

Theirs was already looking like a jolly snowman, the sort Tom had seen on Christmas cards. A fat, jolly, round-faced snowman, who would soon have a smiling face and a carrot nose. He would be big and cheerful like Gary's dad.

Tom's own snowman wasn't at all like that. As he added more snow, and patted and smoothed and moulded it, the snow figure was taking a shape of its own. He could feel it through his soaking gloves, a firm, growing shape. It would only grow the way it wanted. If he tried to add bits that weren't right, the snow crumbled and slid off.

The shape refused to become a snowman. It felt to Tom as if there was

a creature inside the snow, pushing its way out. It didn't want to stand upright, but crouched on the ground, a firm, huddled, living shape.

At last he stepped back and looked at it and saw what it was.

