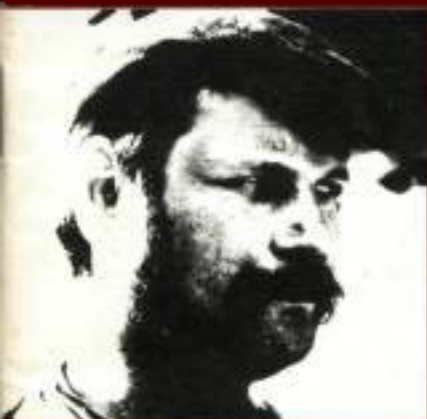


BBC Television for Schools

Joe and the Sheep Rustlers

by Leonard Kingston

A Look and Read Book



Ted Beasley



Denis Beasley



Mike Burns



Mrs Sharp



Joe Norland



Jill Sharp



Pat, a workman.

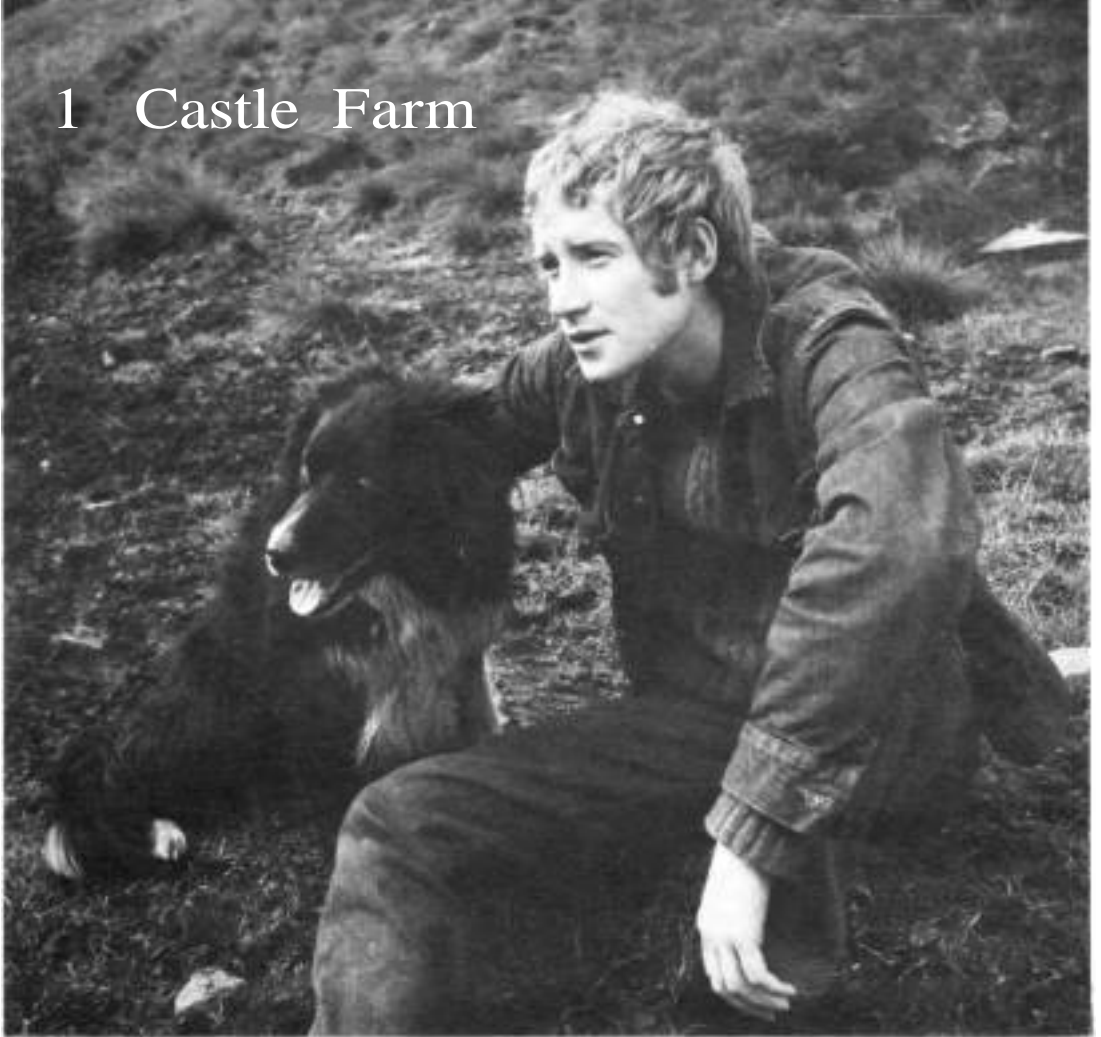


Mr Burns, the butcher.



Mr West, the warden.

1 Castle Farm



My name is Joe. I live in a town called Ten Bridges, but I work on a farm on the moors. The farm is called Castle Farm.

I want to tell you a story about this farm. It is owned by Mrs Sharp and her daughter Jill. I helped to run the farm with Mike Burns. Mike was foreman, I was the shepherd boy and Jill and Mrs Sharp looked after the shire horses.



We had to work very hard. We always had to be on the watch for sheep rustlers—that is, sheep stealers. I bet you never thought we had sheep rustlers in Britain. Well, we do, and this story is all about them.

We had been losing sheep for some time, but we did not know who was stealing them. Then to add to our worries, Mike Burns said he must leave. He would not say why he must leave. Mrs Sharp was very upset. The day Mike was to leave I caught her having a row with Mr West, the warden of our local youth hostel. Mr West and Mrs Sharp were usually good friends. Yet, she was shouting :

'We have lost three sheep in the last week, and you and your hostellers are to blame!'



Mr West tried to tell her that this was not true. But she would not listen and walked off angrily. Mr West said to Jill and me:

'Your mum, Mrs Sharp, wants to know where her sheep have gone. She should try asking some of the local lads. What about that pair up there?' He pointed up into the hills. We looked and saw two men. They were watching us through binoculars!



'The Beasley brothers!' said Mr West. 'The beastly brothers, I call them. That's just what they are; beasts, the pair of them. They have a farm near Ten Bridges.'

Why were they watching Castle Farm? Jill and I were very worried. We walked up the track into the farmhouse. Then we turned and looked back. The Beasley brothers had gone from the hill.

A little later, Mike came to say goodbye. He was carrying his case and cap.

'Oh Mike,' Jill cried. 'Why can't you stay? Why do you have to leave?'

This upset Mike. 'I can't tell you,' he shouted. 'Will you leave me alone? Please! I *would* tell you if I could.' And off he ran!

We were amazed. Why was he so upset? Then Jill saw that Mike had left his cap.

'I will take it to him. I will ask him again to stay with us,' she cried. 'Perhaps it's not too late. Never say die!'

That was one of Jill's funny sayings 'Never say die!' She was always saying it. She ran off and I ran after her.

We reached the farm gate and there we stopped dead. We saw Mike getting into a lorry. The Beasley brothers' lorry! And there were the Beasley brothers talking to Mike!

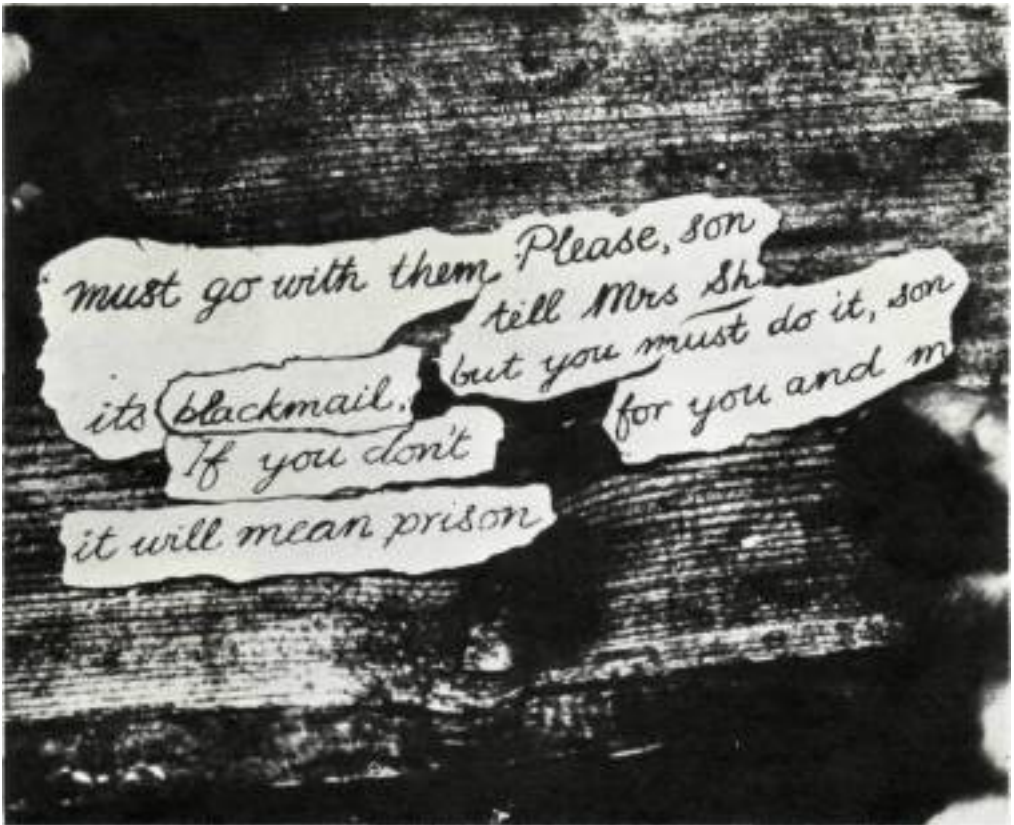
'I don't like this,' I whispered to Jill. 'I don't like this at all!'



2 Blackmail

The next day Jill was cleaning out Mike's old room. We were burning the rubbish in the farmyard. Jill was throwing bits of paper into the fire and some blew away.

I picked up one bit. There was one word on it: BLACKMAIL. We quickly put together all the bits of paper we could find. It looked like this:



'It's a letter to Mike from his father!' I said.

Mike's father had a butcher's shop in Ten Bridges.

What could the letter mean ?

'I will go over to see Mike at the Beasley brothers' farm,' I said. 'I can take his cap. That will give me a good reason for going.'

Jill lent me her horse, Canty. I jumped on his back and rode off towards the Beasley brothers' farm.



When I got to the farm, it looked empty. There was nobody in sight. I walked up to the front door of the farmhouse and then I heard strange sounds.

I was scared. I crept in. Denis Beasley was lying asleep in a chair. The strange sounds were snores! I almost burst out laughing. But then I heard a terrible voice behind me.

'What are you doing here, sonny boy? *Snooping?*'

It was the elder Beasley brother, terrible Ted! He woke up brother Denis and both closed round me. I felt really scared this time!

'What's your game, sonny boy?' asked Ted.

I said I was looking for Mike Burns.

'We don't know any Mike Burns!' Ted shouted. 'Clear off!'

I went, but they were not going to get rid of me as easily as that. I was sure now that something was up! I rode Canty round to the back of the farm and peeped over the wall. There was Mike! Just as I thought. The Beasley brothers were talking to him.



Then I saw something that made me gasp with amazement. There were some sheep in the yard with strange marks on their backs.

Stolen sheep!

What were these sheep doing at the Beasley brothers' farm ?

I began copying down the marks on a bit of paper. I forgot about Canty. As I wrote, he walked up behind me. I looked round. There he was-standing in the gateway, where the Beasley brothers could see him!

Denis saw him. He turned to brother Ted to tell him.

What could I do ? I would be caught red-handed !



3 A mistake

Denis was talking to Ted. He was telling him about Canty.

I had to act quickly. I ran out, grabbed Canty and pulled him back. Just in time! Ted turned round. He could not see Canty.

'What about it?' he said, angrily.

Denis turned round. *He* could not see Canty.

'The horse *was* there!' he said. 'I swear it, Ted !'

Ted was angry. 'We had better look round,' he said to Mike. They both walked towards the gateway.

'You take that side,' said Ted, and Mike turned towards Canty and me. He saw us! I just looked at him. I could not speak, because Ted would have heard me. I just looked at Mike and he seemed to understand.

'Can you see anything ?' cried Ted.

'No boss, nothing,' said Mike, and he turned away.



Mike had saved us! I led Canty off as quietly as I could. Now to find my friend Mr West.

I rode to the hostel. Mr West listened to my story and we looked at his book of sheep marks. Yes, there were the marks I had copied down. They were the marks of different farms. The sheep were stolen.

'Joe, lad,' said Mr West, laughing, 'this looks like the end for the beastly Beasley brothers! Come on, Joe, let us get over there.'



We got into his car and were soon at the Beasley brothers' farm. Mr West led the way into the house.

He said sternly to Ted Beasley:

'This lad says you have some stolen sheep in your backyard.'

Ted did not look very worried.

'Stolen sheep?'he said. He turned to Denis. 'Here, Denis, what do you know about stolen sheep?'

Denis grinned. 'Oh, I know nothing, Ted,' he said.

The warden was getting angry. 'Cut out the funny stuff, Beasley!' he shouted. 'I am going to look at your backyard!'

He pushed the brothers out of the way. We walked into the backyard. There were sheep there, all right. But the marks! All the sheep had the Beasleys' marks on their backs.



'Mr West,' I said, 'the sheep have been changed!'

'No sonny boy,' said Ted, grinning at me. 'You just made a mistake.'

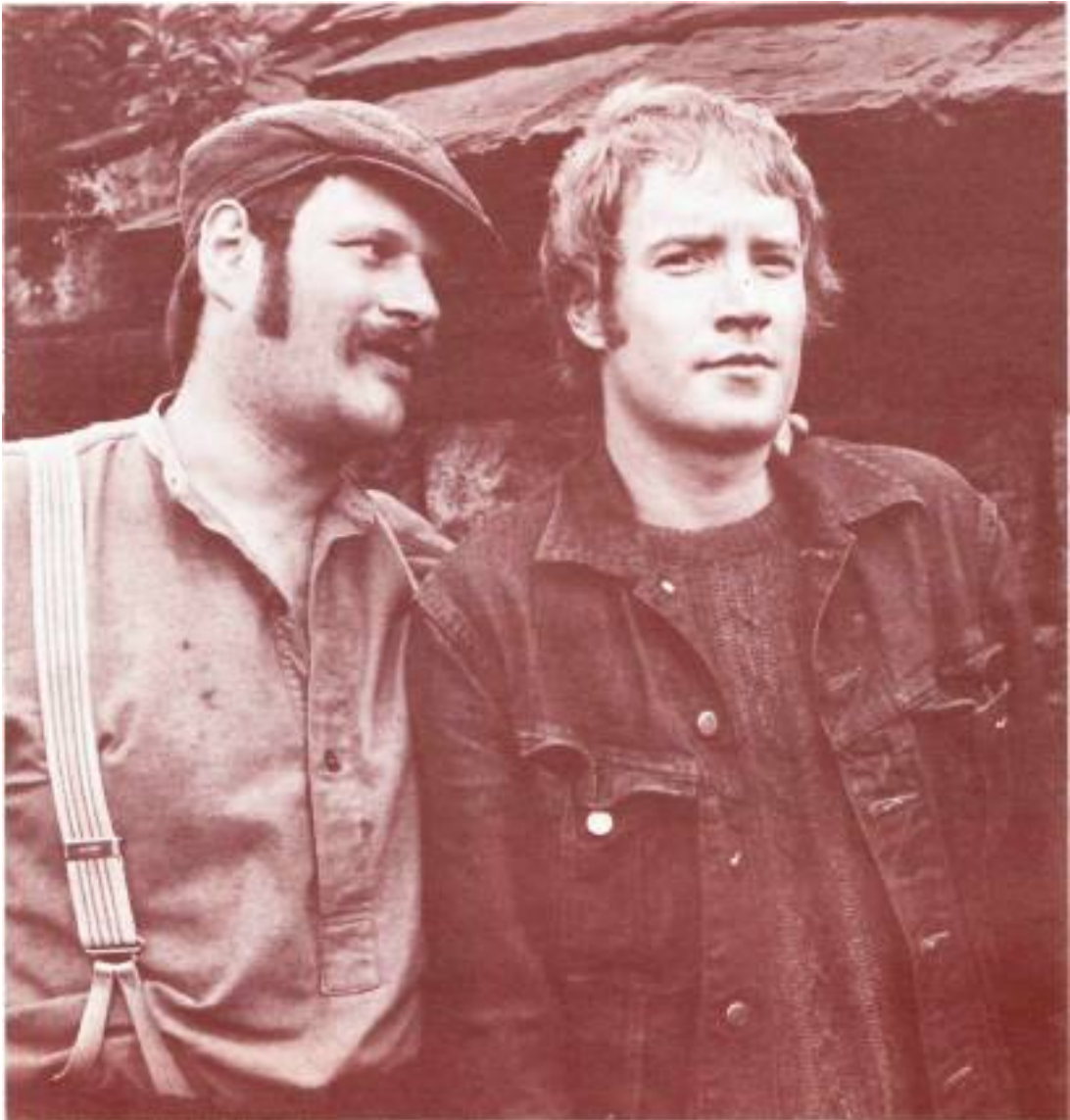
I *knew* that was not true, but how could I prove it?

The warden was fed up. 'Sorry,' he said, 'very sorry, Beasley,' and he turned away.

Ted came close to me and said:

'Silly snooper.' He gave me a nasty smile. 'You have made me angry. Yes, angry, sonny boy. You shouldn't have done that. When boys make me angry I make them sorry. *Very sorry!*' Then he whispered in my ear, 'You will be hearing from us!'

I was frightened. Big Ted was out to get me!



4 One in three

Only Jill believed my story about the Beasley brothers. Only Jill believed that big Ted was out to get me.

Jill and I took turns to watch the sheep -just in case. Were the Beasley brothers somewhere near? We never knew. But sometimes I got the feeling that somebody was watching us, somewhere.

A week passed and nothing happened. Perhaps everything was going to be all right.

It was shearing time. Harry Crabtree, the local shearer, came to Castle Farm to shear our sheep.

Harry is a friendly chap. He usually talks a lot. But that day, he did not seem keen on talking.

He had come from working on the Beasley brothers' farm and I wanted to hear if he had spoken to Mike. Jill and I kept asking him, but he would not say a word. Then just as he was leaving, he pushed a letter into my hands.



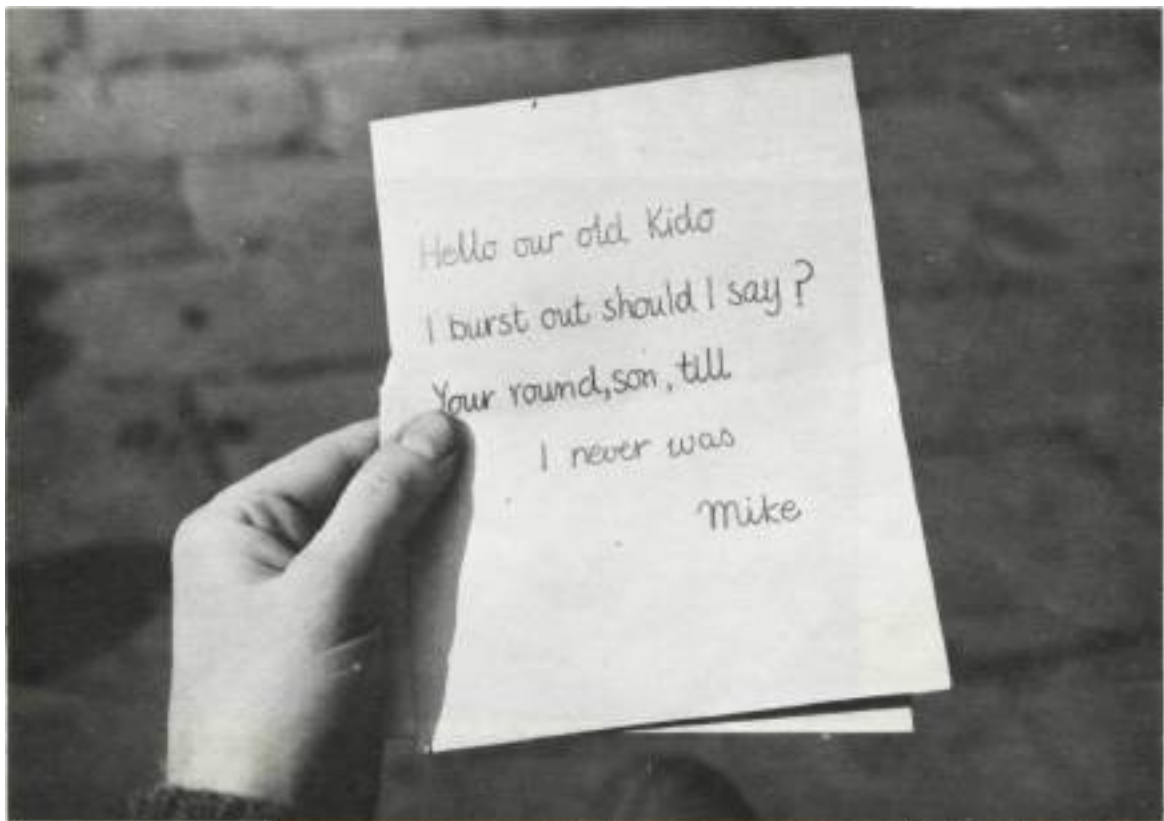
'Here, from Mike,' he said, speaking very quietly as if he was frightened.

'Mike says, take one in three if you want to see,' Harry said.

'One in three? What does Mike mean?' I said.

But Harry just looked frightened. 'I have said too much as it is,' he said. 'You will get me killed!' And off he went.

We opened the letter. This is what it said:



We could not make head or tail of it.

'It's nonsense!' I said.

'Perhaps it's a code message,' said Jill

'Yes! One in three!' I cried.

We underlined every third word. But when we read that out it still did not seem to make sense:

'Never say die!' said Jill. 'Let us try every third *letter*.'

So we underlined every third letter, but still we could not make sense of it.

We gave up. We could not spend any more time on it. There was work to be done. We had to load up the wool and take it to a factory in Ten Bridges. I put the letter away in my pocket and we set to work.

We drove to the factory. As we were unloading the wool, the foreman of the factory said to us,



'Terrible news about Harry Crabtree, isn't it?'

'What news?' I asked.

'Have you not heard ?' he said. 'He was beaten up after leaving your farm this morning !'

We remembered what Harry had said. 'You will get me killed'. Had he been beaten up because of Mike's letter? I said to Jill, 'There *must* be some message in that letter !'

We had another look at it. Suddenly Jill cried,
'Perhaps we should have counted the question mark as a
letter!'

Could that be it ? Yes! We tried it and it worked!



'Our sheep!' cried Jill.

Mike had been trying to warn us. While we were in Ten Bridges, the Beasley brothers were stealing the sheep. There was only Mrs Sharp left at the farm to watch the sheep.

'Come on Jill!' I cried. 'Let us get back! We may be in time!' We started up the car. The foreman started shouting at us. 'Come back!' he shouted.

But we had no time to stop. We had to get back to the farm!

5 Never say die

We drove as fast as we could. Could we get there before the Beasley brothers?

We reached the top of the hill leading down to Castle Farm. There, driving out of the gateway, was a big lorry. Was it the Beasley brothers? We did not know. We raced down the hill.



The lorry came at us. We had to turn aside to escape a crash. The lorry went racing up the hill.

We ran into the farmyard. There was no sign of the sheep and no sign of Mrs Sharp.

'Mum! Mum!' cried Jill, but there was no answer. We looked in the stables. Then we heard moaning sounds coming from the barn. We rushed in and there was Mrs Sharp, bound and gagged! We untied her.

'What has happened, Mum?' asked Jill.



'I was in the house,' moaned poor Mrs Sharp. 'I heard a lorry - the sheep - I rushed out and something seemed to hit me. I don't remember any more, Jill. Joe, you must go after the lorry. We have got to save our sheep!'

'What can we do?' said Jill.

'Stop the lorry!' I said.

'How?'

'If we go up by the hostel, we can get to the crossroads before the lorry.'

'And pick up the warden on the way!' cried Jill.

'Yes. We need the warden.' I said. 'Come on!'

We ran to the car. Soon we were at the hostel talking to Mr West. He jumped in the car and we were off again.

We reached the crossroads. The lorry came in sight. We blocked the road and the lorry came to a stop. Just as I thought! The Beasley brothers were driving the lorry.

'Hello, warden,' Ted said to Mr West. 'What can we do for you?'



'Open up the back of your lorry, Beasley,' said Mr West, sternly.

'Why?'

'You know why!' shouted Mr West. 'Because it's full of sheep stolen from Castle Farm!'

The Beasley brothers started to say, 'No it...'

Mr West said, 'If you do not open up the lorry this instant I am going to telephone the police!'

That seemed to frighten them! They led the way to the back of the lorry. They opened the doors and we looked inside...



The lorry was empty! There was no sign of the sheep.

Ted and Denis started to smile. They had tricked us again.

'You have hidden the sheep somewhere!' I shouted.

Then Ted turned nasty. 'I tell you what, sonny boy,' he said, 'this is the second time you have blamed us for stolen sheep. Are *you* perhaps rustling a few sheep and trying to put the blame on somebody else?' He turned to Mr West. 'Yes, you ring the police, warden! Go on. I would enjoy that. Ring them up and get them to quiz the snooper here about sheep stealing !'

I did not know what to say. The warden was looking at me as if he *believed* Ted. The Beasley brothers got back into their lorry and drove off, laughing and sneering.

'They are lying!' said Jill to the warden, 'they are lying ! You must see that!'



Mr West shook his head.

'All I can see is that Joe has again made me look a fool. I tell you this much, Joe. Next time you come running for my help, you had better bring proof!' And he turned away angrily.

Jill looked at me.

'Never say die,' she whispered.

6 Prisoner in the house

Jill and I were very worried. The sheep had gone and nobody would believe our story of the Beasley brothers. Mrs Sharp was ill in bed, so she could not help us. It was up to us. We had to do it all on our own. Somehow, we *had* to find those sheep.

'A secret hiding place,' said Jill. 'The sheep must be in some secret hiding place. That is the answer!'

'But *where*?' I asked.

Where, indeed. We looked at the local map.



'Here are the crossroads where we stopped the lorry,' said Jill. 'Here is our farm. They must have unloaded the sheep between the crossroads and the farm. That leaves a lot of land to explore.'

'It will be like looking for a needle in a haystack,' I said.

'We must not think like that!' cried Jill. 'We *are* going to find it. Never-'

'Never say die!' I shouted, before she could say it. We both burst out laughing. Somehow, we felt better after that. Jill saddled Canty and I got on my bike. Then we set out to explore.



All day we explored the land between the crossroads and the farm. One time we saw smoke rising from a clump of trees. We crept up and looked. But it was only a tramp cooking his lunch.

By teatime we had found nothing.

'It is no use,' I told Jill. 'We shall never find the sheep this way.'

'But what more can we do?'

'If only we could talk to Mike,' I said. 'He must know where the sheep are hidden.'

We both knew what that meant. We would have to go to the Beasley farm. If big Ted caught sight of us But there was no other way.

'All right,' said Jill bravely. 'What are we waiting for?' We set off down towards the farm.

We crept into the backyard. There was no sign of Mike anywhere. Then we heard a shout and we hid in the barn.



We heard Ted Beasley shout from the doorway of the farmhouse.

'Denis!' he called. 'Where are you? Your tea is getting cold!'

Denis jumped down from the hay, just next to our hiding place. That frightened us.

'What is the matter with you ?' shouted Ted, angrily. 'Are you asleep again?'

'No, no, Ted!'

'Have you got the marking paint?'

'Yes, all done!' said Denis, and he followed Ted into the house and they shut the door.

T bet they are holding Mike a prisoner in there! He *must* be in there. Jill, if only you could get them out of the house for a second!'

'Me?' said Jill. She did not like the sound of that.

'Yes! Then I could creep in. Go on, you can do it! Just knock and say something to get them out of the house.'

'But *what?* Say *what?*'

'Anything ! Say Canty has got a nail in his shoe! Please, Jill!' I begged. 'Come on, be brave. It is our only chance!'

'All right,' she said, at last. T will try it.'

So Jill led Canty into the yard, while I crept up close to the door. Jill walked slowly to the door. She raised her hand and knocked.

Now for it. Now there was no turning back.



7 The red trail

Denis came to the door. He had a cup of tea in his hand. He just looked at Jill and gaped.

'Who is it?' shouted Ted from inside the house.

'It is-er-that girl,' stuttered Denis.

'Jill Sharp, Mr Beasley,' shouted Jill. 'Jill Sharp of Castle Farm!' That brought Ted running!

'What do you want?' he asked, angrily. 'Now look here, you leave us alone! We don't know anything about your sheep! If I hear another word about them I am going to the police. Do you hear? Clear off! Clear off!'

'Yes!' said Denis. 'Do you hear?'

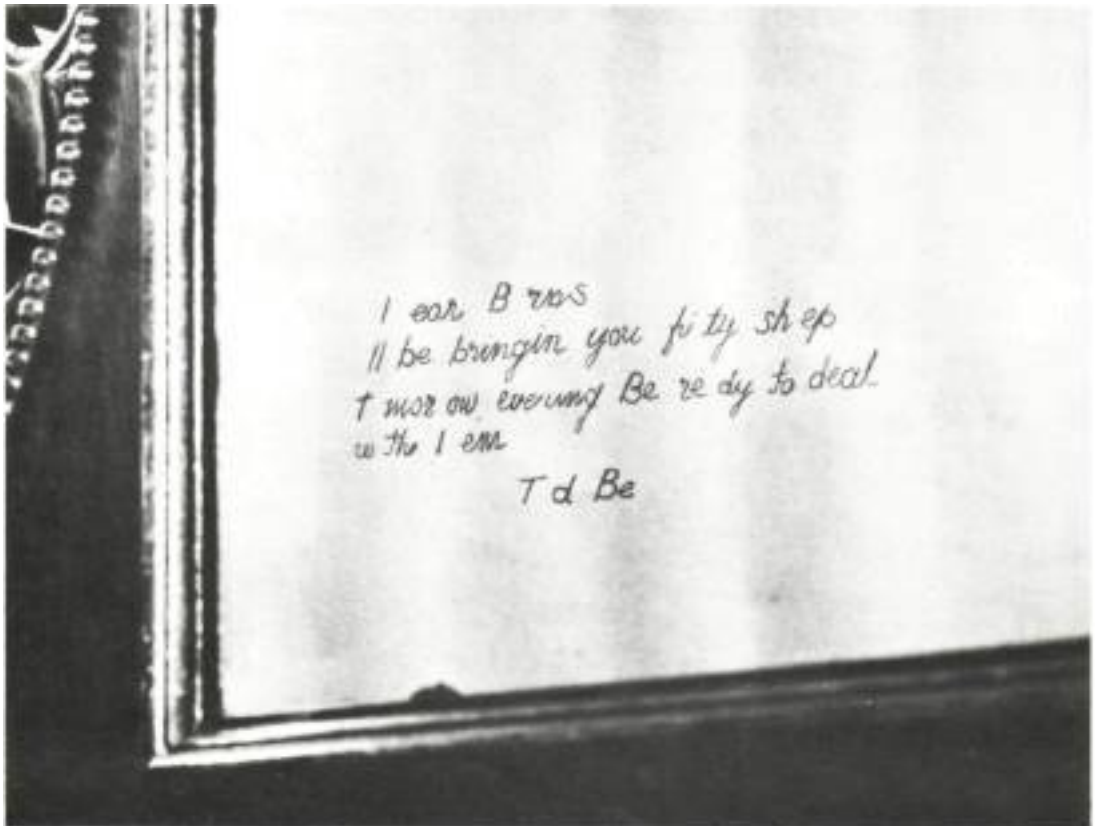
'Mr Beasley, I do not want to talk about our sheep,' said Jill, sweetly. 'I want you to look at my horse.'

'Your horse?' said Ted, his eyes popping. 'Why?'

'There is something wrong with it,' said Jill. Before they could say another word, she grabbed them both by the hand and led them out into the yard.



Now I had my chance. I dashed for the door and slipped inside. I ran upstairs, calling 'Mike! Mike!' very softly. There was no answer. I looked into all the rooms. No sign of Mike anywhere! I ran downstairs again. The Beasley brothers were still in the yard, looking at Canty and talking to Jill. I took one last look around the room. I saw some blotting paper on Ted's desk. There were ink marks on it. I held it up to the mirror. In that way I could read the marks the right way round. This is what I saw:



I was trying to work out what it said when I heard footsteps. I looked round. The Beasley brothers were returning ! I was trapped. I put the blotting paper back as quickly as I could and hid under the desk. Ted Beasley was angry. He was shouting as he came into the room.

'There is something funny going on here! There was nothing wrong with that rotten horse! So what does it all mean? What washer game?'

He sat down at the desk. I was scared. He was almost touching me!

'They are plotting something ! I can feel it. For one thing, where is that Joe? I bet he is around here somewhere!'

He didn't know how right he was!



'If I get my hands on him', Ted screamed, 'I will kill him!' And he stamped his feet. I shrank back. Luckily, he then jumped up and went to the window. I peeped out. I heard him saying to Denis:

'You get the marking paint and stick it in the back of the Land Rover. We are not waiting till tomorrow to get rid of the sheep. We are doing it now! We will change the marks and dump them on Burns before nightfall!'

Burns! That was the name of Mike's father. So that was the name on the blotting paper. Burns the butcher! They were going to sell our sheep for meat.

Not if I could help it!

The brothers went out into the yard. They sent Jill out of the yard. They got a large tin of red marking paint from the barn and put it in the back of the Land Rover. Then they went back into the barn. I ran out, quickly climbed into the back of the Land Rover and lay still. I heard the brothers come out of the barn. Some brushes were flung in the back of the Land Rover. They landed on top of me.

'Are you sure that paint is safe?' I heard Ted say.

Would they look in the back and *see me*?

'Ah, Ted, nothing can happen to it,' Denis said sleepily, and they moved away. Soon the Land Rover started up. I peeped out. We were turning out of the farmyard and there I could see Jill, waiting with her horse.



She looked very gloomy. She could not think what had happened to me. She got a shock when I waved to her! She grinned and waved back. Then I picked up a tin and dipped it in the red marking paint. Then I splashed some on to the road.

Jill got the message! I was going to leave a red trail for her to follow. I was going to lead her to our stolen sheep!

8 Left to rot



I kept splashing out the red paint, a little at a time. It left a fine trail. I was sure Jill would find it easy to follow. But how long would the journey be? I was running out of paint.

But then the lorry stopped beside some old houses. I jumped out and hid. The Beasley brothers came round to unload their marking paint.

'What has been happening here?' cried Ted.

They saw the tin covered in red paint. They saw the red trail leading away from the lorry. They were on to me! Ted grabbed me.

'You little rat!' he shouted. 'I am going to put an end to your snooping for ever! Open the door, Denis!'



A door was opened. I was flung into the dark, landing almost at the feet of... who do you think? Mike Burns!

'Mike!' I cried.

'Yes, your friend Mike,' sneered Ted. 'You can both lie there and rot together! As he slammed the door shut, I heard him shout to Denis, 'We cannot change the marks now. Let us get those sheep into the lorry and get out of here!'

Mike and I were left alone in the dark.

Mike explained, 'The Beasley brothers found out I had sent that letter to you. So they stuck me in here.'



'But why did you join them in the first place, Mike?' I asked, and then he told me. He had been stealing sheep from Castle Farm and selling them to his father. The Beasley brothers had got to hear of it and had blackmailed him into joining them on their farm and blackmailed his father into buying all the sheep they had been stealing from the other farms roundabout. Mike was very sorry about it all now.

'Oh, Joe,' he moaned, 'why did I ever get you into this!'

'Cheer up, Mike. We shall soon get out of here.' I explained about the trail of red marking paint I had laid for Jill.

But Mike did not cheer up.

'These walls are over a foot thick, Joe,' he said. 'That door is solid oak. Jill will turn up here but she will not hear us calling for help. Ted Beasley was right. We shall lie here and rot!'

'We have got to find something to make a noise!' I said.

'But what? There is nothing here!'

I looked around. There was a loose beam in the roof. We pulled and pulled until it came free. We banged it against the door.

'That sounded good and loud,' said Mike.

'Now, again!' I shouted, and we banged the door again! And again!





Jill had arrived outside. She was standing by the door. She heard the sound of the banging ! Quickly, she tied a piece of rope to the door and tied the other end to Canty.

'Heave! Heave!' she shouted.

Canty pulled and heaved. We banged away with the lump of wood. Slowly the door began to give way. At long last Mike and I were free!



9 Put up your hands

Jill and I shouted and danced for joy, but Mike stopped us.

'Joe! Jill! Our job is not finished yet!'

'No, Mike is right,' I said. 'If we are going to catch the Beasley brothers we have no time to waste.'

'But where are they?' asked Jill. 'Where have they gone to?'

'My dad's place in Ten Bridges,' said Mike. He turned to me, 'I know a quick way to get to Ten Bridges.'

'But we would be no match for the Beasley brothers,' I said.

'No, but perhaps we could hold on to them, while Jill gets help.'

'If I could get to the hostel—' Jill began.

'That is it!' shouted Mike. 'The hostel! Get the warden!'

'And the hostellers!' I added.

'I will get them all!' said Jill, and she jumped on Canty.

'Good luck!' she shouted.

'Good luck!' we shouted back.

Off she went, galloping as fast as she could.



'Now, Joe,' said Mike, 'are you feeling fit? This is going to be a long, hard run.'

'I am fit,' I said, cheerfully.

'Right then. After me!'

And off we set!

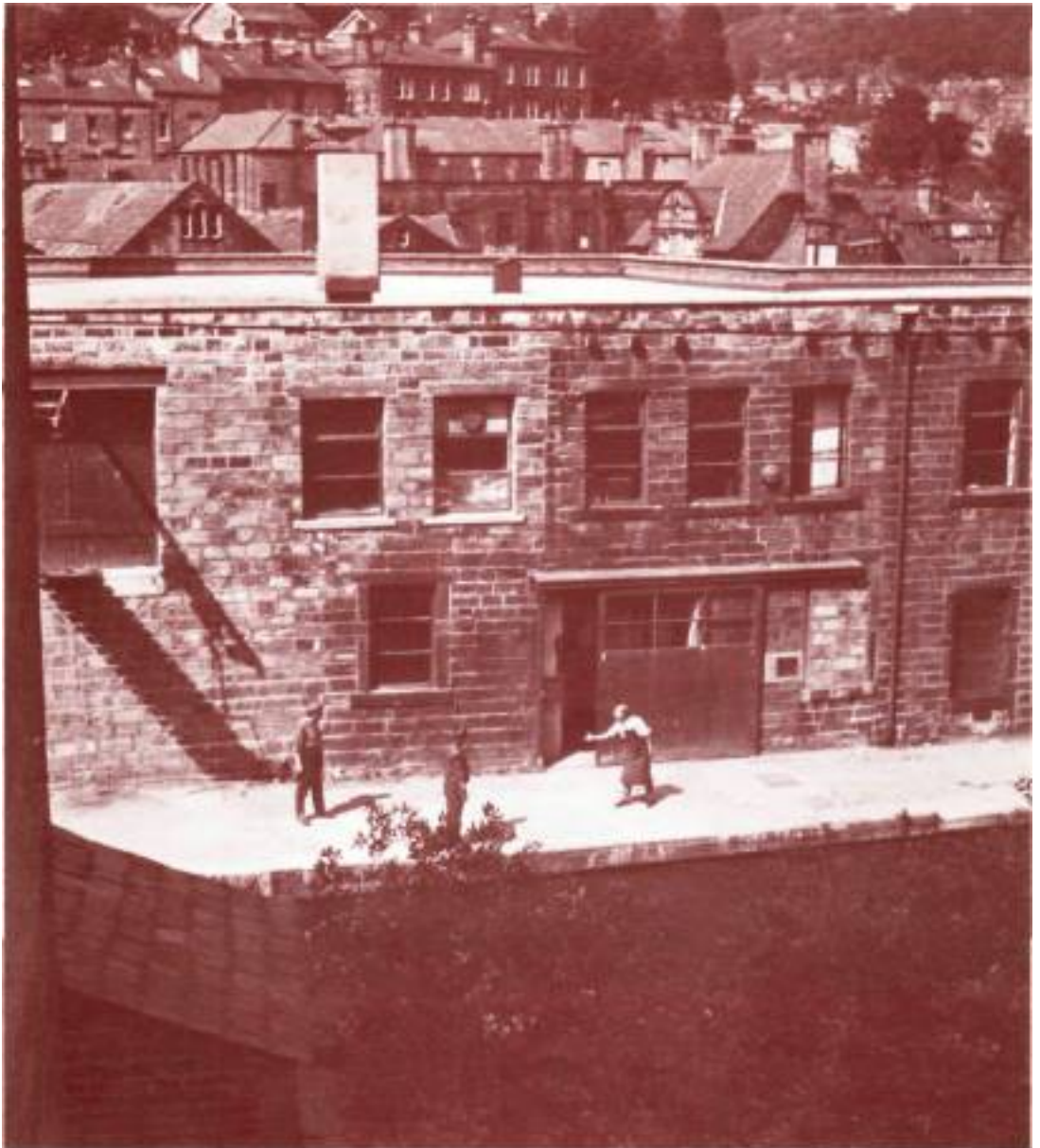
I will never forget that run. Up hills, across streams, running till I thought my legs would fall off!

'Come on!' Mike kept saying. 'Faster! Faster!'



Faster, faster we went till at last we found ourselves on the top of the hill looking down on Ten Bridges. The lorry was below on the banks of the canal. The Beasley brothers were talking to a man.

'We have made it!' cried Mike. 'We are in time! That is my dad talking to them down there! Come on!'





We crept down the hill and crossed the bridge over the canal
As we came near, I could hear Mike's father shouting :

'I am *not* taking them! I can't Beasley! Not with the Sharp brand on them!'

'You will take them and like it!' Ted Beasley shouted back.
'You know what will happen to you and Mike if I drop a word to the police!'

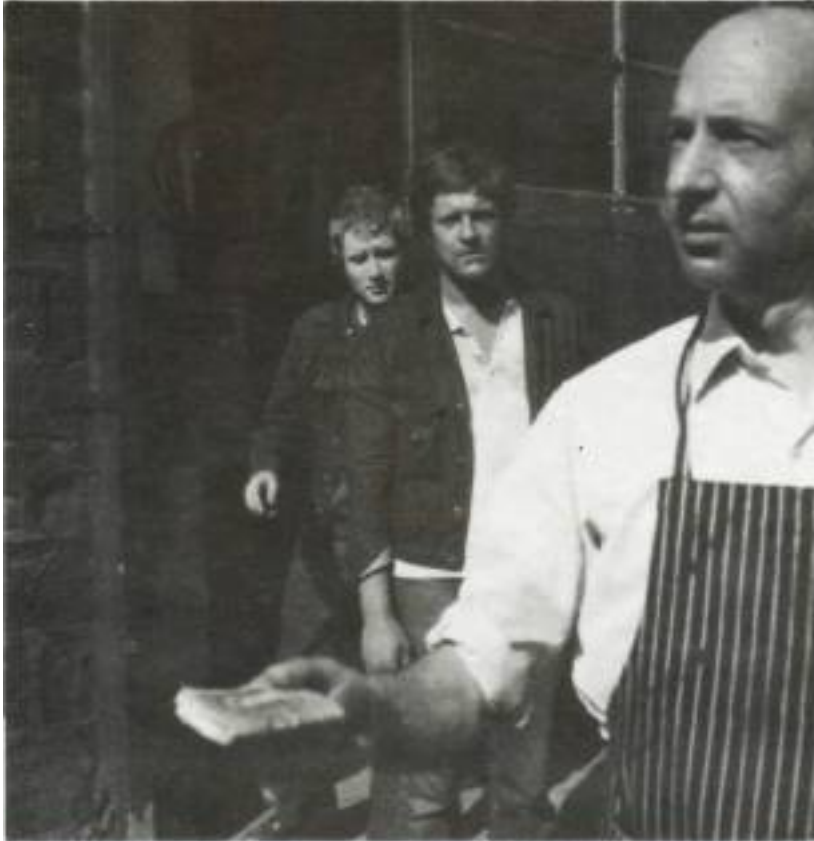
'Yes, remember that!' shouted Denis.

Mike's father was looking very unhappy.

'Come on,' said Ted, sternly. 'Take the sheep and hand over the cash! Hand it over!'



Mike's father was just about to hand over the cash, when Mike ran to him.



'Don't, Dad! Don't!' he cried, and he turned to Ted and shouted, 'You leave my father alone, Beasley! Your game is up! You are finished!'

'The snoopers again!' said Ted.

'Yes!' I said. 'You did not think we would escape, did you? Well, we did, and our friends are all around you. Beasley! You are surrounded!'

This was not true, but I thought I might bluff the Beasleys into giving themselves up.

'That is right! You are surrounded!' said Mike.

Denis looked very frightened. We tricked him all right.
But Ted just sneered at us.

'Surrounded are we?' he said. 'I think you are bluffing, sonny boys.'

'We are not,' I said.

But Ted was not even listening. He was reaching into the lorry. He grabbed a shotgun and pointed it at us!



'Perhaps *you* had better put up your hands, lads,' he shouted.
'All of you! Get them up fast! The game is not over for big Ted Beasley. No, not by a long way!'

10 The hero



There we were, hands above our heads, helpless. Would Jill and the warden *never* come?

'Get that cash Denis,' said Ted.

'Yes, Ted!' said Denis, taking the cash out of Mr Burns's hand.

'When we are outside the town,' said Ted, 'I am going to stop at a telephone box and dial 999. I shall tell the police where they can find three crooks and fifty stolen sheep! Get it?'

We got it, all right. Ted Beasley was going to make it look as if *we* had stolen the sheep! We would be stranded on the canal with the lorryload of sheep. Everybody would believe we had stolen them.

'You are a right scoundrel Beasley!' shouted Mike.

'Thanks,' said Ted, looking very pleased with himself.
'A right scoundrel.'

He and Denis started to back away, still keeping the shotgun pointed at us. 'Now, not a peep from any of you or you will get it!'

'Oh, what can we do?' moaned Mr Burns.

'Nothing, Dad,' said Mike.



Then suddenly a car came screaming on to the canal bank. It was Jill and the warden and the hostellers! Ted and Denis turned round.

Now was our chance. 'Come on!' I shouted to Mike and Mr Burns. 'Let us get them!'



Ted turned. A shot rang out. Mr Burns gave a cry and fell. We stopped and Ted and Denis rushed off between the houses by the side of the canal.

'I am all right,' cried Mr Burns. 'Get after them before they get away!'

So we all set off again after Ted and Denis. Mike and I, Jill, the warden and all the hostellers ran after them. There are lots of bridges in Ten Bridges- that is how it got its name. We ran between the houses on to one bridge and looked across at the Beasley brothers on another bridge.

We shouted to Mr West 'Over there! There they are!'

'Good lads!' the warden shouted back. 'This is the end of the Beasley brothers!' he yelled.



But we still had to catch them first. They were making for the car. Would they get there in time? No, we were overtaking them! Mike grabbed Denis. Ted ran to the side of the canal.

'Stop! Get back!' he shouted at me, pointing the gun. I made a grab for his legs, the gun went off. Splash, went Ted Beasley into the canal!



He came up, looking very sorry for himself.

'Third time unlucky, Beasley?' said the warden, grinning down at him.

The police arrived. The Beasley brothers and Mike and his father were taken away.



'What will happen to Mike and Mr Burns?' said Jill.

'They will get off fairly lightly, I should think,' said Mr West. 'After all, without Mike's help we would never have nabbed the crooks at all.'

'Yes, that is right,' I agreed.

'But, somehow, I cannot see Mike getting his old job back at Castle Farm,' the warden added, with a sly grin.

'Why not?' I asked.

'Well, I know a young fellow who might take over the job of foreman.'

'Yes, with a rise in pay, too,' said Jill.

'Why, he might *even* get a medal!' said the warden. They were both grinning.

'Who are you talking about?' I cried.

'*You*, you twit!' laughed Jill and she gave me a hug.

'Foreman!' I said. Would I really be made foreman of Castle Farm? The warden seemed to think so. So did Jill. And that evening, when we got back to Castle Farm, even Mrs Sharp seemed to think so!

So here I am, foreman in charge of Castle Farm. Mike now works with his father in the butcher's shop. Ted and Denis Beasley are in prison. And there is no more sheep rustling on the moors.

The moors are free from rustlers now.





LOOK AND READ

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