



the difficulties and dangers he had hoped to leave behind? The pine forests that men had planted were cold and dark places. He couldn't scratch a living there! Many hedges had been dug out to make bigger fields, so numbers of homes were no more. Finding food might not be difficult, but it was so likely to be poisoned. Who could know what sprays the farmers used?

Now if he went forward he would find shelter more easily in the many back-gardens, hedges, verges, homely scrub, park and golf-course rough. There was still some risk of poison, but it was a smaller risk. Why hesitate then? One very good reason. The WAY to the better life lay before him; a frightening maze of box-like sections with steep sides and dusty gritty wire-mesh covered bottoms that was the unfinished by-pass. It would be all too easy to lose the way or even break a leg. Then after that there was still the old roads to cross.

He stood up, a rugged little figure and faced the roadway. His aching feet had decided him. It was better to try to overcome that which lay in his path than 'slog' all that way back. Along the side of the road he went looking for a place where he could climb down. There seemed to be none. He must have missed some likely one, surely? Back he toiled. It was quite light now. In fact, men already busy with their machines were taking their breakfast-break. He must find a place quickly if he was to cross in any safety. Ah! That stretch there looked likely. Funny he hadn't noticed it before. He was not to know that 'it' had not been there when he had passed. Indeed, men had been very busy.

Gripping the edge of the curbing stone he gingerly lowered himself. He travelled light; his worldly goods stowed about his person. He had toyed with the idea of using a polythene bag that he had found in a hedgerow where some thoughtless, untidy picnicker had left it. It would keep his possessions dry and in order while at the same time it would prevent some unfortunate cow from eating it. Cows, he well knew, were often lackadaisical creatures in their eating habits and the polythene could cause acute stomach-ache, maybe even death. It was certainly something to be treated with caution; he had even heard of a fellow hedgehog who had squeezed into one, using it as a sleeping bag. His sleep may well have been a good deal longer than he had bargained for if there