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STORY Teller

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The Great Big Hairy Boggart



Long ago there was a farmer called Jude who bought a field at a very low price. "I wonder why it was so cheap," said his wife, Beth. "Do you think it will be all right?"

"Of course it will!" replied Jude. "It's good land. And to think it's mine. All mine!"

"*Mine, you mean!*"

Jude and Beth turned round and were amazed to see a great big hairy boggart, standing only a few yards away. He had bloodshot eyes and a nose as round and red as a beetroot. Long, fleshy ears poked through his hair, which stood up like a hedgehog's prickles. He had a set of whiskers as tangled as a hawthorn bush.

The boggart's clothes were in tatters and his trousers were held up with old rope. His hairy knees and elbows showed through ragged tears and worn-out holes. And he had the longest arms you have ever seen, with fists as big as turnips.

"Get off my land!" he shrieked, waving his arms about like a windmill.

"Your land?" said Jude.

"That's what I said. My land, and my boggart father's land before me, and his father's before that."

"You must be joking," said Jude. "I paid good money for this land and I signed the deeds."

"You just get yourself off it!" yelled the boggart. "I was here first!" And he began to jump up and down in a rage.

"Well *I'm* here now!" said Jude. And *I* own it."



They stuck their chins out and glared angrily at each other. But neither of them would give way. Then Beth said: "Perhaps I've got the answer. You plant the crop, Jude, and the boggart can reap it. Then we can all have the harvest."

"Hmm, all right," said the boggart.

Jude did not see why he should do all the work and then give half his crop away. But Beth waved a hand to silence him.

"So which half of the crop do you want, boggart, the tops or the bottoms?"

"You what?"

"Do you want what grows *above* the ground or what grows *under* it. One or the other. Be quick. Make up your mind."

"Oh, I'll take the tops," chuckled the boggart. "You can keep the roots."

So Jude and the boggart shook hands on the bargain.

"Fine!" said Beth as she walked home with Jude. "All you have to do now is plant potatoes."

So Jude ploughed his land and planted

potatoes. He hoed the weeds and watched the bushy green plants come up. When harvest came the great big hairy boggart returned to the field and demanded his share of the crop.

"There you are," said Jude. "The tops are all yours. Lovely potato plants just right for . . . well, I'm sure you'll find some use for them."

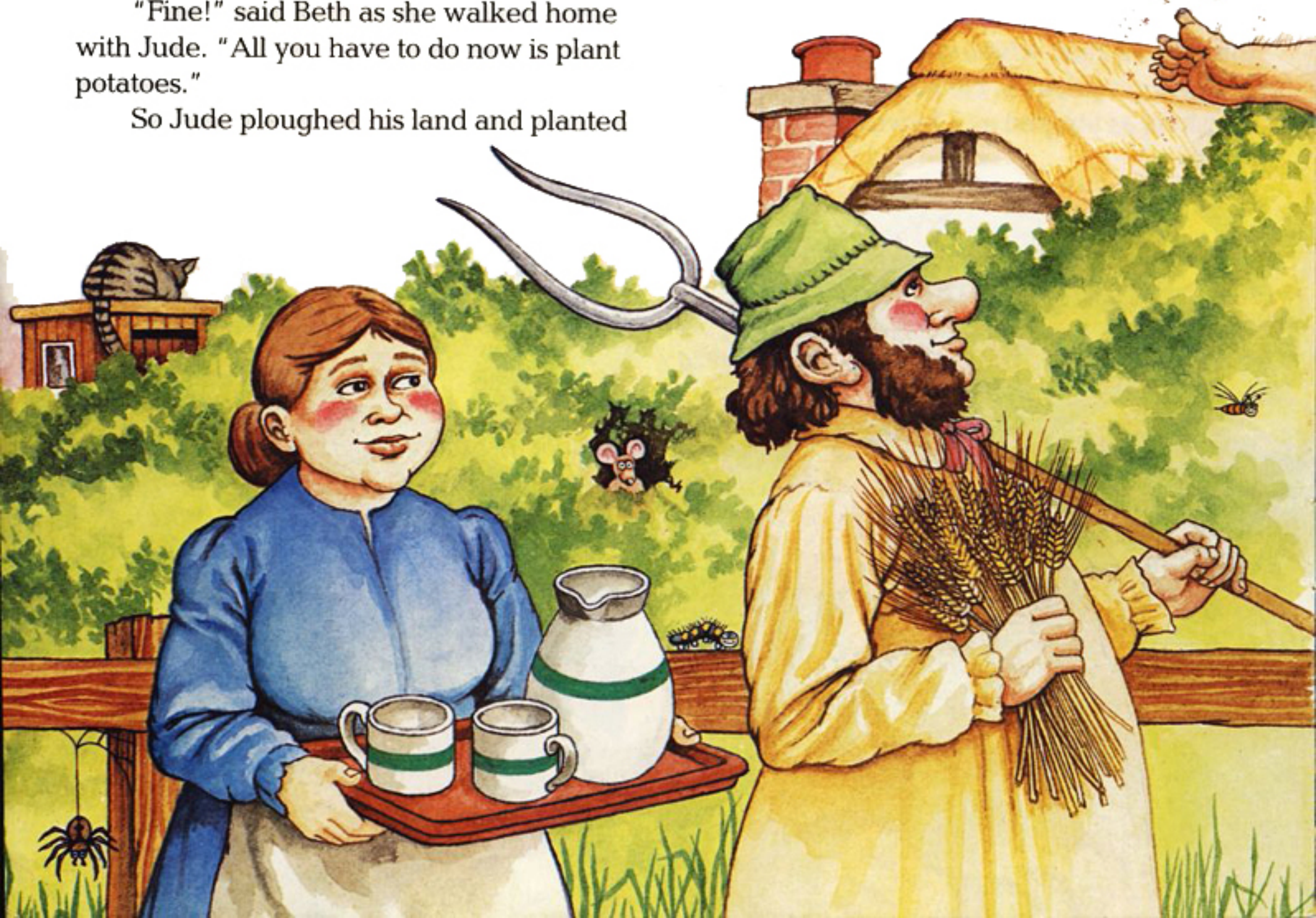
"You little rogue!" roared the boggart. "You miserable cheat! That's not fair! Why, I'll, I'll . . ."

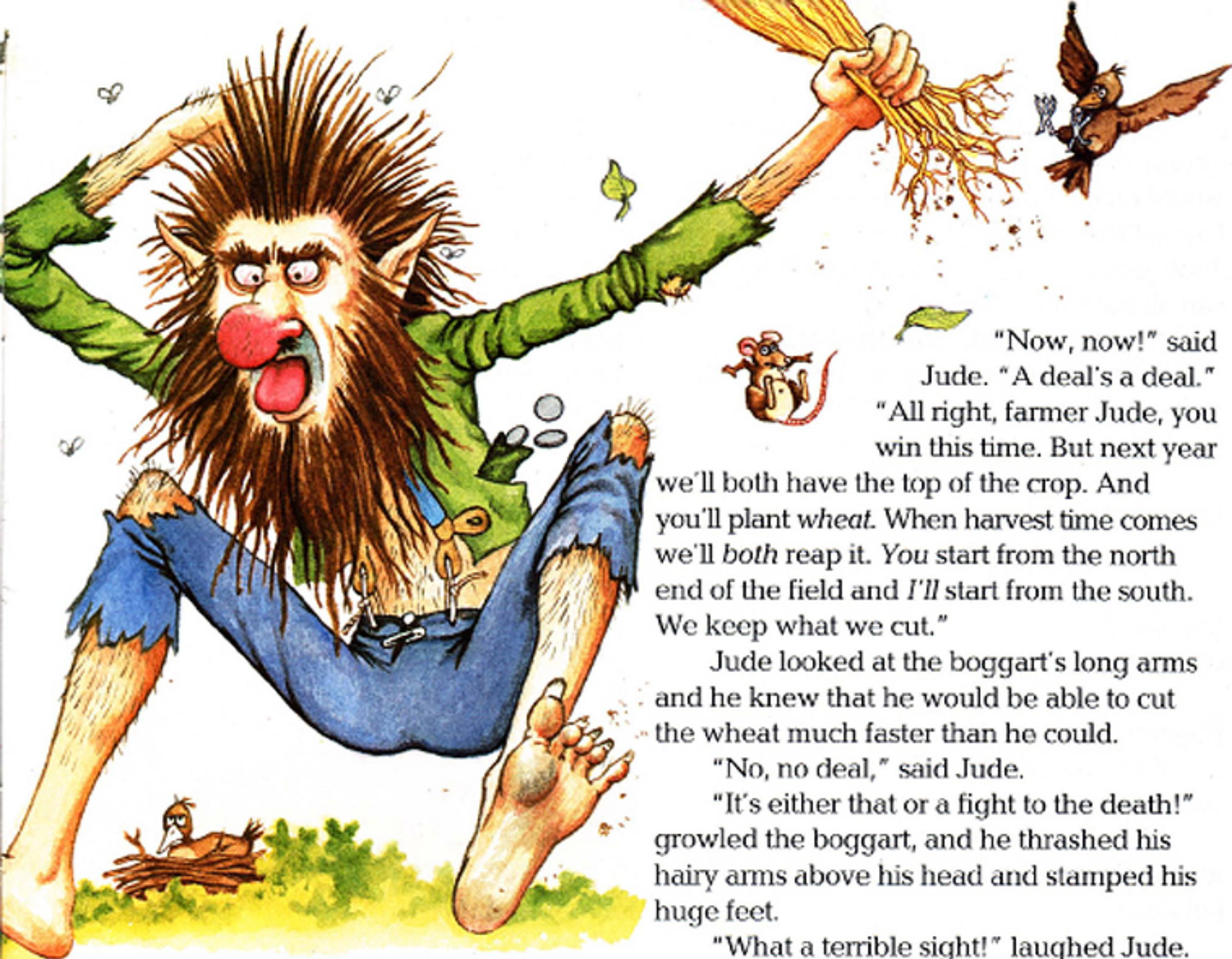
"A bargain is a bargain, boggart. Now take the potato tops and leave me alone."

"Hmmp!" The boggart was fuming with anger. "I'll get even with you next time."

"What do you want next year then, tops or bottoms?" asked Beth.

"Bottoms, of course. You can keep the





tops next time!" And the boggart stomped off.

"Now what shall we do?" asked Jude.

"Plant barley, my dear. Let the boggart make what he can out of barley roots!"

So, after Jude had dug up all his potatoes, he planted his field and sowed barley seed. He rolled the land and watered it, and when the spring came young green shoots appeared. By harvest time, when the great big hairy boggart arrived for his share of the crop, the field was a swaying carpet of gold.

"There it is," said Jude. "I'll have the tops and you can have the roots."

The boggart screamed with rage. "You've cheated me again, you little shrimp. Why I'll, I'll . . ."

"Now, now!" said Jude. "A deal's a deal."

"All right, farmer Jude, you win this time. But next year

we'll both have the top of the crop. And you'll plant *wheat*. When harvest time comes we'll *both* reap it. You start from the north end of the field and *I'll* start from the south. We keep what we cut."

Jude looked at the boggart's long arms and he knew that he would be able to cut the wheat much faster than he could.

"No, no deal," said Jude.

"It's either that or a fight to the death!" growled the boggart, and he thrashed his hairy arms above his head and stamped his huge feet.

"What a terrible sight!" laughed Jude. "Please—don't let's fight. I wouldn't want to hurt a boggart!" So they shook hands on the deal and the boggart went away sniggering.

Jude told Beth about the bargain. "He's got such strong arms! He'll cut ten times as much wheat as I can. He's beaten us this time, I'm afraid."

Beth thought for a minute. "Suppose that some of the wheat grew with tougher stalks than the rest," she said. "Then one scythe would get blunt much quicker than the other." And she told him her plan.

"Oh, that's it!" said Jude. "I'm glad the boggart doesn't have a wife as clever as you!"



Jude ploughed the land and planted the wheat seed, then he watched the crop grow tall and golden. Just before the harvest he bought some thin iron rods and crept out to the boggart's end of the field in the middle of the night. He stuck the rods into the ground among the stalks of wheat.

Harvest day came and the great big hairy boggart arrived, carrying a scythe in each of his huge hands. Jude started cutting the wheat from the top end of the field, and the boggart started from the other. Jude swung his single scythe in steady, sweeping strokes and the golden wheat fell down all around him. But the boggart cut and hacked and sweated and swore, and then he stopped.

"The weeds in the wheat down this end seem mighty tough!" he shouted.

"No trouble up this end!" called Jude.

The boggart was too stupid to notice the iron rods. So he sharpened both scythes and went on hacking at the wheat. Eventually he stopped again, mopping his forehead. "I'm tired out with cutting these weeds."

"Really?" said Jude. "That's funny. I'm still as fresh as a daisy."

The boggart tried again, swinging his scythes in all directions, but with each stroke they got more blunt and chipped. Finally he threw them down in a rage.

"You can keep your useless land!" he yelled at Jude. "It's more trouble than it's worth." He strode off over a hedge and vanished down the road into the distance. And the great big hairy boggart never bothered Jude and Beth again.





The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea
 In a beautiful pea-green boat.
 They took some honey, and plenty of money
 Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
 The Owl looked up to the stars above,
 And sang to a small guitar,
 "O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,
 What a beautiful Pussy you are,
 You are,
 You are,
 What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

The Owl and the Pussy Cat



Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl!
 How charmingly sweet you sing!
 O let us be married! Too long we have tarried,
 But what shall we do for a ring?"
 They sailed away for a year and a day,
 To the land where the Bong-tree grows.
 And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood,
 With a ring at the end of his nose,
 His nose,
 His nose,
 With a ring at the end of his nose.



"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
 Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."
 So they took it away, and were married next day
 By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
 They dined on mince and slices of quince,
 Which they ate with a runcible spoon.
 And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
 They danced by the light of the moon,
 The moon,
 The moon,
 They danced by the light of the moon.



GOBBOLINO

The Knight's Cat



Gobbolino was sitting sadly by the roadside when he heard the *Clop! Clop! Clop!* of a horse approaching.

A fine horse was coming along the road. But the knight who sat astride it was pale and sad. The horse shied at the sight of Gobbolino, nearly throwing the knight off.

"Good day to you, little cat!" said the knight. "And what are you doing on the king's highway? You're a very pretty cat. Why don't you jump up on my horse and come with me?"

As they rode along, the knight told Gobbolino why he was so sad.

He said he was in love with the beautiful Lady Alice. But she had been shut up in a high tower by



her father until she made up her mind which of two suitors she would marry. One was the knight himself, and the other was the black baron who lived in a castle nearby.

Both suitors went to visit her every day and took her wonderful presents. The Lady Alice had promised to marry the man whose present the other man could not guess. Every day the black baron would guess what present the sad knight had brought. And every day the sad knight would guess what present the baron had brought.

Now, the tower stood in the middle of a wood, and it was guarded by a huge dragon. The dragon was old and lazy, but Gobbolino had never seen a dragon before, and he was more than a little frightened when he saw the green coils of the monster wrapped around the bottom of the tower. The knight, holding Gobbolino on his arm, knocked boldly on the door of the tower. The lazy dragon opened one eye and looked at them, but he did not move.

Rosabel, serving maid to the Lady Alice, ran down the stairs and opened the door.

"Is my lady alone?" asked the knight.



"Why, yes sir, she is. The baron left half an hour ago. And he brought the loveliest set of ivory balls you ever saw!"

Gobbolino could see now how the suitors found it so easy to guess each other's presents.

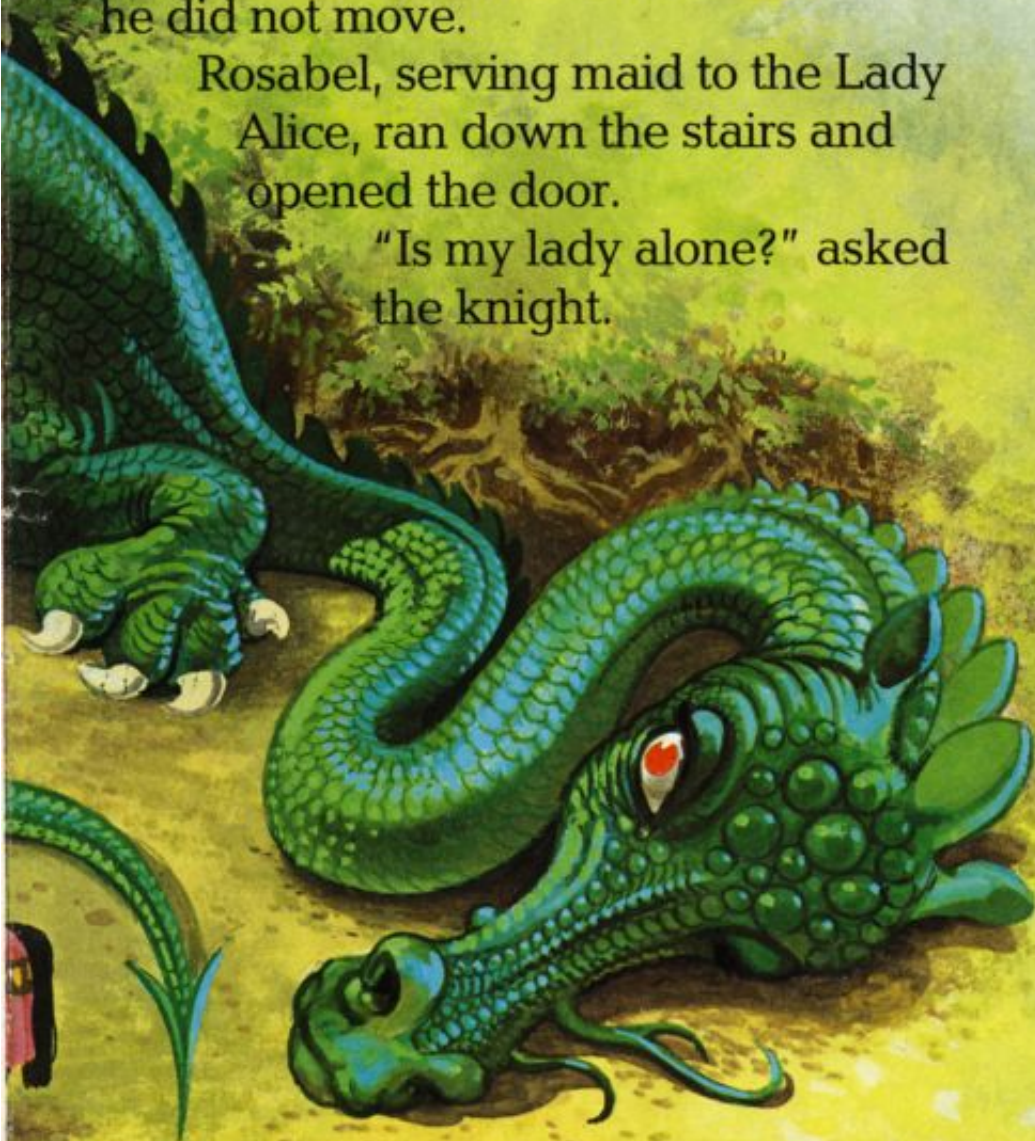
The knight and Gobbolino followed Rosabel up the stairs to the top of the tower, where the Lady Alice sat beside her spinning wheel, looking out over the forest.

"Oh, what a pretty little cat," she cried. "Do let him come and sit on my lap."

Gobbolino leapt on to her lap and sat there, purring.

"Stay with me for ever, little cat!" the Lady Alice whispered. "It's so lonely here in the tower with nobody but my serving maid and the silly knight and the stupid baron and that lazy dragon to talk to. I've never had such a pretty gift before!"

Sitting at the feet of the Lady Alice, Gobbolino thought that he had never been so contented before in his life.





When night fell the Lady Alice brought out her harp. The music grew sadder and sadder, till at last she burst into tears. "Oh Gobbolino! What is to become of me? Now I'll have to marry the knight and I don't want to marry either of them. I'm in love with a noble young lord. But he went to the wars, and now my father says that I must marry one of these stupid men. What shall I do?"

The baron arrived the next morning with five gold coins for Rosabel. But still she would not tell him about the knight's present.

"Oh no!" she sobbed. "I dare not. The present would turn me into gingerbread and scratch me with its claws."

"It's a *cat*!" shouted the baron.
"A *witch's cat*!"

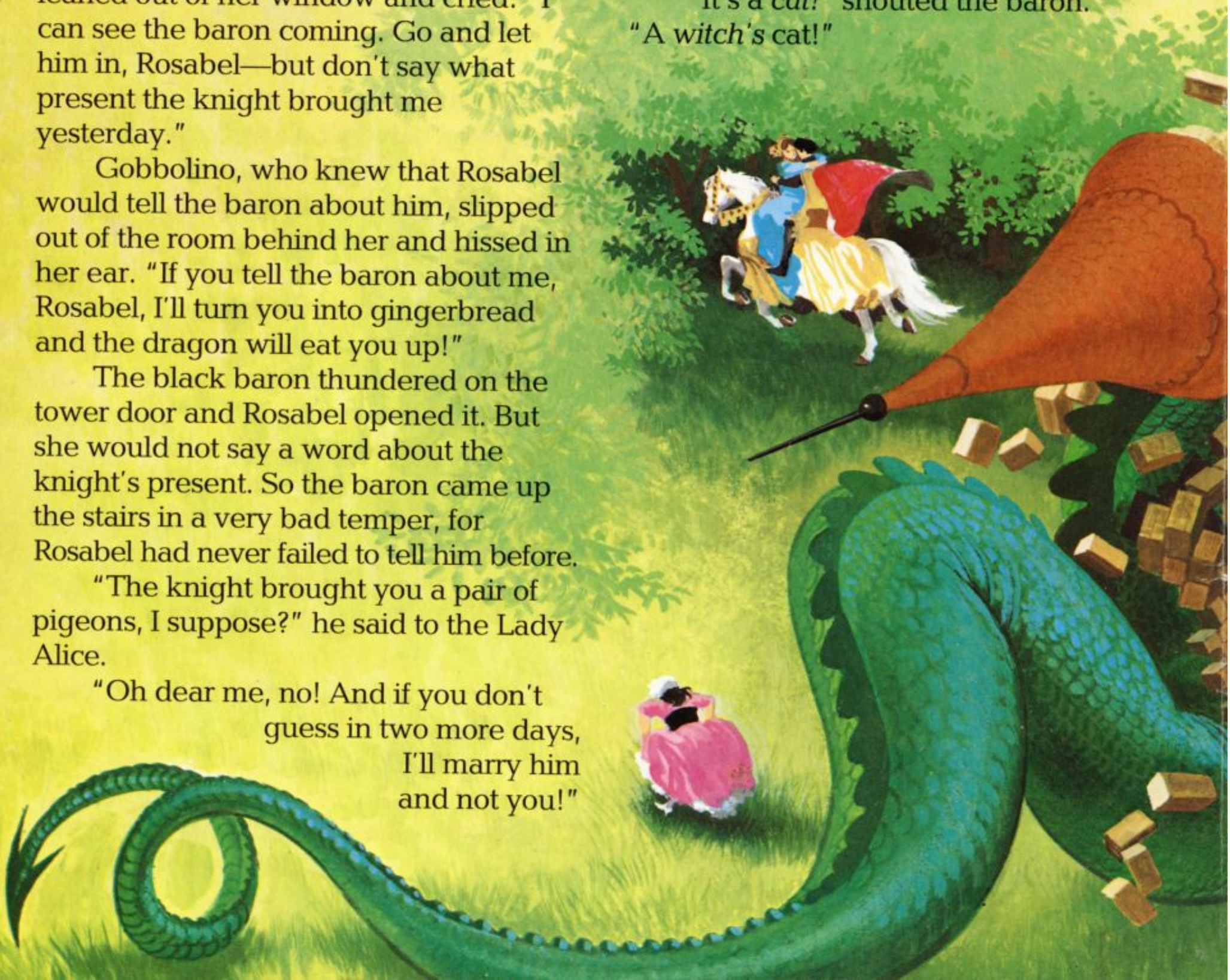
The next morning the Lady Alice leaned out of her window and cried: "I can see the baron coming. Go and let him in, Rosabel—but don't say what present the knight brought me yesterday."

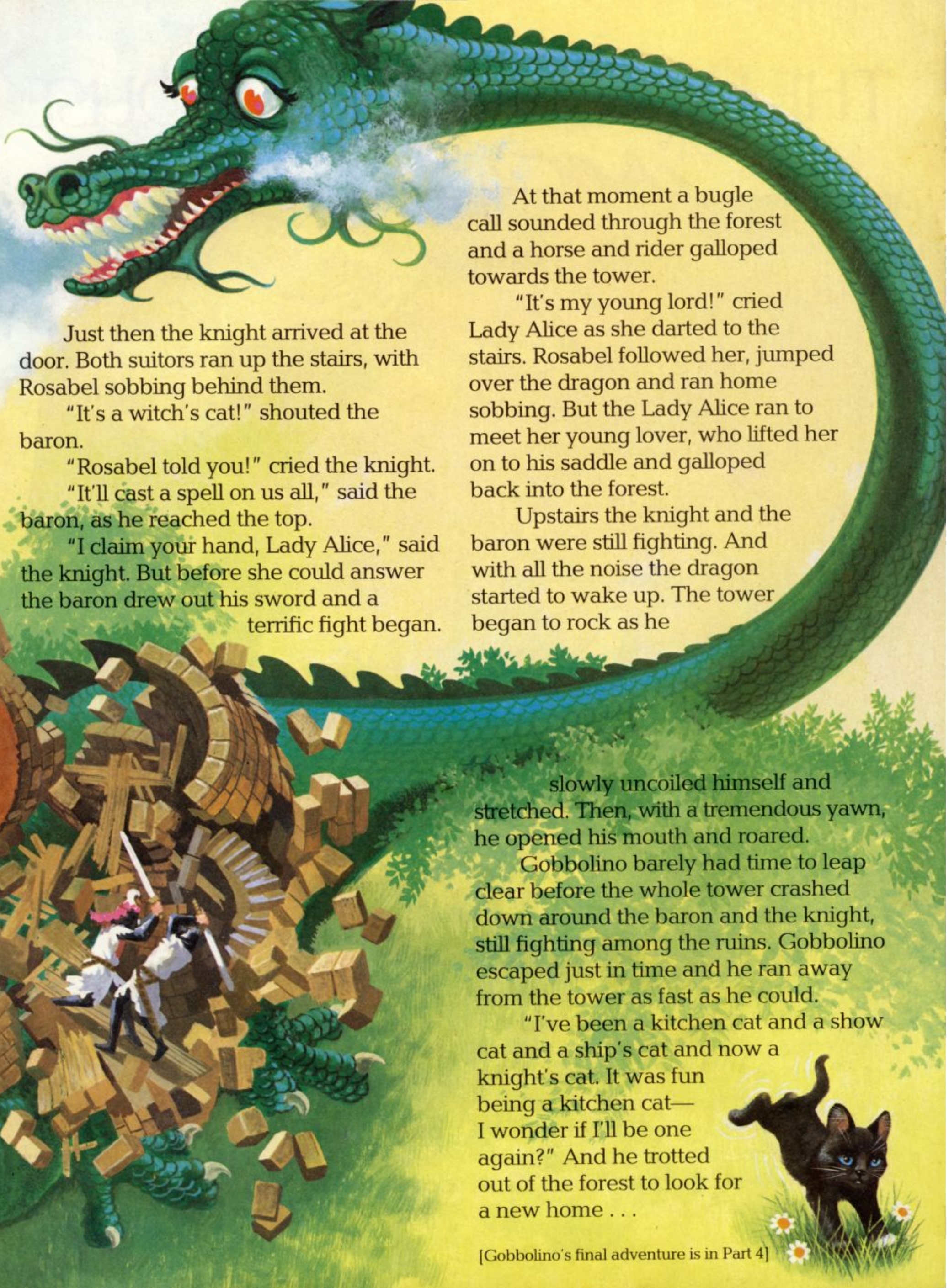
Gobbolino, who knew that Rosabel would tell the baron about him, slipped out of the room behind her and hissed in her ear. "If you tell the baron about me, Rosabel, I'll turn you into gingerbread and the dragon will eat you up!"

The black baron thundered on the tower door and Rosabel opened it. But she would not say a word about the knight's present. So the baron came up the stairs in a very bad temper, for Rosabel had never failed to tell him before.

"The knight brought you a pair of pigeons, I suppose?" he said to the Lady Alice.

"Oh dear me, no! And if you don't guess in two more days, I'll marry him and not you!"





Just then the knight arrived at the door. Both suitors ran up the stairs, with Rosabel sobbing behind them.

"It's a witch's cat!" shouted the baron.

"Rosabel told you!" cried the knight.

"It'll cast a spell on us all," said the baron, as he reached the top.

"I claim your hand, Lady Alice," said the knight. But before she could answer the baron drew out his sword and a terrific fight began.

At that moment a bugle call sounded through the forest and a horse and rider galloped towards the tower.

"It's my young lord!" cried Lady Alice as she darted to the stairs. Rosabel followed her, jumped over the dragon and ran home sobbing. But the Lady Alice ran to meet her young lover, who lifted her on to his saddle and galloped back into the forest.

Upstairs the knight and the baron were still fighting. And with all the noise the dragon started to wake up. The tower began to rock as he

slowly uncoiled himself and stretched. Then, with a tremendous yawn, he opened his mouth and roared.

Gobbolino barely had time to leap clear before the whole tower crashed down around the baron and the knight, still fighting among the ruins. Gobbolino escaped just in time and he ran away from the tower as fast as he could.

"I've been a kitchen cat and a show cat and a ship's cat and now a knight's cat. It was fun being a kitchen cat—I wonder if I'll be one again?" And he trotted out of the forest to look for a new home . . .

[Gobbolino's final adventure is in Part 4]

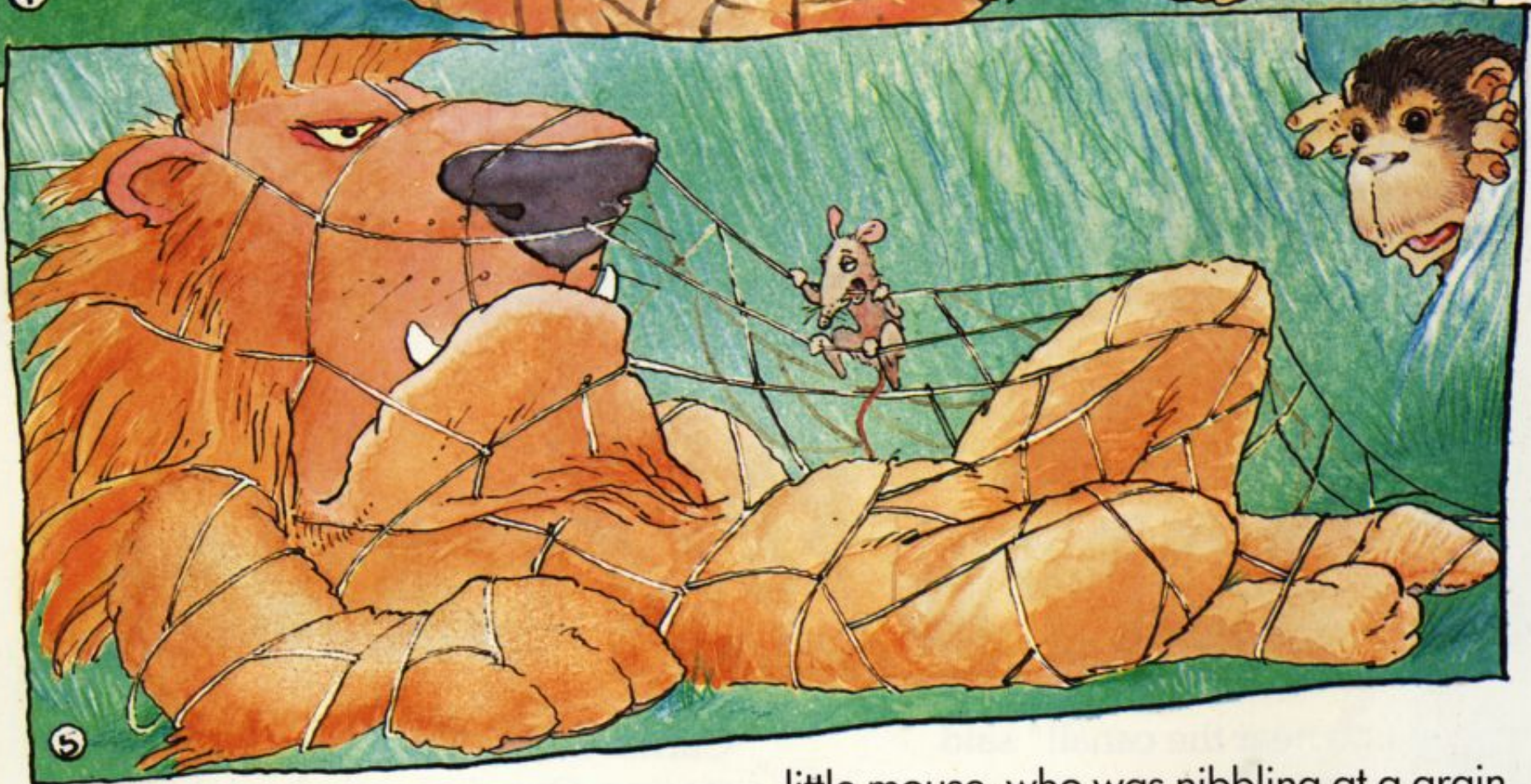
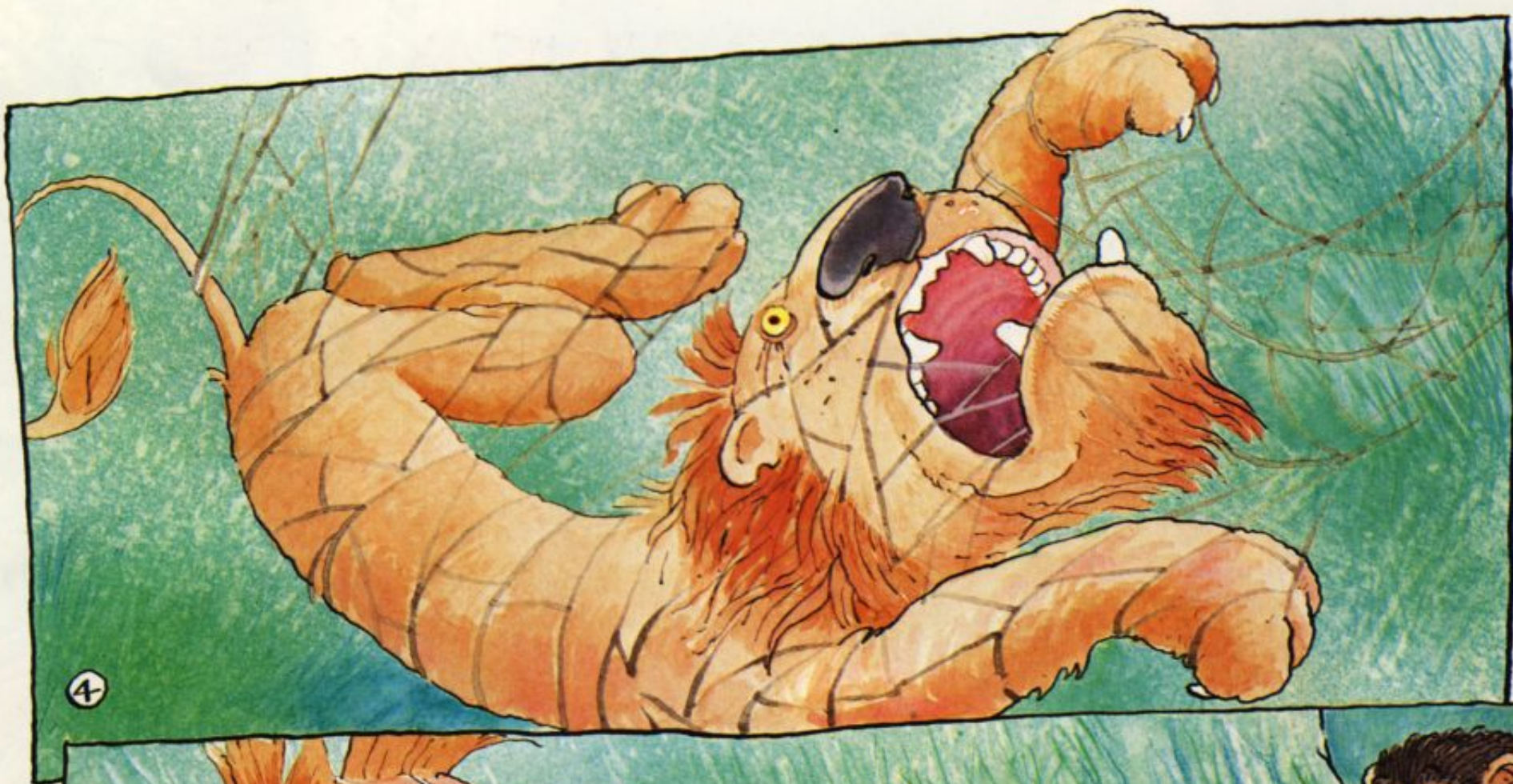
THE LION AND THE MOUSE



One very hot afternoon, a lion was dozing in a cool, dark cave. He was just about to fall asleep when a mouse scuttled across his nose. With an angry roar, the lion raised his paw and knocked the mouse to the ground. "How dare you wake me up," he snarled. "I'll crush you into the ground."

"O, please, please spare me," squeaked the terrified mouse. "I promise to help you one day if only you'll let me go."

"That's a joke," said the lion. "How could a puny little mouse like you help a big strong lion like me?" And he began to laugh. He laughed so much that he lifted his paw . . . and the mouse escaped.



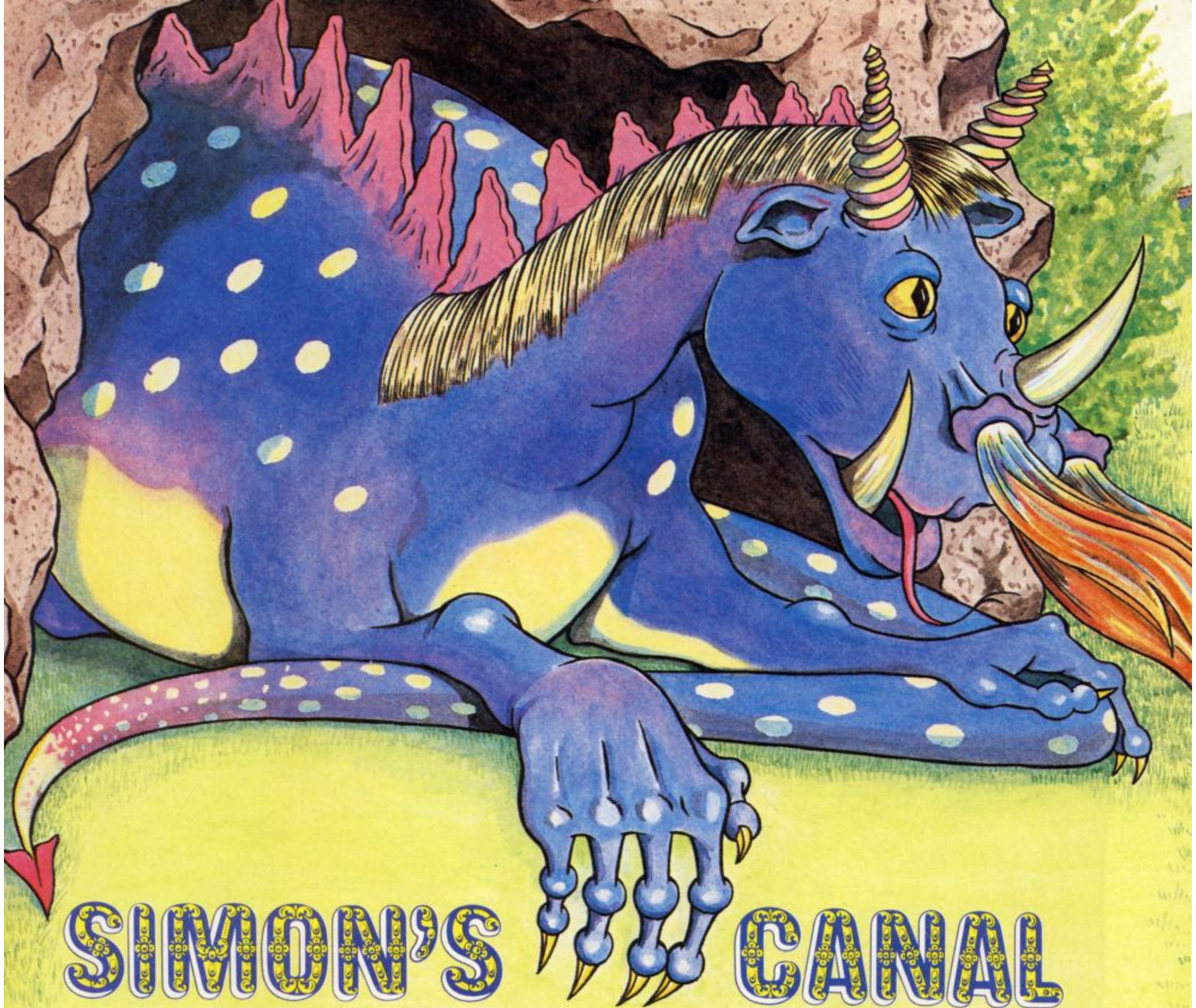
A few days later the lion was out hunting in the jungle. He was just thinking about his next meal when he tripped over a rope pulled tight across the path. A huge net fell on top of him and, strong as he was, he just could not struggle free. And as he twisted and turned and wriggled and writhed, the net got tighter and tighter.

The lion began to roar so loudly that even the animals outside the jungle could hear him. One of these animals was the

little mouse, who was nibbling at a grain of corn. He immediately dropped the corn and ran to the lion. "O mighty lion," he squeaked. "If only you'll keep still I can help you escape."

By now the lion felt so tired that all he could do was lie back and watch as the mouse gnawed through the ropes of the net. He could hardly believe it when some time later he realised he was free.

"You've saved my life, little mouse," he said. "I'll never laugh at the promises made by tiny friends again."



SIMON'S CANAL

"Don't go near the canal!" said Simon's mum.

She said this ten times a day to Simon's big sisters, Trish and Paula. Trish and Paula had to look after Simon, keep him safe from harm.

Mum put on Simon's jacket and combed his hair. Then she said to the girls again: "Remember now, keep away from that canal!"

Simon did not know what a canal was. How could he know if he never saw it? He guessed it was a huge and frightening monster in a lair near

Curran's Mill. Sometimes he heard it roaring. One dark, windy night it came galloping up the lane towards their house, hungry and angry. A good thing the door was locked and the curtains drawn.

Trish and Paula took Simon to the library.

"Simon can have a book with one of my tickets," said Trish.

"He can't read."

"Well, he can look at the pictures."

"What sort of book do you want, Simon?"



"A book about a canal."

"No," said Trish. "There's only one book about a canal. It's too boring. You won't like it."

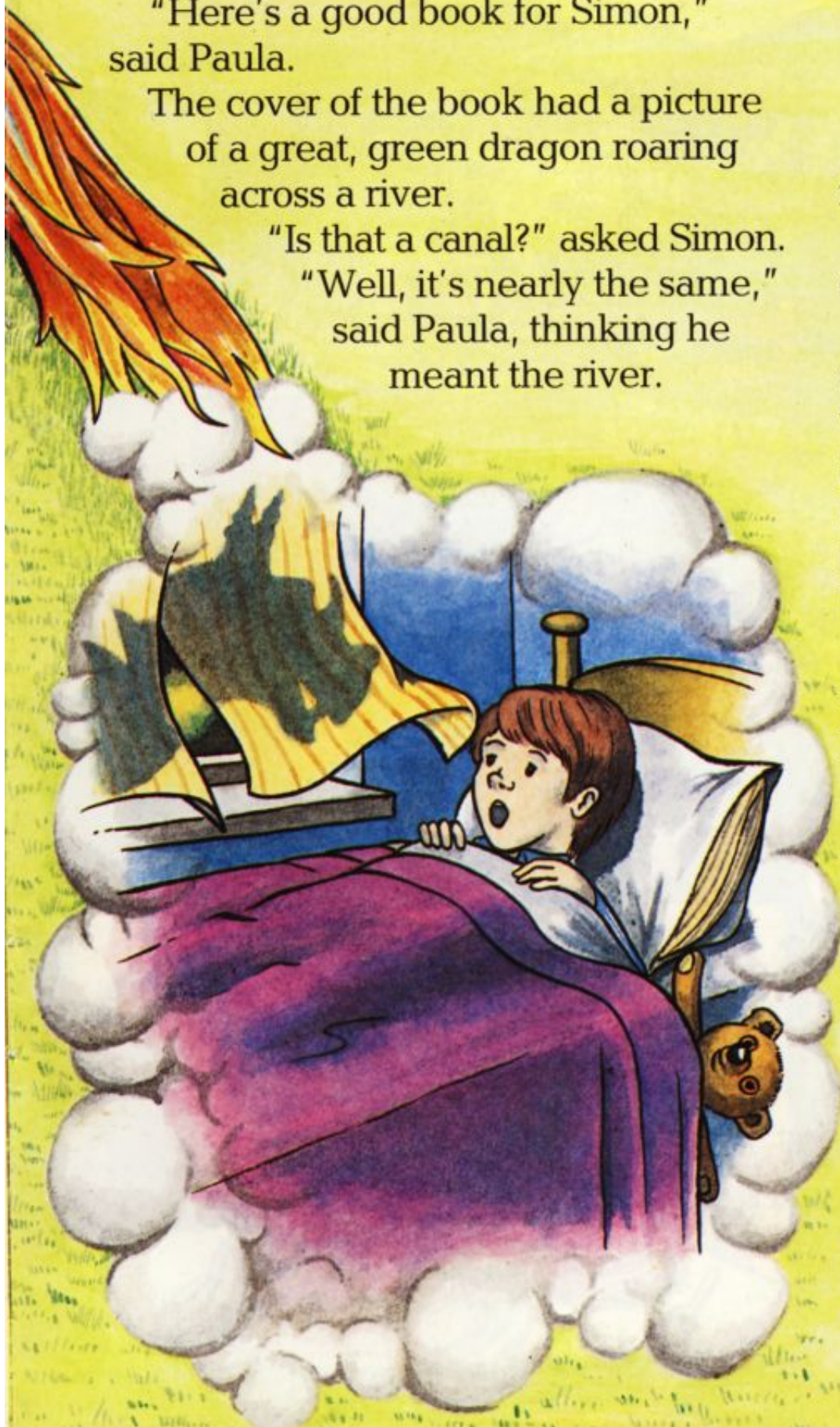
Simon knew what boring meant. He had watched his dad boring holes. Perhaps the canal bored holes in people with its horns. Trish was right—he would not like that.

"Here's a good book for Simon," said Paula.

The cover of the book had a picture of a great, green dragon roaring across a river.

"Is that a canal?" asked Simon.

"Well, it's nearly the same," said Paula, thinking he meant the river.



"You and your canal!" sighed Trish.

Next day, Gran came from London for a holiday. Gran loved the country.

"We shall go out every day," she said to Simon.

When Trish and Paula were at school, Gran and Simon had fun. They went to the park. They rambled through the woods. They climbed up the hill behind Simon's house. Then, one lunchtime, Gran said they would walk by the canal that afternoon.

Simon looked startled. His tummy felt queer and he could not eat his pudding.

"Aren't you scared, Gran?"

"Scared of a weedy old canal? I should think not!" said Gran.

So the monster was not so frightening after all. It was growing old, losing its strength. Simon began to feel sorry for it.

Gran and Simon walked through the fields. They came to Curran's Mill.

The mill stood on the banks of the water and the power from the water ran the mill. Simon did not feel scared with Gran beside him.

"Where's the canal?" asked Simon

"Right in front of you, of course!"

Gran pointed with her umbrella.

"Oh," said Simon. He could see nothing but water.

Then he knew! The monster was *invisible*. It could see them, but they could not see it. The monster hummed quietly to itself. But it did not try to hurt them. It was old.

At teatime, Simon said: "They'll

never be able to catch it, anyway."

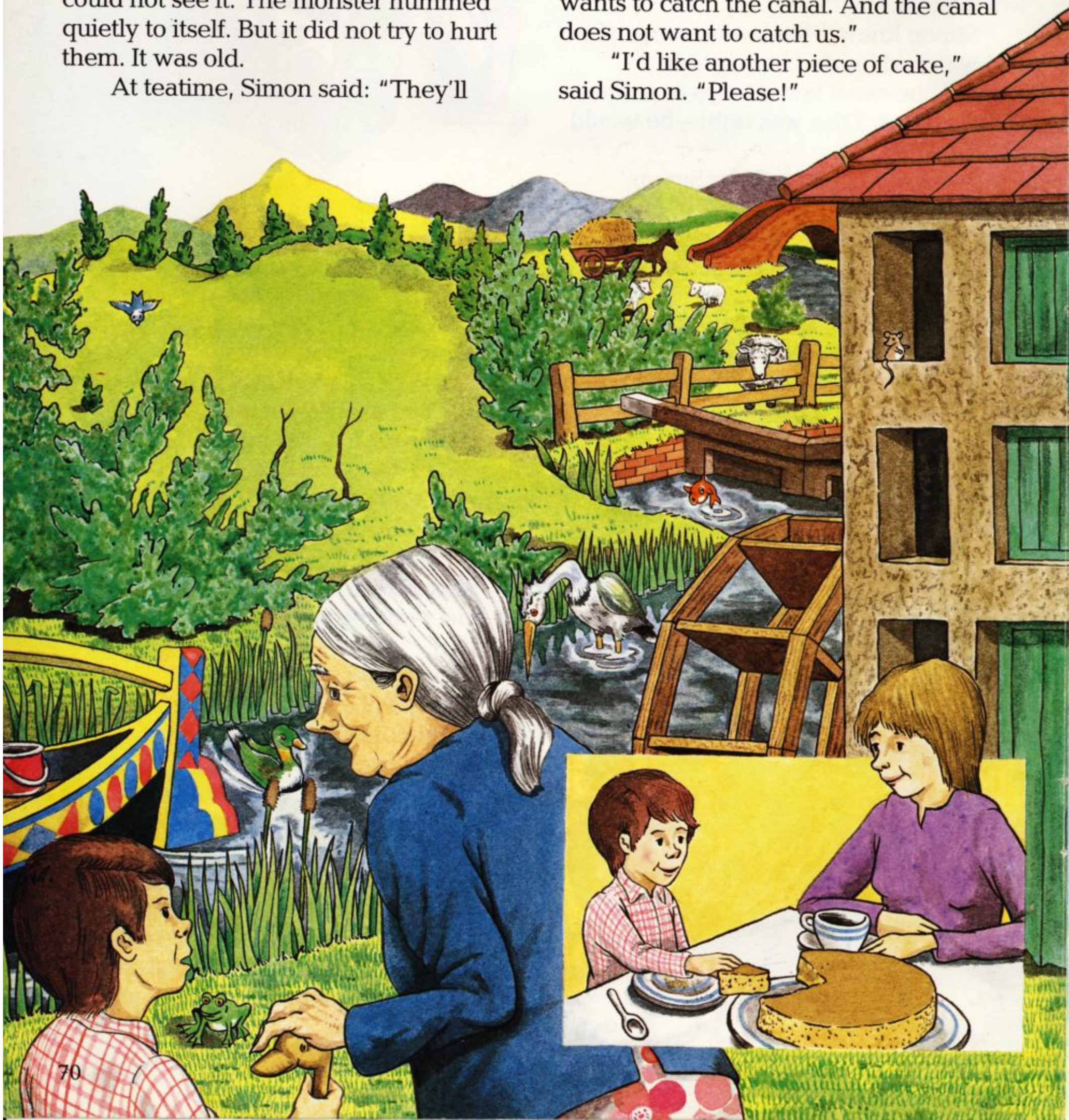
"Catch what, dear?"

"The canal."

Trish and Paula giggled. "Isn't he funny, Mum? Who would ever want to catch a canal?"

"Good!" thought Simon. "Nobody wants to catch the canal. And the canal does not want to catch us."

"I'd like another piece of cake," said Simon. "Please!"



HANSEL AND GRETEL



On the edge of a deep, dark forest lived a woodcutter and his two children, Hansel and Gretel. After his first wife died, the woodcutter married again, but the woman was unkind and felt no love for Hansel and Gretel.

Every day the woodcutter went to the forest to chop wood. He worked very hard, but no matter how hard he worked he got so little money for his wood that he just could not afford to feed his family.

One night, when Hansel and Gretel were in bed, the woodcutter said to his wife: "How are we going to feed the children tomorrow? There's hardly any food left."

"We can't afford to feed them," she said sharply. "We don't have any money. They're young and strong. They'll just have to find their own food. Tomorrow we'll take them into the middle of the forest and come back without them. We'll just have to leave them there."

The woodcutter threw up his hands in horror. "My children left all alone in the forest! They might be eaten by bears!"

"Well, I can't feed them any more. They'll have to go!" his wife said angrily.

The woodcutter argued for a long time with his wife. But she was such a hard, frightening woman when she was angry that in the end he agreed to her

plan. Upstairs, the children were woken by the quarrel and they listened as their stepmother repeated her plan to abandon them in the forest. Gretel began to cry. But Hansel whispered, "Don't worry. I have a plan, too."

Later that night, when everyone was asleep, Hansel crept downstairs, quietly opened the kitchen door, and went out into the garden. There, against the dark earth of the flowerbeds, hundreds of white pebbles shone brightly in the moonlight. Hansel quickly filled his pockets with pebbles and crept back to bed.





In the morning, their stepmother called them. "I think it would be nice if we all went into the forest today," she said. "You children can play while I help your father chop wood. You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

Hansel and Gretel did not reply, but followed their parents into the dark forest.

"Keep up, Hansel," shouted the

boy's stepmother. "Why are you so slow?" But Hansel continued to dawdle behind, his hands in his pockets. And each time his stepmother's back was turned, he dropped one of the white pebbles on to the ground.

At last, after many twists and turns among the trees, the grown-ups stopped.

"Hansel! Gretel! You poor children, you must be tired out with walking. You must sit down and rest. Here is some bread for your lunch. Now wait here for us to come and fetch you."

The children ate the bread and, after playing for a while, they fell asleep under the trees. When they woke up, it was nearly dark and they were still alone.

"They've left us behind," sobbed Gretel.

"We'll never find our way home now. We'll both be eaten by bears!"

But Hansel pointed to his trail of pebbles shining in the moonlight. He took Gretel's hand and together they followed the trail of white pebbles all the way home.

When they knocked on the cottage door, their father opened the door and





hugged them tight because he was so delighted that his wife's cruel trick had gone wrong. But their stepmother only glared at them angrily and packed them off to bed.

"It's no good looking so pleased," she said to the woodcutter. "Tomorrow we *must* lose them in the forest and make sure they *don't* find their way home."

Upstairs, the children were still awake and they overheard their stepmother's unkind words. Hansel lay quietly in his bed until everyone was asleep, and then he crept downstairs to collect more pebbles. But the door was locked!

Poor Hansel. He crept back to bed and lay awake trying to think what to do.

"Come on!" called their stepmother

the next morning. "Let's spend the day in the forest again. Hansel, you can carry the bread for your lunch."

Just as before, Hansel dawdled behind the others. And when his parents' backs were turned, he tore little bits of bread from the loaf and dropped them.

"Keep up, Hansel!" shouted his stepmother. "Why are you so slow?"

After a long while they came to the middle of the forest. "Now sit down and eat your bread while we chop wood."

They were so tired from their long walk that they soon fell fast asleep. When they woke up, it was very dark and they were all alone. But this time Gretel did not cry. "Where's the trail, Hansel?" she asked. "How did you mark the path this time?"

"With breadcrumbs!"

"But where are they? I can't see any." And although they searched and searched they could not find any of the crumbs Hansel had dropped. The birds had eaten them all!





Hansel and Gretel sleeping under the tree, to protect them against the cold.

In the morning Hansel and Gretel wandered through the forest until they came to a grassy clearing among the trees. They stared in amazement for there stood a wonderful house made entirely of lovely food. It had gingerbread walls and windows of sugar and a chocolate roof. It looked and smelled like Easter and Christmas rolled into one.

They were so hungry that they ran to the house and began to break off bits of chocolate tiles and sugar window-sills. Then an old lady came hobbling out of the front door. "Don't eat my house, children," she croaked. "Come in and I'll give you pancakes and puddings instead."

So they followed her inside, and told her that they were lost and could not find

In the heart of the dark forest, Hansel and Gretel clung to each other.

Soon a hard frost formed on the forest floor. They huddled together at the foot of a tree and the birds watched them from overhead. "We ate the boy's trail of crumbs!" they sang sadly. "We didn't know what it was! The children are cold because of us!" The birds dropped a quilt of leaves down on to





their way home. Before they could finish the old woman set down in front of them two steaming pancakes oozing with fruit and cream.

"Thank you so much," said Hansel at last, wiping his mouth. "Can I wash the plates for you, ma'am?"

"No, no child," said the old lady. "But if you want to help me you can sweep out that cage in the corner of the room."

It was a very large cage, big enough for Hansel to crawl inside with a brush. Suddenly, the door clanged behind him and the old woman shrieked with delight. "Got you! A witch, a witch, that's what I am. My gingerbread house is a trap! And who do you think I catch in my trap, eh? *Children!* Ha! Ha! Ha!"

The witch made poor little Gretel be her servant, making her sweep and scrub and clean. But she had something else in mind for Hansel. "Ha! Ha! I'll fatten you up, my boy. Then one day soon I'll roast you for dinner!"





One day, as Gretel was sweeping the house, she noticed that the witch was very short-sighted. Every day the old woman would go to Hansel's cage and peer in at him. "Poke your finger through the bars, lad," she would say. Then she would feel Hansel's finger to see if he was getting fat. A few days later Gretel crept to the cage and whispered her plan to her brother.

So when the witch told him to poke his finger through the bars, he stuck a chicken bone through instead and let her feel that.

"Too thin, too thin," she snapped. "You'll never be fat enough to roast. I'll have to turn you into soup instead!"

The next day, the old witch said to Gretel: "Heat a big pan of water on the stove so that I can cook your brother. I want it very, very hot, do you hear, so put lots of logs in the fire."

"The stove is ready," said Gretel after a while. "But I don't know if it's hot enough for you."

"Stupid girl!" snapped the witch. "Do I have to do *everything* myself?" She hobbled over to the stove and bent down to look inside. Quick as a flash, Gretel gave her a push,





tumbled her into the stove and slammed the door shut. There was a puff of purple smoke . . . but Gretel was too busy unlocking Hansel's cage and setting him free to see.

"Let's get out of this horrible forest!" she cried, "and never come back."

"Wait a second," said Hansel. "We can't go home empty-handed. Father hasn't enough food to feed us. We must take something with us."

So they made a sledge out of the chocolate roof of the gingerbread house. And they broke up its gingerbread walls and loaded them on to the sledge along with the sugar-spun windows, candy-twist bannisters and marshmallow chairs. Then they pulled the sledge through the forest until at last they found the path leading home.


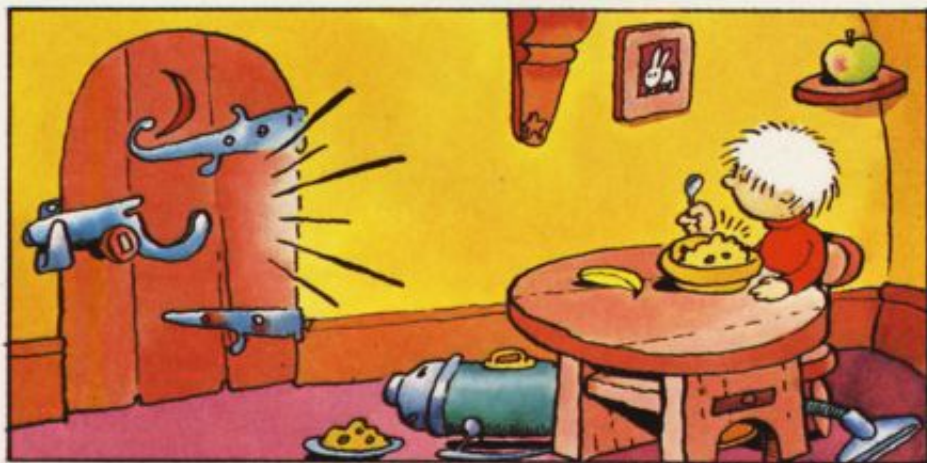
As the woodcutter's house came into view they could see their father standing in the doorway. His unkind wife had run away with a rich timber merchant and he was left feeling very lonely without his children. When he saw Hansel and Gretel he was overjoyed and hugged and kissed them.

They all took the chocolate sledge into the town and sold sweets to every family that lived there. And they took home so much money that none of them ever went hungry again.



ALDO

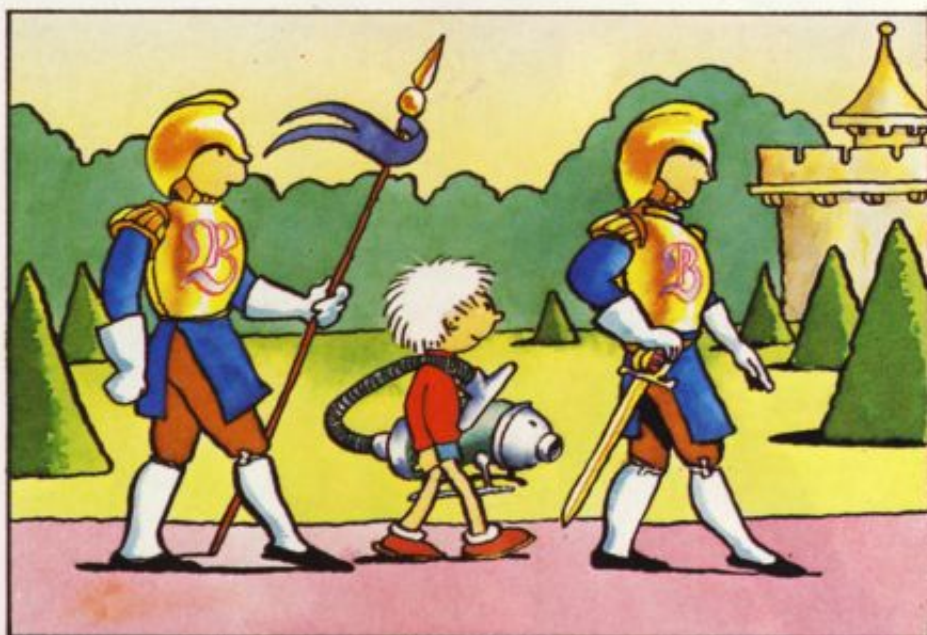
in Arcadia

One morning Aldo was eating his breakfast when there was a loud knock on the door.



"The King wants to see you, Aldo."
"Actually, he wants to see the vacuum."



"Does your vacuum fly, Cyril?"
"I'm lucky if it cleans the carpets, Fred."



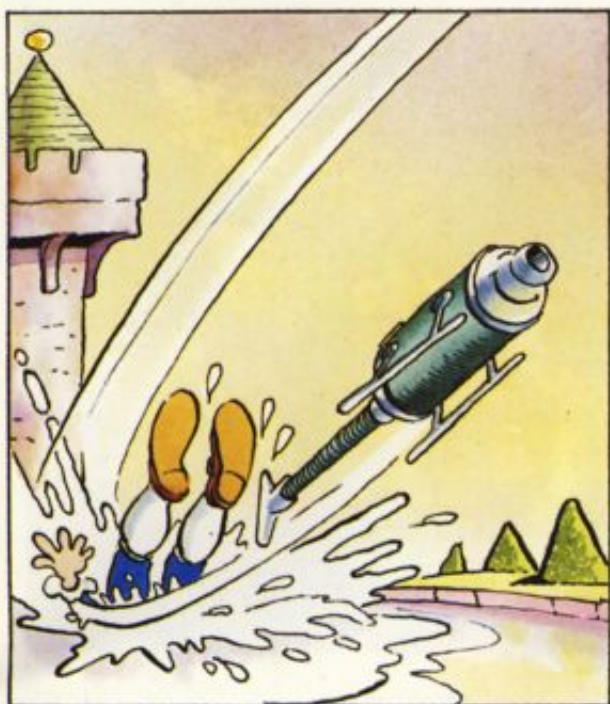
"Good morning, your majesty."
"One has heard of you and one wishes to fly."



"I suppose one just sort of . . . mounts."
"Yes, your majesty, one does."



"Fly! Oh I say . . . careful now!"
"Hold on tight, your majesty. Oh dear . . ."



"I say, we're heading for the moat . . ."



"I've never been so insulted. Arrest them!"



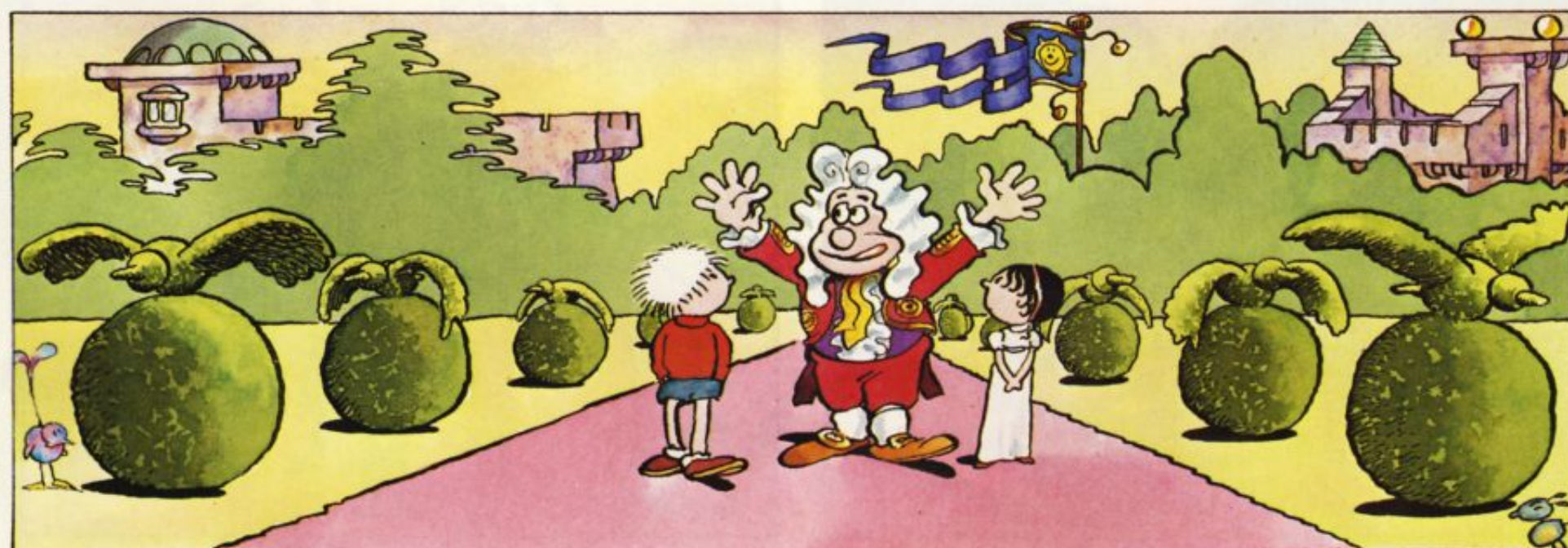
"Come here you—you're for the royal dungeons!"



"I wonder how long we'll have to stay here, vacuum. Wait a minute . . . who's this?"



"Don't worry, when the King calms down I'll get you out. Daddy's still furious."



"We are truly sorry, Aldo. We realise now that it was just an accident . . ."

... but one really does want to fly."
"Well, perhaps my Uncle Emo can help."



"This is going to take some thought.
Hmm . . . yes, I think I may have the answer."



"Gosh, what's happening?"
"Uncle Emo's conjured up some magic sweets!"



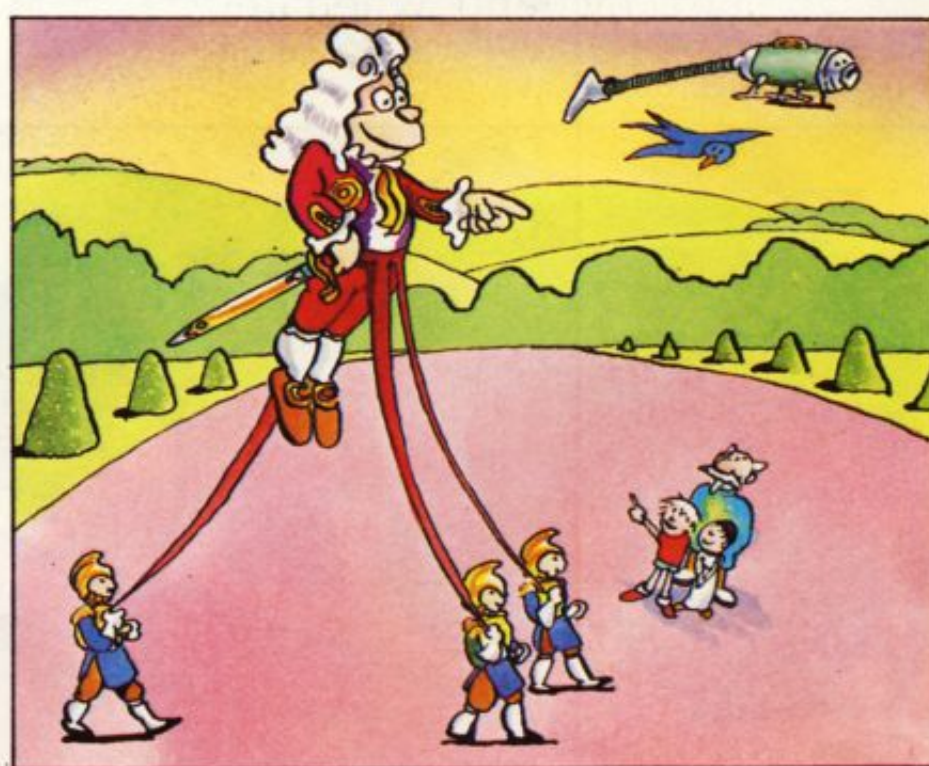
"Suck one of these sweets, your majesty, when
you want to fly. The effects last one hour."



"One can but try . . . Good heavens!"
"Look, Daddy's taking off by himself."



"For services to the Kingdom of Arcadia
I dub thee Sir Aldo and Sir Uncle Emo."



The King spent the rest of the day
blissfully floating around.



Child of the Sun

There is a very old tale that tells of a man and his wife who lived on a small island off the west coast of Canada. They were very lonely, for they had no children and no-one else lived on the island.

One evening, when the sky was the colour of seagull's feathers, the young woman sat alone on the seashore looking out across the water.

"If only we had children, they could play on the sand with me and I wouldn't be so lonely," she said.

A kingfisher nearby was diving in the mouth of the river with his young.

"O kingfisher," said the young woman. "I wish I had children like you."

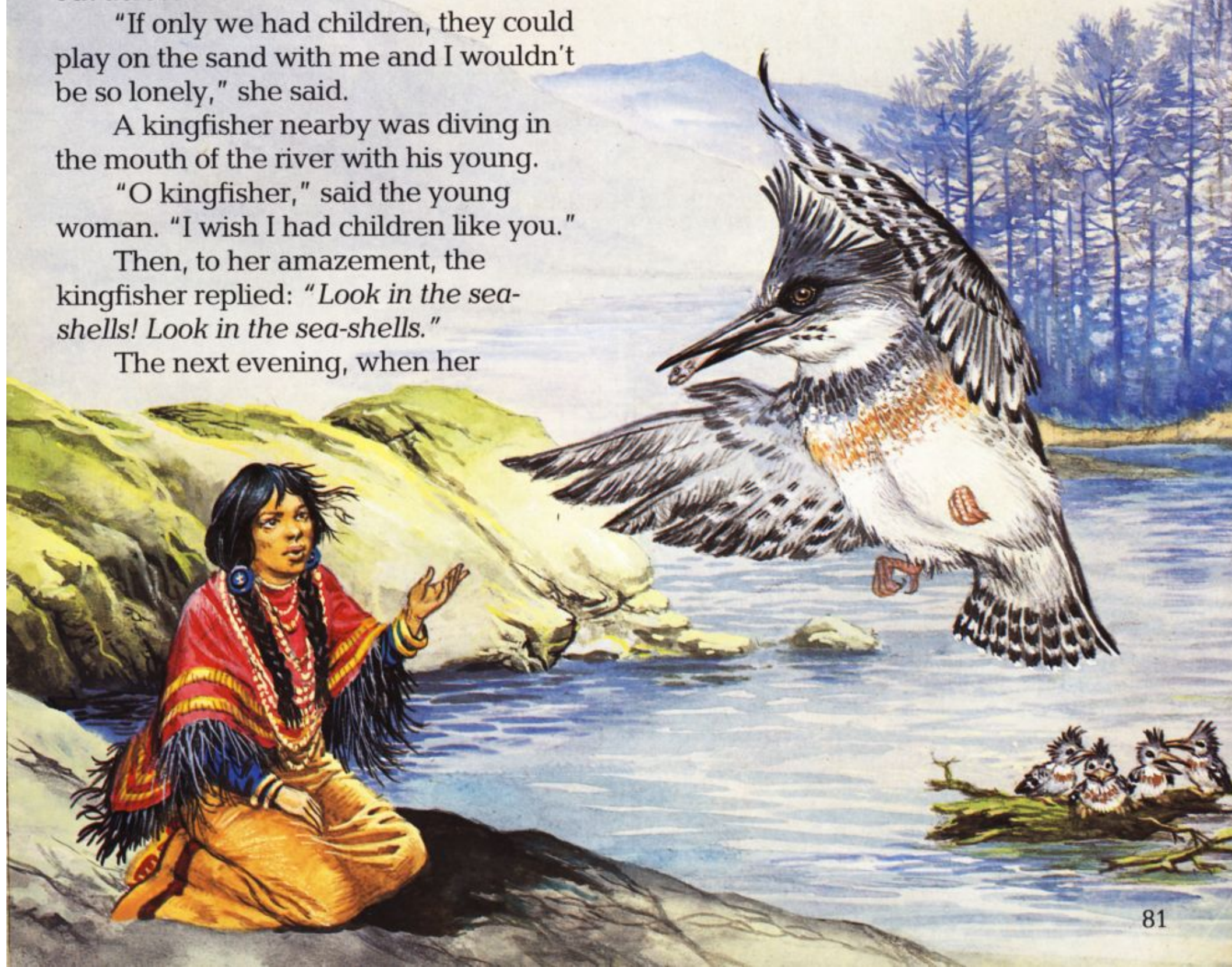
Then, to her amazement, the kingfisher replied: "*Look in the sea-shells! Look in the sea-shells.*"

The next evening, when her

husband was away fishing, the woman sat again on the beach looking out to the sea. She saw the seagull bobbing up and down on the waves with her brood of young gulls.

"O seagull," the young woman sighed. "I do wish I had children like you."

And the seagull replied: "*Look in the sea-shells. Go and look in the sea-shells.*"



Then suddenly she heard a cry from behind her. It came from a large sea-shell lying in the sand. Picking it up, the woman looked inside and saw a tiny boy, crying as hard as he could.

She carried the baby home and looked after him. He soon grew into a strong little boy. One day the boy said to the young woman: "I must have a bow made from the copper bracelet on your arm."

The woman smiled. And to please the little boy she made a tiny bow and two tiny arrows.

The next day the boy went out hunting with his bright new bow. And after that he went out hunting every day, bringing back geese, ducks and all sorts of small sea-birds.

As he grew older, the boy's face turned a deep golden colour, brighter than the shine of his little golden bow. And when he sat on the beach, gazing out to sea, the weather was always calm and there were strange bright lights on the water.

One day a huge storm blew over the ocean and the sea was so rough that the



fisherman could not go out in his boat. And before long he and his wife and the little boy had no more fish to eat.

Then the boy said, "Let me go out in the boat with you, Father, because I will conquer the Storm Spirit."

The man did not want to go out in the boat as the sea was so violent, but the boy continued to plead so much that he finally agreed.

Together they set out across the stormy sea. They had not gone far when they met the Storm Spirit blowing in from the southwest, where the great winds live.

Tossing the little boat this way and that,



the Storm Spirit blew and blew like a wild monster. But for all his blowing he could not turn the small boat over. The boy guided it through the waves, and soon the sea was calm all around them.

Then the Storm Spirit called his friend Mist of the Sea to come and hide the water, for he knew that when the Mist came down the man and the boy would soon be lost.

When the man saw Mist of the Sea spreading across the water he was terrified. He was more afraid of Mist of the Sea than any of his many enemies on the waters.

But the boy said, "Don't be afraid. He will not harm you when I am with you."



When the Mist of the Sea saw the boy sitting in front of the little boat, and smiling, he disappeared as quickly as he had arrived. There was nothing else the Storm Spirit could do so he turned away in anger, and the sea was safe again.

As they set off for home the boy taught his father a magic song, which they sang to the fish. When they heard it, the fish swam into the nets and by evening the boat was loaded up with a fine catch.

"Tell me the secret of your power," said the father.

"I can't tell you yet," replied the boy.

The next day the boy went out with his copper bow and arrows and shot many birds. When he got home he skinned them and hung up the skins to dry. Then he covered himself in the skins of plovers, rose into the air and flew above the sea. Below him the sea was a dull grey, like the colour of his wings.

After flying round the island, he





came down. He took off the plover skins, and put on the feathers of blue jays, and again soared up into the air. The sea beneath him immediately turned to a blue like the blue of his wings. Again he flew round the island and returned to the beach.

This time he put on the skins of robins, which had a reddish golden colour from their breast feathers. As he flew high over the sea the waves below him reflected the colour of fire. Bright gleams of light appeared on the ocean, and the western sky shone a golden red.

When he came back to the beach the boy said to his mother: "I am the Child of the Sun. It is time for me to go now, and I shall leave this island for ever. But I shall appear to you often in the western sky when the sun shines bright at the end of the day. When the sky and sea at evening are the golden colour of my face you will know that the next day will be fine, and there will be neither wind nor storm.

"And though I have to leave you I will give you special powers. Wear this magic robe and if you ever need me you

can let me know by sending little white signals to me, so I can see them from my home in the west."

The boy gave his mother the magic robe and flew off to the west, leaving the fisherman and his wife very sad.

Now, when the woman sits in the sand and loosens her magic robe, the wind starts blowing and the sea becomes rough. And the more she loosens it, the more the storm rages.

But in the autumn, when mists roll in from the sea and the evening sky is dull, she remembers the boy's promise. Taking the tiny white feathers from the breasts of birds, she tosses them into the wind. Turning to snowflakes, they fly off to the west to tell the boy that the world is grey and lonely and that it longs for the sight of his golden face.

Then, after the sun has fled, the boy appears, and the sky is set on fire and the sea is sprinkled with golden light. And the people of the Earth know that there will be no wind the next day and the weather will be fine. Just as the Child of the Sun promised them, long ago.



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A giant climb in
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