

At that moment, Jack screamed and Ben jumped as a mouse scurried across the landing and disappeared under a door. "Just a mouse," Ben informed Jack confidently and he continued up the stairs. Jack's legs wobbled like jelly as he followed.

Upstairs appeared to be much like downstairs, but the light was fading making it difficult to see.

"I think it's time to go," Jack suggested, making his way to the stairs.

"Not yet," insisted Ben. "There's that room over there." He pointed towards a closed door.

Jack shivered as they turned the handle and the door creaked open. They stepped inside and glanced around. At first, it appeared to be just like the other rooms - empty. But as their eyes adjusted to the gloom they noticed a large wooden wardrobe on the far wall. Grabbing Jack's arm, Ben strolled across the room towards it. The wardrobe door opened easily and lying in the bottom was... a bundle of carrier bags. Feeling brave, Jack picked one up and shook it. It sounded like thunder in the silence. "Look, nothing. So can we go now?" he pleaded.

"Nothing, you say," laughed Ben and he bent down and retrieved a handful of notes. "Look at all this," he exclaimed. "We'll be rich." He reached into the wardrobe, pulled out the other carrier bags and shook the contents on to the floor. The boys laughed as hundreds of ten pound notes floated around them like confetti.

Suddenly, the door banged shut. The boys were silent. Still. Ben stood up, strode over to the door and turned the handle. It was stuck. He tried again. It did not move.

For a moment the two boys sat surrounded by the money with only the occasional whimper by Jack breaking the silence. "We might as well pick all this up and put it in the bags," said Ben glumly and grabbing a handful he stuffed the notes back into one of the carrier bags. Jack joined in. "Why are these notes red?" asked Jack, holding them up to the fading light at the window. There was no answer for a moment. "I think it means the money is stolen," replied Ben slowly.

"I wonder who stole it?" pondered Jack, continuing to stuff the red notes into the bags.

"I don't know," replied Ben thoughtfully. "But I hope they don't come looking for it tonight." The boys looked at each other. A shiver crept down

Ben's spine. "We need to get out of here quickly," he muttered.

"Help, help!" yelled Ben and Jack together. They pummelled on the door until their hands ached and their voices were hoarse, but no-one came. They tried the door again, heaving with all their might, but it didn't move an inch. Dusk was turning into dark and their only light was the orange glimmer from a streetlight. Soon the boys grew tired. They huddled together by the wardrobe and fell into a doze.

After what seemed like hours, Ben woke with a start. He shook Jack to wake him. There it was. That was what had woken him. The noise. It was different this time. Footsteps, definitely footsteps. Downstairs, floorboards creaked. Someone or something was in the house. The boys gripped each other, frozen with fear. The footsteps got louder, nearer. Ben could hear his heart thumping. Who or what was it? Maybe it was the thieves come to take the money, maybe a black-bearded pirate who had hidden his treasure under the floorboards. Jack whimpered. Neither moved a muscle. They held each other even tighter and sunk against the wardrobe, hoping the darkness would swallow them up.