

NIGHT

Neighbour used to follow their haunts with his dog.

On these nocturnal rambles he learned the habits of the wood mice, with their large eyes and long, delicate ears—beautiful little creatures they were. He studied the stars that winked through the lattice of the trees or watched for the strange lights that used to rise and hang over a low wood to the south. He learned the meaning of each Night sound that came to him in these silent watches. The baying of a pair of hounds away up the hill came faint and far to tell of the wise little cottontail eluding its pursuers. The pungent odours of the forest were known in time, but best of all he grew to understand the wind that came when trees were bare and sighed or moaned or whispered gently by his feet. Under the great arches were heard the harmonies of the ancient wood sighing for its vanished tribes, moaning for its lost people.

From the great organ music that rose and fell in deep symphonies the tone died down and became soft and gentle