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Escape!

One day in November 1647, Jacob Armitage hurried through the New Forest to the house of Arnwood.

‘You must leave this house immediately¹,’ he said to Edward Beverley. ‘Come with me to pack² your things. You must come to my home and stay there.’

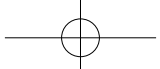
‘But why, Jacob?’ Edward asked the old man. ‘Why?’

‘The King has escaped³ from his prison at Hampton Court⁴,’ Jacob explained. ‘He’s riding south through the



‘The King has escaped from Hampton Court.’

¹ **immediately** *adv.* at once 立刻, 马上 || ² **pack** *v.* to put things into bags etc ready for a trip somewhere 收拾 (行李) || ³ **escape** *v.* to get away from a place where you have been kept as a prisoner 逃走, 逃跑 || ⁴ **court** *n.* the place where a king or queen lives and works 宫廷



forest, and Cromwell's soldiers are searching for him. And I've just heard a group of soldiers in the forest – they were talking about Arnwood. They know that your father was the King's friend, and they're planning to burn Arnwood tonight, because they think the King is hiding here.'

'Burn Arnwood! They can't do that! It's *my* house, and I'm staying here!' Edward said angrily. He was fourteen years old, the oldest of the four Beverley children.

The Beverley children lived alone at Arnwood, with an old woman who did the cooking¹ and all the work of the house. Their father, Colonel² Beverley, was killed while fighting for King Charles I at Naseby in 1645. Before he left home, he asked Jacob, a poor forester³ who lived near Arnwood, to look after his family. Jacob knew the family well and was happy to do this. And when the children's mother died a few months later, Jacob came every day to visit the children and to help them.

'My dear boy,' Jacob said, 'remember your sisters and brother. The soldiers will shoot them, or burn them in the house. No, no, you must all come with me.'

In the end, Edward agreed. He and his brother Humphrey, who was twelve, packed their things. Then they put them on Jacob's horse, White Billy, who was waiting outside.

¹ **cooking** *n.* the act of making food and cooking it 做饭 || ² **colonel** *n.* an officer of high rank in the army 上校 || ³ **forester** *n.* someone who works in a forest taking care of, planting, and cutting down the trees 护林人, 林务员