The Beetroot Detective

A red mark has an ordinary explanation.

A short story to enjoy together



Read slowly. Pause to enjoy the pictures and the words.

The Beetroot Detective

READ TOGETHER

Badger found a red mark on his napkin. "A mystery!" he announced. He fetched his notebook. Rabbit looked up from lunch. "We have just eaten beetroot," she said.

Badger wrote Possible Beetroot. He preferred his mysteries to have several chapters. He inspected his spoon, the plate and the edge of his cup. More red marks appeared on his list.

"Perhaps a red dragon visited," he suggested. Rabbit pointed to the beetroot dish. Badger wrote Possible Dragon, then paused. Nobody had seen a dragon. Everyone had seen the beetroot.

Mum helped them wash their hands and clean the table. The red marks came from places where the food had touched. Badger compared the marks with his notes.

The Beetroot Detective

READ TOGETHER

"The ordinary explanation fits," he admitted. Rabbit nodded. "It often does." Badger crossed out the dragon, leaving a small doodle of it in the margin because it was a good drawing.

His report read: Beetroot juice made the marks. We noticed where the food had been. Underneath, he drew the dragon eating a pretend beetroot sandwich.

The mystery had only one chapter, but Badger felt pleased. He had found an answer that matched the evidence. The dragon could keep its own place in the picture, safely outside the report.

LET'S TALK

Which explanation matched what Badger had actually observed?

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