RAT. We returned to the hole in the riverbank. Oh, look. Leaves are starting to fall.

MOLE. Autumn already.

RAT. A couple of days later, Otter dropped by.

OTTER *and* PORTLY.

OTTER. Rat! Mole! Have you heard the news?

MOLE. No, Otter. What?

OTTER (*to* PORTLY, *who dashes off*). Portly. Portly! Come back here!

MOLE. Otter. What's the news?

OTTER. There's nothing else being talked about all along the riverbank. Portly. Come here.

RAT. What? Spit it out.

OTTER. Toad went up to town by an early train this morning. And he has ordered a large and very expensive motor car.

MOLE. Oh, dear.

RAT. Poop-poop!

MOLE. Indeed.

RAT. That will spell trouble.

OTTER (*pursuing* PORTLY). Portly! Portly! Where is that child?

OTTER *leaves in search of* PORTLY.

Autumn.

MOLE. Well, it did spell trouble, but not for some time. Summer was long over. The year turned into autumn. The trees had lost their leaves. Shall we go boating, Rat?

RAT. River's too swollen for that. Anyway, feeling a bit tired. I think I'll get an early night.

MOLE. So we spent a lot of time snug in our holes while wind and rain were battering at our doors.