

Joe picked up his bags. As they walked to the kitchen door at the side of the house, Joe was surprised to see five or six tents in the valley next to a stream.

'That's our field too,' Jenny explained. 'We use it to earn money from holiday visitors. We're not the only organic farm around here now and we can't always sell all our vegetables.'

'One of our guests sometimes helps us on the farm,' Dave said. 'She's arriving tomorrow evening.'

'She's from Stockholm,' Jenny said. 'You'll like her, Joe. She's a student too.'

Inside, the living room was warm and comfortable. A large grey and white dog was asleep on a sofa in front of the fire.

'That's Fin,' Dave said. 'Don't fall over her!'

'Your room's the first on the left upstairs,' his aunt explained. 'It's got a good view of Cloud Hill.'

Joe went upstairs to his room at the back of the house. From the window he could see across the valley to a big hill covered with young trees. The sky was getting dark now and the moon was rising behind it. At the bottom of the hill was a field of maize. It stood straight and tall, and the tops of the plants were red in the evening sun. There was a light in the valley and Joe could see the shape of a house.

'Supper's ready, Joe!' Dave called.

Hungry as always, Joe ran downstairs.

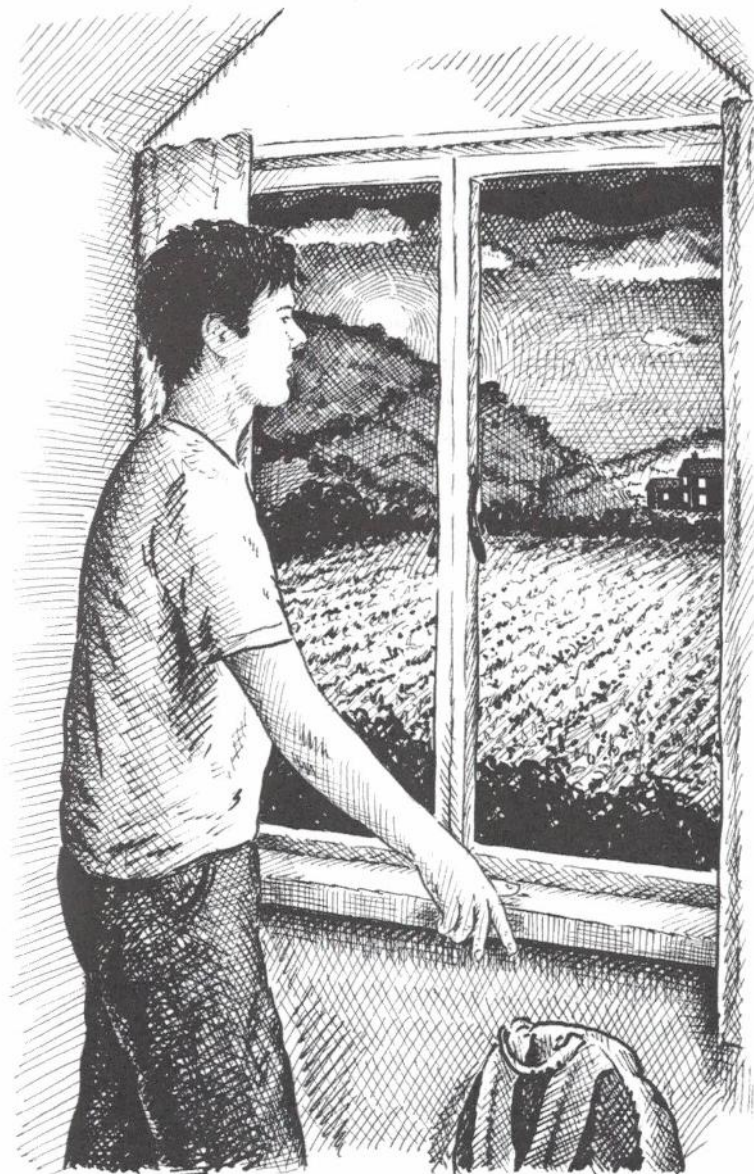
'So who owns that field across the valley – at the bottom of Cloud Hill?' he asked. 'There's a house there too. Is it one of the other organic farms?'

There was a long silence. Jenny went into the kitchen and Dave put some more knives and forks on the table.

'Ken Ladock – and his wife,' Dave said at last.

'Don't you like them?' Joe asked.

'We don't know them very well, Joe,' his aunt said as she carried a large dish into the room. 'They bought the farm last year.'



*From the window he could see across the valley.*