" squawked Captain Cutlass.

"I just can't believe Mr Turnbull's mixed up in this," said Mum. "He's so nice."

"So's Steve," said Bert. "I like a good worker."

Steve was working nearby. "We do our best, Guv," he said.

"Know what I mean?"

"Come and say hello to Mrs Watson," said Bert.

Steve smiled at Mum. He hadn't seen Captain Cutlass.

"A piece of cake!" squawked the parrot. "A piece of cake, a piece of cake!" And he squawked and flapped at Steve.

"Get off!" shouted Steve, backing away. "You're not having another go at me!"

"What?" said Bert. "When did that

parrot have a go at you? When?"

Suddenly, he grabbed Steve and pushed him into a seat on

the Big Wheel.

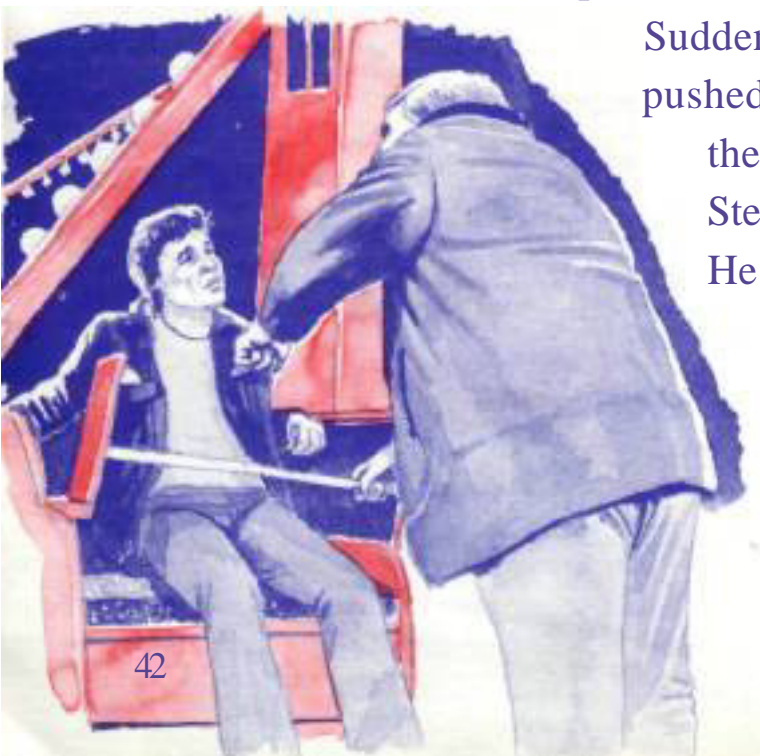
Steve squirmed.

He didn't like the Big Wheel.

"Talk or ride!" said Bert.

"Know what I mean?"

Where's Rachel?"



Chapter ten **Mixed fortunes**

Rachel was still in the office block. So was Ozzie. So was Turnbull. The phone rang in Turnbull's office and he went to answer it. The corridor was empty. "Let's go!" whispered Rachel to Ozzie, and they crept towards the stairs.

As they were passing the lift the doors opened, and there was Sidney. He stared at them. They stared at him. "She's got out, Guv!" shouted Sidney. Then everybody ran.



Ozzie and Rachel ran down the stairs.

Sidney ran down the stairs after them.

Turnbull went down in the lift. At the bottom, the lift doors opened. A tea trolley was there!

Turnbull and Sidney crashed into it.

Ozzie and Rachel got away.

"The car!" shouted Turnbull. "We can still get them."

Turnbull and Sidney jumped into the car and drove off.

It was dark now and the fair was open.

Steve was still on the Big Wheel. He'd had a short ride and a long, long talk. He had told Bert and Mum everything.

Turnbull stopped his car in the trees by the fairground.

There was no sign of Ozzie or Rachel.

"Maybe they went to the police," said Sidney.

"No," said Turnbull. "They'd come here first.

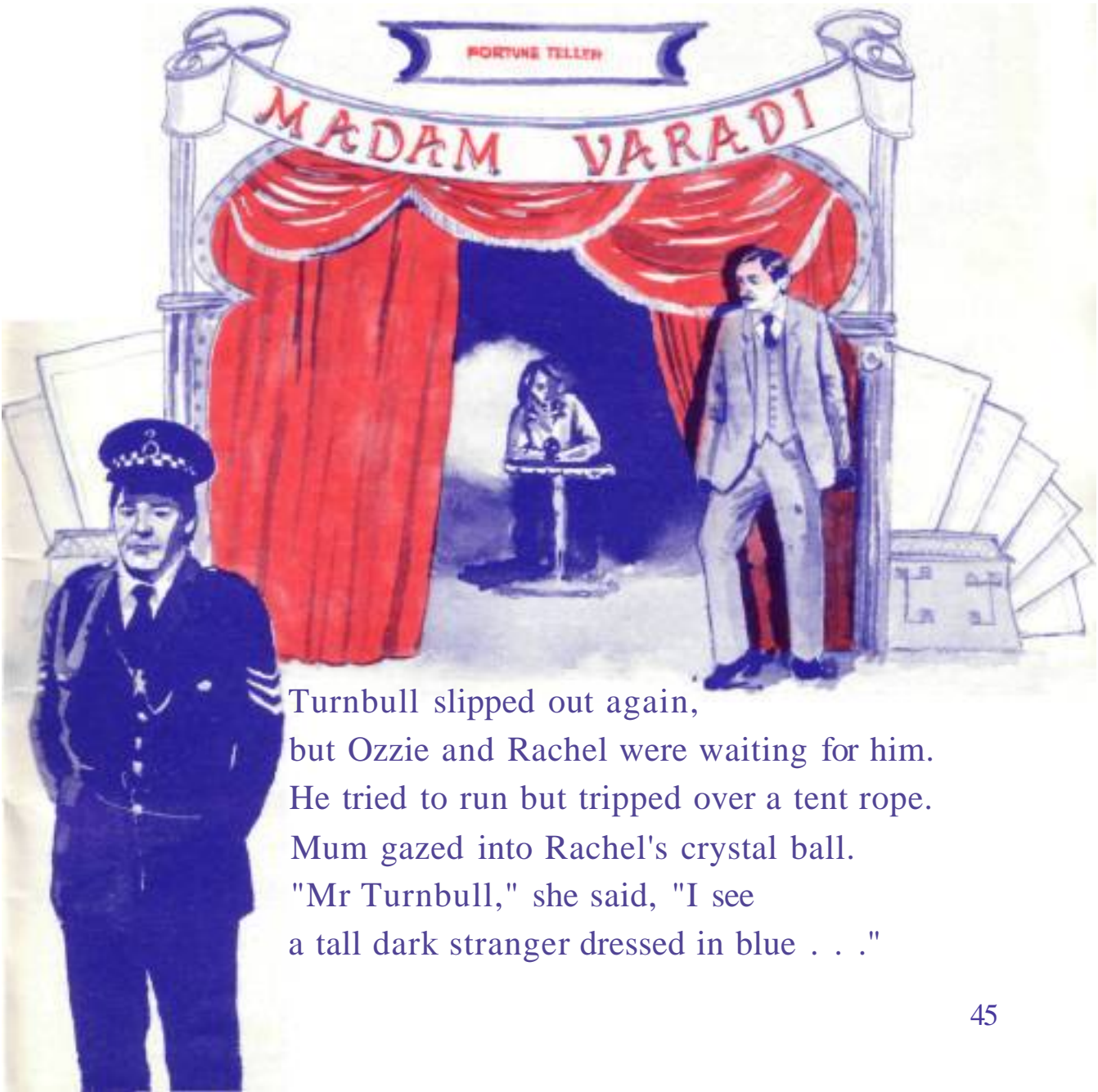
Find Steve and tell him what's happened."

Turnbull and Sidney made their way into the fairground.

Sidney saw Steve at the top of the Big Wheel.



He stopped and stared. Suddenly Bert grabbed him and pushed him into another seat. Sidney was going to take a ride on the Big Wheel too. Turnbull tried to get away. He slipped into the fortune-teller's tent, but Mum was there. "Oh," cried Mum. "Mr Turnbull!"



Turnbull slipped out again, but Ozzie and Rachel were waiting for him. He tried to run but tripped over a tent rope. Mum gazed into Rachel's crystal ball. "Mr Turnbull," she said, "I see a tall dark stranger dressed in blue . . ."



Mr Turnbull felt a hand on his shoulder.

He looked up and saw a policeman.

Mum smiled, "And I shan't be selling Watson's Field.

Not to you or anybody else."

"She's a good 'un!" said Captain Cutlass. "Give her a kiss!"

And Bert did.

"That parrot talks a lot of sense," he said.

The next evening Bert and Rachel had a party in their caravan. Nothing special, just tea and lots of cream cakes and jam doughnuts.

Captain Cutlass was there, and Mum and Ozzie.

"It's a piece of cake!" squawked Captain Cutlass.

"No it's not." said Ozzie. "It's a jam doughnut."

"All right, Mastermind!" said Rachel, but she laughed.



Everybody laughed, even Mr Grant and Mrs Leach. They were the special guests. Sherry was there too. "I just don't know what to say/" said Mr Grant. "Action, Robert," said Mrs Leach. "Not words." And they tore up the petition. Then Rachel gazed into her crystal ball and saw happiness all round. "You know what that means, don't you?" said Bert. "A ride on the Gallopers. Come on." So they all went for a ride. Except Sherry and Captain Cutlass. "You're a good 'un!" squawked Captain Cutlass. "Give us a kiss!" But Sherry just wagged her tail.



LOOK AND READ

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