

The next few months were probably the unhappiest months that I have ever known in all my life. We had four enemies – the rain, the wind, the cold and the shorter days. The days were not much shorter, but we had to spend a lot of time inside the house because of the bad weather.

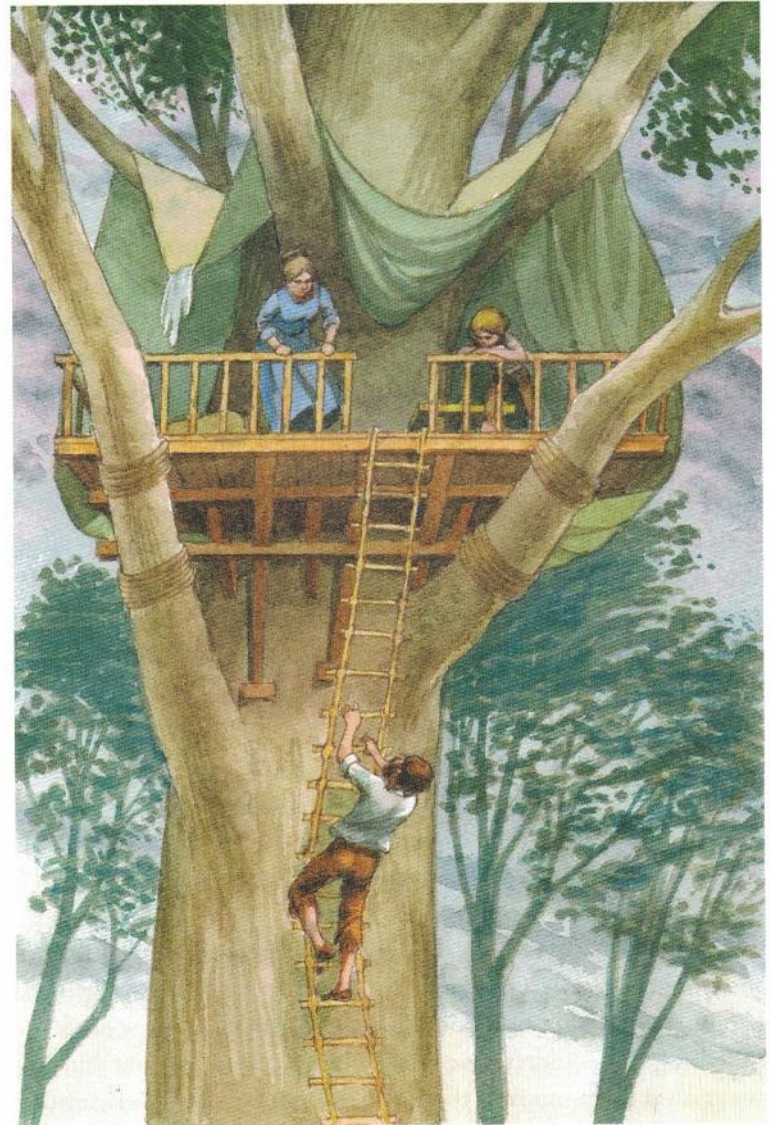
The rain came down like a river from the sky. It rained nearly all day and all night. There were only a few days when it stopped. Most of the land was under water. The river was too big to cross, and our bridge was broken. Luckily our garden was on higher ground, and our plants were beginning to come through.

The wind was very strong. When we made our Tree House, I didn't think about the wind. If a house is built on the ground, with good walls and a low roof, the wind will pass over it. The house is safe. But when a house is built up in a tree, the wind goes up into it.

The roof of our house was made of sailcloth. When it rained, there were deep pools of water on the roof. The water ran over the sides, on to the floor. Then the strong wind pushed the sailcloth up, and a river of rain came down into the room!

The days were not as hot as before, and the nights were the same – sometimes even cold. We sat all day in wet clothes and we couldn't dry them. In the evenings, we didn't know how to keep warm. We put stones on the floor of our tree room and lit a fire on them, but soon the room was full of smoke and we were afraid of a fire. We couldn't get the smoke out of the room. We couldn't make a hole in the roof because of the rain.

When the sun went down, darkness came suddenly. But even in the daytime, the room was quite dark. We had no light. We burned small pieces of wood, giving a little light. But that wasn't enough. So at night we sat round in our wet clothes, very cold, in the darkness. There was nothing to do except sleep.



*When it rained, there were deep pools of water on the roof.*

