

Mole

don't like moles. They belong in holes. We don't like moles. We don't ...

*The Wild Wooders have Mole on the floor now and are kicking and beating him and the Chief Weasel having taken off Mole's spectacles, is about to do his worst and gestures for silence to accentuate the horror when in the silence is heard a distant but familiar voice*

**Rat** (*off, calling*) Moley.  
**Chief Weasel** It's Rat!

*The Wild Wooders scatter, only the Chief Weasel, who is as two-faced as they come, runs back with Mole's spectacles. Rat enters*

Put your glasses on, mate. Only a bit of fun.

**Rat** Moley. Where are you? It's me. It's old Rat. Moley.

**Mole** Ratty? Ratty? Is that really you?

**Rat** Moley?

*The Wild Wooders have withdrawn to a respectful distance but are watching the proceedings, still wondering if they could be in there with a chance. Rat, catching sight of them, puts paid to that idea*

Don't even think about it. (*To Mole*) Oh, thank goodness I've found you, old chap.

**Mole** Oh, Rat, I've been so frightened, you can't think. Frightened to death. Oh, oh.

**Rat** Hold up, hold up. It's all right. Safe now. Rat's here. You shouldn't have done it, Moley. We River Bankers hardly ever come here by ourselves.

**Mole** But why do they do it, Rat?

**Rat** It's just their nature. We can't stop here. The weasels are still somewhere about and it's snowing. Trouble is, I don't quite know where we are. Up you get, Moley. We must get on.

**Mole** I'm tired out, Ratty.

**Rat** Me too, but our only hope is to find some shelter or we're done for. Come on.

*Mole trips and falls headlong*

**Mole** Oh, my leg, my leg.

**Rat** What's up.

**Mole** I must have tripped over a tree stump. Oh my, oh my.

**Rat** (*getting out his handkerchief*) No, you didn't.

**Mole** Yes, I did.

**Rat** You didn't, Mole. This is a very clean cut. It's not from a tree stump, it's from something sharp.

**Mole** Well, never mind what done it. It hurts just the same whatever done it.

**Rat** "Whatever did it". Just because we've hurt our leg doesn't mean we can forget our grammar. (*He starts scraping away the snow*)

**Mole** Hey, Ratty, what about my leg?

**Rat** Never mind your leg. Look.

**Mole** So? A doorscraper. What of it?

**Rat** What of it? Don't you see what it means, you dull creature?

**Mole** Of course I see what it means. It means that some very careless person has left his doorscraper in the middle of the Wild Wood. And you seem to have forgotten I've hurt my leg.

**Rat** Where there's a doorscraper, what else is there?

**Mole** How should I know? Sometimes, Rat, I don't understand you.

**Rat** Yes — that's because you're a thick-headed beast. Now dig.

**Mole** I'm not thick-headed, I'm not thick-headed, at all. Ratty! A front door!

**Rat** Exactly. Now do you understand?

**Mole** It's Mr Badger's.

**Rat** Exactly. Pull the bell.

**Mole** You saved us! You saved us!

*Mole pulls the bell. Rat seizes it from him and yanks it even harder*

Oh, Rat, you're a wonder. You're wasted here — among us simple creatures. You should be at Oxford. Or in the Government.

**Rat** I'd rather be beside a warm fire. (*He batters on the door*) Wake up, Badger, wake up. Pull, Mole, pull. We must wake him. Badger, Badger.

Wake up!

*There is a sound of many locks being unlocked and bolts drawn and of a gruff voice inside*

**Badger** (*off*) Now the very next time this happens, I shall be very cross. Very cross indeed. Disturbing someone on a night like this. Who is it? Come on, speak up.

**Rat** Badger, let us in, please. It's me, Rat, and my friend Mole. We're lost.

**Badger** (*off*) Lost? How can you be lost? You're outside my front door.

*He opens it. Badger is all dressing-gown. His hair, once black, now has a broad streak of grey down it and though there is a tail somewhere, since he is never out of his dressing-gown we don't see it. His bark, needless to say, is much worse than his bite and his heart melts at the sight of the two friends*