

Why the Whales Came

Michael Morpurgo

- 1 Mother was sitting in the kitchen, her chair rocking back and forth. The lamp was on the table beside her and her sewing lay in her lap. I expected a wiggling from her for being out after dark but she looked up vacantly at us as we came in and seemed neither annoyed nor surprised that we were late.
- 5 "Well," she said, a weak smile on her face. "You're back." And then, "I'm afraid your Mr Wellbeloved was right after all, Gracie. I thought he might be you know. I didn't want to believe him, no one did, your father least of all; but he's an educated man, Mr Wellbeloved, he could see it coming."
- 9 "Right about what, Mother?" I asked. "What's happened?"
- 10 "Where is everyone?" Daniel asked. "Can't find anyone at home."
- 11 "They've all gone to a meeting in the church, Daniel. Father's gone too, Gracie. They called an island meeting as soon as they heard the news this afternoon."
- 13 "It's the war, isn't it?" Daniel said. "They've started the war, Gracie, like old Welly Belly said they would." And Mother lowered her head.
- 15 There was such a storm that first night of the war, a violent thunderstorm that flashed and rolled around the island as if it wanted to uproot it from the sea. The wind moaned and howled horribly through the house. White sheet lightning turned the night to day outside my window heralding each new rumbling crescendo of thunder.

