

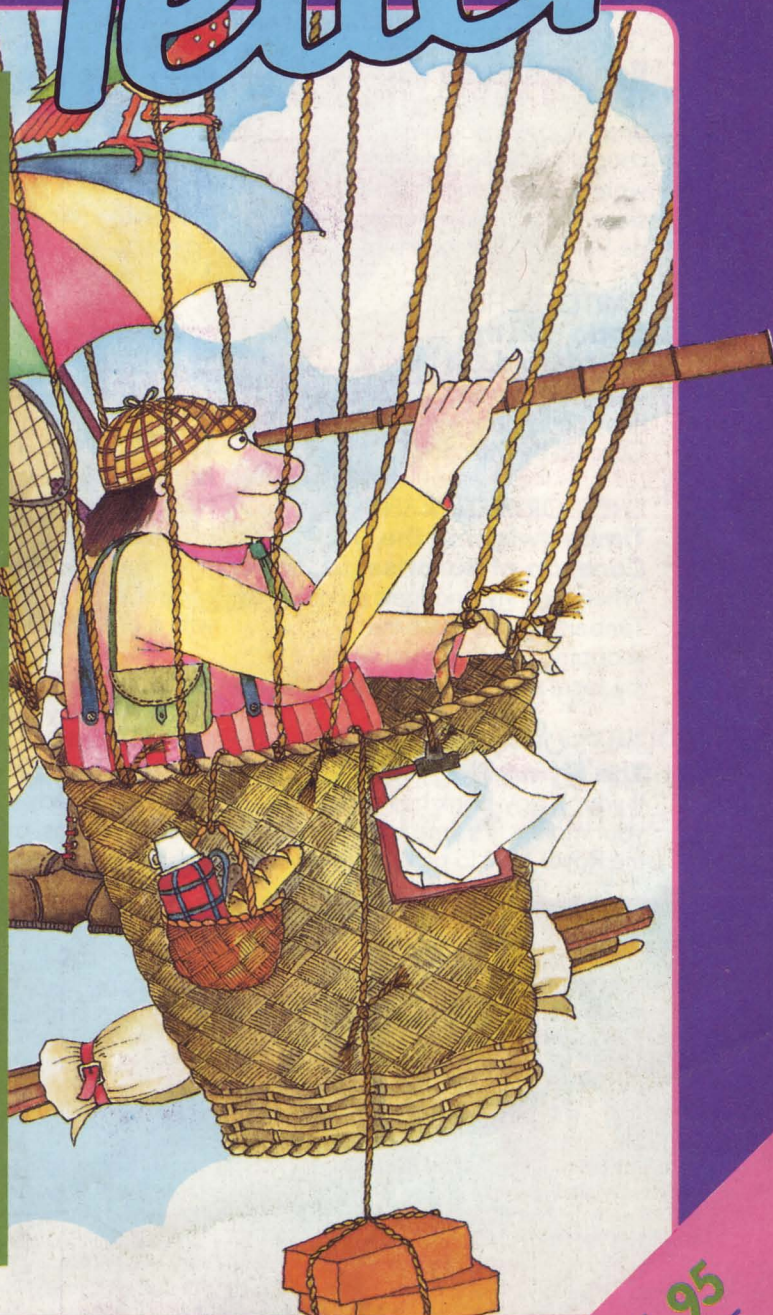
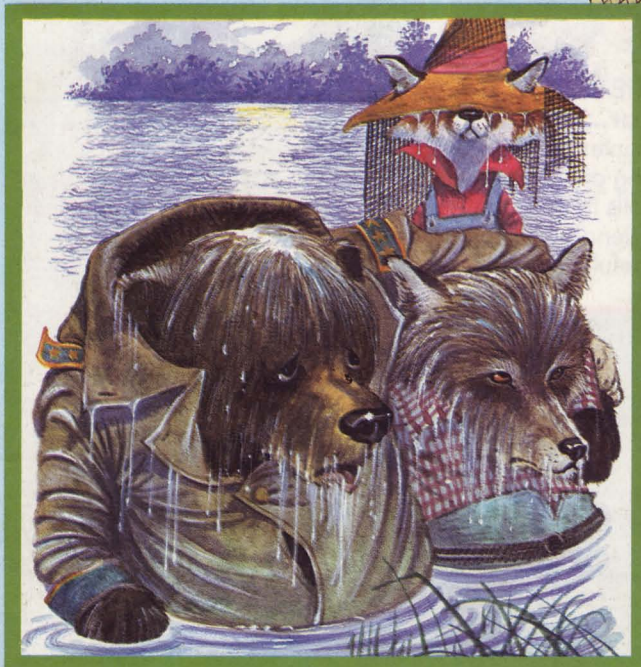
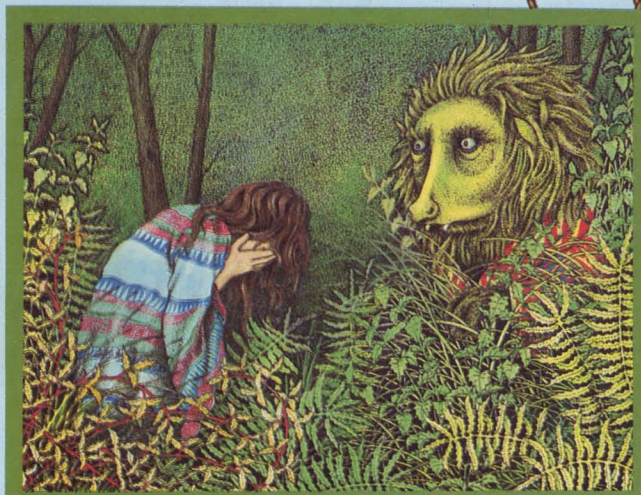
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PART 6

STORY

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STORY Teller

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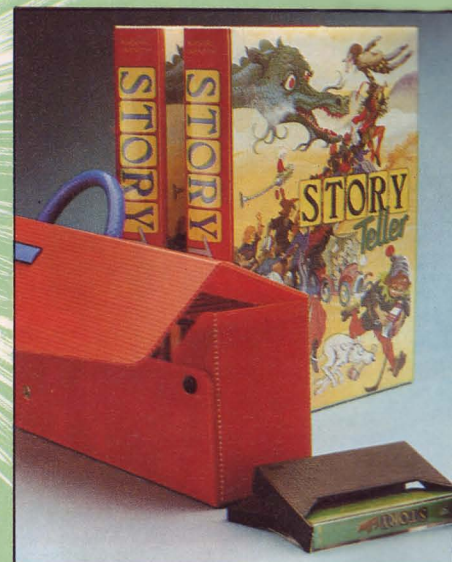
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Once upon a time there was a rich man who had three daughters. Suddenly, almost overnight, he lost nearly all his money. The family had to sell their grand house and move to a tiny run-down cottage in the country.

The two older girls were always complaining about having to patch their dresses and never being able to go to parties. But the youngest, who was called Beauty because of her sweet face and gentle nature, made the best of everything.

One day, their father set off to town to see if he could find work. As he

mounted his horse, he asked the girls what they would like if he earned enough money to buy them each a present.

"A beautiful dress for me!" said the first daughter.

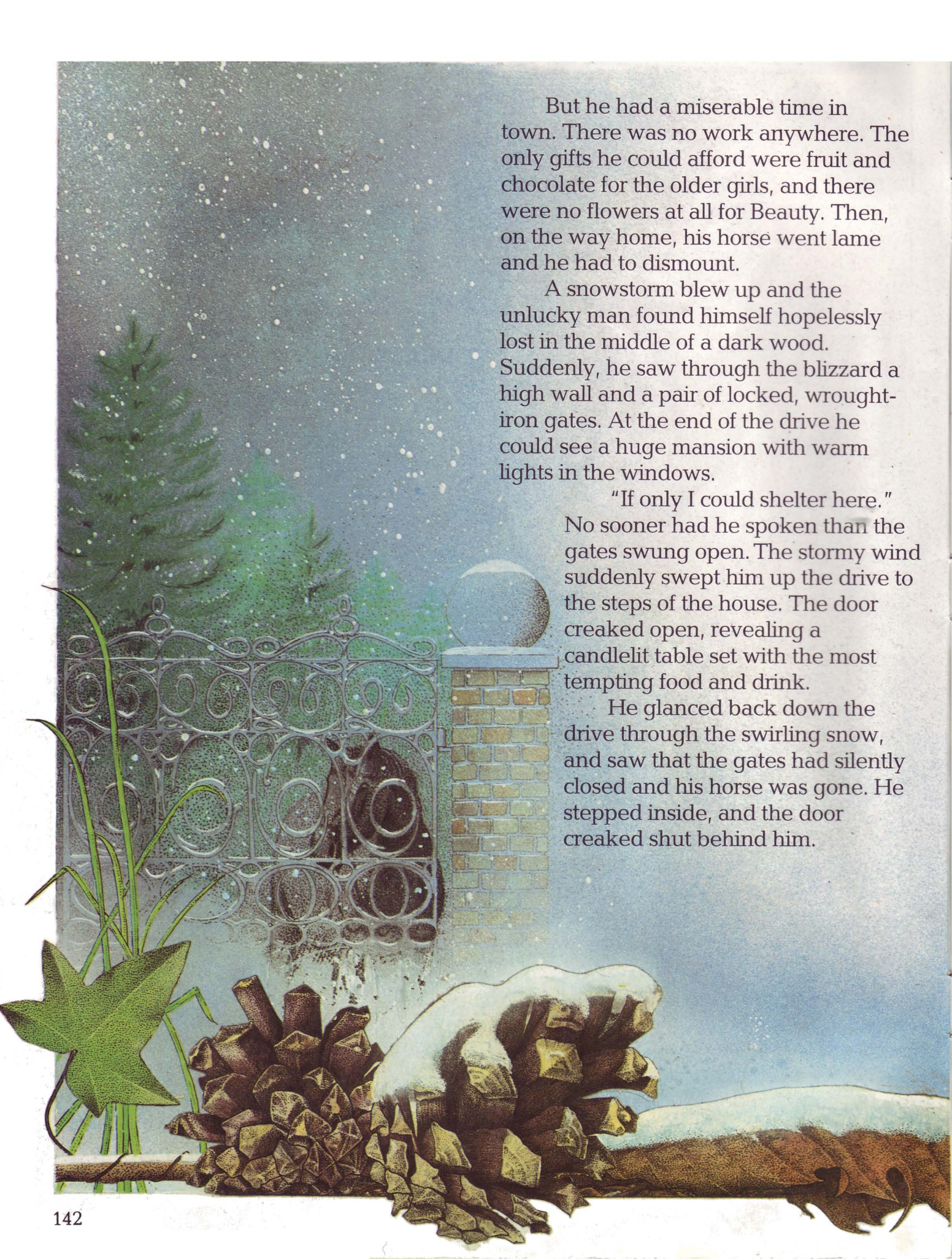
"A silver necklace!" said the second.

"Just come back safely, Papa," said Beauty. "That's enough for me."

"Oh Beauty! There must be *something* you would like!"

"A red rose for my hair then," she said with a smile. "But it's winter, so I won't mind if you can't find me one."

"I'll do my best for all of you," said their father, and he galloped away.

A winter scene with a snowstorm. A large, dark green pine tree stands on the left. In the center, a decorative wrought-iron gate is partially open, revealing a path leading to a large house in the distance. The sky is dark and filled with falling snow. In the foreground, there are two large, brown pinecones and some green leaves.

But he had a miserable time in town. There was no work anywhere. The only gifts he could afford were fruit and chocolate for the older girls, and there were no flowers at all for Beauty. Then, on the way home, his horse went lame and he had to dismount.

A snowstorm blew up and the unlucky man found himself hopelessly lost in the middle of a dark wood. Suddenly, he saw through the blizzard a high wall and a pair of locked, wrought-iron gates. At the end of the drive he could see a huge mansion with warm lights in the windows.

"If only I could shelter here."

No sooner had he spoken than the gates swung open. The stormy wind suddenly swept him up the drive to the steps of the house. The door creaked open, revealing a candlelit table set with the most tempting food and drink.

He glanced back down the drive through the swirling snow, and saw that the gates had silently closed and his horse was gone. He stepped inside, and the door creaked shut behind him.

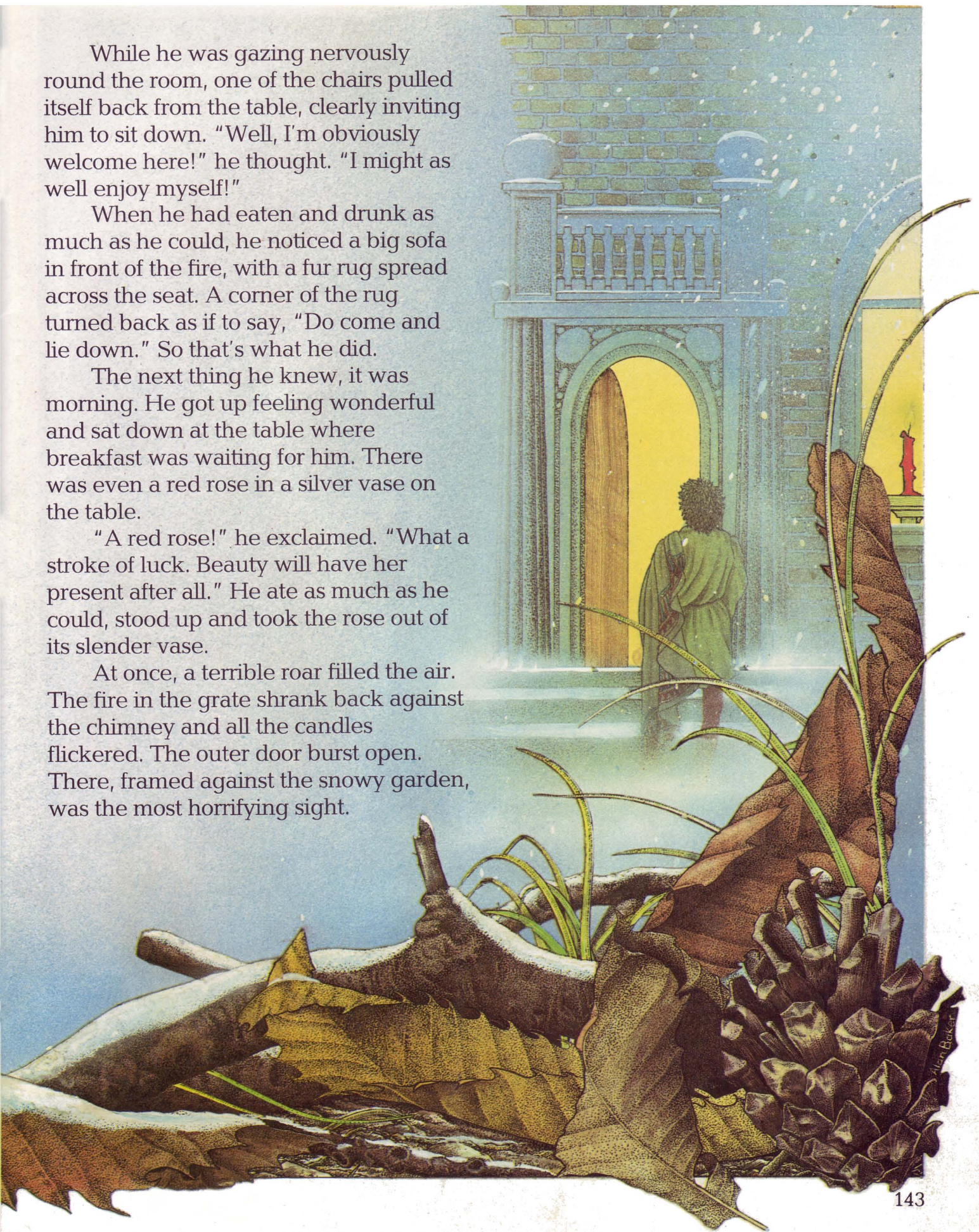
While he was gazing nervously round the room, one of the chairs pulled itself back from the table, clearly inviting him to sit down. "Well, I'm obviously welcome here!" he thought. "I might as well enjoy myself!"

When he had eaten and drunk as much as he could, he noticed a big sofa in front of the fire, with a fur rug spread across the seat. A corner of the rug turned back as if to say, "Do come and lie down." So that's what he did.

The next thing he knew, it was morning. He got up feeling wonderful and sat down at the table where breakfast was waiting for him. There was even a red rose in a silver vase on the table.

"A red rose!" he exclaimed. "What a stroke of luck. Beauty will have her present after all." He ate as much as he could, stood up and took the rose out of its slender vase.

At once, a terrible roar filled the air. The fire in the grate shrank back against the chimney and all the candles flickered. The outer door burst open. There, framed against the snowy garden, was the most horrifying sight.



Was it a man or a beast? It was dressed in gentlemen's clothes — but there were hairy claws where there should have been hands, and its head was a mass of tangled fur.

"Steal my rose, would you?" it snarled, showing its appalling fangs. "What kind of thanks is that for the hospitality I've given you?"

The man nearly died of fright. "Please forgive me, sir. It was for my daughter, Beauty. But I'll put it back at once of course."

"Too late!" growled the Beast. "You must take it with you now . . . and send me your daughter in exchange."

"No!" gasped Beauty's father. "No!"

"Then I shall eat you this minute," roared the Beast.

"Better for you to eat me than my lovely daughter," said the unhappy man.

"If you send her, I'll not harm a hair of her head,"

said the Beast. "You have my word on it. Now, choose."

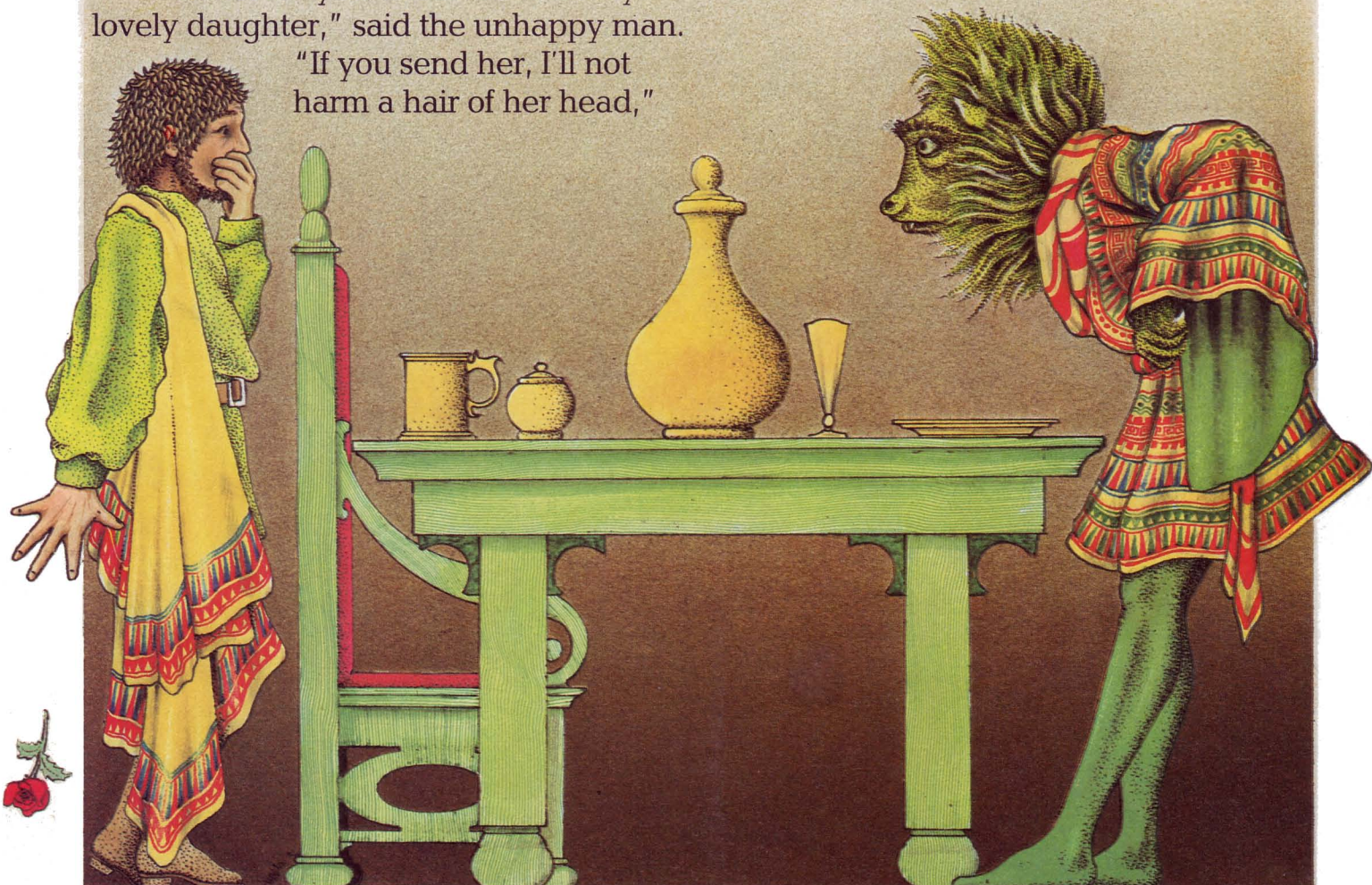
The girl's father agreed to the dreadful bargain, and the Beast gave him a magic ring which, if twisted three times, would bring Beauty to the Beast's desolate mansion.

Outside in the snow stood the horse, now cured of its lameness, saddled and ready for the journey. But what a miserable journey it was, and an even worse homecoming when he told his daughters what had happened.

"Did he really say he would not hurt me, father?" asked Beauty.

"He gave his word, my darling."

"Then give me the ring," said Beauty. "Don't forget me, will you everyone?" She kissed them goodbye, put





on the ring, and twisted it three times.

Almost at once, she found herself in the Beast's mansion.

But he was not there to greet her. In fact she did not see him at all for many days, but the house made her very welcome. Doors opened by themselves, candlesticks floated upstairs to guide her to bed, food appeared at the table and was mysteriously cleared away.

Beauty was not frightened by the friendly house, but she felt so lonely that she began to wish the Beast would come and talk to her — however awful he looked.

One day, as she wandered in the garden, the Beast stepped out from

behind a tree. Beauty could not stop herself giving a scream as she covered her eyes.

"Don't be afraid, Beauty," he murmured, trying to keep the growl out of his voice. "I've only come to wish you good day and ask if you are enjoying your stay at my house."

"Well," said Beauty, taking a deep breath, "I'd rather be at home. But I am well looked after, thank you."

"Good," said the Beast. "Would you mind if I walked with you for a while?"

So the two of them wandered about the garden, and after that the Beast often came to talk to Beauty. But he never sat down to eat with her at the big table.

One night, Beauty saw him loping across the moonlit lawn. She realised with a shock that he was out hunting for his food. Glancing up, he saw her at the window. Covering his face with his great paws, he let out a roar of shame.

Although he was ugly, Beauty was so lonely and he was so kind to her that she began to look forward to seeing him.

One evening, he came up behind her when she was sitting reading by the fire. "Marry me, Beauty," he said.

He looked so hopeful that Beauty felt sorry for him. "I do like you very much, Beast, but no, I really don't want to marry you. I don't love you."

The Beast often repeated his polite offer of marriage. But she always said "No" as kindly as she possibly could.

One day he found her weeping by the fountain in the garden. "Oh Beast!" she cried. "I'm sorry to cry when you've been so kind to me, but it's almost



winter! I've been here nearly a year. I'm so homesick. I miss father, so much."

To her joy, Beast said, "You may go home for seven days if you promise to come back." Beauty promised at once, and twisted the ring on her finger.

What joy there was when Beauty appeared in the little kitchen in the middle of supper. They had a wonderful week together. Beauty told her family all about her strange host and they told her all their news. The happy week passed with no sign or word from the Beast. "Perhaps he's forgotten," thought Beauty. "I'll stay a bit longer."

Another week passed and, to her delight, nothing happened at all. The family breathed a sigh of relief.

Then one night, as she was brushing her hair in front of the mirror, her reflection suddenly faded — and there instead was the Beast. He was lying by



the moonlit fountain, almost hidden by fallen leaves.

"Oh Beast!" exclaimed Beauty, tears springing to her eyes. "Please don't be dead. I'll come back. Dear Beast."

She twisted the ring three times and found herself by his side in the garden.

"Beast, oh Beast," she wept, lifting his huge head on to her lap. "I didn't mean to kill you. I love you."

She tried to brush the leaves from his face, but her eyes were so full of tears that she could not see, and tears brimmed over and splashed down on to his head.

Suddenly, he spoke. "Look at me, Beauty. Wipe away your tears and see what you have done."

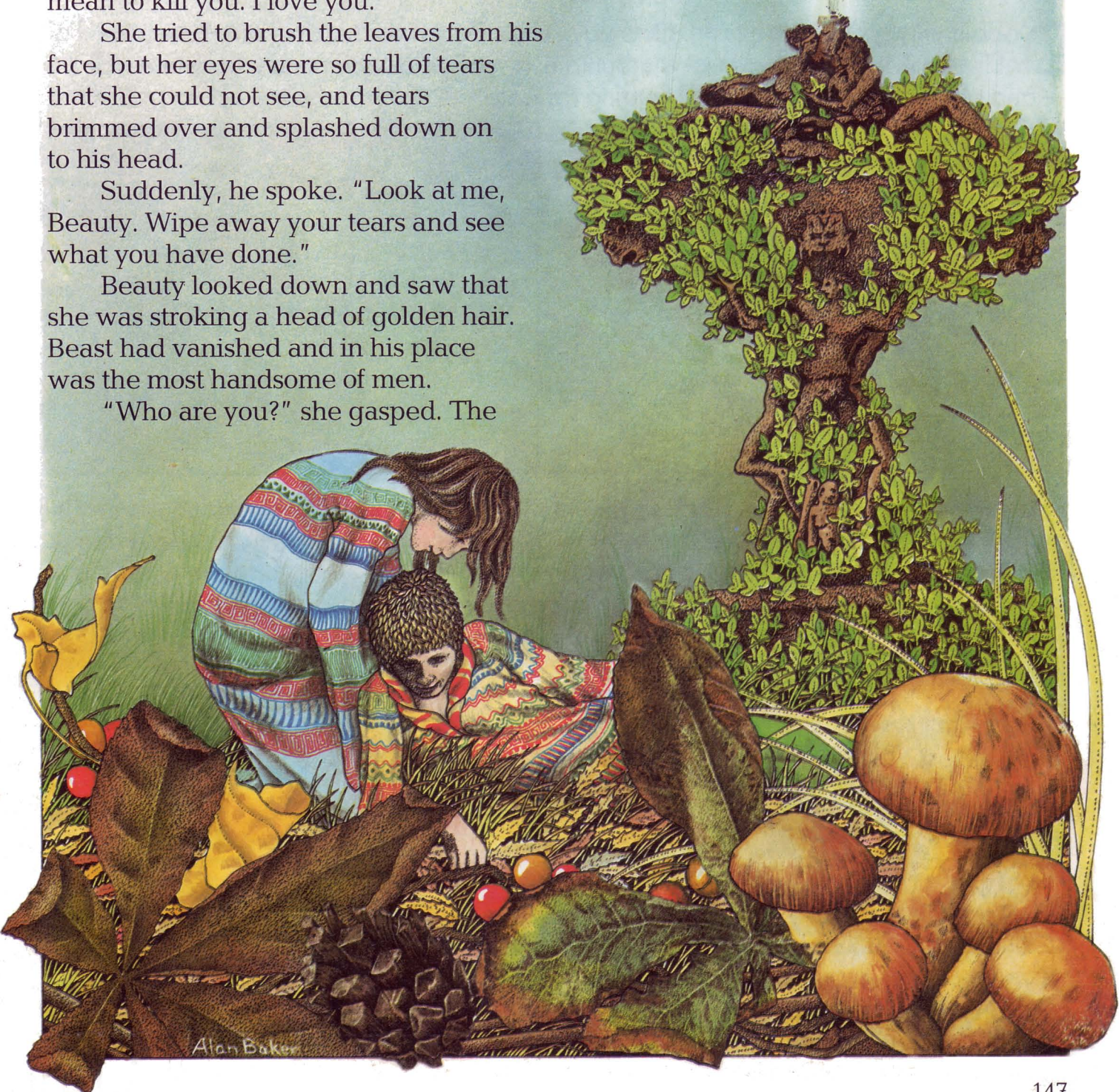
Beauty looked down and saw that she was stroking a head of golden hair. Beast had vanished and in his place was the most handsome of men.

"Who are you?" she gasped. The

young man took her face in his hands.

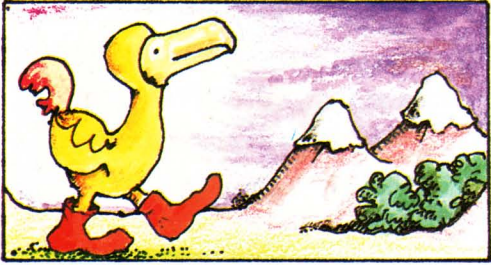
"I am a prince," he said. "A witch cast a spell on me to change me into a beast forever. Only the true love of a young girl could free me. Ah Beauty, I'm so glad you came back. Now will you marry me?"

"Of course, my Prince, I will." And the two of them lived happily ever after.

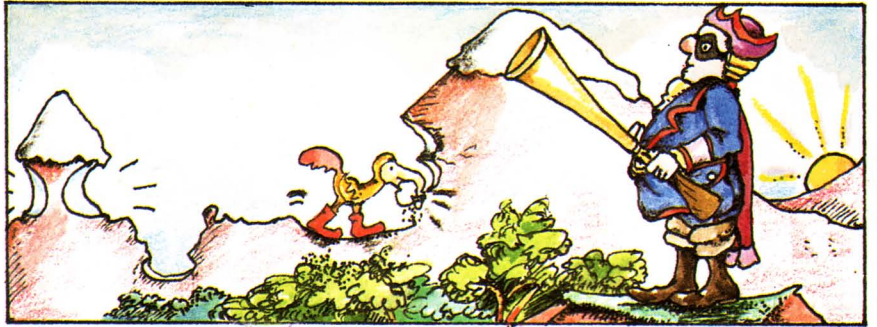


dodo

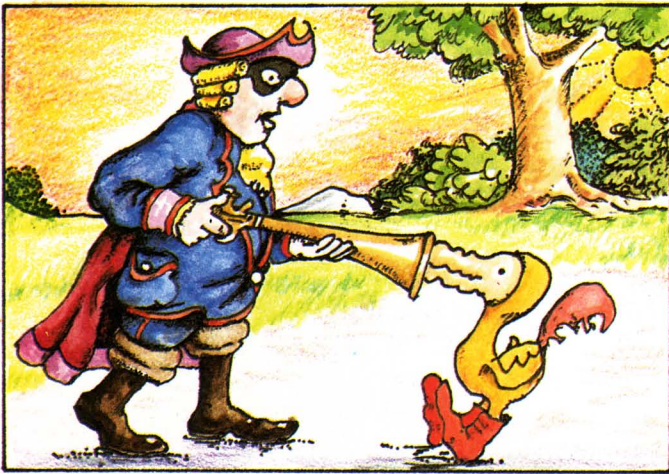
and the Pot of Gold



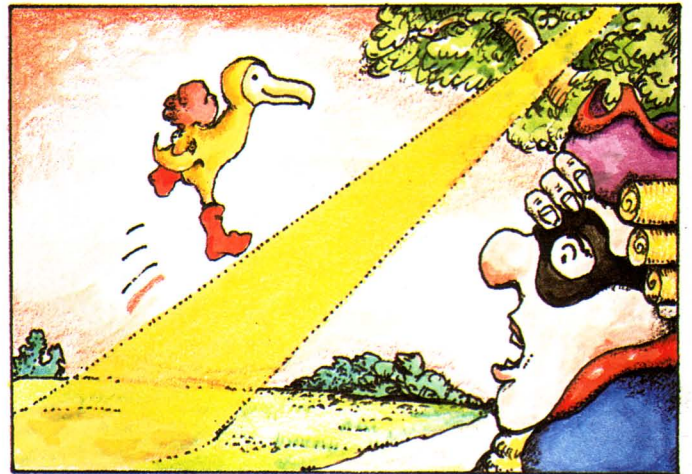
Dodo is *always* hungry. He can eat mountains — and often does . . .



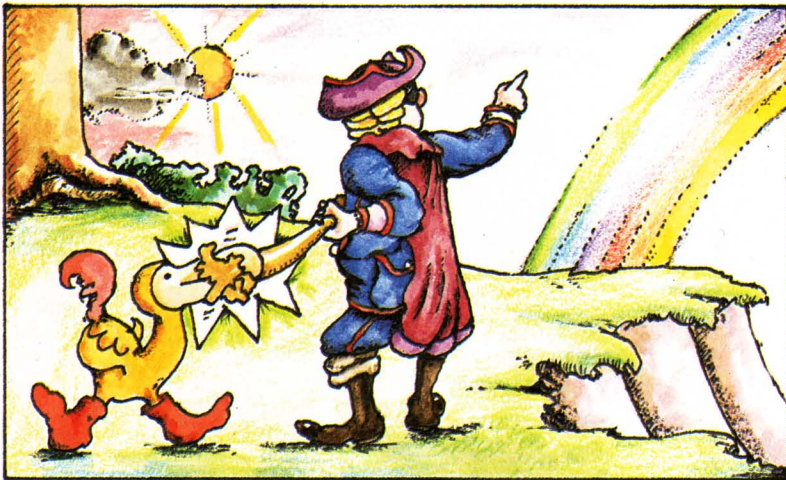
One day, when Dodo was tucking into the side of a mountain, a robber saw him and thought he was digging for gold.



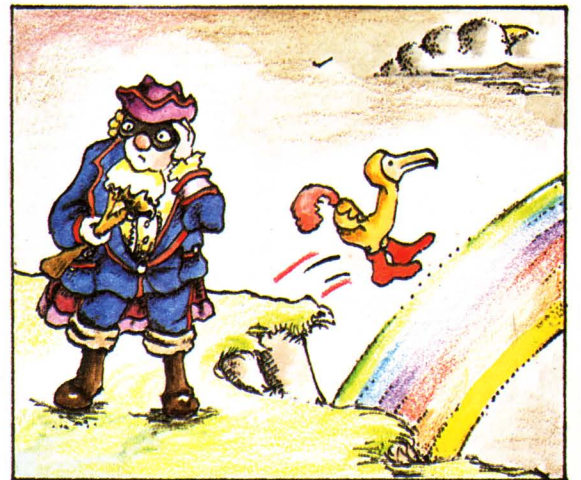
"Give me all your gold!" shouted the robber, pointing his gun at Dodo. "But I haven't got any . . ." said Dodo,



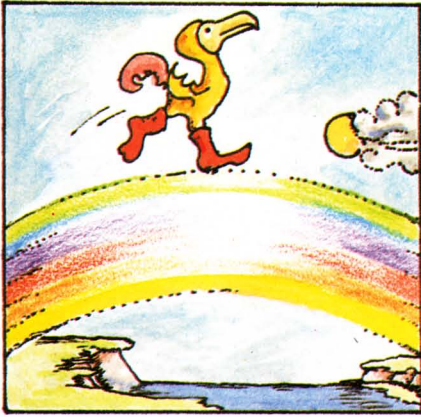
"... except for the golden sunbeams. I dance on them." And Dodo did a dance on a sunbeam.



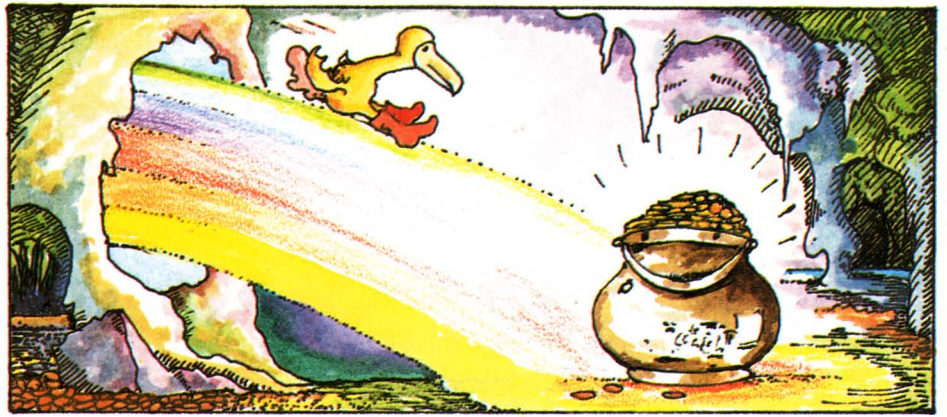
"If you can do that," said the robber, "then you can dance over the rainbow." "Of course I can," said Dodo.



"Well, there's a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Go and get it — or I'll blast your beak off!"



So Dodo danced to the top of the rainbow, with the sun shining in his eyes and the rain falling on his feathers.



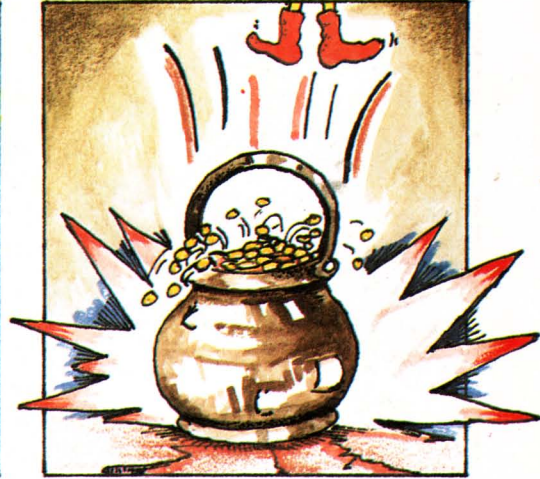
Then, he slid down the other side. And there really was gold at the rainbow's end! Dodo picked it up in his beak.



But as he reached the top, the rainbow began to fade from under his feet.



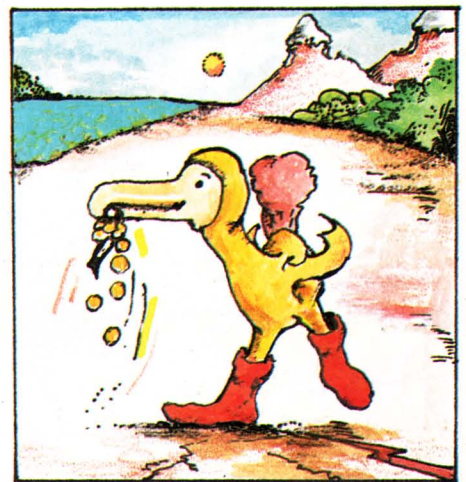
Down below, the robber yelled, "Throw me the gold before the rainbow fades!"



So Dodo did. But the pot was so heavy that it *flattened* the robber . . .



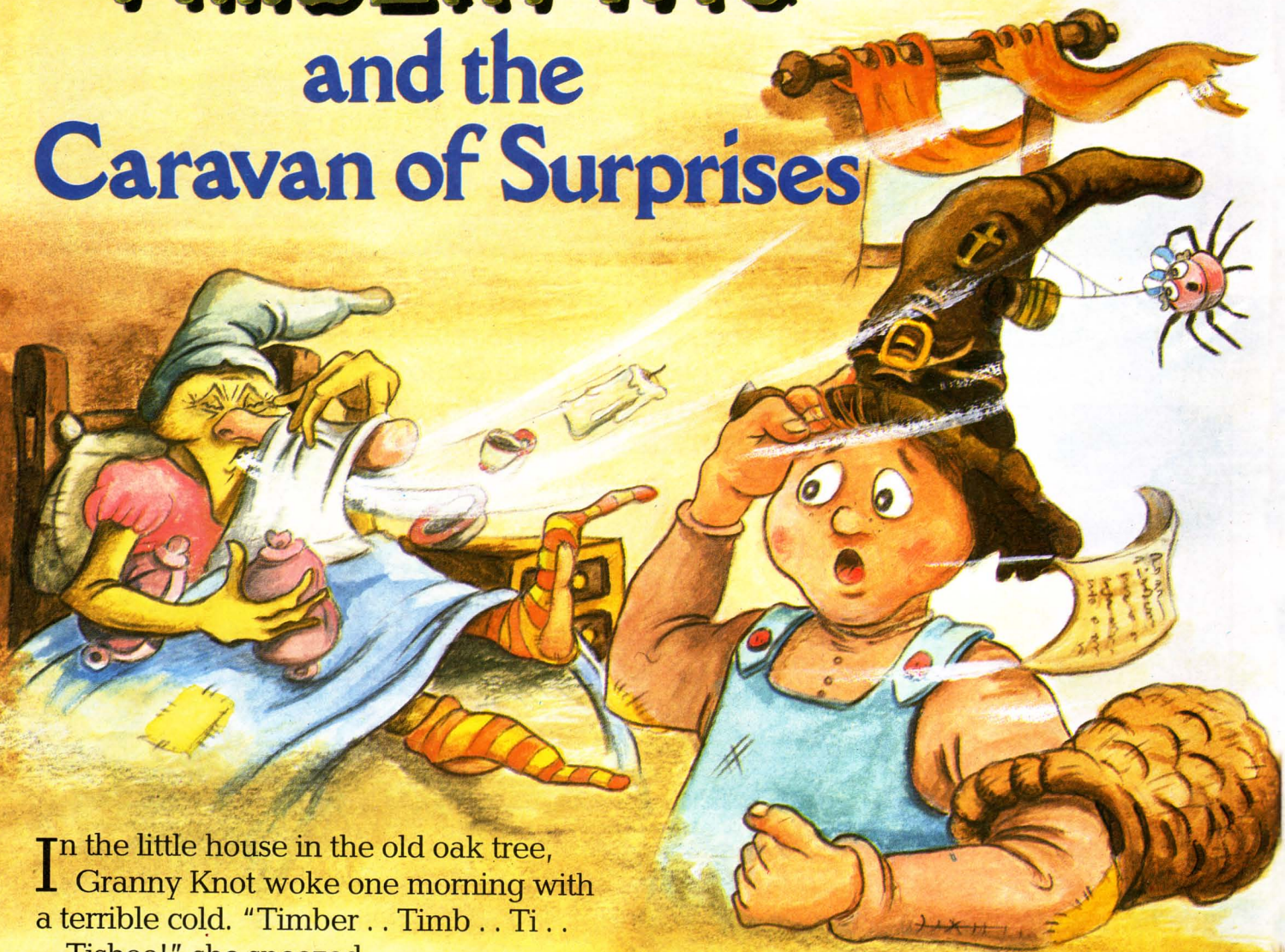
. . . and all the gold spilled out in a glittering, sparkling heap. Dodo wondered what to do with it. "I could leave it here," he thought.



"But it's wrong to waste money." So he ate it.

TIMBERTWIG

and the Caravan of Surprises



In the little house in the old oak tree, Granny Knot woke one morning with a terrible cold. "Timber . . . Timb . . . Ti . . . Tishoo!" she sneezed.

"Is something wrong?" asked Timbertwig, coming into the bedroom.

"I've got an awful cold," she moaned. "Pass me my handkerchief. It's hanging up behind the door."

"What, this thing? I thought it was a sheet," sniggered Timbertwig as he took down the *enormous* hankie.

"Don't be so cheeky!" snapped Granny. "You'll have to go to market for me today. I'm much too ill. Look, I've written down a shopping list."

"Leave it to me," said Timbertwig proudly, and he put on his hat — the hat

where Abigail the magic spider lived. As they set off, Granny Knot blew her *enormous* nose. And all the trees in Wiggly Wood shook at the terrible noise.

Soon Timbertwig and Abigail reached the edge of the wood. And there, on the common, was the travelling market. They loved the market. It was always full of such strange, interesting people.

Timbertwig wandered past a fortune-teller, a magician who did tricks with balloons, and an old lady who knitted string vests. The end stall belonged to Doc Leaf, the quack doctor.

"Roll up, roll up!" he shouted. "Buy a bottle of Baldy Brew and your hair will grow as thick as grass on a lawn. It's the eighth wonder of the world. And cheap at half the price!"

"Excuse me," said Timbertwig. "My Granny's got a rotten cold. Do you have something to cure it?"

"I certainly have, laddie," lied Doc Leaf. "I've got just what you need inside my tent." Of course, Doc Leaf had no such thing — just hundreds of jars of Baldy Brew. He ripped off one of the labels and wrote a new one: *QUICKY COLD CURE*. "Now you take this home and let your Granny sniff it." But whatever you do, laddie, don't let her eat it or spill it on anything."

"Right. Thank you very much," said Timbertwig. And he put the jar under his hat to keep it safe.

Abigail, who had nodded off to sleep in Timbertwig's hat, suddenly woke up.

"What's that *dreadful* smell?" she thought, sniffing the jar of Baldy Brew. "I'll have to magic that away or nobody will want to visit me in my smelly little hat-home." And she waved her wand.

*"Whiffity, woppity, zippity zo,
This hat's full up, so out you go!"*

But the jar stayed where it was — and Timbertwig was magicked right out of his hat!

"Oops! Sorry, Timbertwig. My spells are *always* going wrong."

Timbertwig picked himself up off the ground and put his hat on again.





"Never mind," he said. "Look Abigail, we can buy all our shopping here." He was standing at the door of Mr Misfit's Caravan of Surprises.

The inside of the caravan was far bigger than the outside, and its shelves overflowed with boxes and bottles and baskets. Mr Misfit could sell you *anything* — from an elephant's sock to a mouse's toothbrush. Timbertwig wandered in amazement among the skunk-skin rugs, the butterfly wings, the whalebones and ships-in-bottles. There were hair ribbons for vultures and songbooks for elks. There were spelling books for gnus and a map of footpaths on the seabed. There was a silent radio and a portrait of the Invisible Man.

Abigail was delighted when she found a department just for spiders, where she could buy pickled flies and eight-legged pyjamas.

Timbertwig peeped over the counter and there was Mr Misfit.

"Come in, come in. Why, it's Mrs Knot's wee little grandson, isn't it?"

"That's right," replied Timbertwig.
"She's not very well, though. So I'm
doing the shopping today."

"And what can I fetch you?"

Timbertwig took out his list. "I'd
like . . ." He stopped when he saw that
Granny had forgotten to write down how
much she wanted of anything. Well,
perhaps he could guess. "Um . . . I'd like two
bags of milk and a packet of turnips . . .
a sack of butter and a loaf of bacon."

Mr Misfit giggled. "Sliced or
unsliced?" he said, meaning the bacon.

"Er, nice and crusty," said
Timbertwig. "And half a dozen cabbages
and a jar of bread, please."

"Brown or white?"

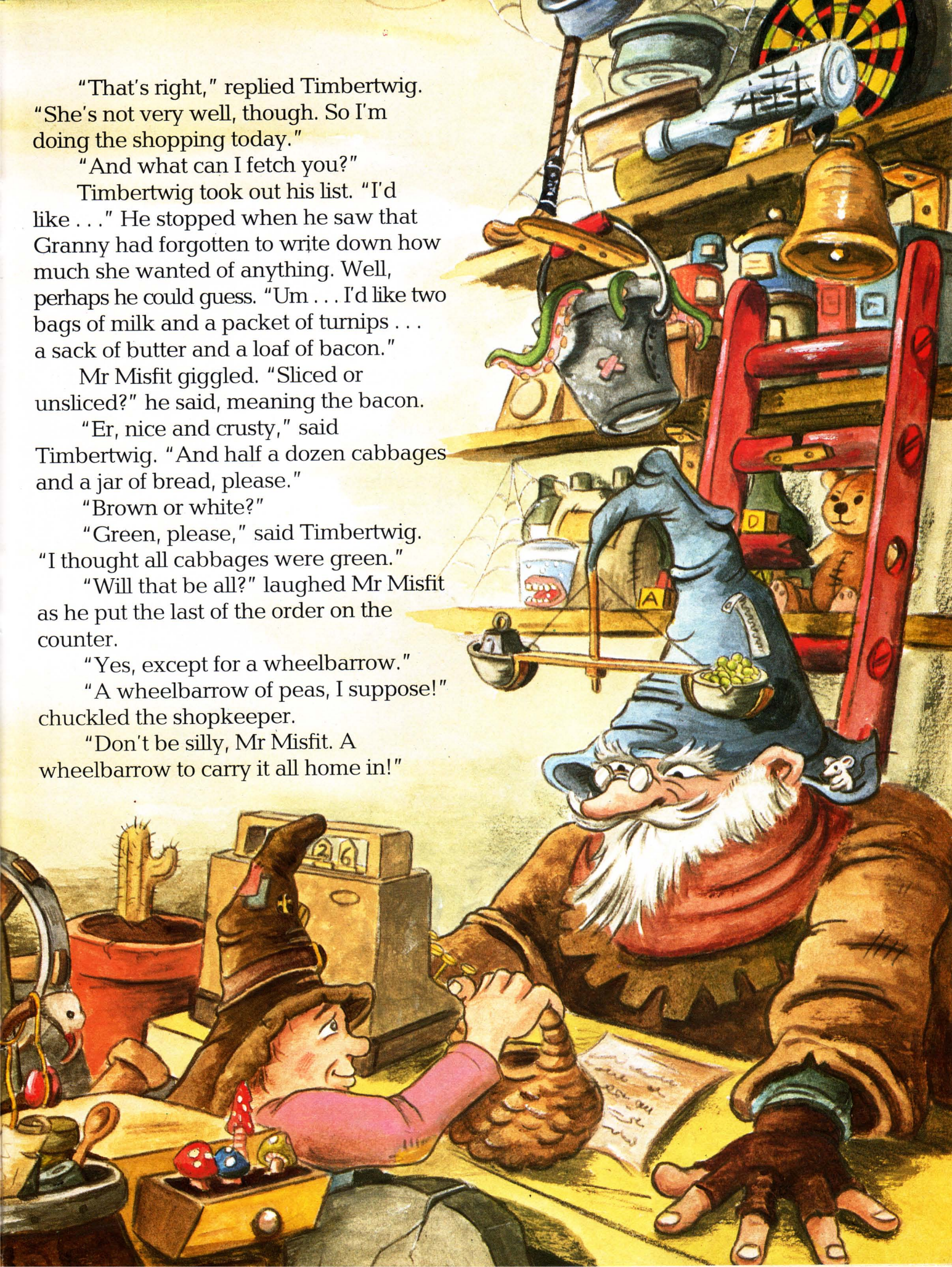
"Green, please," said Timbertwig.
"I thought all cabbages were green."

"Will that be all?" laughed Mr Misfit
as he put the last of the order on the
counter.

"Yes, except for a wheelbarrow."

"A wheelbarrow of peas, I suppose!"
chuckled the shopkeeper.

"Don't be silly, Mr Misfit. A
wheelbarrow to carry it all home in!"



Timbertwig and Abigail headed back to Wiggly Wood. Soon they could see the trees ahead shaking — Granny Knot was still sneezing.

"I'm back!" called Timbertwig. "I've done *all* the shopping." Granny Knot stared at the wheelbarrow over her huge red nose and her huge white hankie.

"Um, is there something wrong?"

"There certainly is!" she shrieked.

"What's all this? A jar of bread, a sack of butter, two bags of milk . . ."

"I tried my best, didn't I, Abigail?"

"Of course you did," squeaked the

spider, leaning out of the little green door in Timbertwig's hat.

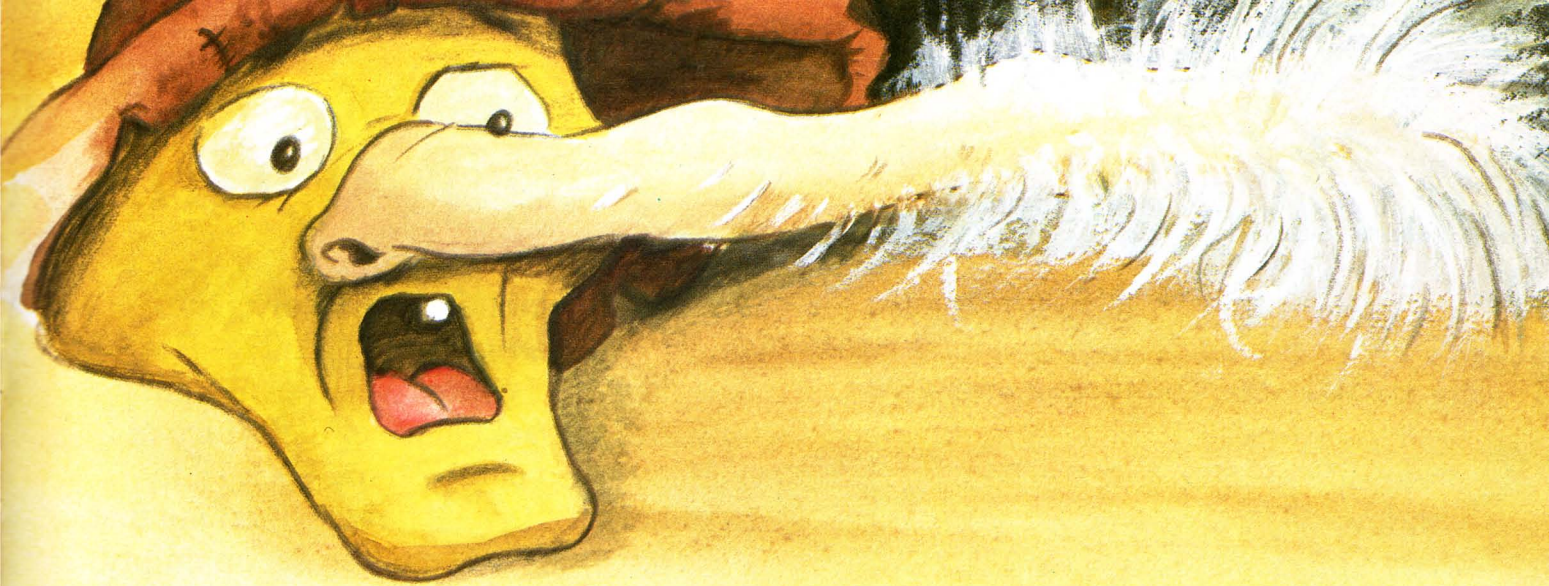
"You stay out of it, you spindly little creature!" snapped Granny.

Timbertwig was just going to give Granny Knot the cold cure he had brought from Doc Leaf when there was a knock on the door. He put the jar down on the table and went to answer it.

Being very nosey, Granny opened the jar, dipped the end of her nose into the liquid and began to blow bubbles . . .

It was Mr Misfit at the door. He had brought some flowers for Granny — and a basket of shopping that Timbertwig *should* have brought home. "I was only playing a little joke on you, Timbertwig. No harm done, eh?"





Just then a piercing scream rang out in the kitchen. "Oh Timbertwig, help me! Come quickly!"

Timbertwig and Mr Misfit ran into the kitchen . . . and burst out laughing when they saw Granny Knot. Her nose was covered in fluffy white hair!

"Don't just stand there. *Do* something!" she shrieked.

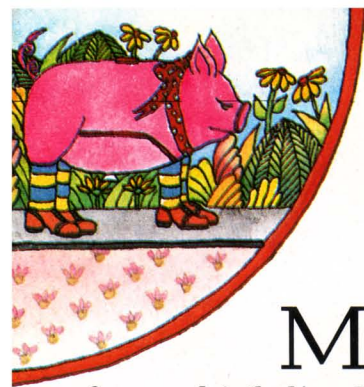
Mr Misfit picked up the jar of Quicky Cold Cure and recognised it straight away as Doc Leaf's famous Baldy Brew. "Don't worry! Doc Leaf's

hair restorer never did work! It will all fall out by the morning!"

By this time, the hair on Granny's nose was so thick that her cold-in-the-nose got warm and went away. "Well I never did!" she said. "I'm cured! Let's celebrate with a nice, sticky, treacle tart!"

So they all sat down to tea together. And even Abigail was allowed to join the feast. "As long as she wipes all her feet," said Granny Knot.





The Flying Piggy-Bank

My Mum gave me a smashing piggy-bank for my birthday. It was pink and round, with the word TAIWAN stamped on its underside in capital letters. I put it on the window-sill in my bedroom, and every week I put some of my pocket money through the slot on its back.

Then one day I decided I wanted to buy a new bed for my doll's house. I took down the piggy-bank, prised open the rubber plug underneath it and shook it hard over my bed.

Nothing came out. Not a penny.

"It's gone!" I shouted. "I've been putting money in here for weeks and it's all gone! Where's my money?"

"I ate it."

"What did you say?" I could hardly believe where the voice was coming from.

"You fed it to me, so I ate it," repeated the piggy-bank.

"Oh, you can talk, can you?"

"Yes, if someone talks to me."

"In that case you can tell me where my money is."

"I've told you, I ate it."

"But it's not in your stomach any more!"

"I've digested it," said Taiwan.

"Where else do you think pigs like me get our energy from?"

"It's not good enough," I said, giving him another shake. "I want my pocket money! Give it back at once!"

"I can't," he said crossly. "We'll just have to go and get some more."

"Where from?" I asked.

"Well, where does money come from?" Taiwan said impatiently. "The Royal Mint, of course. The Royal Mint inside the Royal Palace of the Prince of Riches. If you climb on my back I'll fly you there. But you'll have to feed me first. I'm starving! And I can't fly on an empty stomach."

I fetched my collection of foreign coins and posted them into the slot.

With all this money the pig began to grow. He grew to such a size that he rolled off the window-sill, and soon a



fully grown pink pig was standing in the middle of the bedroom. I climbed on to his back and Taiwan took off through the open window.

Backwards.

"Why are you flying backwards?" I asked, turning to face Taiwan's tail so as to see where I was going.

"The Royal Mint is a long time ago," he replied.

"Don't you mean a long way away?"

"No, I mean a long time ago. So I have to fly backwards through time."

I soon saw that this was just what we were doing. The air filled with smoke and flowers of fire burst in red blooms to right and left of us.

"What's happening?"

"Gunfire," said Taiwan, calmly.

"There's a war going on down there."

I began to wonder if the pig was as clever as he seemed. "Do you mean to say that we might be shot down?"

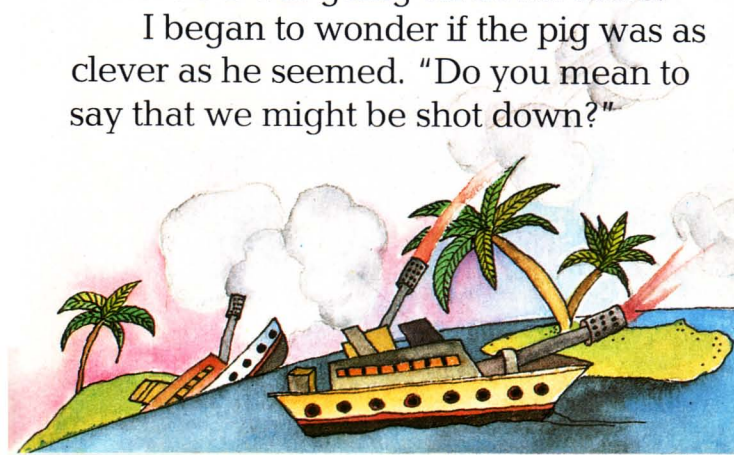
Taiwan did not answer because just then we were overshadowed by the white billows of a vast parachute. And the man dangling on the end of it, wearing a sheepskin jacket and goggles, landed on the back of the pig.

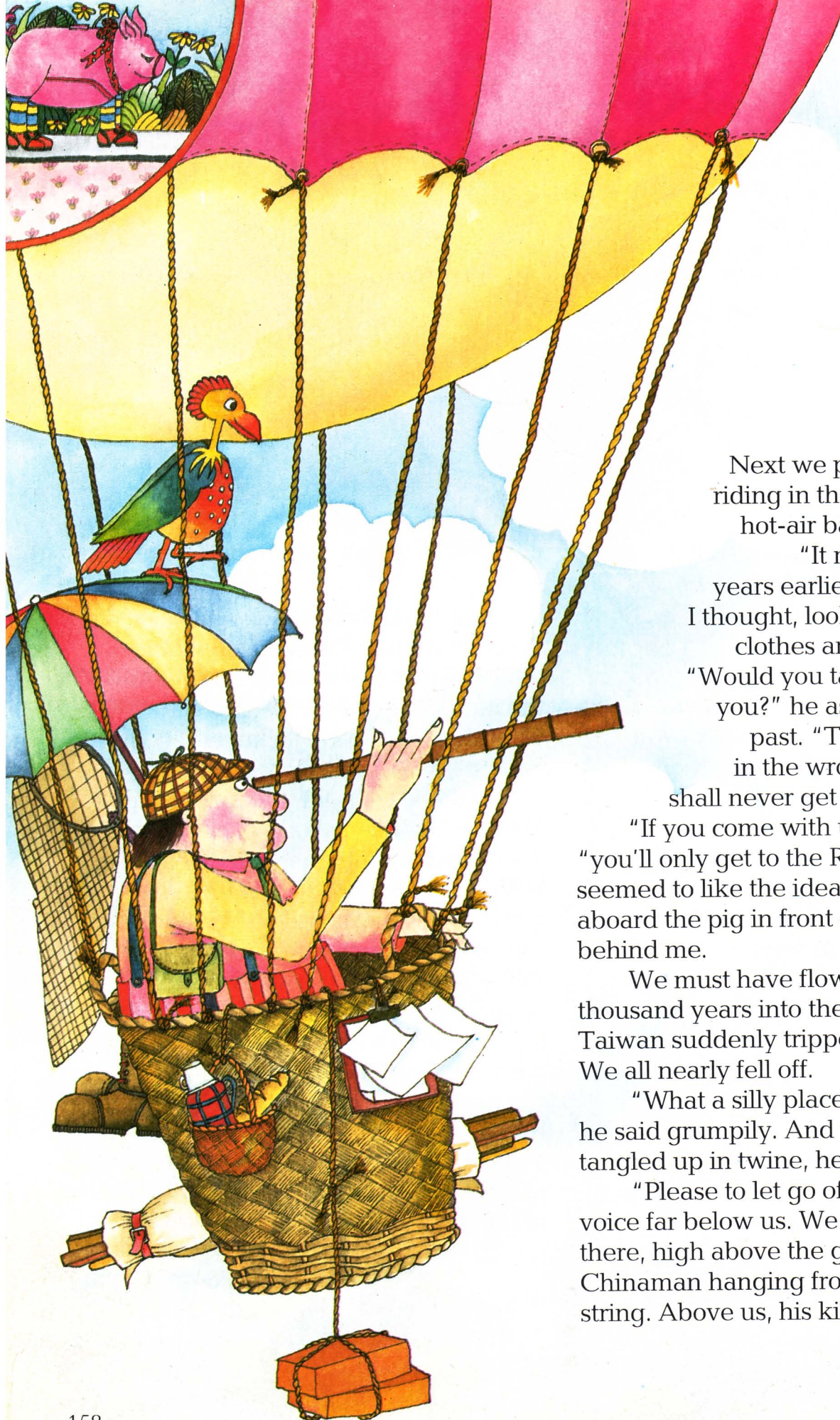
"Oh, hello," said the pilot. "I baled out. I've just been shot down." His plane dived past and plunged into the sea far below. "I hope you don't mind if I ask for a lift." Taiwan grunted once or twice, but he did not seem to mind very much.

"Why are we going backwards, old chap?" And Taiwan explained.

The pilot was pleased to hear that we were flying to the Royal Mint.

"Actually, I'm a bit short of cash myself," he said. "Left my wallet in the plane, you know."





Next we passed an explorer riding in the basket of a huge hot-air balloon.

"It must be a hundred years earlier than yesterday," I thought, looking at his strange clothes and deerstalker hat. "Would you take me along with you?" he asked as we floated past. "The wind's blowing in the wrong direction and I shall never get where I'm going."

"If you come with us," I told him, "you'll only get to the Royal Mint." He seemed to like the idea and climbed aboard the pig in front of the pilot and behind me.

We must have flown another thousand years into the past when Taiwan suddenly tripped in mid-air. We all nearly fell off.

"What a silly place to leave string," he said grumpily. And with his feet tangled up in twine, he kept flying.

"Please to let go of kite," said a little voice far below us. We peered down and there, high above the ground, was a Chinaman hanging from the end of the string. Above us, his kite flapped

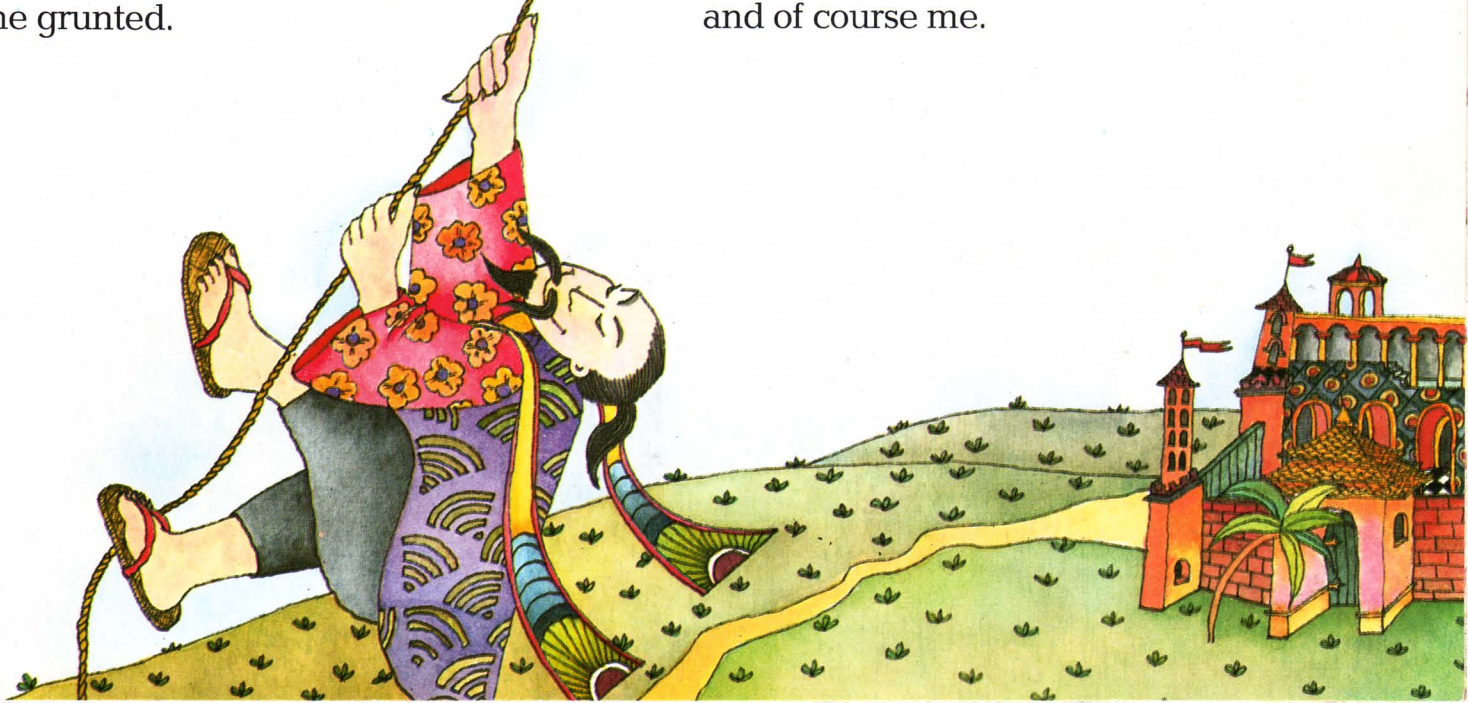
like a bright paper bird.
Taiwan had got caught up
in an ancient Chinese kite.

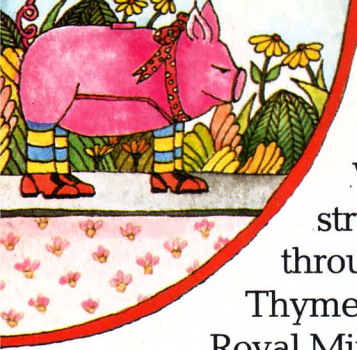
"Why pig not look where it is
going?" asked the Chinaman as he
climbed up the string and joined us on
the pig's back. I explained that we were
flying backwards through time. We all
admired the kite and said how clever the
Chinese had been to invent kites before
anyone else. And our new passenger
cheered up a lot.

"Chinese also invent banknotes,"
said the little man when we
told him we were going in search
of money..Taiwan shuddered:
"I *never* eat paper money,"
he grunted.

We flew on, just beyond the start of
Time, turned left, and the Palace of the
Prince of Riches appeared on the horizon.

The Royal Mint grew green and
sweet-smelling against the Royal Back
Wall of the palace. It was guarded by a
large, royal cat with an arching back—
but he was no match for a flying pig, a
fighter pilot, an explorer, a Chinaman
and of course me.





While they were struggling and scrambling through the Royal Sage and Thyme, I crept in among the Royal Mint and picked the silver and copper coins that hung down from every plant, and stuffed my pockets with them. When Taiwan trotted up I posted the coins into his slot and we all climbed aboard for the return journey.

We flew forwards this time, of course, the pig's ears crackling in the

wind. But with four passengers aboard, Taiwan was soon tired and hungry again.

"More money! More money!" he grunted, and I posted a handful of coins into his slot.

"I'm sorry," he said shortly. "But some of you must get off. You're just too heavy for me."

"That's quite all right, said the explorer. "My hot-air balloon has just come into sight. Look, it's over there."

The pilot decided to join the explorer



in his travels round the world. And the Chinaman drifted back to earth on the end of his kite string. So I was left all alone, riding the flying pig. But before we reached home, I had to feed every coin I had picked at the Royal Mint into Taiwan's slot.

"I'm still hungry!" he complained, and his empty stomach rumbled between my knees. I shut my eyes and wedged my fingers into his slot in case we crashed.

The next thing I knew, we had tumbled in through my bedroom window and the pig was lying on its side on the floor, small and stiff and shrunken back to its normal size.

I picked it up and shook it. Not a rattle. I peered down its slot. Not a penny. I ran into the kitchen and shouted to my mother. "There's no money left in the piggy-bank!"

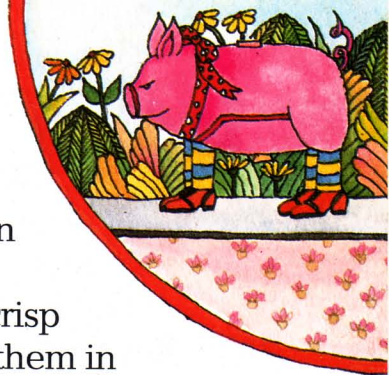
"Yes dear, I'm sorry about that," she said. "I had to borrow it to pay the

milkman. "Let's see — how much was in there? Here you are."

She gave me two crisp green notes. I crinkled them in my hand, remembering that Taiwan did not eat paper money.

"Do you think that if I saved my pocket money every week . . ."

"Pigs might fly," said mother, "Oh well," I said, "I will then!"



The Land of the BUMBLEY BOO

In the land of the Bumbley Boo
The people are red, white and blue,
They never blow noses.
Or ever wear closes;
What a sensible thing to do!

In the land of the Bumbley Boo
You can buy Lemon pie at the Zoo;
They give away Foxes
In little Pink Boxes
And Bottles of Dandelion Stew.

In the land of the Bumbley Boo
You never see a Gnu,
But thousands of cats
Wearing trousers and hats
Made of Pumpkins and Pelican Glue!

*Oh, the Bumbley Boo! the Bumbley Boo!
That's the place for me and you!
So hurry! Let's run!
The train leaves at one!
For the land of the Bumbley Boo!
The wonderful Bumbley Boo-Boo-Boo!
The wonderful Bumbley BOO!!!*



THE MOON and THE MILLPOND



There was often trouble among the animals. They quarrelled and argued and cheated and tricked each other. And it was nearly always Brer Rabbit's fault.

Usually the animals made friends again. They lay around in the sun and were as nice as can be to each other. But when things were peaceful and quiet, Brer Rabbit was bored.

"Bored! Bored! Bored!" he said one day as he sat chatting to his friend Brer Terrapin. "It's time for some fun!"

"You're the most wicked creature in all Alabama, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Terrapin. "But life's never boring when you start making trouble! What are you planning now?"

Brer Rabbit looked shocked. "Who said I was going to make trouble? I was only going to suggest a fishing trip to the old millpond." But there was a wicked glint in his eyes. "You bring Brer Fox and Brer Bear and Brer Wolf along tomorrow night. If anything happens, just watch and listen."



"We've wasted our time."

"What? Why?" The animals pushed through the the long grass to the edge of the pond. "What's wrong, Brer Rabbit?"

"There's been an accident," he explained. "You missed it. The moon has fallen into the pond. Oh well, we'll just have to go home again."

"The moon fell into the pond?"

"Yes! If you don't believe me, look for yourselves!"

Brer Fox and Brer Bear and Brer Wolf all looked. And, sure enough, there was the moon, swinging and swaying at the bottom of the pond.

"But I wanted to catch some perch," said Brer Fox.

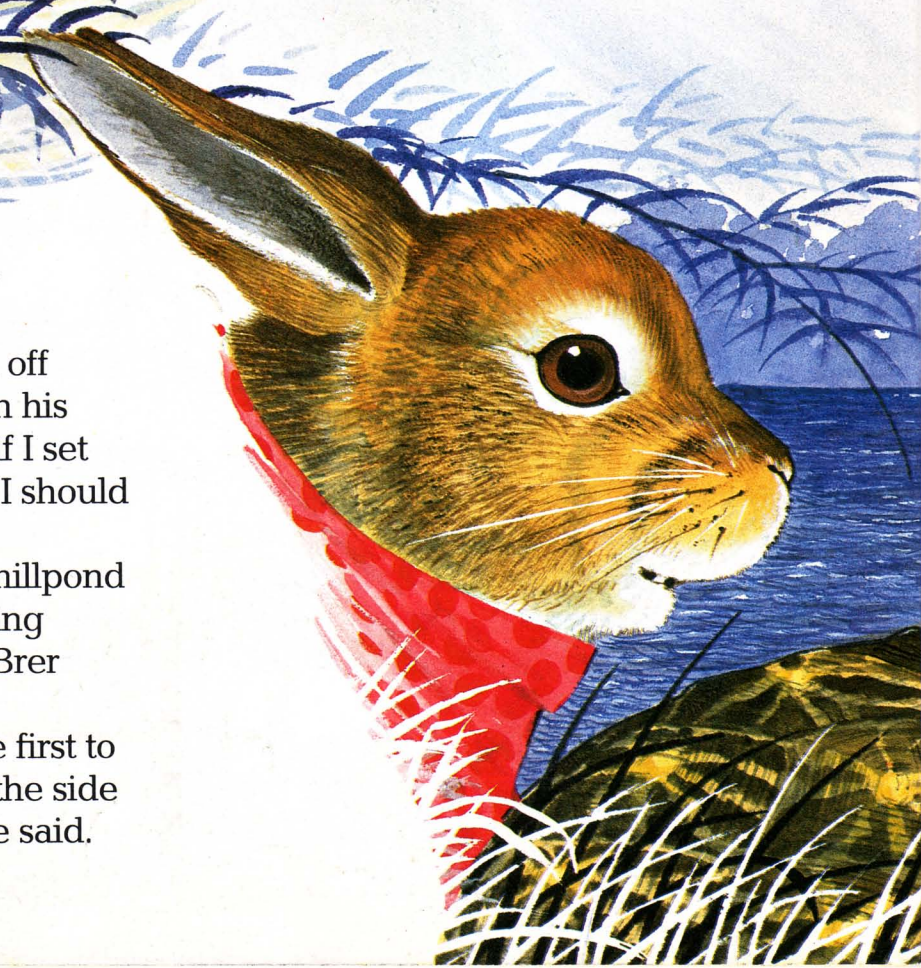
"And I wanted to catch a pike," said Brer Bear.

"And I was going to catch a trout," said Brer Wolf, "and eat it for supper."

"I'll be there," chuckled Brer Terrapin. "I wouldn't miss it for anything!" While Brer Rabbit ran off home to bed, Brer Terrapin began his slow walk to the millpond. "Um, if I set off now," he thought to himself, "I should be there by tomorrow night."

The animals all went to the millpond the next night. Brer Fox took fishing tackle, Brer Bear took a net, and Brer Wolf took some bait.

But Brer Rabbit had been the first to arrive. He was sitting on a log at the side of the millpond. "It's no good," he said.



"And I was after minnows," said Brer Terrapin. "What were you after, Brer Rabbit?" And the two creatures winked at each other.

"It's very disappointing. I can see that," said Brer Rabbit. "But nobody will catch *anything* in here tonight—unless we get that moon out. It will scare off every fish in the pool!"

They all scratched their heads and waited for Brer Rabbit to have a good idea. Brer Rabbit was always full of good ideas.

"I've got it!" he said at last. "I'll run round to the Mud Turtle's house and borrow a big net. We'll need something strong and big to pull out the moon. It's solid silver, you know. Wait for me. Don't do anything till I get back." And with a flash of his white tail, Brer Rabbit was gone.

At least he *seemed* to have gone. Only Brer Terrapin noticed the tips of two ears just showing above a nearby

bush. "Solid silver, eh?" he thought out loud. "Just think what *that* is worth!"

All at once, Brer Bear was reaching for his net. "Quick! Before Brer Rabbit comes back! Let's get the moon out and share it between us."

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf watched eagerly as Brer Bear reached for the moon. At first he thought he might be able to reach with his paw. But as he lay on his stomach and splashed, the moon seemed to drift further out into the lake. "It's no good," he said. "I'll have to use my net."

Not wanting to get their feet wet, they stood on the bank and threw the net out over the glistening moon, then heaved it ashore.

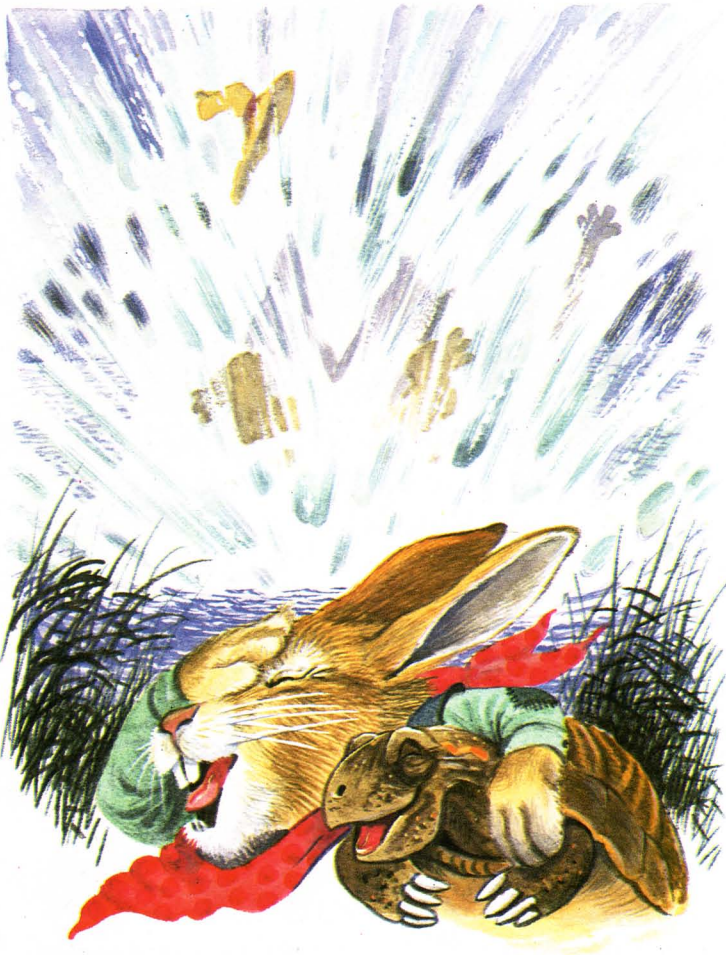
But there was no moon in the net.

Again they threw it out, and again it came in empty. "We're not reaching far enough," said Brer Fox. "If we all step down into the water, we'll be able to get the net over the moon."

They tried it, Brer Wolf complaining about the cold. "We've got it this time!"

But there was still no moon.





By the time they reached the bank, Brer Bear and Fox and Wolf were all quarrelling and arguing and blaming each other.

"You pulled me under!"

"You should have let go!"

"Who's idea was it anyway?"

"I've got mud in my boots!"

Brer Rabbit smiled. "That's better," he thought to himself. Then he helped the soggy animals out of the pond, one by one. They looked at him darkly, knowing he was *somehow* to blame.

"Darned Rabbit," said Brer Wolf, looking up at the moon in the sky.

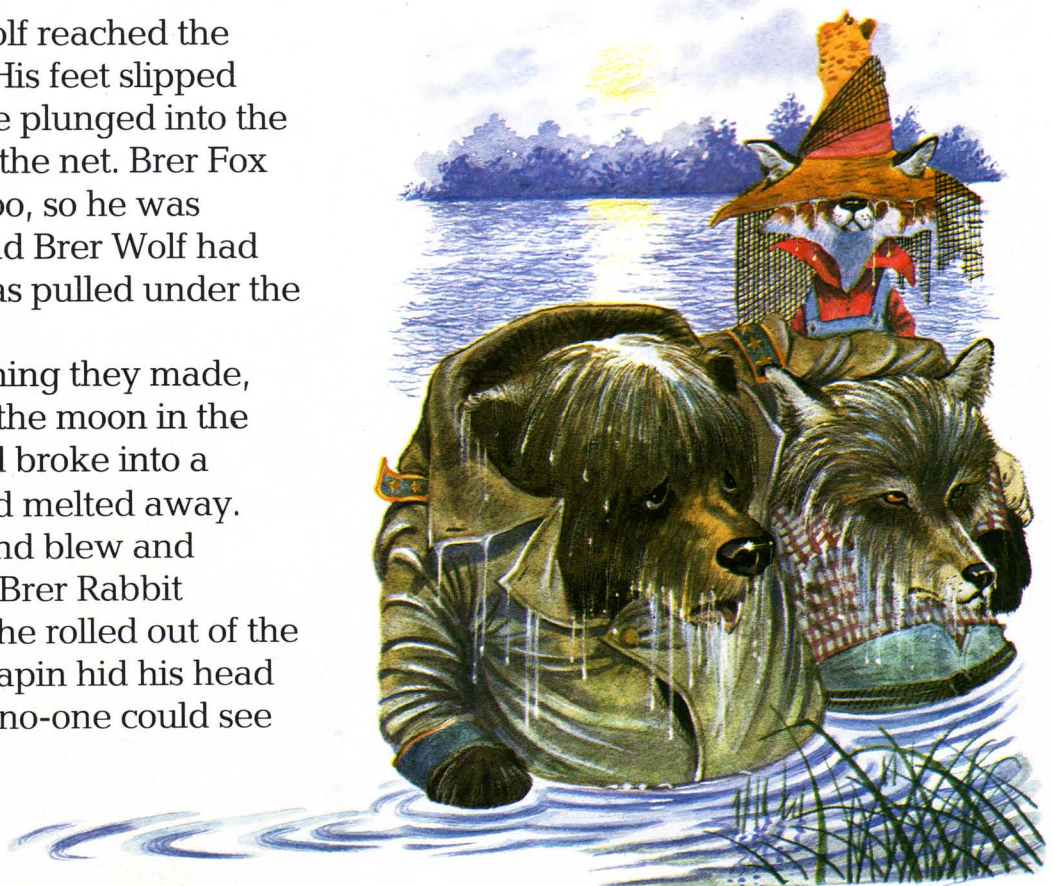
"You never said what *you* wanted to catch this evening, Brer Rabbit," giggled Brer Terrapin.

"Didn't I?" said Brer Rabbit. "Well, I thought I'd catch out a fool or two. And with the moon for bait, I reckon *I* had a pretty successful evening!"

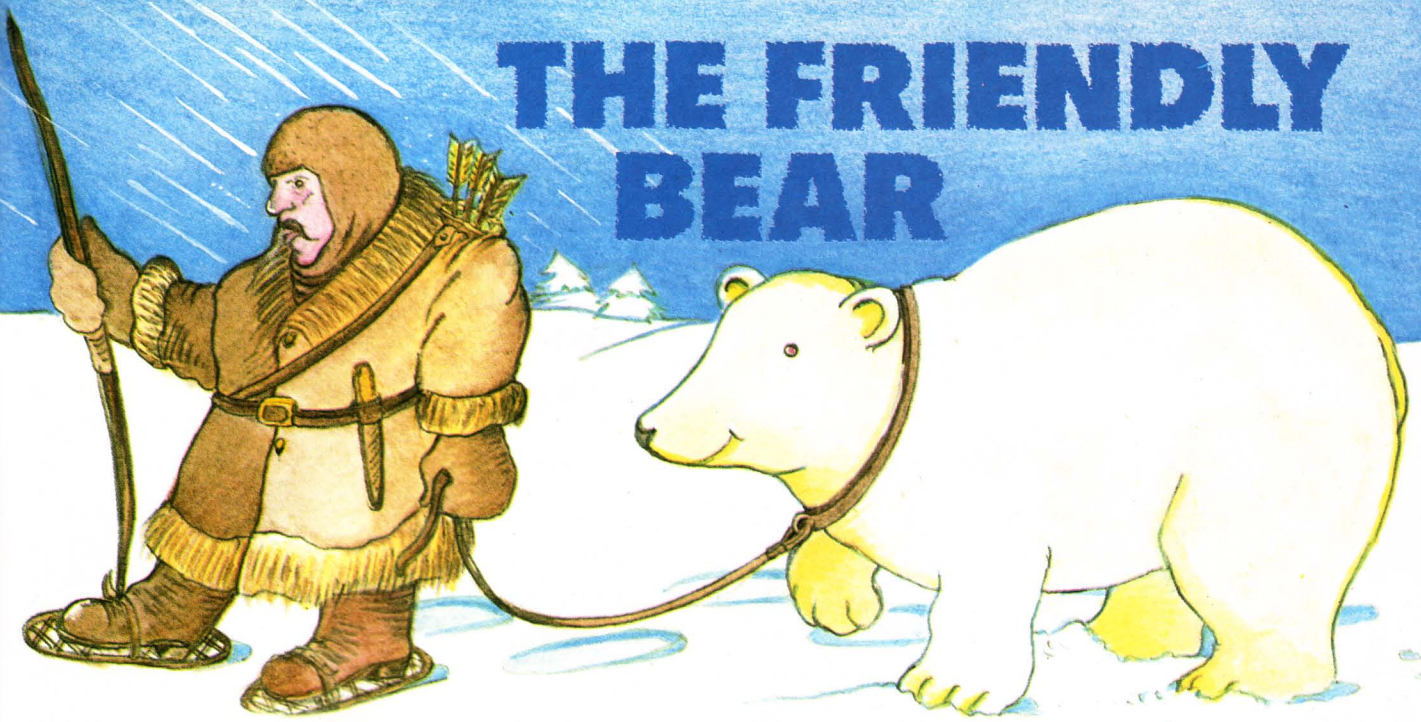
Just then, Brer Wolf reached the edge of the shallows. His feet slipped from under him and he plunged into the deep water, clutching the net. Brer Fox was holding the net, too, so he was pulled in after him. And Brer Wolf had hold of it, too, so he was pulled under the water as well.

With all the splashing they made, the silver reflection of the moon in the bottom of the millpond broke into a thousand pieces — and melted away.

They spluttered and blew and splashed and howled. Brer Rabbit laughed so much that he rolled out of the bushes. And Brer Terrapin hid his head inside his shell so that no-one could see him grinning.



THE FRIENDLY BEAR



When Otto the hunter caught the white bear, it was so big, so beautiful and so friendly that he decided to give it to the King of Denmark for Christmas. But as they travelled down the mountain together, night fell. "Let's get out of the cold," Otto said to him. "Look, there's a cottage!"

He knocked at the door and a voice inside said, "Why are you knocking? You've never bothered before." Anxious children's faces peered out of the window. "Oh, I'm sorry," said the farmer, opening the door. "I thought you were those terrible trolls."

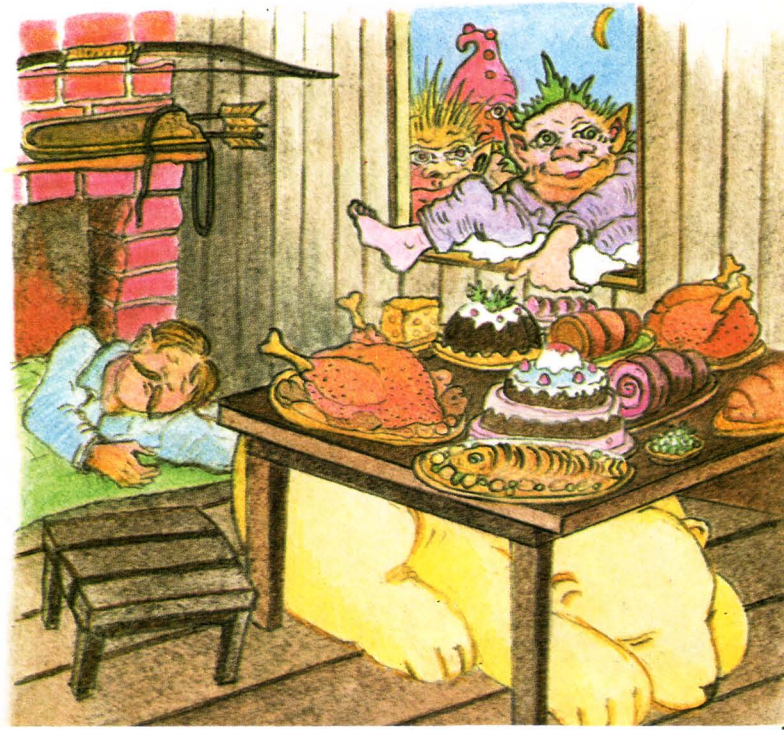
"Trolls?" said Otto. "My friend the bear and I were just looking for somewhere safe to shelter until morning."

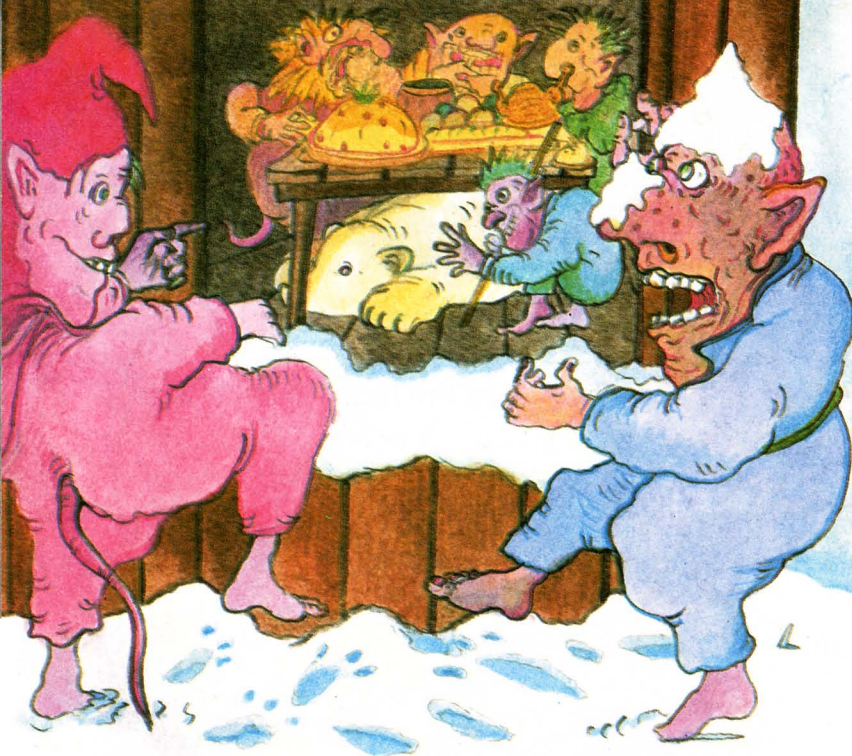
"You'll be better off in the caves, friend," said the farmer's wife. "That's where we're all going now. It's Christmas Eve, you know. And every Christmas Eve a pack of nasty trolls come down from the mountains and make themselves at home in our little house. They eat every scrap of food and drink all our beer. They break the furniture and smash the plates. Then, they all pile into our bed to sleep — and they don't even take their boots off!"

"It's just as well we came along when we did," said Otto. "Let us stay the night here, and I don't think you or your family will need to go to the caves this Christmas."

So the hunter bedded down in front of the kitchen fire, his bear curled up under the table, and the farmer and his wife went upstairs to their own bed.

At the stroke of midnight, shrieks of laughter and hideous howls rang out all around the cottage.





"RROOOOAAA OOOO AARR!!!" The white bear pounced out from under the table, grabbed the troll and threw him straight out the door and into the snow.

You never saw anything like the look on those troll's faces when they saw how big the "pussy cat" really was! They jumped through the window, climbed up the walls and fled up the chimney. The

Then the trolls shouted, *"Farmer Neils! We've come for our Christmas dinner, do you hear? What have you got for us this year? It had better be good — or else!"*

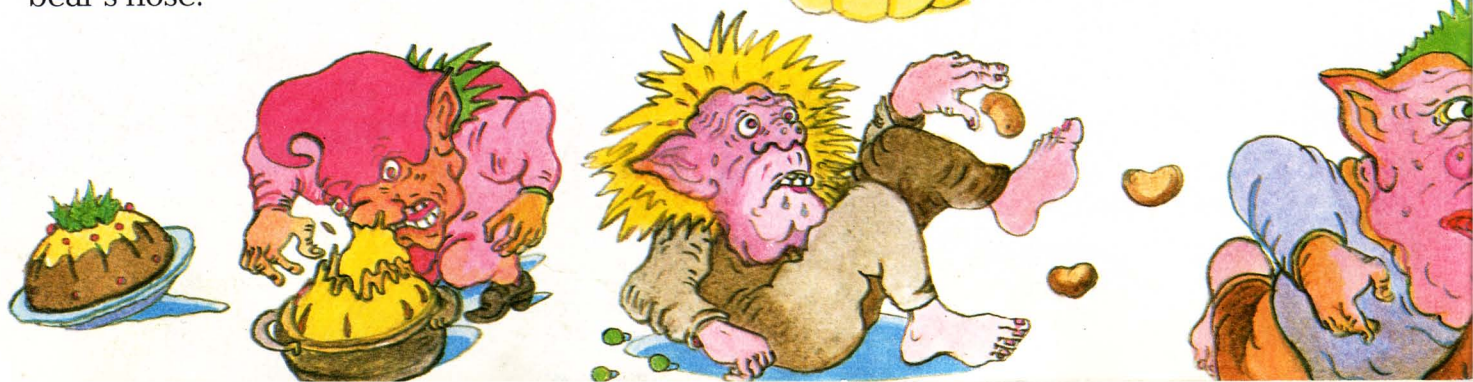
They forced the window open and tumbled in — the ugliest pack of creatures Otto had ever seen.

They opened every cupboard and drawer and began wolfing down all the food they could lay paws on — whole eggs, raw meat, cakes in their tins and all the sweets on the Christmas tree. Then they drank beer until they were reeling and rolling and singing at the tops of their voices.

"Oh, look," said a drunken troll.

"Here's a sweet little pussy cat."

The bear opened one eye. "Have a sausage, little pussy," mumbled another troll, and he pushed a hot sausage up the bear's nose.



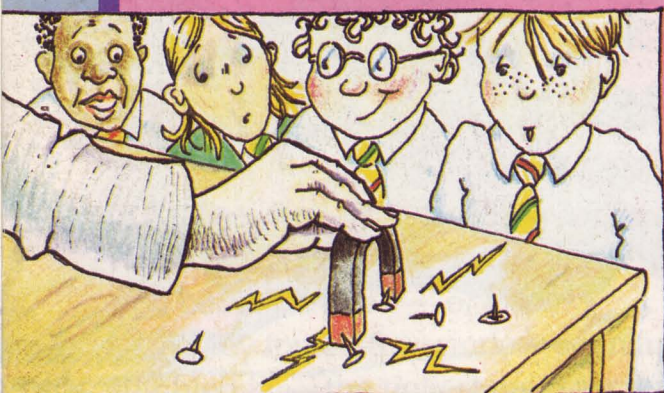
bear chased them out of the cottage and across the snow — back to the mountains.

Silence settled over the cottage. Farmer Neils and his wife crept downstairs. "I don't

think you'll have any more trouble from those trolls," laughed Otto.

The grateful Mrs Neils gave him lots of the food that had been saved from the trolls, and he set off early the next day with his present for the King. By then, the news had reached every troll in the land: "*Don't go to Farmer Neils for your Christmas dinner! He's got himself the biggest pussy cat you've ever seen!*"





IN PART 7 OF **STORY**Teller

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