

*Great heavens! It was the barrel of a gun!* Quick as a whip, Mr Fox jumped back into his hole and at that same instant the entire wood seemed to explode around him. *Bang-bang! Bang-bang! Bang-bang!*

The smoke from the three guns floated upward in the night air. Boggis and Bunce and Bean came out from behind their trees and walked towards the hole.

‘Did we get him?’ said Bean.

One of them shone a flashlight on the hole, and there on the ground, in the circle of light, half in and half out of the hole, lay the poor tattered bloodstained remains of ... a fox’s tail. Bean picked it up. ‘We got the tail but we missed the fox,’ he said, tossing the thing away.