

THE BARTON SERIES

BARTON LISTENS TO RAINY TIME TALES



BY

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(Ages 8 and over)

BARTON LISTENS TO RAINY-TIME TALES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Story	Page
(1) THE CENTER WITH CREAM	9
(2) THE NOT-TOO-IDENTICAL TWINS	13
(3) THE LAND BEYOND	22

THE CENTER WITH CREAM

It was a cool and quiet Saturday afternoon when Barton and his friends gathered at his treehouse. They had previously made plans to meet there, and have a club meeting. At the meeting, they decided to go to the toy store and then head off to the movies. The friends all wanted to see a new, special documentary movie titled, 'Animals of the desert'.



The movie was widely advertised for the last few weeks via several media and had taken a long time in the making. The children had also seen clips of the movie and it promised to be quite informative and fun-filled, especially with the narrator adding a bit of humour in the documentary. The friends all looked forward to a wonderful and entertaining evening that Saturday. Going to the movies on a Saturday was a favourite pastime of the seven friends.

Barton, Kwame, Dane, Alfredo, Sian, Shanna, and Malaika settled down comfortably in the treehouse. Though some of them brought snacks along,

they all just had lunch at their respective homes. During the time at the treehouse, they would usually feast on the wide variety of available food and candy before they went to the movies. Kwame though looked at a large box of cookies with vanilla cream centres that lay in front of him. They were among his favourite snacks and he longed to open the box.



It would be a pity not to eat them, he thought. Maybe the box might even be left in the cupboard for our next meeting. Maybe the cookies might spoil before we have the next meeting. These thoughts were agonising to Kwame. The plump boy cringed at the frightful thought.

Though Dane and Barton continued to keep him on a restricted diet, he was still allowed some snacks each day. The two boys had also placed Kwame on light daily exercises and he admirably adhered to both regimes. In fairness, Kwame was already beginning to show signs of small weight loss as well as being a bit fitter than he was before.

As the small group sat and continued to engage in casual conversation, a small drizzle began to fall. There was no threat of a heavy downpour, but it was steady enough to restrict the children to the treehouse. The sun still peeped through the sudden drizzle and solemnly promised to soon defeat its only enemy and dominate the daytime hours.



“The rains would cause no obstacles in your planned events for the evening,” the solar powerhouse seemed to whisper kindly to the group of friends.

Meanwhile, Kwame’s thoughts were neither on the inclemency of the weather nor on the wonderful plans for an evening that lay ahead. It was restricted only to a large box of vanilla cream-centred cookies that lay unopened and uneaten on the small table in the room.

“I have an idea,” shouted Kwame rather suddenly.

The rest of the children immediately turned around and temporarily aborted their activities.

“Let us have a ‘storytelling competition’ whilst we await the rains to cease,” he said. “Let us use our imaginative talents and create a story on the spot. It must be short, original, entertaining, and on any topic of the narrator’s choice,” Kwame added, with a little twinkle in his eyes.

The others listened to Kwame’s suggestion.

This idea of Kwame must be centred around food, thought Barton. Kwame’s innovative ideas usually did have food as an eventual reward. That fact was considered a given.

So it came to pass that the close and perceptive friend of the plump boy was right on target.

“The winner would receive some small prize, like, say the box of vanilla-centred cookies,” Kwame suggested.

Barton laughed quietly to himself.

“That’s my close and dear friend, Kwame,” he chuckled.