

me with a knowing, confidential look in her eyes. 'And what about you Michael? You look a bit peaky.'

If I did look peaky, it wasn't because I was hungry.

'Too much Polly,' said Barry.

'Pegleg! Dumbo!' said Polly, and she stuck her tongue out at him, and then ran indoors after Auntie Eleri, still rabbiting on about the Sandman.

'Come on,' said Barry. 'I've got the kite ready and the wind's just right.'

'You go careful,' said Dadci. 'Don't go prancing around on that leg of yours.' And then Polly came running out again.

'What about the Sandman's supper?' she said.

'The Sandman can sing for his supper,' Barry said. 'Mike's flying my kite.'

'Later,' I said to Polly. 'We'll do it later.' It wasn't at all easy keeping everyone happy.

'My sister's a nutter,' said Barry as he walked away, 'a real little nutter.' And then he let me have a go with one of his crutches. 'We'll have a crutch race,' he said, and I discovered he could still run faster than me even with a broken leg.

That afternoon I flew the yellow kite from the back garden and it soared up over the fields around Buzzard Rock. And Barry was right – it was perfect kite-flying weather, the breeze off the sea filling the kite with a life of its own. It was a wheeling buzzard, a rearing cobra, a skimming swallow, whatever it wanted to be. I didn't seem to be able to control it at all. When the kite decided it would dive-bomb the cows and scatter them in all directions, Barry took it off me and flew it himself. And after that, whenever it grounded in the rocks or the gorse, I was sent off to retrieve it and launch it again. I didn't mind a bit. I was with Barry and I could