





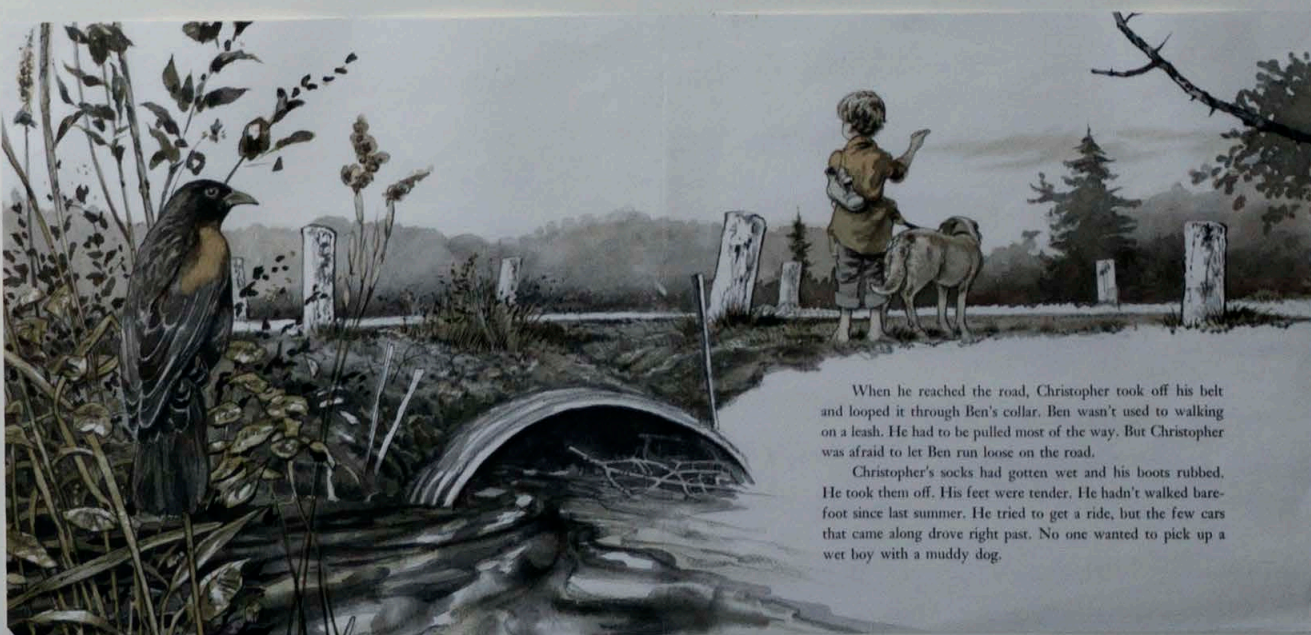
When he reached the road, Christopher took off his belt and looped it through Ben's collar. Ben wasn't used to walking on a leash. He had to be pulled most of the way. But Christopher was afraid to let Ben run loose on the road.

Christopher's socks had gotten wet and his boots rubbed. He took them off. His feet were tender. He hadn't walked bare-foot since last summer. He tried to get a ride, but the few cars that came along drove right past. No one wanted to pick up a wet boy with a muddy dog.



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