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Opening extract from

The Castle in the Field

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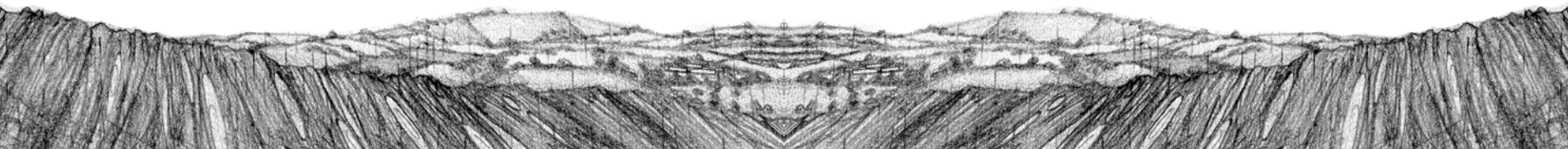
This book has dyslexia friendly features

To the children and teachers of
Wickhambreaux School where this
story was first told



Chapter 1
Buckets

We couldn't go home after school because there was no one there. Mum worked in the village shop and didn't get back till five. Dad never came home until much later. He worked on the farm, driving tractors and looking after the cows, and he was never home till after supper.



The three of us were walking home – my younger sister Lisa, my friend Tom and me. We stopped at the end of the lane to wait for Mum.

"It's going to rain, Chris, I can feel it," said Tom.

And he was right. It began to bucket down. It was the kind of rain that really hurt when it hit you – it stung your face and neck.



We were all soaked through within a minute. We tried to shelter behind the hedge, but that didn't help because the rain was coming straight down. Already the ditches were running water, and it wouldn't stop.

"The shelter, what about the shelter?" Tom yelled over the rain. Tom was my best friend at school and always came home with us. He looked like a half-drowned rat with his black hair laid flat on his head and his nose running like a tap.

"We're not allowed in there," Lisa yelled. She was holding her schoolbag over her head.

Tom didn't listen to Lisa. He ducked under the hedge and across the muddy field. We followed him, bumping up and down in the furrows, squelching and slithering our way to the shelter.

