

When does the cave start being a home?

Dolly, a prehistoric woman is foraging for food when the heavens open and torrential rain pours down on her. She runs to a nearby cave to take shelter.

She stays for several hours while the storm passes. While she waits, she explores the cave, noticing the types and shapes of rock.

When the rain stops, she leaves but remembers the cave. A week later, she returns just to sit there and get some peace from her family.

She eats berries at the front 'porch' and watches the nearby birds.

Normally she sleeps out in the open air, with her family, who are nomadic and set up camp in a different spot every couple of nights. But one evening she is very tired and lies down to rest in the cave, only to fall asleep and not wake up till the next morning.

She visits the cave increasingly regularly, until she goes every day for a few hours in the evening. Sometimes she stays longer and sleeps there.

She sweeps up the debris on the floor of the cave. She builds a fire pit just outside and stores some logs at the back of the cave. She plants a small nut tree nearby. She levels the floor so that it's less bumpy.

Eventually spring becomes summer and summer becomes autumn and she invites her family to sleep in the cave.

They bring in some objects such as large rocks, animal hides and straw. They make handprint marks on the walls. Increasingly they spend more of their time in and around the cave.

One day they are out hunting and they return to the cave to find a man and his dog asleep in it. They scare the man off.

From here, when does it STOP being a home?

The man never comes back, but they are always worried he might.

The children of the family get older and the cave starts to feel crowded.

Arguments and fights break out and

Dolly regrets inviting her family to sleep in the cave.

It's summer and a particularly annoying aunt decides to move into the cave and Dolly decides to sleep elsewhere.

In the summer heat of a particularly hot August, the cave becomes full of flies. The flies find food scraps and their numbers multiply. These flies attract spiders and small lizards, which attract raids from bigger predators, until the cave no longer feels like a safe refuge.

One by one, the family decides to leave the cave. Only the dad stubbornly stays in the cave until finally he gets lonely and rejoins his family.

The cave continues as a hotbed of insects and small animals.