

The Better Brown Stories

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- 1 Brian Brown, who had no dog of his own, nevertheless knew more about dogs than any boy in Snuggleton. His room was full of dog books; in school even the teacher had come to rely on his superior knowledge. At home, Brian did his share of the hoovering and often boiled eggs for the family breakfast. All he asked for in return was a dog or, more particularly, a puppy. His thoughtless parents, however, refused to consider it and his apathetic sister was no help either. Brian endured the situation with dignity. As time went by, he slowly covered the walls of his room with dog pictures, collected cheap sets of dog cards whenever he went to an antique fair ... and waited.
- 11 It was half-past ten on a cool May night ... Brian ate a sandwich at the kitchen table and listened to the radio. Suddenly there was a newsflash: "WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAMME TO REPORT ANOTHER MISSING DOG IN SNUGGLETON." It was the Plumber's Pekinese, apparently. The police were at the scene of the crime in Roman Road. Owners were again advised to check the whereabouts of their dogs and warned to "STAY INDOORS".
- 18 Brian wandered over to the window. His cool yet curiously reckless mind was considering this business of the missing dogs. He drew the curtain aside. Fog, drifting in from the sea, pressed up against the glass and smothered the view. The street lamp was barely visible. Brian listened: faint rumblings from the fridge, gurgling water in the radiator. Outside, a distant throbbing. He switched off the light.

