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Five Children and It—Chapter 8: Bigger Than The Baker's Boy

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Alastair Roberts

For the Easter season, I am posting some rather different things on this channel, in addition to my regular output, as a little gift to my followers and supporters. This is the third book I am reading through: 'Five Children and It', by E Nesbit. I hope that you all enjoy!

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Transcript

Chapter 8. Bigger Than The Baker's Boy. Look here, said Cyril. I've got an idea.

Does it hurt much? said Robert sympathetically. Don't be a jack-an-ape. I'm not humbugging.

Shut up, Bobbs, said Anthea. Silence for the squirrel's oration, said Robert. Cyril balanced himself on the edge of the water-butt in the backyard where they all happened to be and spoke.

Friends, Romans, countrymen, and women, we've found a Samoyed. We have had wishes. We've had wings.

And being as beautiful as the day— ugh, that was pretty jolly-beastly, if you like—and wealth and castles and that rotten gypsy business with the lamb. But we're no forwarder. We haven't really got anything worth having for our wishes.

We've had things happening, said Robert. That's always something. It's not enough unless they're the right things, said Cyril firmly.

Now I've been thinking— Not really, whispered Robert. In the silent what's-its-names of the night, it's like suddenly being asked something out of history, the date of the conquest or something. You know it all right at the time, but when you're asked it all goes out of your head.

Ladies and gentlemen, you know jolly well that when we're all rotting about in the usual way, heaps of things keep cropping up and then real earnest wishes come into the heads of the beholder. Hear, hear, said Robert, of the beholder, however stupid he is, Cyril went on. Why, even Robert might happen to think of a really useful wish if he didn't injure his poor little brains trying so hard to think.

Shut up, Bob, as I tell you. You'll have the whole show over. A struggle on the edge of a water-butt is exciting but damp.

When it was over and the boys were partially dried, Anthea said, It really was you that began it, Bob's. Now honour is satisfied, do let squirrel go on. We're wasting the whole morning.

Well then, said Cyril, still wringing the water out of the tails of his jacket. I'll call it packs if Bob's will. Packs then, said Robert sulkily, but I've got a lump as big as a cricket ball over my eye.

Anthea patiently offered a dust-coloured handkerchief, and Robert bathed his wounds in silence. Now squirrel, she said. Well then, let's just play bandits or forts or soldiers or any of the old games.

We're dead sure to think of something if we try not to. You always do. The others consented.

Bandits was hastily chosen for the game. It's as good as anything else, said Jane gloomily. It must be owned that Robert was at first but a half-hearted bandit, but when Anthea had borrowed from Martha the red-spotted handkerchief in which the keeper had brought her mushrooms that morning, and had tied up Robert's head with it so that he could be the wounded hero who had saved the bandit captain's life the day before, he cheered up wonderfully.

All were soon armed. Bows and arrows slung on the back look well, and umbrellas and cricket stumps through the belt give a fine impression of the wearer's being armed to the teeth. The white cotton hats that men wear in the country nowadays have a very brigandish effect when a few turkey's feathers are stuck in them.

The lamb's mail cart was covered with a red and blue checked tablecloth and made an

admirable baggage wagon. The lamb asleep inside it was not at all in the way, so the bandities set out along the road that led to the sandpit. We ought to be near the Samyad, said Cyril, in case we think of anything suddenly.

It is all very well to make up your minds to play bandit, or chess or ping pong or any other agreeable game, but it is not easy to do it with spirit when all the wonderful wishes you can think of, or can't think of, are waiting for you round the corner. The game was dragging a little, and some of the bandits were beginning to feel that the others were disagreeable things, and were saying so candidly, when the baker's boy came along the road with loaves in a basket. The opportunity was not one to be lost.

Stand and deliver, cried Cyril. Your money or your life, said Robert. And they stood on each side of the baker's boy.

Unfortunately, he did not seem to enter into the spirit of the thing at all. He was a baker's boy of an unusually large size. He merely said, Chuck it now, do you hear? and pushed the bandits aside most disrespectfully.

Then Robert lassoed him with Jane's skipping rope, and instead of going round his shoulders, as Robert intended, it went round his feet and tripped him up. The basket was upset. The beautiful new loaves went bumping and bouncing all over the dusty chalky road.

The girls ran to pick them up, and all in a moment Robert and the baker's boy were fighting it out, man to man, with Cyril to see fair play, and the skipping rope twisting round their legs like an interesting snake that wished to be a peacemaker. It did not succeed. Indeed, the way the boxwood handles sprang up and hit the fighters on the shins and ankles was not at all peacemaking.

I know this is the second fight or contest in this chapter, but I can't help it. It was that sort of day. You know yourself there are days when rows seem to keep on happening, quite without your meaning them to.

If I were a writer of tales of adventures, such as those which used to appear in the Boys of England when I was young, of course I should be able to describe the fight, but I cannot do it. I never can see what happens during a fight, even when it is only dogs. Also, if I had been one of those Boys of England writers, Robert would have got the best of it.

But I am like George Washington. I cannot tell a lie, even about a cherry tree, much less about a fight, and I cannot conceal from you that Robert was badly beaten, for the second time that day. The baker's boy blacked his other eye, and being ignorant of the first rules of fair play and gentlemanly behaviour, he also pulled Robert's hair and kicked him on the knee.

Robert always used to say he could have licked the baker if it hadn't been for the girls. But I am not sure. Anyway, what happened was this, and very painful it was to self-respecting boys.

Cyril was just tearing off his coat so as to help his brother in proper style, when Jane threw her arms round his legs and began to cry and ask him not to go and be beaten too. That, too, was very nice for Robert, as you can imagine, but it was nothing to what he felt when Anthea rushed in between him and the baker's boy and caught that unfair and degraded fight around the waist, imploring him not to fight any more. Oh, don't hurt my brother any more, she said in floods of tears.

He didn't mean it, it's only play, and I'm sure he's very sorry. You see how unfair this was to Robert, because if the baker's boy had had any right and chivalrous instincts, and had yielded to Anthea's pleading and accepted her despicable apology, Robert could not in honour have done anything to him at any future time. But Robert's fears, if he had any, were soon dispelled.

Chivalry was a stranger to the breast of the baker's boy. He pushed Anthea away very roughly, and he chased Robert with kicks and unpleasant conversation right down the road to the sandpit. And there, with one last kick, he landed him in a heap of sand.

I'll land you, you young varmint, he said, and went off to pick up his loaves and go about his business. Cyril, impeded by Jane, could do nothing without hurting her, for she clung round his legs with the strength of despair. The baker's boy went off red and damp about the face, abusive to the last.

He called them a pack of silly idiots and disappeared round the corner. Then Jane's grasp loosened. Cyril turned away in silent dignity to follow Robert, and the girls followed him, weeping without restraint.

It was not a happy party that flung itself down in the sand beside the sobbing Robert. For Robert was sobbing, mostly with rage. Though of course I know that a really heroic boy is always dry-eyed after a fight.

But then he always wins, which had not been the case with Robert. Cyril was angry with Jane. Robert was furious with Anthea.

The girls were miserable, and not one of the four was pleased with the baker's boy. There was, as French writers say, a silence full of emotion. Then Robert dug his toes and his hands into the sand and wriggled in his rage.

He had better wait till I'm grown up, the cowardly brute. Beast! I hate him. But I'll pay him out, just because he's bigger than me.

You began, said Jane incautiously. I know I did silly, but I was only jolly, and he kicked

me. Look here! Robert tore down a stocking and showed a purple bruise touched up with red.

I only wish I was bigger than him, that's all. He dug his fingers in the sand and sprang up, for his hand had touched something furry. It was the Samoyed, of course.

On the lookout to make sillies of them as usual, as Cyril remarked later. And of course, the next moment Robert's wish was granted, and he was bigger than the baker's boy. Oh, but much, much bigger.

He was bigger than the big policeman who used to be at the crossing at the mansion a house years ago, the one who was so kind in helping old ladies over the crossing. And he was the biggest man I have ever seen, as well as the kindest. No one has a foot rule in its pocket, so Robert could not be measured.

But he was taller than your father would have been if he stood on your mother's head, which I am sure he would never be unkind enough to do. He must have been ten or eleven feet high, and as broad as a boy of that height ought to be. His suit had fortunately grown too, and now he stood up in it, with one of his enormous stockings turned down to show the gigantic bruise on his vast leg.

Immense tears of fury still stood on his flushed giant face. He looked so surprised, and he was so large to be wearing a turned-down collar outside of his jacket, that the others could not help laughing. The Samoyed's done us again, said Cyril.

Not us, me, said Robert. If you'd got any decent feeling, you'd try to make it make you the same size. You've no idea how silly it feels, he added thoughtlessly.

And I don't want to. I can jolly well see how silly it looks, Cyril was beginning. But Anthea said, Oh, don't.

I don't know what's the matter with you boys today. Look here, Squirrel, let's play fair. It is hateful for poor old Bob's all alone up there.

Let's ask the Samoyed for another wish, and if it will, I do really think we ought all to be made the same size. The others agreed, but not Gaely. But when they found the Samoyed, it wouldn't.

Not I, it said crossly, rubbing its face with its feet. He's a rude, violent boy, and it'll do him good to be the wrong size for a bit. What did he want to come digging me out with his nasty wet hands for? He nearly touched me.

He's a perfect savage. A boy of the Stone Age would have had more sense. Robert's hands had indeed been wet with tears.

Go away and leave me in peace. Do. The Samoyed went on.

I can't think why you don't wish for something sensible, something to eat or drink, or good manners or good tempers. Go along with you. Do.

It almost snarled as it shook its whiskers and turned a sulky brown back on them. The most hopeful felt that further parley was vain. They turned again to the colossal Robert.

Whatever shall we do? They said, and they all said it. First, said Robert grimly, I'm going to reason with that baker's boy. I shall catch him at the end of the road.

Don't hit a chap smaller than yourself, old man, said Cyril. Do I look like hitting him, said Robert scornfully. Why, I should kill him.

But I'll give him something to remember. Wait till I pull up my stocking. He pulled up his stocking, which was as large as a small bolster case, and strode off.

His strides were six or seven feet long, so that it was quite easy for him to be at the bottom of the hill ready to meet the baker's boy when he came down swinging the empty basket to meet his master's cart, which had been leaving bread at the cottages along the road. Robert crouched behind a haystack in the farmyard that is at the corner, and when he heard the boy come whistling along, he jumped out at him and caught him by the collar. Now, he said, and his voice was about four times its usual size, just as his body was four times its.

I'm going to teach you to kick boys smaller than you. He lifted up the baker's boy and set him on the top of the haystack, which was about sixteen feet from the ground, and then he sat down on the roof of the barn and told the baker's boy exactly what he thought of him. I don't think the boy heard it all.

He was in a sort of trance of terror. When Robert had said everything he could think of, and some things twice over, he shook the boy and said, And now get down the best way you can! and left him. I don't know how the baker's boy got down, but I do know that he missed the cart and got into the very hottest of hot water when he turned up at last at the bakehouse.

I am sorry for him, but after all it was quite right that he should be taught that boys mustn't use their feet when they fight, but their fists. Of course, the water he got into only became hotter when he tried to tell his master about the boy he had licked and the giant as high as a church, because no one could possibly believe such a tale as that. Next day the tale was believed, but that was too late to be of any use to the baker's boy.

When Robert rejoined the others, he found them in the garden. Anthea had thoughtfully asked Martha to let them have dinner out there, because the dining room was rather small and it would have been so awkward to have a brother the size of Robert in there. The lamb, who had slept peacefully during the whole stormy morning, was now found to be sneezing, and Martha said he had a cold and would be better indoors.

And really it's just as well, said Cyril, for I don't believe he'd ever have stopped screaming if he'd once seen you, the awful size you are. Robert was indeed what a draper would call an outsize in boy. He found himself able to step right over the iron gate in the front garden.

Martha brought out the dinner. It was cold veal and baked potatoes, with sago pudding and stewed plums to follow. She of course did not notice that Robert was anything but the usual size, and she gave him as much meat and potatoes as usual, and no more.

You have no idea how small your usual helping of dinner looks, when you are many times your proper size. Robert groaned and asked for more bread, but Martha would not go on giving more bread forever. She was in a hurry, because the keeper intended to call on his way to Ben and Her's fair, as she wished to be smartly dressed before he came.

I wish we were going to the fair, said Robert. You can't go anywhere that size, said Cyril. Why not, said Robert.

They have giants at fairs, much bigger ones than me. Not much they don't, Cyril was beginning, when Jane screamed, Oh! with such loud suddenness that they all thumped her on the back, and asked whether she had swallowed a plumbstone. No, she said, breathless from being thumped.

It's not a plumbstone, it's an idea. Let's take Robert to the fair, and get them to give us money for showing him. Then we really shall get something out of the old Samyad at last.

Take me indeed, said Robert indignantly. Much more likely me take you. And so it turned out.

The idea appealed irresistibly to everyone but Robert, and even he was brought round by Anthea's suggestion that he should have a double share of any money they might make. There was a little old pony cart in the coach-house, the kind that is called a governess cart. It seemed desirable to get to the fair as quickly as possible, so Robert, who could now take enormous steps and so go very fast indeed, consented to wheel the others in this.

It was as easy to him now as wheeling the lamb in the mail cart had been in the morning. The lamb's cold prevented his being of the party. It was a strange sensation being wheeled in a pony carriage by a giant.

Everyone enjoyed the journey except Robert and the few people they passed on the way. These mostly went into what looked like some kind of standing-up fits by the roadside, as Anthea said. Just outside Beninhurst, Robert hid in a barn, and the others went on to the fair.

There were some swings, and a hooting-tooting blaring merry-go-round, and a shooting gallery, and Aunt Sally's. Resisting an impulse to win a coconut, or at least to attempt the enterprise, Cyril went up to the woman who was loading little guns before the array of glass bottles on strings against a sheet of canvas. "'Here you are, little gentleman,' she said.

"'Penny a shot!' "'No, thank you,' said Cyril. "'We are here on business, not on pleasure. "'Who's the master?' "'The what?' "'The master, the head, the boss of the show.' "'Over there,' she said, pointing to a stout man in a dirty linen jacket who was sleeping in the sun.

"'But I don't advise you to wake him suddenly. His temper's contrary, especially these hot days. Better have a shot while you're waiting.' "'It's rather important,' said Cyril.

"'It'll be very profitable to him. I think you'll be sorry if we take it away.' "'Oh, if it's money in his pocket,' said the woman. "'No kid now.

What is it?' "'It's a giant.' "'You are kidding.' "'Come along and see,' said Anthea. The woman looked doubtfully at them. Then she called to a ragged little girl in striped stockings and a dingy white pet coat that came below her brown frock, and leaving her in charge of the shooting gallery, she turned to Anthea and said, "'Well, hurry up, but if you are kidding, you'd best say so.

"'I'm as mild as milk myself, but my Bill, he's a fair terror and—' Anthea led the way to the barn. "'It really is a giant,' she said. "'He's a giant little boy in a suit like my brother's there.

"'And we didn't bring him up to the fair because people do stare so, and they seem to go into kind of standing up fits when they see him. "'And we thought perhaps you'd like to show him and get pennies, and if you'd like to pay us something you can, only it'll have to be rather a lot because we promised him he should have a double share of whatever we made.' The woman murmured something indistinct, of which the children could only hear the words swelt me, bar me, and crumpet, which conveyed no definite idea to their minds. She had taken Anthea's hand and was holding it very firmly, and Anthea could not help wondering what would happen if Robert should have wandered off or turned his proper size during the interval, but she knew that the Samyads' gifts really did last till sunset, however inconvenient their lasting might be, and she did not think, somehow, that Robert would care to go out alone while he was that size.

When they reached the barn and Cyril called, "'Robert!' There was a stir among the loose hay, and Robert began to come out. His hand and arm came first, then a foot and leg. When the woman saw the hand she said, "'My!' But when she saw the foot she said, "'Upon my word!' And when, by slow and heavy degrees, the whole of Robert's enormous bulk was at last disclosed, she drew a long breath and began to say many things,

compared with which barmy and crumpet seemed quite ordinary.

She dropped into understandable English at last. "What'll you take for him?" she said excitedly. "Anything and reason.

"Would have a special van built. "Leastways, I know where there's a second-hand one, "would do up handsome. "What a baby elephant had as died.

"What'll you take? "He's soft, ain't he? "Them giants mostly is, but I never see—" "No, never. "What'll you take? "Down on the nail. "We'll treat him like a king and give him first-rate grub "and a doss fit for a blooming duke.

"He must be dotty or he wouldn't need you kids to cart him about. "What'll you take for him? "They won't take anything," said Robert sternly. "I'm no more soft than you are.

"Not so much, I shouldn't wonder. "I'll come and be a show for today if you'll give me—" He hesitated at the enormous price he was about to ask. "If you'll give me fifteen shillings." "Done!" said the woman, so quickly that Robert felt he had been unfair to himself and wished he had asked thirty.

"Come on now and see my bill "and we'll fix a price for the season. "I dare say you might get as much as two pounds a week regular. "Come on and make yourself as small as you can for gracious sake.' This was not very small, and a crowd gathered quickly, so that it was at the head of an enthusiastic procession that Robert entered the trampled meadow where the fair was held, and passed over the stubby yellow dusty grass to the door of the biggest tent.

He crept in, and the woman went to call her Bill. He was the big sleeping man, and he did not seem at all pleased at being awakened. Cyril, watching through a slit in the tent, saw him scowl and shake a heavy fist in the sleepy head.

Then the woman went on speaking very fast. Cyril heard, "'Strewth!' and—'Biggest draw you ever, so help me!' And he began to share Robert's feeling that fifteen shillings was indeed far too little. Bill slouched up to the tent and entered.

When he beheld the magnificent proportions of Robert, he said but little. "'Strike me pink!' were the only words the children could afterwards remember. But he produced fifteen shillings, mainly in sixpences and coppers, and handed it to Robert.

"We'll fix up what you're about to draw when the show's over tonight,' he said with hoarse heartiness. "'Lor' Lover-Duck, you'll be happy with us, you'll never want to leave us. Can you do a song now, or a bit of a breakdown?' "Not today,' said Robert.

Rejecting the idea of trying to sing, as once in May, a favourite of his mother's, and the only song he could think of at the moment. "Get Levi, and clear them blooming photos

out. Clear the tent.

Stick out a curtain or something.' The man went on. "'Lor, what a pity we ain't got no tights his size. But we'll have them before the week's out.

Young man, your fortune's made. It's a good thing you came to me, and not to some chaps as I could tell you on. I've known blokes as beat their giants, and starved them too.

So I'll tell you straight, you're in luck this day if you never was afore, cos I'm a lamb I am, and I don't deceive you.' "'I'm not afraid of anyone beating me,' said Robert, looking down on the lamb. Robert was crouched on his knees, because the tent was not big enough for him to stand upright in, but even in that position he could still look down on most people. "'But I'm awfully hungry.

I wish you'd get me something to eat.' "'Here, Becker,' said the horse bill. "'Get him some grub, the best you've got, mind.' Another whisper followed, of which the children only heard, "'Down in black and white. First thing to-morrow.' Then the woman went to get the food.

It was only bread and cheese when it came, but it was delightful to the large and empty Robert, and the man went to post sentinels round the tent, to give the alarm if Robert should attempt to escape with his fifteen shillings. "'As if we weren't honest,' said Anthea indignantly, when the meaning of the sentinels dawned on her. Then began a very strange and wonderful afternoon.

Bill was a man who knew his business. In a very little while, the photographic views, the spyglasses you look at them through so that they really seem rather real, and the lights you see them by, were all packed away. A curtain, it was an old red and black carpet really, was run across the tent.

Robert was concealed behind, and Bill was standing on a trestle table outside the tent making a speech. It was rather a good speech. It began by saying that the giant it was his privilege to introduce to the public that day was the eldest son of the Emperor of San Francisco, compelled through an unfortunate love affair with the Duchess of the Fiji Islands, to leave his own country and take refuge in England, the land of liberty, where freedom was the right of every man, no matter how big he was.

It was ended by the announcement that the first twenty who came to the tent door should see the giant for thruffence apiece. "'After that,' said Bill, "'the prize is riz, and I don't undertake to say what it won't be riz to. So now's your time!' A young man with his sweetheart on her afternoon out was the first to come forward.

For this occasion his was the princely attitude, no expense spared, money no object. His girl wished to see the giant. Well, she should see the giant, even though seeing the giant

cost thruffence each, and the other entertainments were all penny ones.

The flap of the tent was raised. The couple entered. Next moment a wild shriek from the girl, thrilled through all present.

Bill slapped his leg. "'That's done the trick,' he whispered to Becca. It was indeed a splendid advertisement of the charms of Robert.

When the young girl came out she was pale and trembling, and a crowd was round the tent. "'What was it like?' asked a farmhand. "'Oh, horrid! You wouldn't believe,' she said.

"'It's as big as a barn, and that fierce! It froze the blood in my bones. I wouldn't have missed seeing it for anything.' The fierceness was only caused by Robert's trying not to laugh. But the desire to do that soon left him, and before sunset he was more inclined to cry than laugh, and more inclined to sleep than either.

For by ones and twos and threes people kept coming in all the afternoon, and Robert had to shake hands with those who wished it, and to allow himself to be punched and pulled and patted and thumped, so that people might make sure he was really real. The other children sat on a bench and watched and waited, and were very bored indeed. It seemed to them that this was the hardest way of earning money that could have been invented, and only fifteen shillings.

Bill had taken four times that already, for the news of the giant had spread, and tradespeople in carts and gentlepeople in carriages came from far and near. One gentleman with an eyeglass and a very large yellow rose in his buttonhole offered Robert, in an obliging whisper, ten pounds a week to appear at the Crystal Palace. Robert had to say no.

I can't, he said regretfully. It's no use promising what you can't do. Ah, poor fellow, bound for a term of years, I suppose.

Well, here's my card. When your time's up, come to me. I will, if I'm the same size then, said Robert truthfully.

If you grow a bit, so much the better, said the gentleman. When he had gone, Robert beckoned Cyril and said, Tell them I must and will have a rest, and I want my tea. Tea was provided, and a paper hastily pinned on the tent.

Close for half an hour while the giant gets his tea. Then there was a hurried counsel. How am I to get away? said Robert.

I've been thinking about it all the afternoon. Why, walk out when the sun sets, and you're your right size. They can't do anything to us.

Robert opened his eyes. Why, they'd nearly kill us, he said, when they saw me get my

right size. No, we must think of some other way.

We must be alone when the sun sets. I know, said Cyril briskly, and he went to the door, outside which Bill was smoking a clay pipe and talking in low voice to Becca. Cyril heard him say, Good as having a fortune left you.

Look here, said Cyril, you can let people come in again in a minute. He's nearly finished tea, but he must be left alone when the sun sets. He's very queer at that time of the day, and if he's worried, I won't answer for the consequences.

Why, what comes over him? asked Bill. I don't know, it's... It's sort of a change, said Cyril candidly. He isn't at all like himself.

You'd hardly know him. He's very queer indeed. Someone will get hurt if he's not alone about sunset.

This was true. He'll pull around for the evening, I suppose. Oh yes, half an hour after sunset, he'll be quite himself again.

Best humour him, said the woman. And so, at what Cyril judged, was about half an hour before sunset. The tent was again closed.

Whilst the giant gets his supper. The crowd was very merry about the giant's meals, and their coming so close together. Well, he can pack a bit, Bill owned.

You see, he has to eat hearty, being the size he is. Inside the tent, the four children breathlessly arranged a plan of retreat. You go now, said Cyril to the girls, and get along home as fast as you can.

Oh, never mind the pony cart. We'll get that tomorrow. Robert and I are dressed the same.

We'll manage somehow, like Sydney Carton did. Only you girls must get out, or it's all no-go. We can run, but you can't, whatever you may think.

No, Jane, it's no good Robert going out and knocking people down. The police would follow him till he turned his proper size, and then arrest him like a shot. Go, you must.

If you don't, I'll never speak to you again. It was you got us into this mess, really, hanging around people's legs the way you did this morning. Go, I tell you.

And Jane and Anthea went. We're going home, they said to Bill. We're leaving the giant with you.

Be kind to him. And that, as Anthea said afterwards, was very deceitful. But what were they to do? When they had gone, Cyril went to Bill.

Look here, he said. He wants some ears of corn. There's some in the next field, but one.

I'll just run and get it. Oh, and he says, can't you loop up the tent at the back a bit? He says he's stifling for a breath of air. I'll see no one peeps in at him.

I'll cover him up, and he can take a nap while I go for the corn. He will have it. There's no holding him when he gets like this.

The giant was made comfortable with a heap of sacks and an old tarpaulin. The curtain was looped up, and the brothers were left alone. They matured their plan in whispers.

Outside, the merry-go-round blared out its comic tunes, screaming now and then to attract public notice. Half a minute after the sun had set, a boy came out past Bill. I'm off for the corn, he said, and mingled quickly with the crowd.

At the same instant, a boy came out of the back of the tent past Becker, posted there as Sentinel. I'm off about the corn, said this boy also, and he, too, moved away quietly and was lost in the crowd. The front-door boy was Cyril.

The back-door was Robert. Now since sunset once more his proper size. They walked quickly through the field along the road where Robert caught Cyril up.

Then they ran. They were home as soon as the girls were, for it was a long way, and they ran most of it. It was indeed a very long way, as they found when they had to go and drag the pony cart home next morning, with no enormous Robert to wheel them in it, as if it were a male cart, and they were babies and he was their gigantic nurse-maid.

I cannot possibly tell you what Bill and Becker said when they found that the giant had gone. For one thing, I do not know.