

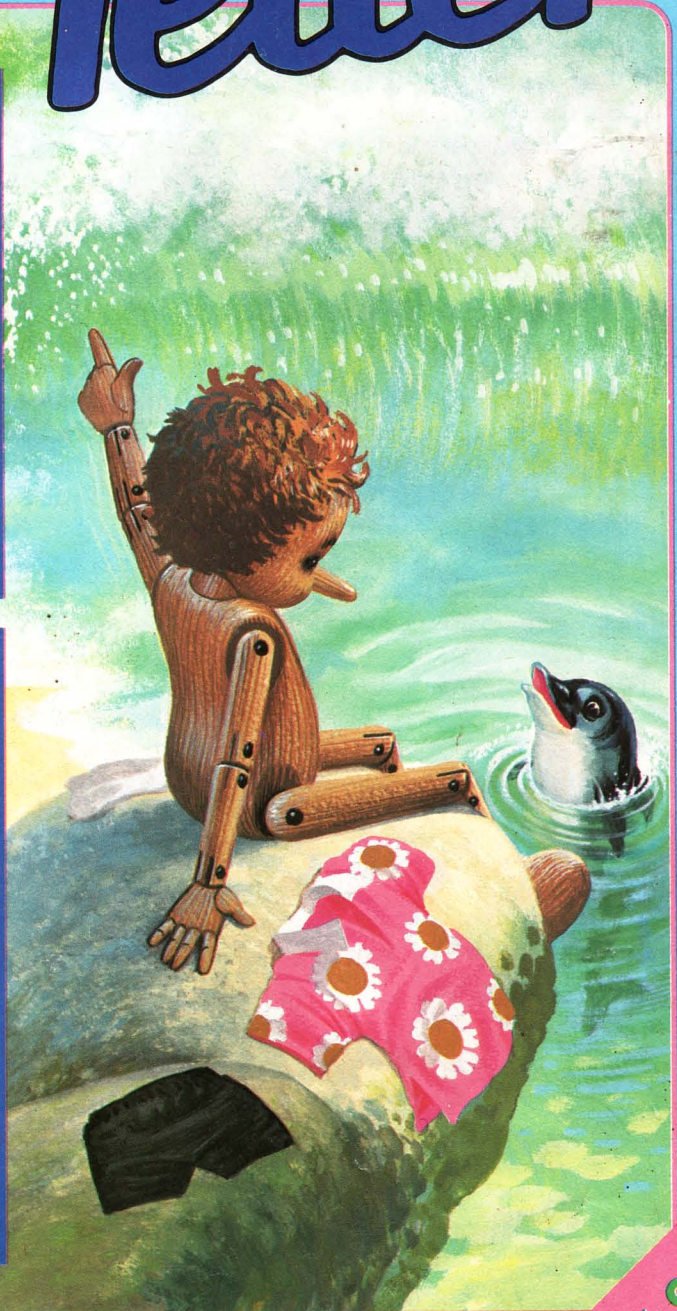
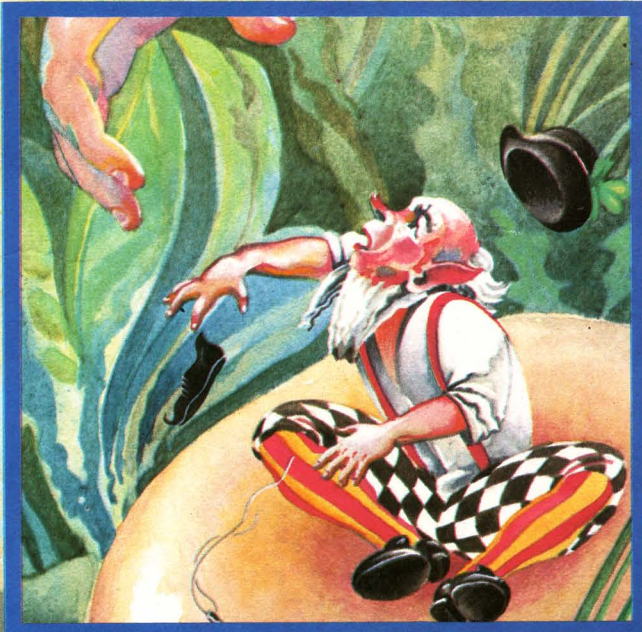
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PART 14

STORY

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Teller



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STORY

Teller

CONTENTS PART 14

GREAT MYTHS AND LEGENDS

The Monster in the Labyrinth365

Daedalos of Crete built an underground maze to house a bull-like monster. And an ancient Cretan civilisation built a conduit with over 1000 turnings. Together these may well have given rise to the Minotaur myth.

FAMOUS FABLES

Who's Stronger?.....370

Aesop's story of a battle between wind and sun.

THE STORY TELLER SERIAL

Pinocchio:

The Great Search.....372

Released from prison, the lonely puppet leads a dog's life, and finds that all that he loves is lost.

RHYMES AND VERSE

The Old Man of Torbay.....378

The anonymous exploits of an English eccentric.

FOLK TALES OF THE WORLD

Scarlet Braces.....379

Young Pat thinks his luck has turned when he catches a leprechaun — that's Gaelic for 'little-bodied one' — a leprechaun to you or me.

COMIC HEROES

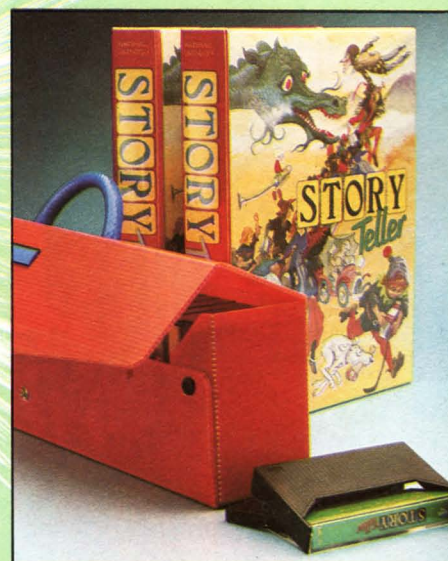
Grogre the Ogre.....383

You may already know that ogres come in a variety of colours. But did you know that such colours denote wisdom, goodness, stupidity...? Peter Dennis draws this original story by Kevin Carriás of one young ogre whose aim it is to become a Golden Ogre!

CLASSIC FAIRY STORIES

Cinderella387

In the Middle East a diamond anklet replaced the glass slipper. In England large elements of the story turn up in *Cap o' Rushes*. Even the North American Indians have their own version. But to most little girls, it is simply the best fairy story of all.



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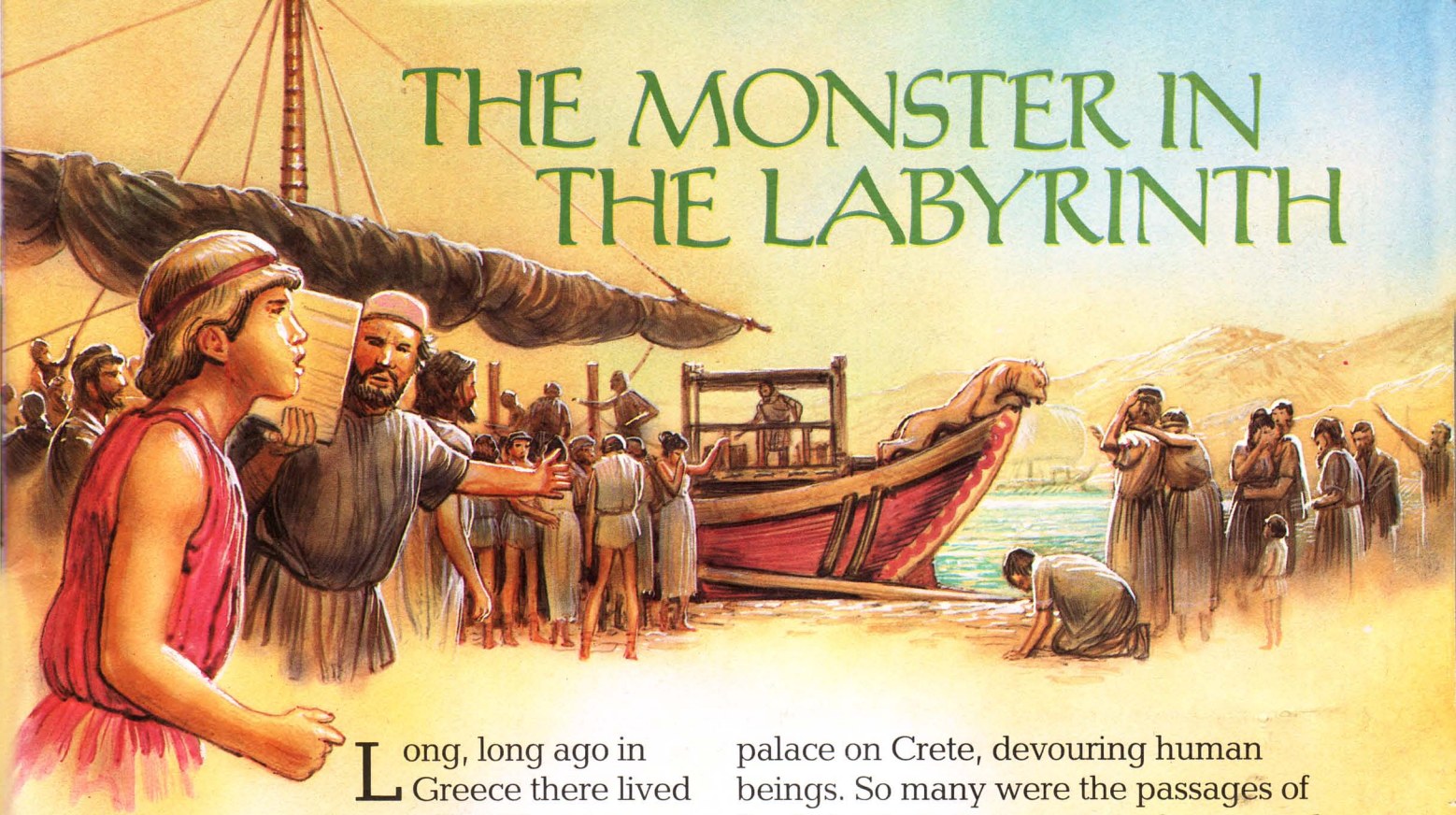
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THE MONSTER IN THE LABYRINTH



Long, long ago in Greece there lived a brave, young prince called Theseus. His father was King Aegeas and he ruled the beautiful city of Athens.

One day, when Theseus was down by the harbour, he saw a crowd of people all weeping. Seven young men and seven maidens were being taken aboard a black-sailed ship, their hands tied together with cords.

"Who are all these people on the quay?" Theseus asked a sailor.

"Oh, they're the families of the fourteen victims to be sacrificed. You see the seven young men and the seven maidens? They're being sent to Crete, poor souls. How I pity them!"

"Why? What will happen to them?"

"Bless you, boy, don't you know? They are to be fed to the terrible Minotaur that lives in the Labyrinth!"

Theseus had heard of the Minotaur — the hideous monster with the body of a giant man and the head of a bull! It had deadly horns, enormous teeth, and lived in a vast maze in the cellars of the

palace on Crete, devouring human beings. So many were the passages of the Labyrinth that no-one who entered could ever find their way out.

Theseus rushed back to his father's palace. "Father!" he cried, "I have just seen fourteen young Athenians being taken aboard ship bound for Crete. Why must we send them to be sacrificed to that terrible beast, the Minotaur?"



"Because, my son, long ago there was a war between Athens and Crete. Athens was defeated, and ever since then we have had to send a tribute to Crete every seven years — a tribute of human sacrifices! If we do not send these seven young men and seven maidens to be fed to the Minotaur, the King of Crete will start the war again and many of our people will die!"

"But what if the Minotaur was killed?"

"No-one has ever come out of the Labyrinth alive. Either the Minotaur kills them or they are lost for ever in the maze."

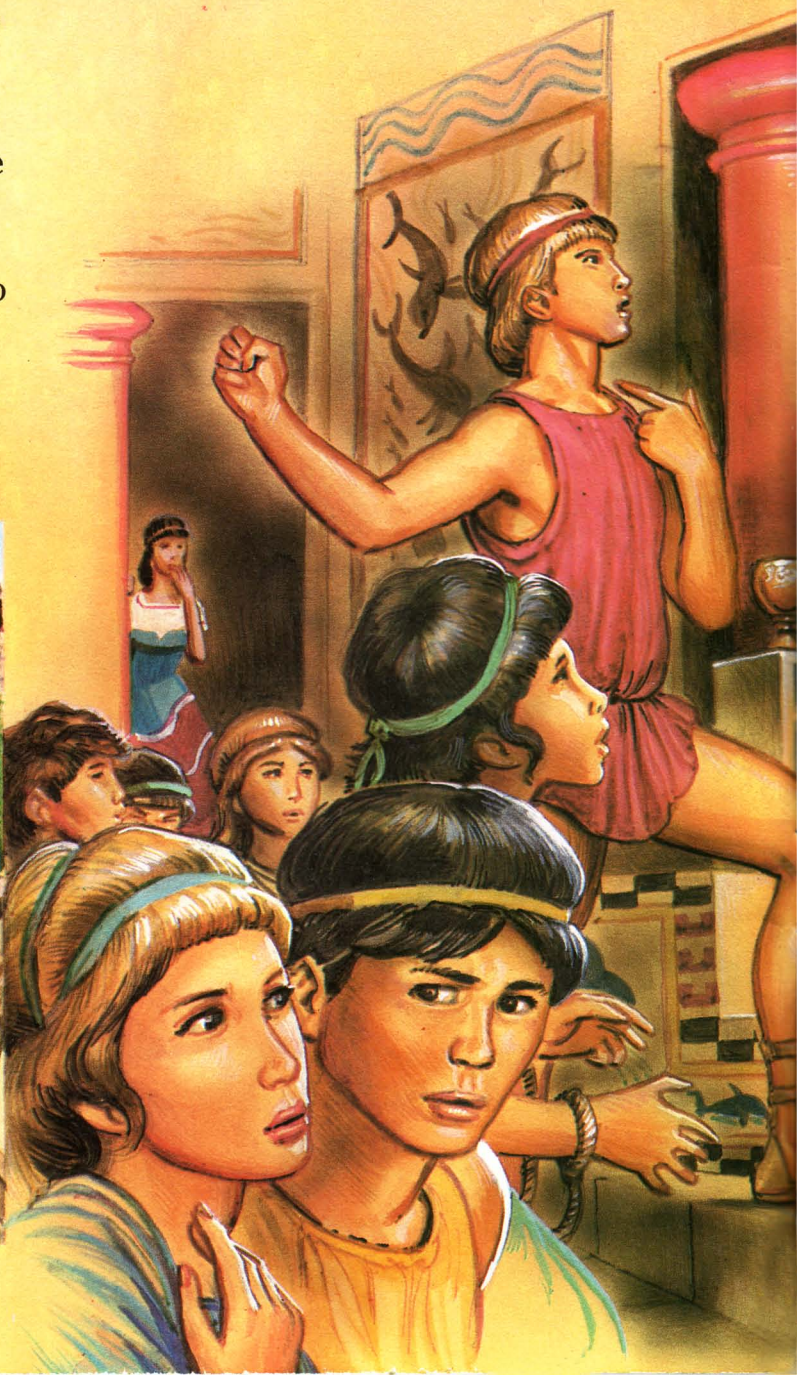
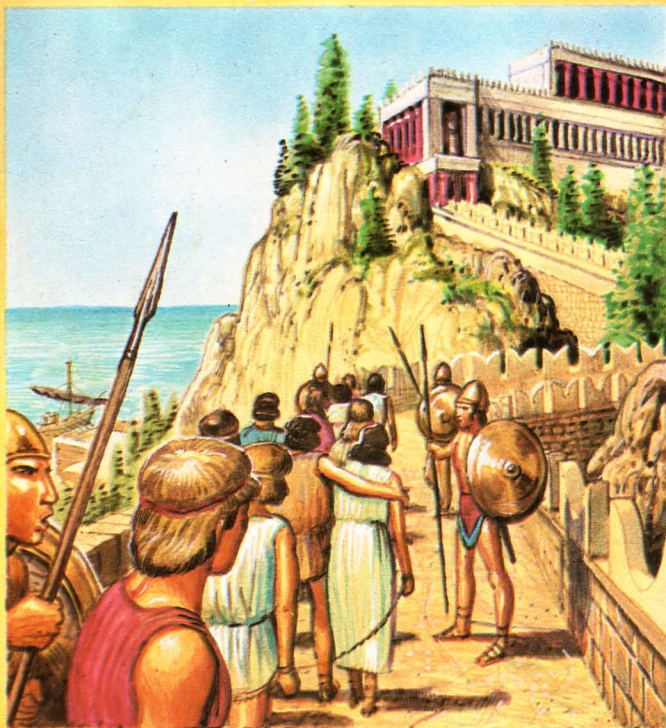
Theseus ran back to the harbour, down to the ship with the black sails, to where the young men and maidens were waiting. Their families and friends were still weeping on the dockside.

"People of Athens!" he shouted. "Do not weep, for I am going to Crete to slay the Minotaur!" And with these words, Theseus boarded the ship and set sail for Crete.

After many days at sea, they arrived at the beautiful island of Crete. High on a cliff stood the magnificent marble palace of King Minos. His soldiers led the young men and maidens up the cliff path.

Inside the palace, everything was painted gold and silver. The rooms were full of the richest furniture, with fighting bulls and leaping dolphins painted on every wall.

In the great hall, King Minos sat on



a golden throne. He had a long white beard and wore silk robes. "I expected only fourteen. Why does King Aegeas send fifteen?"

Theseus stepped forward. "I am Prince Theseus, son of King Aegeas. I have come to slay the Minotaur and free my people from this terrible debt."

"Brave words," said the King with an evil smile. "Since you are so keen to meet our monster, you can be the first



man to enter the Labyrinth tomorrow."

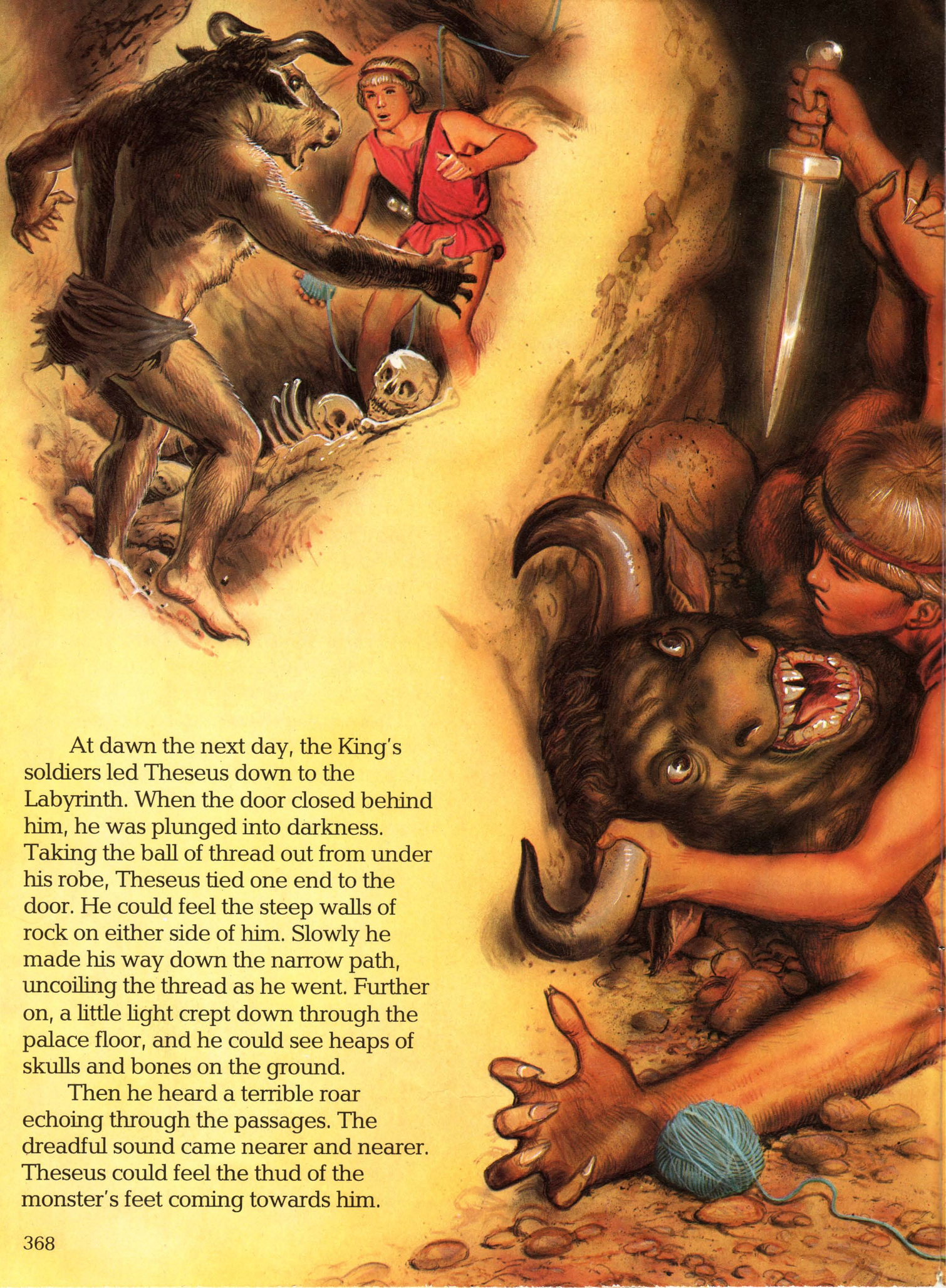
In a corner of the great hall stood the lovely Princess Ariadne. When she saw Theseus she fell in love with him at once. "I must help this brave and handsome young man," she thought.

That night she crept to his room. "Prince Theseus," she whispered. "I cannot help you slay the Minotaur, but I can help you escape from the Labyrinth. You must accept my help or you will die."

"Gladly, princess," replied Theseus.

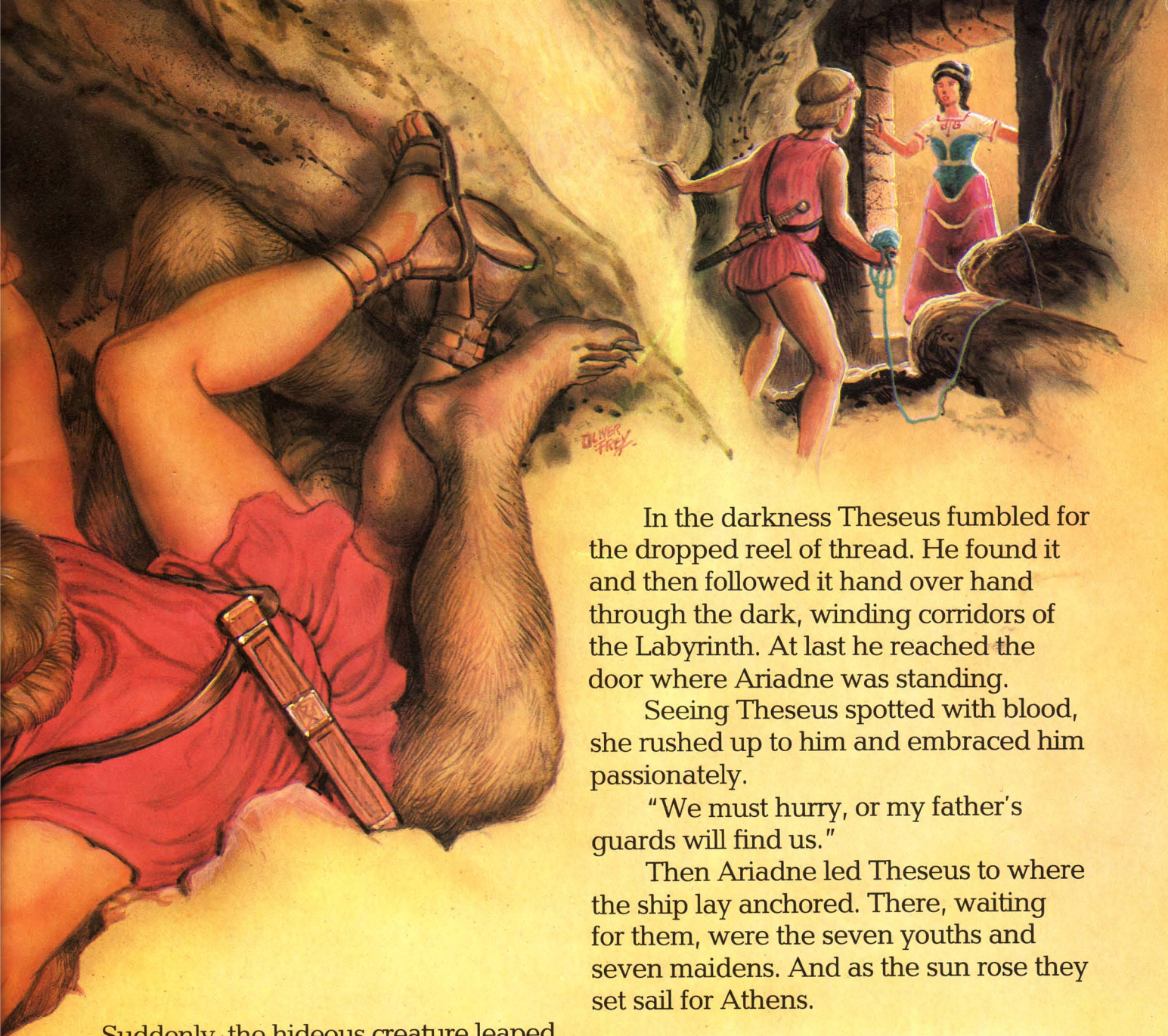
"Then take this sword and this ball of thread and hide them under your robe. When you enter the maze, tie the end of the thread to the door and unwind it as you go through the dark corridors. It's your only hope of finding your way out once you have killed the Minotaur. I will wait for you at the door. You must take me with you back to Athens. My father will kill me if he discovers I have helped you to escape."

"Of course I will, princess," said Theseus gently, "for I already love you."



At dawn the next day, the King's soldiers led Theseus down to the Labyrinth. When the door closed behind him, he was plunged into darkness. Taking the ball of thread out from under his robe, Theseus tied one end to the door. He could feel the steep walls of rock on either side of him. Slowly he made his way down the narrow path, uncoiling the thread as he went. Further on, a little light crept down through the palace floor, and he could see heaps of skulls and bones on the ground.

Then he heard a terrible roar echoing through the passages. The dreadful sound came nearer and nearer. Theseus could feel the thud of the monster's feet coming towards him.



In the darkness Theseus fumbled for the dropped reel of thread. He found it and then followed it hand over hand through the dark, winding corridors of the Labyrinth. At last he reached the door where Ariadne was standing.

Seeing Theseus spotted with blood, she rushed up to him and embraced him passionately.

"We must hurry, or my father's guards will find us."

Then Ariadne led Theseus to where the ship lay anchored. There, waiting for them, were the seven youths and seven maidens. And as the sun rose they set sail for Athens.

Suddenly, the hideous creature leaped at him, bellowing and roaring. But the prince sprang aside, clinging to the rock. Again the beast lunged at him and this time Theseus struck him a mighty blow on the chest. The Minotaur fell back, stunned, and Theseus grabbed hold of its huge, sharp horns. With all his might, he held the beast down. The Minotaur roared again, gnashing its enormous teeth. Theseus swiftly drew his sword and thrust it three times into the Minotaur's heart. The beast roared once more . . . and then lay still.



WHO'S



The Wind was always boasting.

"I'm stronger than anybody.

I can push over trees and bury mountains in snow. I can smash ships on to rocks and tear roofs off houses.

I'm stronger than anything!"

The Sun went by smiling to herself thoughtfully.

"I'm stronger than you, you silly old Sun,"

jeered the Wind.

"Who? Me?" smiled the Sun. "Oh no, I'm afraid you're wrong, Mr Wind."

"What can you do, you over-sized orange? I challenge you to a test of strength!"

"All right," said the Sun. "Do you see that Man down there in Willow Road? He's setting off for work. I bet you can't remove his waistcoat before he catches his morning train."

The Wind hooted out loud and rolled about in a gale of laughter. "That puny thing? I'll strip him naked!"

So the Wind blew until the windows rattled in the house in Willow Road. But seeing the change in the weather, the Man hurried back indoors to snatch up his overcoat. Then the Wind blew and blew until the Man's coat flapped round him. "Brrr! What weather!" he said, buttoning its buttons and belting its belt and hugging the collar closer round his neck.

The Wind howled and howled until the Man was struggling

STRONGER?

against the blast.

"Brrr! What terrible weather!" he said — and he
 hopped on to a bus.

The Wind roared and roared until
the bus rocked on its wheels. "Brrr! What
weather!" said the driver. "I'm taking the bus
into the depot. This wind is strong enough
 to blow it over!"

So the Wind blew and howled and roared against
the depot until he went quite purple in the face.
"Okay, know-all," it sneered at the Sun. "But I bet
 you can't do any better!"

So the Sun shone. Once the Wind stopped blowing,
the bus came out of the depot and drove on towards
the station. "Phew! It's hot!" said the passengers, and got off.
The Sun shone until the Man unbuttoned his coat and mopped
his forehead. "What peculiar weather," he thought,
 turning in to the station yard.

The Sun shone and shone until the Man took off his jacket and
loosened his tie. "Phew! It's hot!" he said, unbuttoning his waistcoat.
The Sun beamed and beamed until the tar on the roads got sticky.
"Phew! This is too much," said the Man, and glanced around him
at the other people on the platform. They were sprawled on
seats, fanning themselves with newspapers.

"Phew!" said the Man — and he took off *his* waistcoat!
The Wind got very huffy after that. "Cheat," he muttered to the
Sun, storming off. "Man always liked you better than me!"

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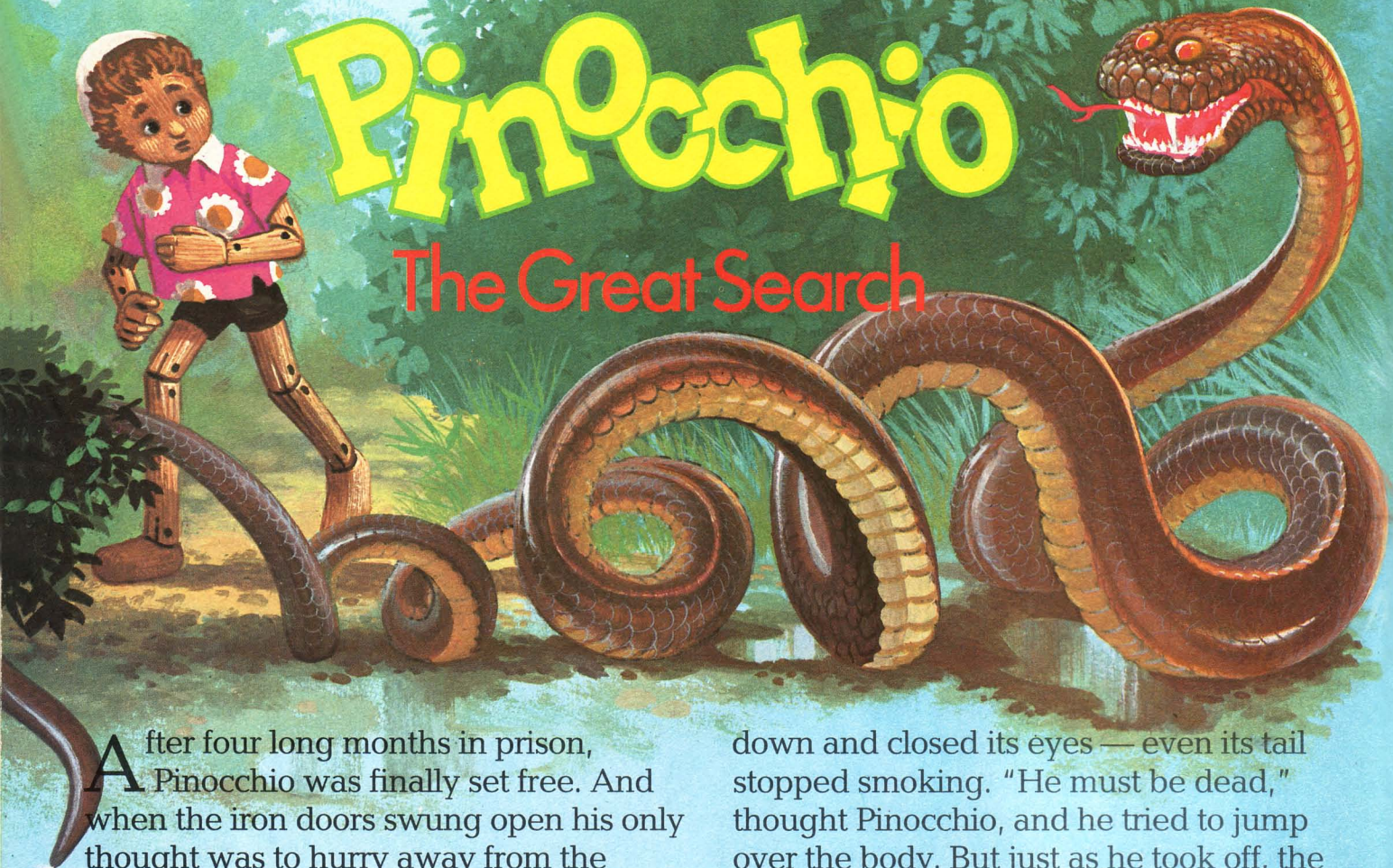
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Pinocchio

The Great Search



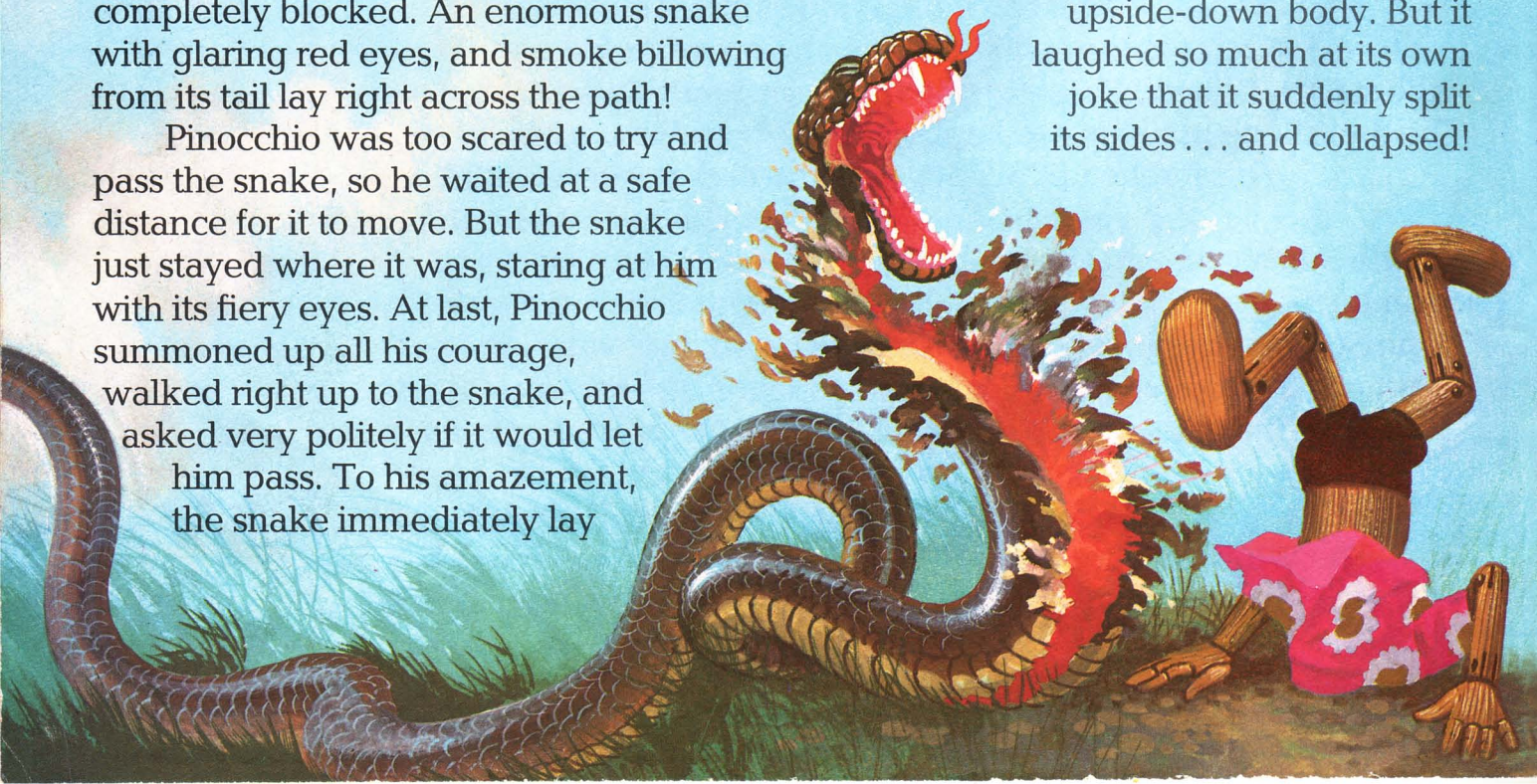
After four long months in prison, Pinocchio was finally set free. And when the iron doors swung open his only thought was to hurry away from the horrible Trap o' Fools. First he would visit the Fairy, and then he would go home to his father, Geppetto.

The road was muddy from days of rain but Pinocchio skipped along merrily until, turning a corner, he found his way completely blocked. An enormous snake with glaring red eyes, and smoke billowing from its tail lay right across the path!

Pinocchio was too scared to try and pass the snake, so he waited at a safe distance for it to move. But the snake just stayed where it was, staring at him with its fiery eyes. At last, Pinocchio summoned up all his courage, walked right up to the snake, and asked very politely if it would let him pass. To his amazement, the snake immediately lay

down and closed its eyes — even its tail stopped smoking. "He must be dead," thought Pinocchio, and he tried to jump over the body. But just as he took off, the snake reared up angrily and Pinocchio was thrown backwards and landed head down in the mud!

The snake had only been playing, and now it burst into a great fit of giggles at the sight of the puppet's wriggling, upside-down body. But it laughed so much at its own joke that it suddenly split its sides . . . and collapsed!



This time the snake really was dead, so Pinocchio picked himself up, clambered over it, and ran on down the path. After all the excitement he felt very hungry, so when he saw some juicy grapes growing in a field, he climbed over the fence to pick a bunch. It was a big mistake, for just as he was stretching out his hand there was a loud crack — as the jaws of a hideous iron trap snapped fast around his legs.

Poor Pinocchio screamed and yelled for hours, but no-one came. Then, through the gloom, a farmer appeared.

"Well, well, what have we got here? Ha! So it's you that's been catching my chickens! And I thought it was weasels!"

"It wasn't me, really it wasn't! I only wanted some grapes!"

"Anyone who steals grapes is quite capable of stealing chickens. You're coming with me to the farmyard. My guard-dog died this morning, so you can take his place!"

And, to Pinocchio's horror, the farmer buckled a heavy dog collar around his neck and chained him to a kennel!

"If you see any of those thieving weasels you bark at once! Understand?" Then the farmer went off to bed, leaving the puppet with a bowl of water and an old bone.

Pinocchio lay down on the straw. Oh, how miserable he was! Finally he cried himself to sleep, but soon he was

woken by strange noises.

There, right inside the farmyard, were four large weasels. One of them tip-toed over to the kennel.

"Evening, Melampo."

"I'm not Melampo. He's dead. I'm a puppet, and I'm here as a punishment."

"Never mind, never mind. We'll give you the same deal as we had with Melampo. If you keep quiet, and let us take eight chickens each week, there'll be one plump chicken for you. All right?"

"Well, I'm . . ." and before Pinocchio could say more, the weasels had opened the door to the chicken-house nearby and slipped inside.





Quick as a flash, Pinocchio slammed the door behind them, rolled a large stone against it, and started barking as loud as he could. *Bow-wow-wow-wow!* The weasels hammered at the door but it was no use. The farmer came running out with his gun, caught all four weasels, and tied them up in a sack.

"At last I've got you! You're for the cooking pot, you robbers. What a magnificent dog!"

The farmer was so pleased with Pinocchio that he set him free,

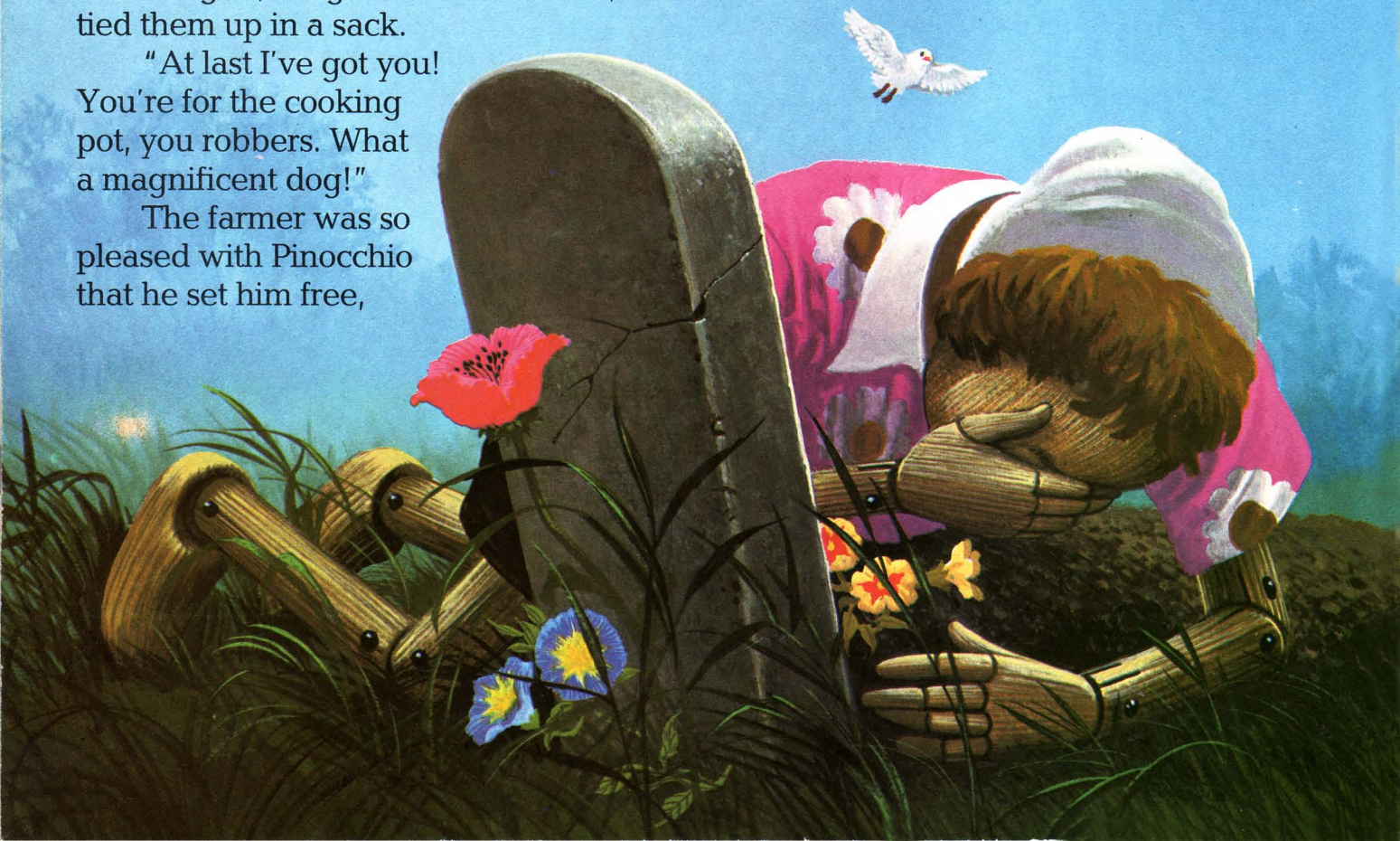
and sent him on his way with many thanks. The puppet went off as fast as his legs would carry him, and he didn't stop running until he came to the wood where the Fairy had lived.

That's right — where the Fairy *had* lived. Poor Pinocchio found no sign at all of the Fairy's house. There was only a marble stone, with these sad words engraved on it:

HERE LIES THE FAIRY WHO DIED OF SORROW
WHEN SHE WAS ABANDONED BY PINOCCHIO

It was a tombstone. And when Pinocchio saw the words, he thought his heart would break. He fell down to the ground and burst into tears. He lay there weeping bitterly all through the night.

"Poor Fairy," he sobbed. "Why did you have to die? It's all my fault. I should have listened to you and not that wicked Fox. And my poor daddy — what's happened to him? I want to stay with him always, and never leave home again.



Oh Fairy, please come back to life. Don't leave me here alone."

And Pinocchio wished that he could die himself.

Then, in the green light of dawn, a huge dove flew overhead. Hovering above the tombstone, it called down to the puppet, "Is that you, Pinocchio? I have been looking for you everywhere." And when Pinocchio nodded sadly, the great bird landed behind him, breathless with news.

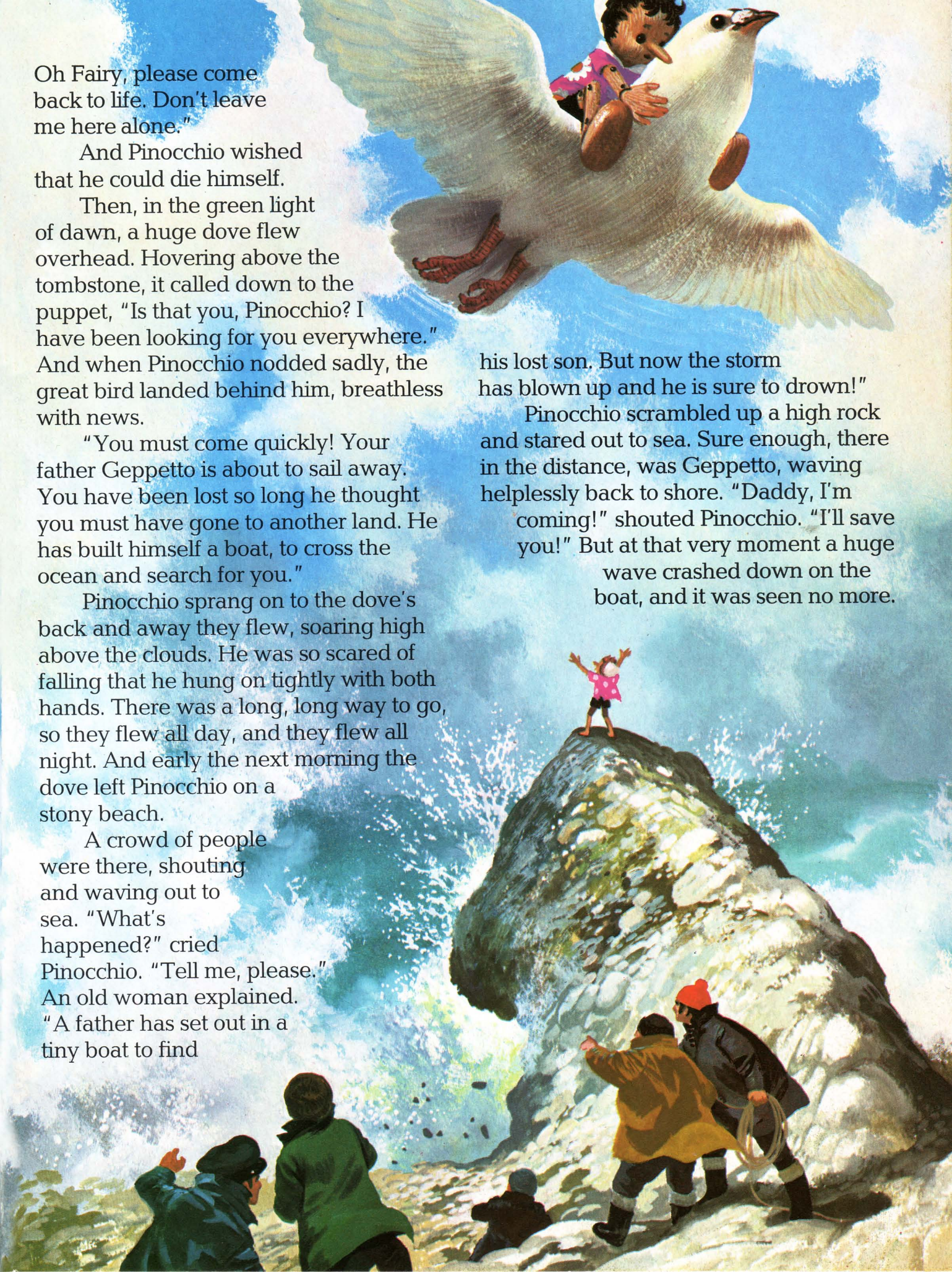
"You must come quickly! Your father Geppetto is about to sail away. You have been lost so long he thought you must have gone to another land. He has built himself a boat, to cross the ocean and search for you."

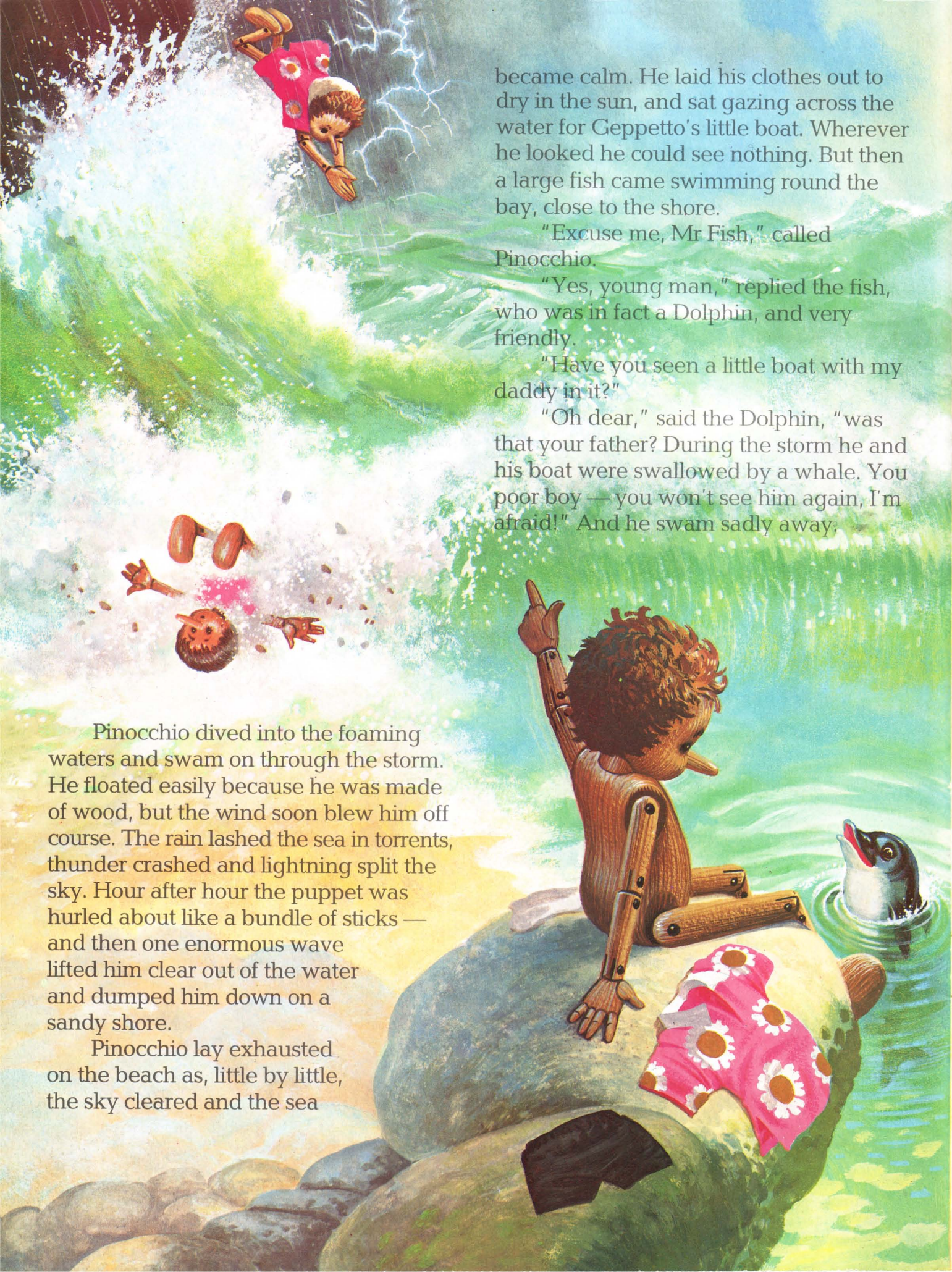
Pinocchio sprang on to the dove's back and away they flew, soaring high above the clouds. He was so scared of falling that he hung on tightly with both hands. There was a long, long way to go, so they flew all day, and they flew all night. And early the next morning the dove left Pinocchio on a stony beach.

A crowd of people were there, shouting and waving out to sea. "What's happened?" cried Pinocchio. "Tell me, please." An old woman explained. "A father has set out in a tiny boat to find

his lost son. But now the storm has blown up and he is sure to drown!"

Pinocchio scrambled up a high rock and stared out to sea. Sure enough, there in the distance, was Geppetto, waving helplessly back to shore. "Daddy, I'm coming!" shouted Pinocchio. "I'll save you!" But at that very moment a huge wave crashed down on the boat, and it was seen no more.





became calm. He laid his clothes out to dry in the sun, and sat gazing across the water for Geppetto's little boat. Wherever he looked he could see nothing. But then a large fish came swimming round the bay, close to the shore.

"Excuse me, Mr Fish," called Pinocchio.

"Yes, young man," replied the fish, who was in fact a Dolphin, and very friendly.

"Have you seen a little boat with my daddy in it?"

"Oh dear," said the Dolphin, "was that your father? During the storm he and his boat were swallowed by a whale. You poor boy — you won't see him again, I'm afraid!" And he swam sadly away.

Pinocchio dived into the foaming waters and swam on through the storm. He floated easily because he was made of wood, but the wind soon blew him off course. The rain lashed the sea in torrents, thunder crashed and lightning split the sky. Hour after hour the puppet was hurled about like a bundle of sticks — and then one enormous wave lifted him clear out of the water and dumped him down on a sandy shore.

Pinocchio lay exhausted on the beach as, little by little, the sky cleared and the sea



Poor Pinocchio. First he loses the Fairy, and now his father, Geppetto. He put his clothes on, and with his heart as heavy as lead followed the road away from the beach. After an hour he came to a place called Busy Bee Village, where the streets were full of people all working at their trades. Wherever he looked there was not a single person idle.

"This won't suit me," thought Pinocchio. "I hate working."

By now he was very thirsty, so he asked a young woman, who was carrying two pails of water, if he could have a drink.

"Of course you can. Here, drink up." And Pinocchio guzzled as if he had never drunk water before.

"And I'll give you some bread and stew if you'll help me with these pails."

"But I hate working. I'm not a donkey, you know!"

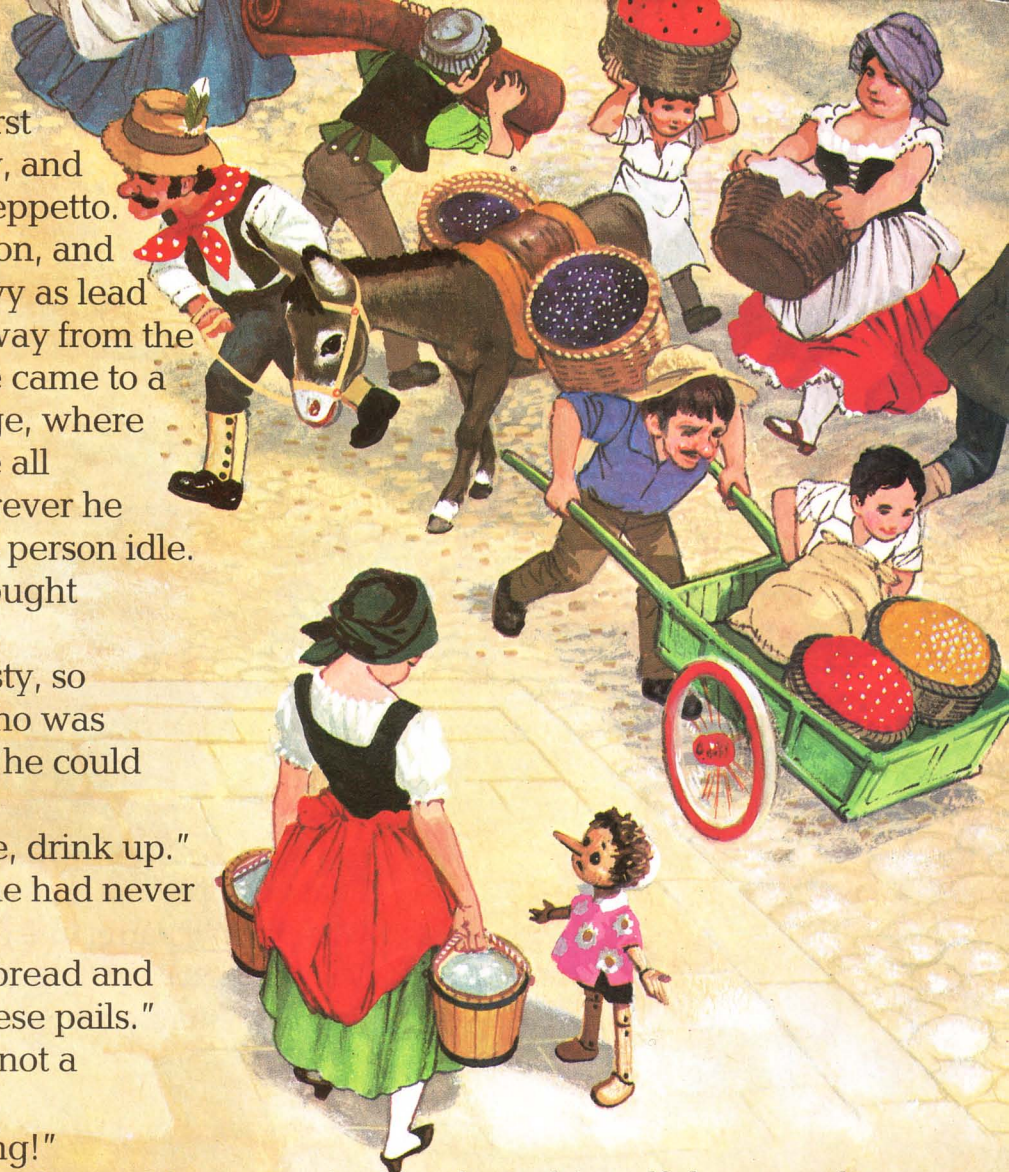
"And some syrup pudding!"

Pinocchio was so ravenous he could not resist. "All right then. I'll carry this smaller one to your house."

They struggled up the road with the heavy pails, and as soon as they were inside her house the woman gave Pinocchio his bread and stew and syrup pudding. He gobbled them down as if he had never eaten before.

When he had finished he looked up at the young woman — and there before him was the very face, with the same hair and the same eyes, that he had thought never to see again.

"O Fairy, it's you! You're *alive*! I thought I'd lost you for ever, like Daddy. I've been so unhappy — *please* don't make me cry again."



And he threw himself down on the floor and hugged her knees.

The Fairy smiled and stroked his head, then she picked him up and kissed him.

"I'm glad to see you too, Pinocchio. Will you stay with me now, like a good boy?" "Yes, I promise!"

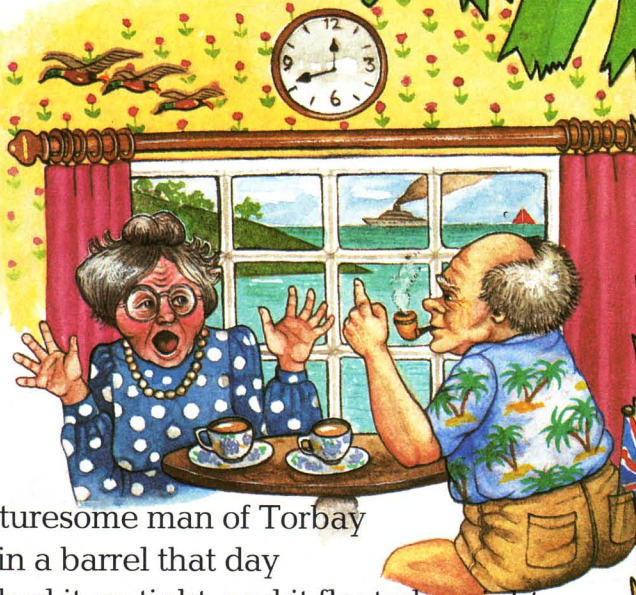
[Will Pinocchio keep his promise? Find out in Part 15]





THE OLD MAN OF TORBAY

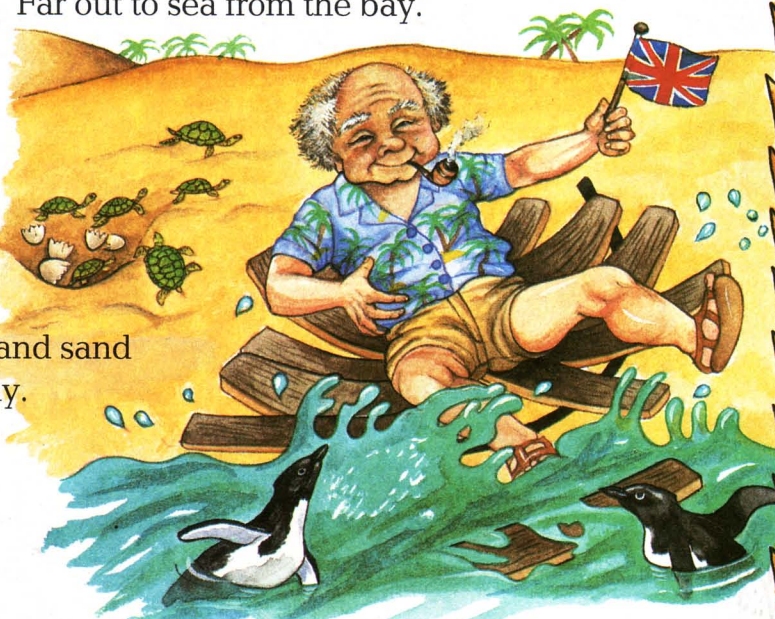
There was an old man of Torbay
Who said to his wife one day
At twelve of the clock, prepare for a shock
For I shall be floating away.



That venturesome man of Torbay
Was put in a barrel that day
They corked it up tight, and it floated upright
Far out to sea from the bay.



That nautical man of Torbay
Wobbled and rolled all the way
To a strange foreign land all coral and sand
Where turtles and penguins do play.



Of that bumptious old man of Torbay
A tale shall be written one day
For a cannibal slim, did promptly cook him
And pickled that man of Torbay.





SCARLET BRACES

Now if there's one thing the people of Ireland know about, it's the ways of the Irish leprechaun. They will tell you that the leprechauns make all the shoes and boots the fairies wear. They will tell you that every leprechaun has a pot of gold hidden away in a secret place. And they will tell you, if you see a leprechaun, never to take your eyes off him or he will disappear before you look back again.

That is why, when Pat Fitzpatrick went out and about each day, he was always saying to himself, "If I ever see a leprechaun, I won't take my eyes off him till he gives me his pot of gold."

Pat might have been a better boy if he had spent more time helping his mother dig potatoes and less time looking for leprechauns and pots of gold.

Still, all that searching paid off. One fine day Pat caught sight of a little man — no bigger than his own hand — sitting on a toadstool, sewing a pair of fairy boots. Pat bit his lip and stood very still. "I won't take my eyes off him, so I won't. Not till he's made me the richest boy in all Ireland!"

Quietly, Pat crept through the grass until he was close enough to reach out and grab the leprechaun in his fist.

"Got you! Now, where's your pot of gold?"



give me any of your nonsense, now," he said. "I shan't let you go until you show me your pot of gold."

The leprechaun writhed and struggled until he wriggled one hand free and could point over Pat's shoulder. "Look, boy, and be quick! Your cow's in the corn!"

Pat very nearly turned his head to look. But, just in the nick of time, he saw it was a trick. "You'll have to do better than that," he laughed, shaking the leprechaun. "I am not taking my eyes off you till I have your pot of gold safe in my hands!"

Then the leprechaun burst into pitiful tears. "Ah, you're a cruel, heartless boy, so you are. Anyone can see that. Here you stand talking of gold when your own house is burning down and your mother inside it!"

"What!"

"Oh! Would you frighten a poor creature half to death?" cried the leprechaun, and his little heart pounded beneath Pat's fingers. "What's that you say about gold? I don't know of any gold, or anything about it at all!"

Pat squeezed the leprechaun a little tighter, never once looking away. "Don't





"Since you won't take your eyes off me, I am unable to tell you a lie. My pot of gold's buried below this particular thistle. But I'm thinking you'll need a spade if you're to dig it up."

"Oho, I see your trick," Pat jeered, squeezing the leprechaun until the little chap's eyes bulged. "You think I'll never find this one thistle again among so many!" So he untied the scarlet braces from round the leprechaun and tied them round the thistle instead, to mark it. Then he pushed the leprechaun deep into his pocket.

In his horror, Pat very nearly dropped the leprechaun and ran home. Just in the nick of time, he saw it was a trick, and shook the leprechaun until the poor little fellow turned as green as his own coat.

"All right, all right," the leprechaun spluttered at last. "I'll tell you where to find my pot of gold."

"No you won't, you'll show me the very spot," said Pat. And taking off his scarlet braces, he tied them to the leprechaun like a lead to a dog.

The magical little cobbler led Pat to the top of a hill. Thousands upon thousands of thistles grew in every direction. He stopped beside one thistle that looked exactly like every other.





But the very moment he lost sight of him, the leprechaun changed into thin air and was gone.

Pat did not mind. He ran home as fast as his legs would carry him, and fetched a spade. It was so heavy that he had to drag it behind him all the way back to the hill. "Thought he could trick me, eh?" he panted. "Well, he didn't reckon on the cleverness of good old Pat Fitzpatrick!"

Puffing and blowing, he stopped at the top of the hill to mop his forehead. And there was a sight in front of him that made his jaw drop.

A pair of scarlet braces dangled from every thistle in sight, as far as the eye could see — thousands upon thousands of scarlet braces. There was no more hope of recognising the leprechaun's thistle than of finding one particular drop of water in the whole of the Irish Sea.

So, if you ever chance to see a leprechaun, and you've a mind to steal his pot of gold, you had better keep a sharp eye on the little fellow . . . and remember the story of Pat Fitzpatrick and his scarlet braces!

In the land of the Red Ogres, in a village made of mud, there lived a father ogre and a mother ogre and a little boy ogre called Grogre.

Grogre's father was very, very big and dark red with thick green claws, long sharp, green teeth and three green horns. He was incredibly strong, with a very loud roaring voice. But, like most Red Ogres, he was not very clever.

GROGRE the OGRE

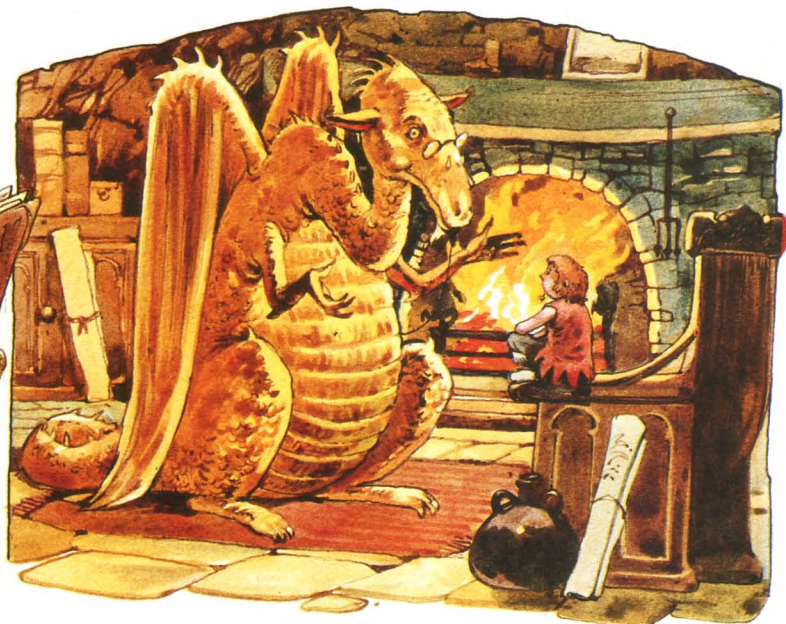


Grogre's mother was bright red with shiny green lips and a long red and green horn. She was not as big as the father ogre, but she was wiser. You can tell red mother ogres are wise because they have three green eyes — fathers have only one or two.

Like all little ogres, Grogre was pink and he had no horns. Yet, although he was small, he was a lot more clever than his father. He could read and write, add up and take away.



Now to turn red, all little ogres have to kill a monster. Grogre's father especially liked killing dragons and he thought it was time that Grogre killed one too. But Grogre did not like killing things.



Worse still, although his father did not know it, Grogre had made friends with a wise old yellow dragon called Zagon. Grogre liked nothing better than sitting in Zagon's warm lair listening to tales of monsters, far-off lands and the wonderful Golden Ogres who were gentle, brave and clever.

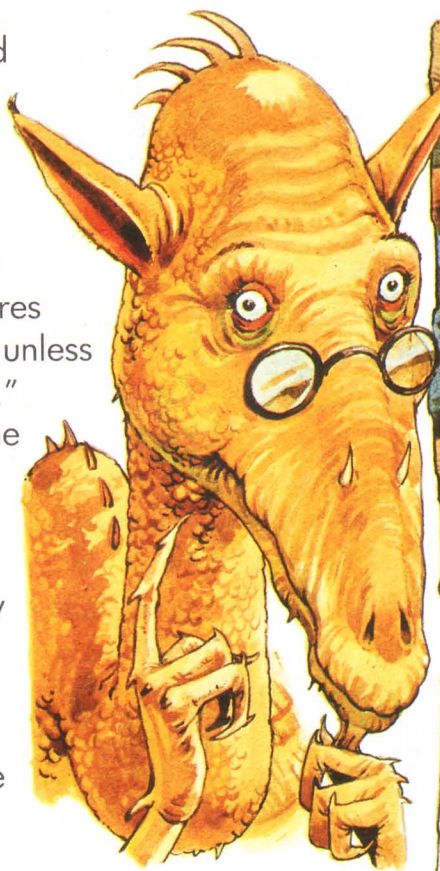
When Grogre's father found out about Zagon, he was furious. "Dragons are for killing, not talking to!" he roared. "If you want to be a big strong ogre like me, you must slay that

dragon!" Smoke began to pour out from his nostrils and his horns shot bolts of lightning. Grogre inched backwards out of the house and, as his father lumbered after him, he ran off down the road as fast as he could.

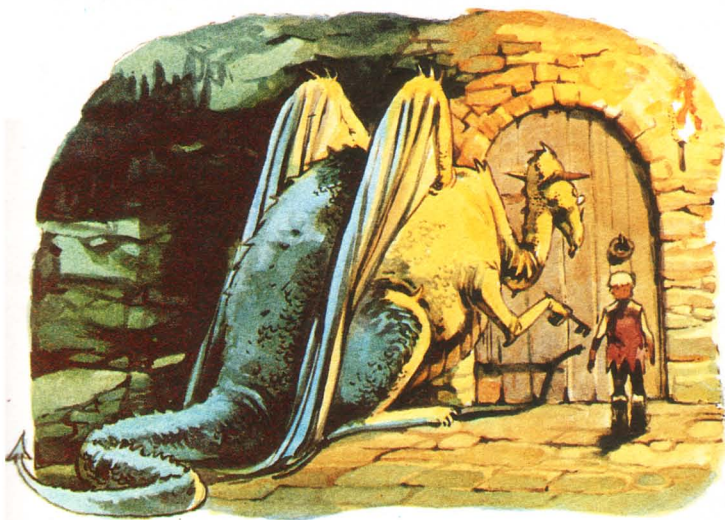


Grogre did not stop running until he reached Zagon's lair and then, shedding bright green tears, he told the dragon what had happened. "You must fly away, Zagon," he said sadly.

The dragon looked thoughtfully over the rim of his spectacles. "You could become a Golden Ogre, you know. Golden Ogres never kill anything unless they really have to." "How can I become a Golden Ogre? I'd have to do some wonderful deed. And I'm only little." Zagon shuffled off down the passage, beckoning Grogre to follow.



"Far away, in the shadow of a lonely mountain, there is a land where everyone is afraid." "What are they afraid of?" asked Grogre. "They are afraid of a huge, slimy monster that lives in the mountain. Every night it oozes out of its cave and crawls into the villages devouring ogres and dragons alike, leaving a foul trail of green slime." Grogre shuddered.



At the end of the passage was a room full of old maps and weird instruments. "But why hasn't some brave ogre killed the monster?" asked Grogre. "It's far too terrible and strong. It can only be killed when it's asleep in its cave. But the monster can change shape, and its cave can only be reached by a passage, far too narrow for an ogre."





"But I might be small enough to crawl through the passage!" exclaimed Grogre. The dragon nodded. "And I could kill it with my father's sword!" "Hmm, yes, but to kill it

you must plunge a sword into its very heart. And to reach that you must crawl along a narrow passage and then cross a slippery rock arch right over the sleeping monster."



"I'll do it!" cried Grogre, and he ran off to get his father's sword. When he got home he peered anxiously round the door. His father was snoring loudly in a chair and his mother was nowhere to be seen. So, tiptoeing to the big glass case on the wall, he quietly lifted out the sword, put on the belt and crept back out again.



Soon Grogre was sitting astride Zagon's broad back, flying higher and higher over the mountains towards the setting sun. Their perilous adventure had begun.

[Find out what happens to Grogre in Part 15!]

CINDERELLA

Once, a young girl called Ella was left alone in the world. Her mother and father were dead, and there was nowhere for her to live except with her step-mother, a proud, snobbish and ambitious woman. She dressed in all the latest fashions and sent to Paris for her hats. But no amount of silk or velvet could make her — or her two daughters — beautiful.

Their mother told Bertha and Gertrude that they were as pretty as two flowers — and they believed her. But how could they help noticing Ella's golden hair? How could they overlook the softness of her skin, the

brightness of her smile, or the daintiness of her hands and feet?

Their jealousy made them unkind, and they forced Ella to do all the housework. She scoured the pots and pans, scrubbed the floors and swept out the fireplaces. And her step-sisters called her "Cinderella".

"Fetch the coal in, Cinderella!"

"Polish my shoes, Cinderella."

"Lazy! Wicked! Stupid Cinderella!"

By the end of the day, Cinderella was too weary to do anything but curl up in the chimney corner and cry herself to sleep.





One morning, a wax-sealed envelope dropped on to the doormat.

Inside were four invitations to a ball at the palace. The Prince was looking for a wife from among the town's most beautiful women.

What excitement there was in the house! Bertha, Gertrude and their mother immediately began choosing gowns and jewels. They talked of nothing else.

"Powder my chestnut wig, Cinderella!"

"Sew on these sequins, Cinderella!"

"Iron this lace, Cinderella! And don't burn it, you stupid girl!"

Cinderella hardly noticed the extra work. She had always longed to see inside the beautiful palace on the hill and now it seemed that she would!

"What shall I wear?" she asked timidly.

Three faces stared at her in disbelief.

"You?" said her step-mother. "You don't suppose you're going to the ball, do you?"

Bertha laughed out loud. "You vain little ragamuffin. Whoever would want to see you at the palace?"

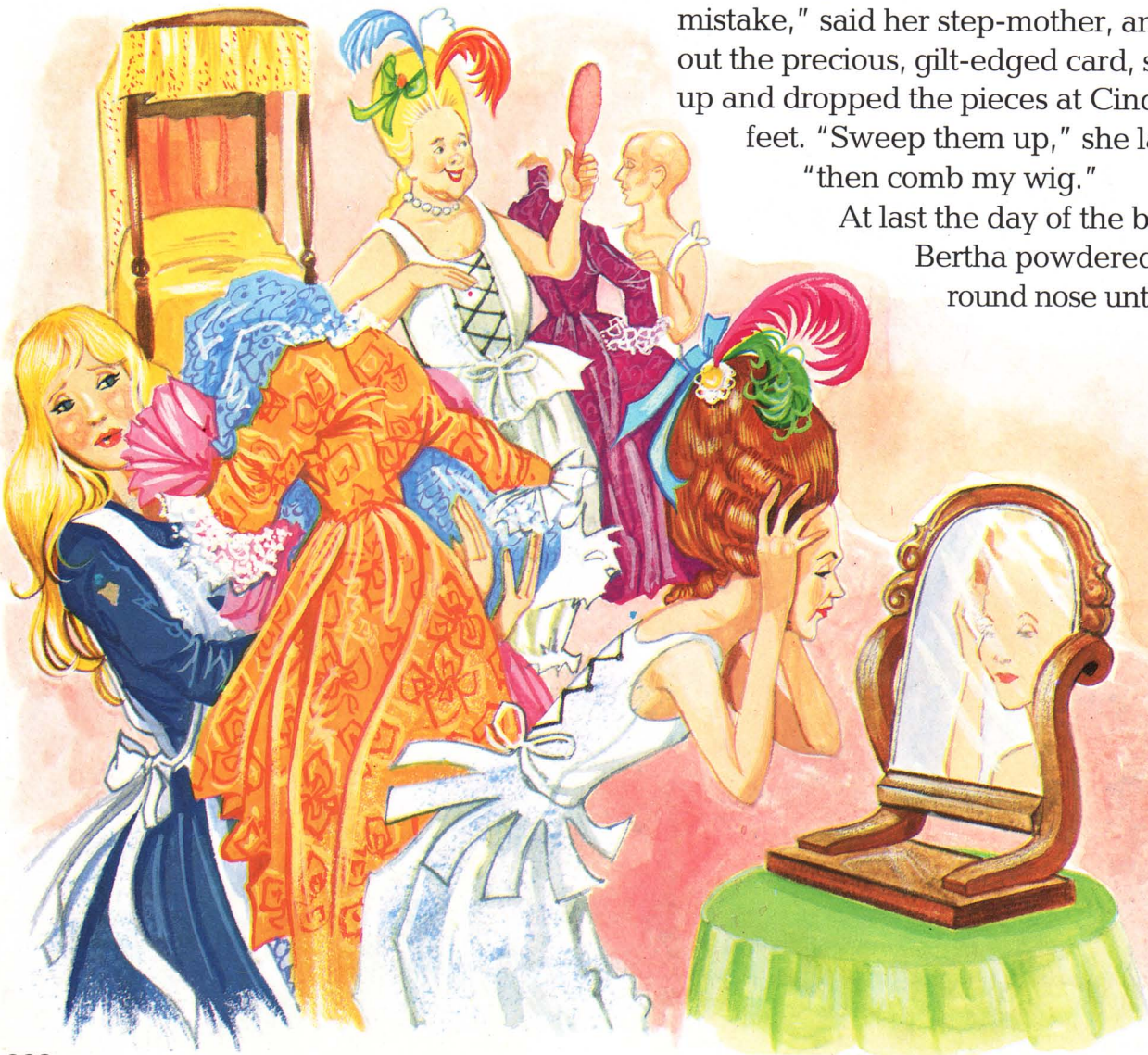
"They wouldn't let in a dirty little waif like you," sneered Gertrude.

"But the invitation . . ."

"The palace must have sent four by mistake," said her step-mother, and taking out the precious, gilt-edged card, she tore it up and dropped the pieces at Cinderella's feet. "Sweep them up," she laughed, "then comb my wig."

At last the day of the ball arrived.

Bertha powdered her round nose until it looked





like a marshmallow. Gertrude fluffed out her hair until it looked like candyfloss. Their mother climbed into a dress of puce brocade, and they all squeezed into the best carriage in town.

As their laughing voices died away and Cinderella shut the door, she could no

longer keep back her tears — they splattered and hissed among the cinders.

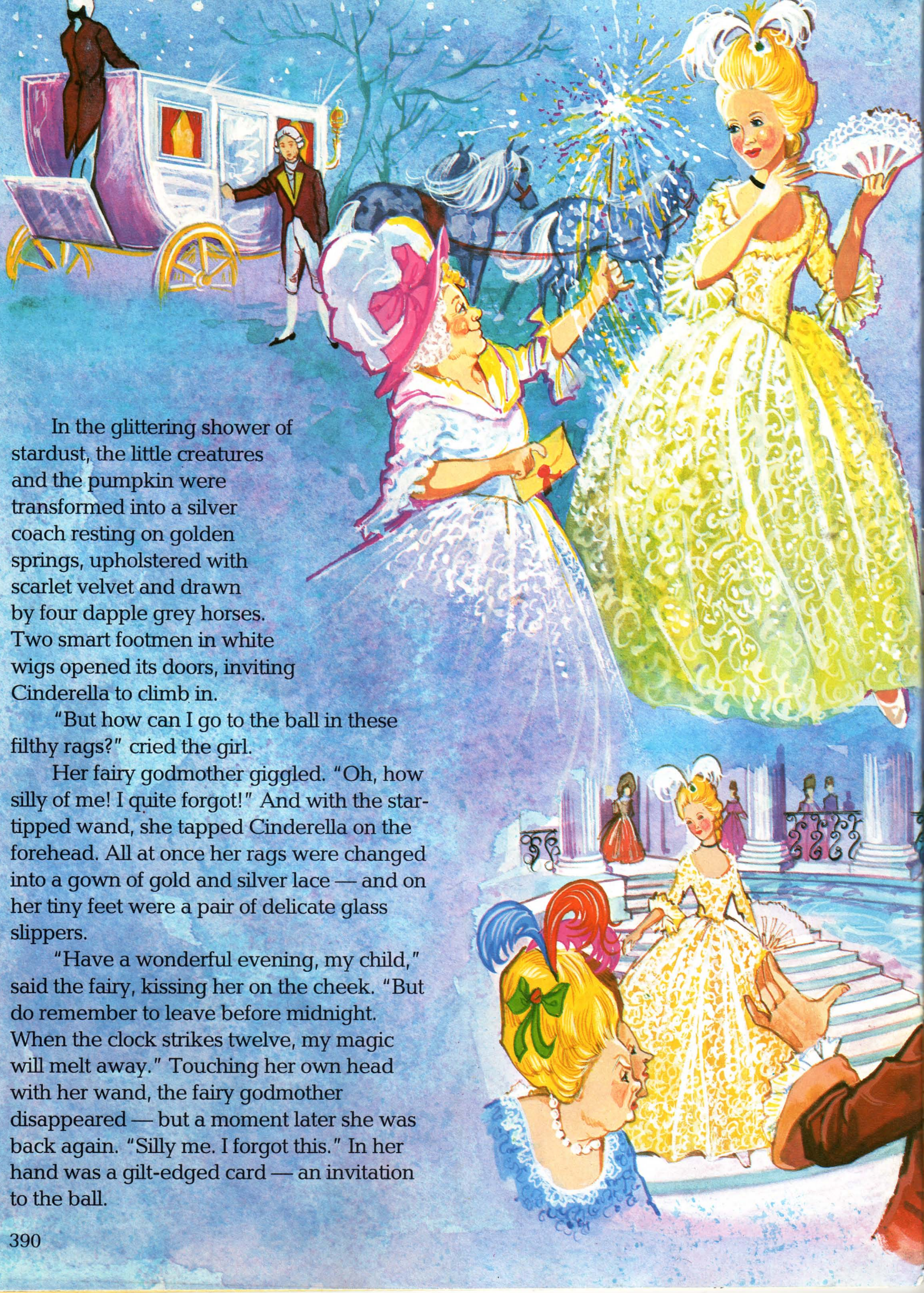
Suddenly all the candles flickered. Hovering between ceiling and stairs was a white-haired fairy in a dress of shimmering silver. "Why are you crying, child?"

Cinderella put her hands to her cheeks in amazement. "Oh please don't be angry with me. I just wanted so much to go to the ball!"

"And so you shall, for I am your fairy godmother. But we haven't much time. Run and fetch four mice from the cornbins in the cellar and bring them to me in the garden."

Too amazed to argue, Cinderella did as she was told. In the garden the fairy asked her to find two lizards, and to pick a pumpkin! As soon as Cinderella had laid these on the ground, the fairy waved her star-tipped wand three times.





In the glittering shower of stardust, the little creatures and the pumpkin were transformed into a silver coach resting on golden springs, upholstered with scarlet velvet and drawn by four dapple grey horses. Two smart footmen in white wigs opened its doors, inviting Cinderella to climb in.

"But how can I go to the ball in these filthy rags?" cried the girl.

Her fairy godmother giggled. "Oh, how silly of me! I quite forgot!" And with the star-tipped wand, she tapped Cinderella on the forehead. All at once her rags were changed into a gown of gold and silver lace — and on her tiny feet were a pair of delicate glass slippers.

"Have a wonderful evening, my child," said the fairy, kissing her on the cheek. "But do remember to leave before midnight. When the clock strikes twelve, my magic will melt away." Touching her own head with her wand, the fairy godmother disappeared — but a moment later she was back again. "Silly me. I forgot this." In her hand was a gilt-edged card — an invitation to the ball.

By the time Cinderella arrived at the ball, it was well underway. But as she walked down the white marble staircase, people stopped dancing, the orchestra stopped playing, and everyone stared at the newcomer's extraordinary beauty.

The Prince ran to greet her and begged to be the first to dance with her. He stayed for the next dance, too. In fact, for the rest of the evening, he danced with no-one else.

Women whispered behind their fans. "I think the Prince is in love already." "Who is she?" "She must be a foreign princess."

Huddled in a corner, Gertrude and Bertha sulked. "Who is she anyway?" "It's not fair. He ought to dance with someone else now."

Whirling to the music in the Prince's arms, Cinderella forgot that she had ever been unhappy. She forgot about scrubbing floors, cleaning out the fires, washing her sister's fine clothes while her own fell into rags. She forgot that her gown was made of fairy dust . . . And she forgot her fairy godmother's warning! The clock

began to strike midnight. "I must go!" she cried in alarm.

"But it's still early!" called the Prince, as she fled up the marble stairs. The clock chimed for the third time.

"I don't even know your name!" he cried, as she ran out of the palace.

The clock chimed for the sixth time. "But I love you!" he pleaded as she leaped into the silver coach. The clock chimed for the ninth time. Cinderella was swept away into the night.





The clock struck twelve as the Prince dropped his head despairingly — and glimpsed a single glass slipper lying on the palace steps. Weary and barefoot, Cinderella stumbled into the kitchen and

fell asleep beside the dying fire. Half-way home her coach had turned back into a pumpkin, and mice and lizards had scuttled away into the gutter.

Hours later, her step-sisters woke her with their noisy quarrelling as they arrived home.

"It's all Cinderella's fault," whined Bertha. "If she'd ironed my dress properly, the Prince would have loved me."

"If she'd tied my corset tighter," grizzled Gertrude, "he would have married me."

"He still might," snarled their mother.



"The princess has disappeared, hasn't she?"

But the Prince was set on marrying the owner of the glass slipper.

"It's so tiny. Nobody but she, could have a foot delicate enough to fit in it," he told his mother. And the next day the Queen issued a proclamation: "The Prince will marry she whom the slipper fits."

Imagine the uproar when the town's fashionable ladies heard the news!

"He's mine at last!" cried Bertha. "My feet are so dainty!"

"They're as big as paving stones!" shrieked Gertrude. "I'm going to get that slipper on if it's the last thing I do!"

Their mother was silent. She was preening herself in front of the mirror, thinking how well a crown would suit her. There was a knock at the door. It was the Prince's page, and he carried the glass slipper on a plush red cushion.

Bertha pulled him in through the door.

"Let me try! Let me try!"

"Me first!" wailed Gertrude.





"If you don't mind!" boomed their mother, sweeping them aside. "I shall try first!"

But although they pushed and squeezed and scrunched up their toes, none of them could force a foot into the glass slipper.

"Is there no-one else in the house?" asked the royal servant.

"No-one," said all three. The servant cast a puzzled look at Cinderella who was standing by the fire. "Oh, her? She's nobody — just the scullery maid."

"Every woman in the land must try on the slipper," said the page, and he knelt in front of Cinderella.

Her tiny foot slipped perfectly into the glass shoe. Then the servant turned, doffed

his cap and bowed low. There, in the open doorway stood the Prince. "I have found her, your highness," said the page.

"It's not fair!" gasped Bertha. "It's all a mistake!" cried Gertrude. "She didn't even go to the ball!" screeched their mother.

Cinderella smiled past them at the Prince. "I'm afraid, my lord, that my ballgown was borrowed, and I can't afford a wedding dress. But I do have a pair of shoes now to wear to my wedding." And from her tattered bag she brought out the second slipper, and put it on.

Bertha blushed. Gertrude curtsied. Their mother squeaked . . . and then fainted.

The Prince bought his bride a wedding dress of milk-white satin and a veil as misty as cloud. And he married her in the great cathedral. Her step-sisters and step-mother bought new dresses for the wedding, and quite forgot that they had ever called her "Cinderella" and made her scrub floors.





IN PART 15 OF
STORY Teller

GROGRE THE OGRE goes after
the Slime Monster

Once, there was no illness or quarrelling,
jealousy or fear. Then Pandora's husband
brought home a mysterious package.
What was inside **PANDORA'S BOX**?

A FISHY TALE

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

What is the great promise the
Fairy makes to **PINOCCHIO**?

In **THE FLYING JACKET**
Professor Popoff gets quite
carried away!

A little Japanese girl receives
the prettiest of presents—
but why do the animals
find **THE PARASOL**
so frightening?

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MORAG HOOD &
NIGEL LAMBERT

