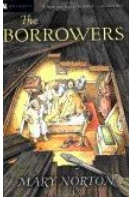


# Passages

## Reading Level 5



**Title:** The Borrowers

**Author:** Mary Norton

### Sample From The Book

"They? Who were they - exactly?"

"Homily, Pod, and little Arrietty."

"Pod?"

"Yes, even their names were never quite right. They imagined they had their own names - quite different from human names - but with half an ear you could tell they were borrowed. Even Uncle Hendreary's and Eggleatina's. Everything they had was borrowed; they had nothing of their own at all. Nothing. In spite of this, my brother said, they were touchy and conceited, and thought they owned the world."

"How do you mean?"

"They thought human beings were just invented to do the dirty work - great slaves put there for them to use. At least, that's what they told each other. But my brother said that, underneath, he thought they were frightened. It was because they were frightened, he thought, that they had grown so small. Each generation had become smaller and smaller, and more and more hidden. In the olden days, it seems, and in some parts of England, our ancestors talked quite openly about the 'little people.'"

"Yes," said Kate, "I know."

"Nowadays, I supposed," Mrs. May went on slowly, "if they exist at all, you would only find them in houses which are old and quiet and deep in the country - and where the human beings live to a routine. Routine is their safeguard. They must know which rooms are to be used and when. They do not stay long where there are careless people, or unruly children, or certain household pets."



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