

Read this story

THE CAVE

He'd never seen anything like the collection of bits and pieces, odds and ends, bric-à-brac and old brock, that this Stig creature had lying about his den. There were stones and bones, fossils and bottles, skins and tins, stacks of sticks and hanks of string. There were motor-car tyres and hats from old scarecrows, nuts and bolts and bobbles from brass bedsteads. There was a coal scuttle full of dead electric light bulbs and a basin with rusty screws and nails in it. There was a pile of bracken and newspapers that looked as if it were used for a bed. The place looked as if it had never been given a tidy-up.

"I wish I lived here," said Barney. Stig seemed to understand that Barney was approving of his home and his face lit up. He took on the air of a householder showing a visitor round his property, and began pointing out some of the things he seemed particularly proud of.

First, the plumbing. Where the water dripped through a crack in the roof of the cave he had wedged the mud-guard of a bicycle. The water ran along this, through the tube of a vacuum-cleaner, and into a big can with writing on it. By the side of this was a plastic football carefully cut in half, and Stig dipped up some water and offered it to Barney. Barney had swallowed a mouthful before he made out the writing on the can: it said WEEDKILLER. However, the water only tasted of rust and rubber.

It was dark in the back of the cave. Stig went to the front where the ashes of a fire were smoking faintly, blew on them, picked up a book that lay beside his bed, tore out a page and rolled it up, lit it at the fire, and carried it to a lamp set in a niche in the wall. As it flared up Barney could see it was in fact an old teapot, filled with some kind of oil, and with a bootlace hanging out of it for a wick.



Clive King

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**Re-read the story****Answer the following questions.**

1. Who was looking round the den? _____

2. Who did the den belong to? _____

3. What was the bed made of? _____

4. Why did Barney wish he lived there? _____

5. Why did Stig's face light up? _____

6. Does Stig rely on the rain for water? _____

7. How do you think Stig cooked his food? _____

8. What does Stig use his book for? _____

9. Why was the fire at the front of the cave? _____

10. Do you think Stig has lived in his den for a long time? _____

11. How did Stig feel about his den? _____

12. What do you think Barney's house is like? _____

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