Badger was dependable, reliable, and always ready to lend a helping paw. He was also very old, and he knew almost everything. Badger was so old that he knew he must soon die.



Badger wasn't afraid of death. Dying meant only that he would leave his body behind and, as his body didn't work as well as it had in days gone by, Badger wasn't too concerned about that. His only worry was how his friends would feel when he was gone. Hoping to prepare them, Badger had told them that some day soon he would be going down the Long Tunnel, and he hoped they wouldn't be too sad when it happened.



One day, as Badger was watching Mole and Frog race down the hillside, he felt especially old and tired. He wished more than anything that he could run with them, but he knew his old legs wouldn't let him. He watched Mole and Frog for a long time, enjoying the sight of his friends having a good time.





It was late when he arrived home. He wished the moon good night and closed the curtains on the cold world outside. He made his way slowly down to the warm fire that was waiting for him deep underground.

He had his supper and then sat down at his desk to write a letter. When he had finished, he settled down in his rocking chair near the fire. He gently rocked himself to and fro and soon was fast asleep having a strange yet wonderful dream like none he'd ever had before.

