



SERIES 1 · BOOK 2

# Still the Storm Blew On

By JC

*Ages 4+*

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Summer and sunshine and running around.

Pip in the sun and the sun on the ground.

Pip with friends all day long,

laughing and joking and singing their song.

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But one afternoon, coming in from the light,

Pip stopped at the door. Something wasn't quite  
right.

The air had gone heavy. The rooms felt all wrong.

A kind of a weather had stayed in too long.

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Old Badger sat heavy and still in the chair.

Not shouting. Not broken. Just - somewhere not there.

Not gone and not here and not quite able to say.

Just quiet. Just heavy. Just greyish. Just grey.

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Fox leaned at the doorway, voice quiet and warm.

"Poor Badger," Fox said softly. "It must be a storm.

You're thoughtful and kind - that's always been true.

If anyone knows how to help here - it's you."

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So Pip found a song, every word, every note,  
the silliest, cheeriest song Pip could quote.

Pip sang to old Badger. Pip tried every part.

But the grey stayed as grey as it lived in the heart.

*Still the storm blew on.*

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Pip brought the warm blanket. Pip brought the right  
cup.

"Would you like this?" said Pip. "Can I help? Cheer  
you up?"

Old Badger sat still, with both eyes closing tight.

The grey didn't shift with the afternoon light.

*Still the storm blew on.*

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Pip sat very close. Pip tried to be bright.

Pip tried to be steady, and gentle, and right.

*If I just do enough, if I try, it will clear.*

But Badger's own weather was all that was here.

*Still the storm blew on.*

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Then, just like that, as the evening drew near,

old Badger stretched slowly. The cloud seemed to clear.

"I'm fine now," said Badger, and rose from the seat.

Pip looked all around. Something felt - incomplete.

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But Pip hadn't stopped it.

The storm had just gone.

Not because of the song,

or the blanket,

or the long afternoon

of sitting-beside.

It had simply - stopped.

Not one bit of it needed.

*What had Pip done wrong?*

*What had Pip missed?*

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Pip walked to the wood's edge in the long evening  
air.

The oak stood as always. And Owl was right there.

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"I tried," said Pip. "I tried everything here.

I sang Badger a song and I sat close and near.

But nothing I did made the weather come through.

It stopped on its own. What was there to do?"

Owl listened to every last word.

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Then, quiet as evening, Owl said:

"That storm was not yours, Pip.

That storm was their own.

A storm that belongs to a creature

must pass in its own time - alone.

You can stay close beside.

You can offer your care.

But the rain that belongs to someone else...

is theirs alone - just theirs."

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"You were not made for carrying  
the weather of those who are grown.  
A child cannot stop another's storm...  
and that isn't a child's work to own.  
Your job, little Pip...  
is to learn.  
And to laugh.  
And to run in the sun."

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Pip held those words for a long, quiet while.  
Something went still in the middle of Pip.

*Something said: oh.*

*Something said: that was theirs.*

*Something said: I can stop.*

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Pip walked home as the evening turned golden and low.

The summer was warm and the meadow aglow.

Tomorrow: the running. The friends. And the song.

The summer was Pip's and the summer was long.

END

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