

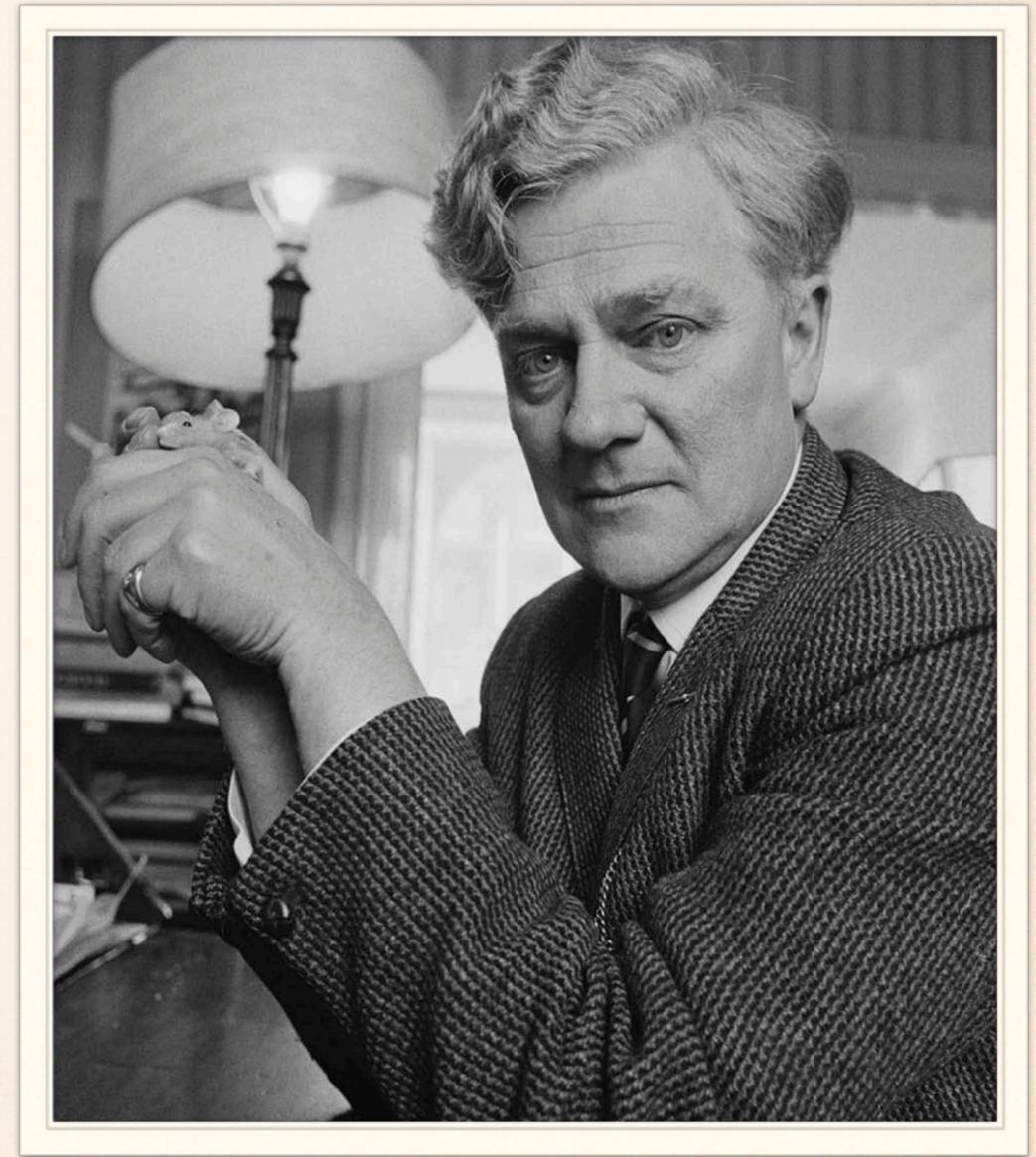
# WATERSHIP DOWN



BY RICHARD ADAMS

# “RABBIT STORIES”

- ❖ Richard Adams told “rabbit stories” to his daughters, especially on long car trips, to keep them entertained and pass the time.
- ❖ His daughters urged him to write them down in a book.
- ❖ The book was rejected by 16 publishers before it was published in 1972, when Adams was in his fifties.



# BEST-SELLER

- ❖ The book was an instant best-seller and became a worldwide phenomenon
- ❖ It has been adapted into two films, two TV animated series, a stage play, a dramatized radio program and several audiobooks
- ❖ It has been translated into 18 languages
- ❖ Adams was awarded the Carnegie Medal, the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize, and other awards



# RABBIT CULTURE

- ❖ The rabbits have their own stories about how life works, where rabbits came from, and the afterlife
- ❖ They have their own language — Lapine — which is light, simple, earthy
- ❖ They have a social hierarchy and government
- ❖ The rabbits have personality, but are not anthropomorphized as in Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit



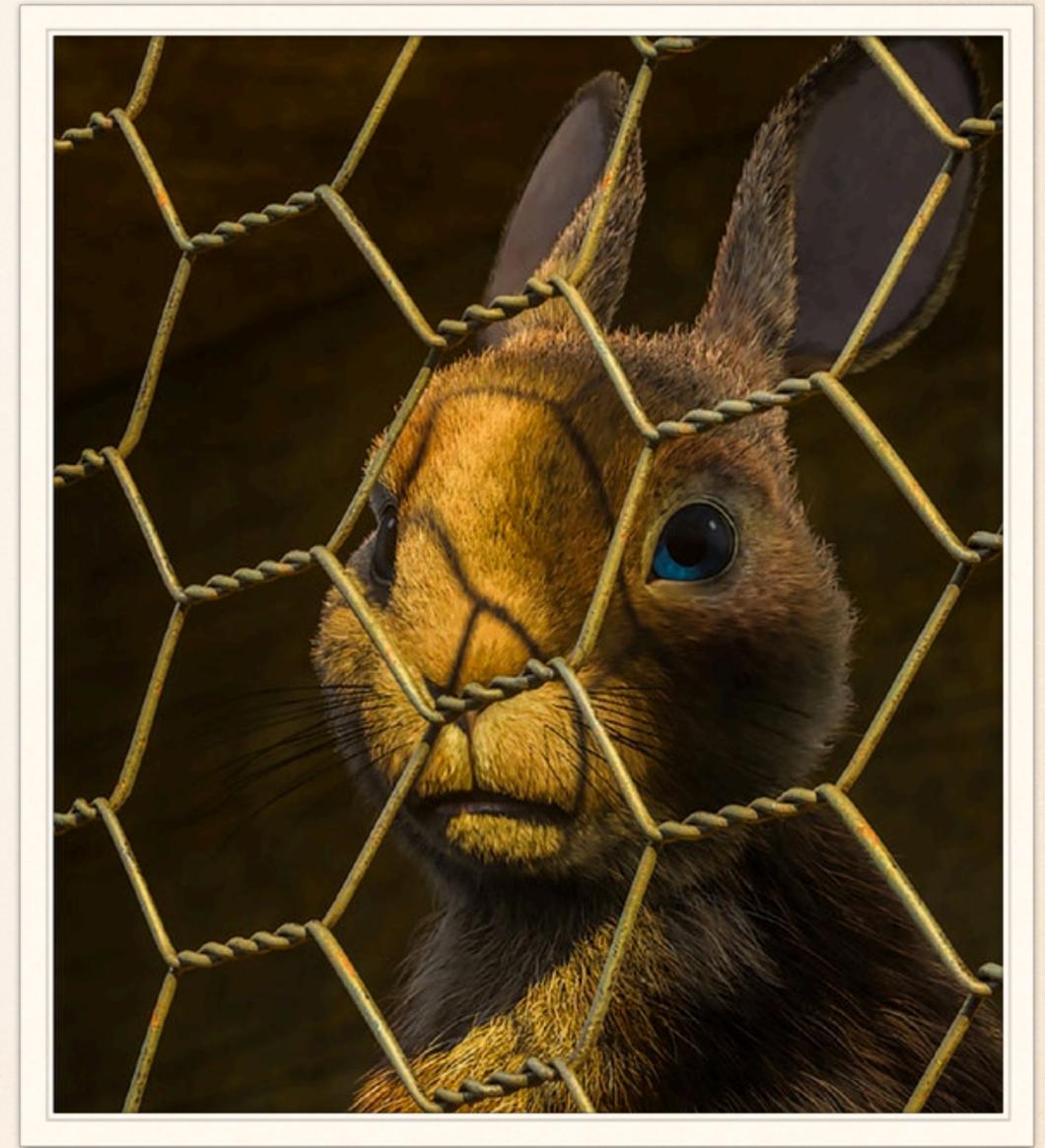
# THEMES & MOTIFS

- ❖ There is not only adventure, but terror, courage, tragedy, triumph
- ❖ There are political alliances, battle strategies, and overcoming obstacles
- ❖ The author claims it is not a political message, but there are lots of political themes in the story
- ❖ The idea of home is examined at length

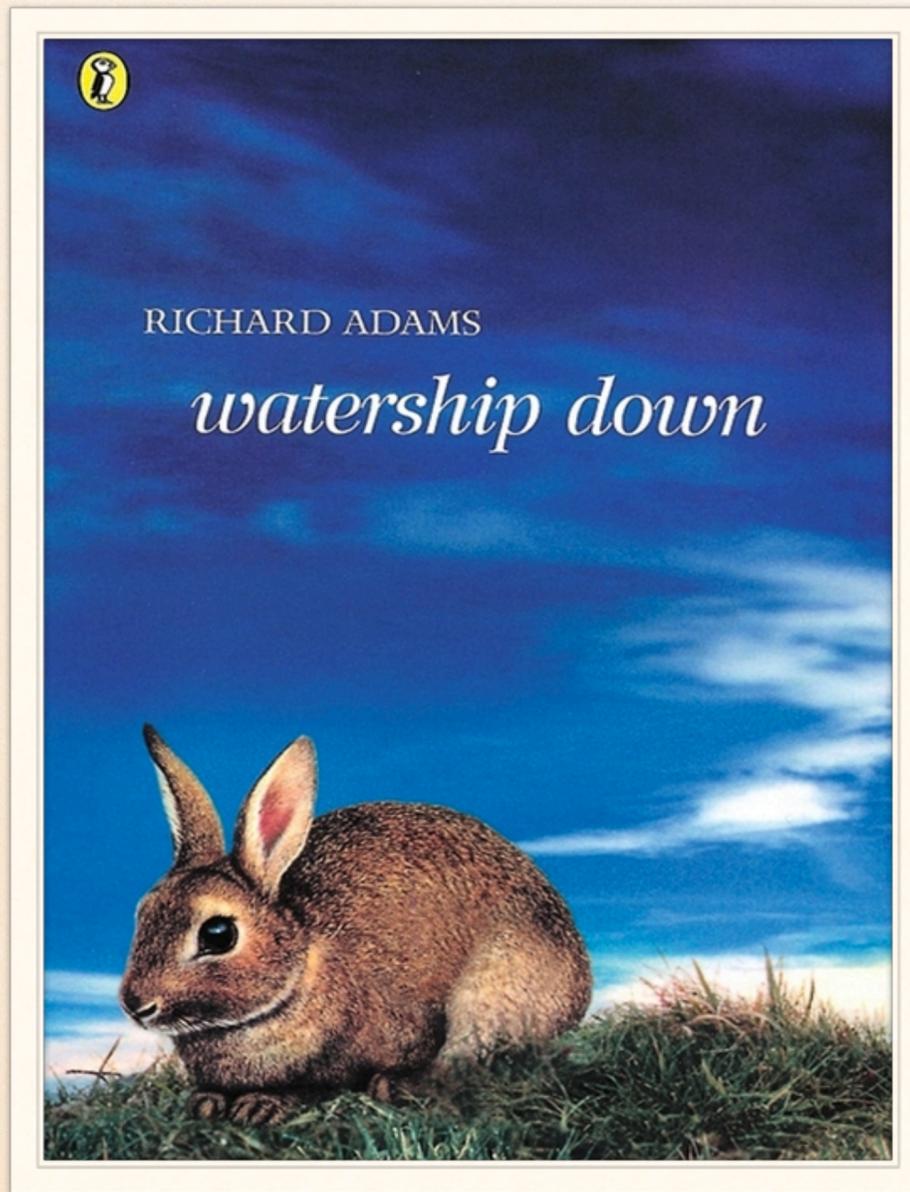


# THEMES & MOTIFS

- ❖ Our own **struggle** against the natural world, illustrated by predation
- ❖ Humans are painted as **evil** (as in “Bambi”)
- ❖ The role of **government**, hierarchy, cooperation, and competition
- ❖ **Freedom** — and what we will sacrifice for it
- ❖ The different ways we respond to **change**



# FORM & GENRE



❖ Form: Novel

❖ Genre: Epic

Fantasy

Fable

Allegory