

Clive and the missing finger

by Sarah Garland

I pushed at the door of Mr. Tibbald's allotment shed. Locked, of course. I tried the little window. It had no glass, only a thin bit of plastic. I cut the plastic with my Swiss army knife and wriggled through. I stood listening. There was no sound, but the smell was unmistakable, the same awful, musky stink as in Mr. Tibbald's house. I switched on the torch and swung the beam round the hut. It lit up a pile of rags and old coats in the corner. What the heck was I doing here? My heart was beating, thumping, in my throat; the noise it made seemed very loud. An arm was stretched out from under the rags. A hand, with curled fingers. Three fingers and one red, angry stump. Could those men have got here before me? Was I too late? Was Mr. Tibbald dead? With a sudden, violent movement the hand jerked upwards. Then Mr. Tibbald was on his feet, a stick in his hand.

"Keep away, boys!" he gasped, hoarsely.

"It's me, Mr. Tibbald, Clive, from next door"

Mr. Tibbald swore violently.

"The diamond gang, Mr. Tibbald, they're after you, they're on their way."

Now answer these questions; remember to use a full sentence.

- 1 Describe how Clive got into the shed.
- 2 What could Clive smell in the shed? Who did it remind him of?
- 3 Why do you think Clive asked himself the question: "What the heck was I doing here?"
- 4 Why do you think Clive's beating heart sounded very loud?
- 5 What did Clive think when he first saw Mr. Tibbald's hand stretched out from under the rags?
- 6 Did Mr. Tibbald realise, at first, that it was Clive in the shed? Who did he think it was?
- 7 How do you think Mr Tibbald felt when he found out that the diamond gang was after him? (*Don't say scared*).
- 8 Do you think Clive was brave to help Mr. Tibbald? Tell me why.
- 9 Would you have helped him if you had been in Clive's place? Tell me why.