



PART 15

STORY

Teller

A second collection of the
world's best children's stories

2



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STORY Teller 2

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THE BOOK

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J. M. BARRIE'S

Peter Pan

Wendy and her two brothers flew with Peter Pan for many days and nights before they saw the magic shores of the Neverland. A million golden arrows pointed out the island to the children, all directed by their friend the sun. But then the arrows disappeared, leaving the island in gloom, and the children felt afraid.

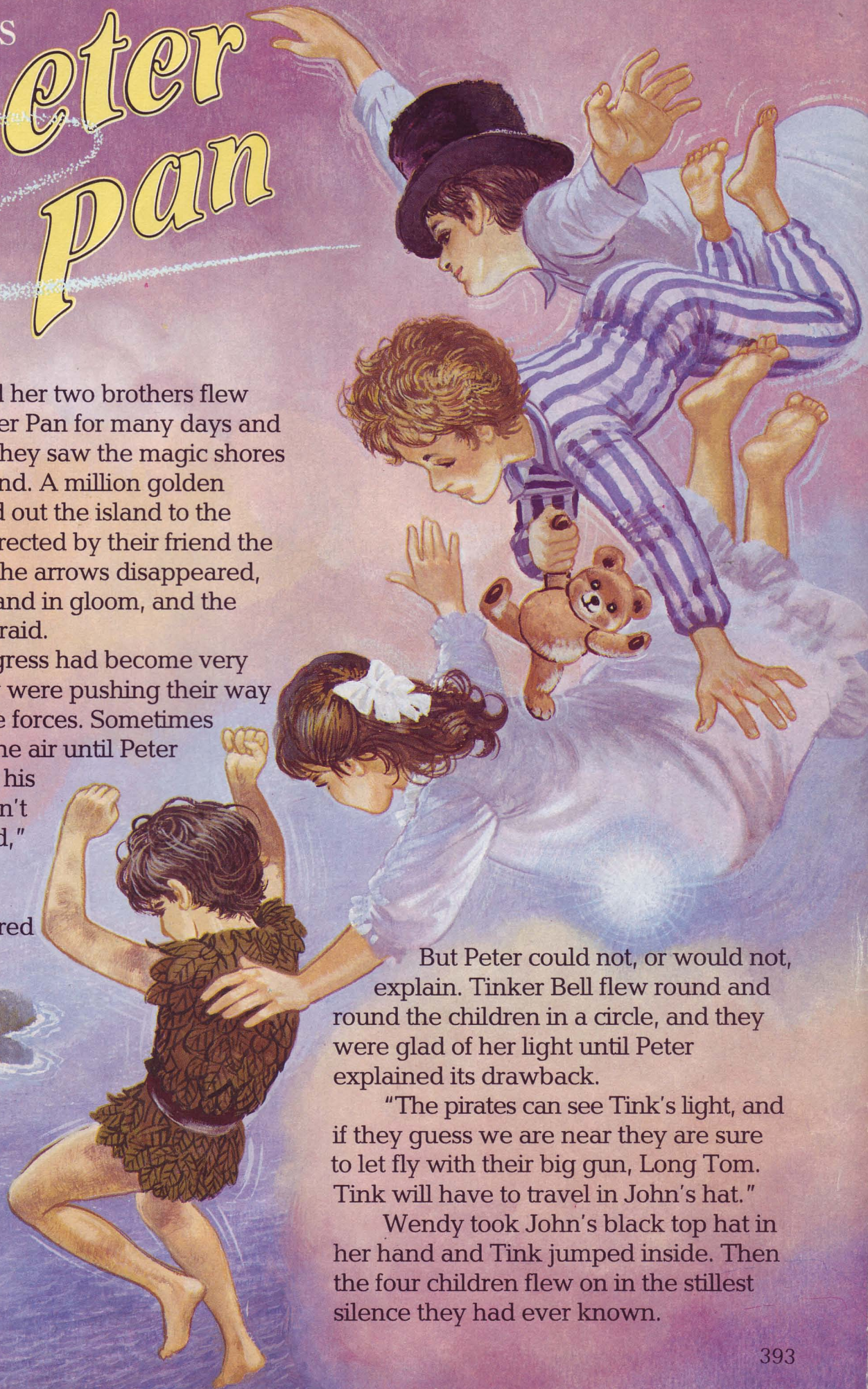
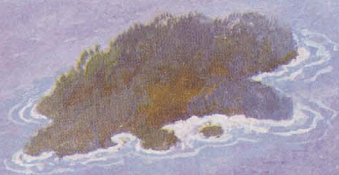
Their progress had become very slow, as if they were pushing their way through hostile forces. Sometimes they hung in the air until Peter beat on it with his fists. "They don't want us to land," he said.

"Who are they?" whispered Wendy.

But Peter could not, or would not, explain. Tinker Bell flew round and round the children in a circle, and they were glad of her light until Peter explained its drawback.

"The pirates can see Tink's light, and if they guess we are near they are sure to let fly with their big gun, Long Tom. Tink will have to travel in John's hat."

Wendy took John's black top hat in her hand and Tink jumped inside. Then the four children flew on in the stillest silence they had ever known.





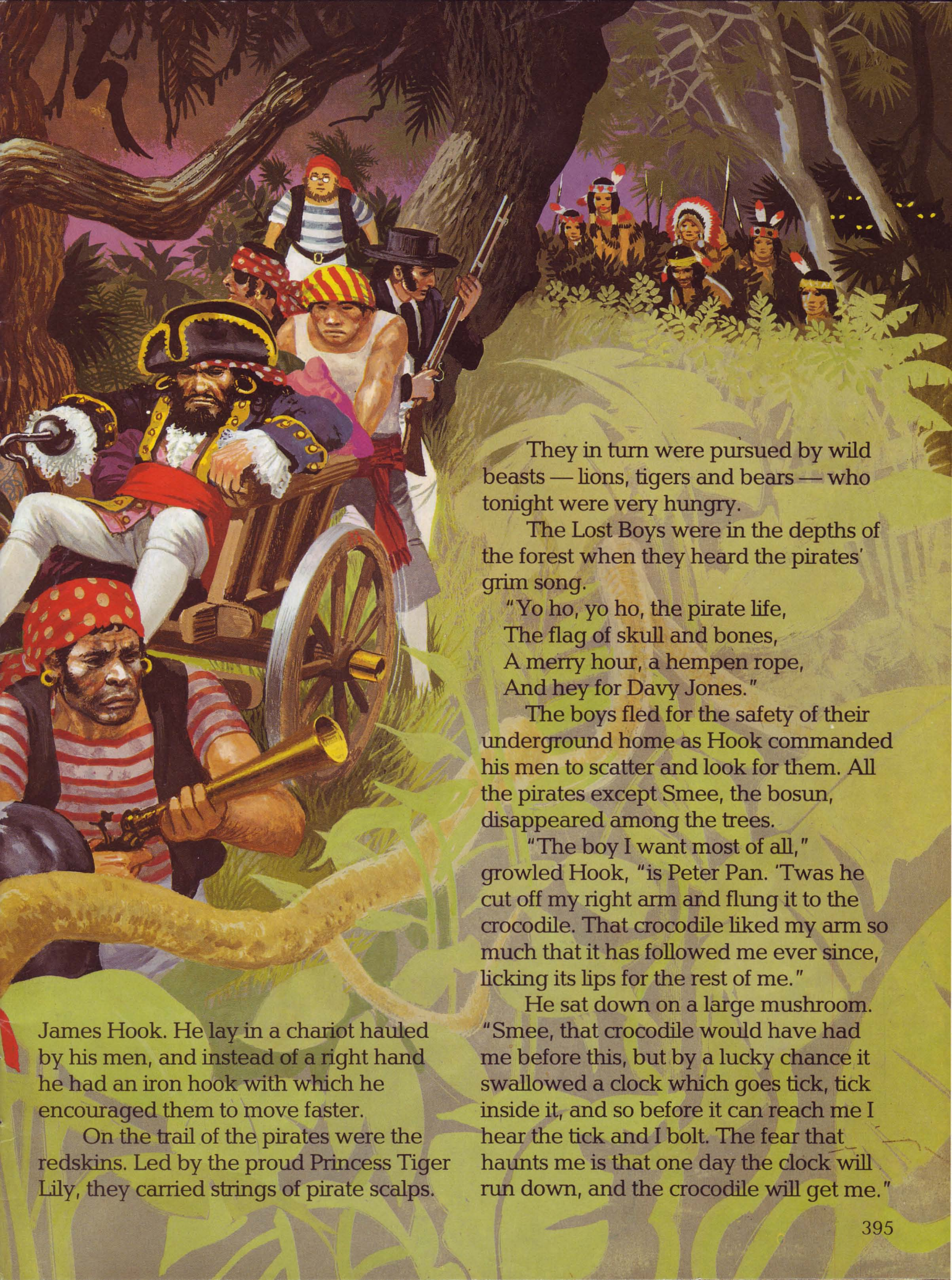
Suddenly, there was the most tremendous crash. The pirates had fired Long Tom at them.

When at last the heavens were steady again, John and Michael found themselves alone in the darkness. Peter had been carried by the waves of the blast far out to sea, while Wendy had been blown upwards with the jealous Tinker Bell.

The little fairy was not always bad, but she had hated Wendy from the moment Peter had given her his acorn button as a kiss. Now she popped out of the hat and began to lure Wendy to her

destruction. Tired and bewildered, what else could Wendy do but follow Tink as she flitted back and forth!

Far below on the island, the six Lost Boys were out looking for Peter Pan. Not far behind them were the villainous pirates, and their captain, the terrible



James Hook. He lay in a chariot hauled by his men, and instead of a right hand he had an iron hook with which he encouraged them to move faster.

On the trail of the pirates were the redskins. Led by the proud Princess Tiger Lily, they carried strings of pirate scalps.

They in turn were pursued by wild beasts — lions, tigers and bears — who tonight were very hungry.

The Lost Boys were in the depths of the forest when they heard the pirates' grim song.

"Yo ho, yo ho, the pirate life,
The flag of skull and bones,
A merry hour, a hempen rope,
And hey for Davy Jones."

The boys fled for the safety of their underground home as Hook commanded his men to scatter and look for them. All the pirates except Smee, the bosun, disappeared among the trees.

"The boy I want most of all," growled Hook, "is Peter Pan. 'Twas he cut off my right arm and flung it to the crocodile. That crocodile liked my arm so much that it has followed me ever since, licking its lips for the rest of me."

He sat down on a large mushroom. "Smee, that crocodile would have had me before this, but by a lucky chance it swallowed a clock which goes tick, tick inside it, and so before it can reach me I hear the tick and I bolt. The fear that haunts me is that one day the clock will run down, and the crocodile will get me."



mermaids' lagoon. These boys are always swimming about there. They will find the cake and gobble it up because, ha, ha, having no mother, they don't know how dangerous 'tis to eat rich damp cake. Hah, ha, ha, they will die."

"It's the wickedest, prettiest plan I ever heard," cried Smee.

Just as they began to sing and dance they were silenced by another sound: *tick, tick, tick*.

"The crocodile!" gasped Hook, and he bounded away, closely followed by Smee.



Since sitting down, Hook had felt curiously warm.

"Smee," he said. "This seat is hot. Odds, bobs, hammer and tongs, I'm burning!"

They examined the mushroom and tried to pull it up. It came away at once, and smoke began to rise. They had discovered the chimney of the Lost Boys' underground home!

The pirates looked round for the entrance, and at last they noticed seven large trees, each with a hole as big as a boy in its hollow trunk.

"I've been searching for the boys' home these many moons," said Hook. "I have a plan. We will return to the ship and cook a large rich cake of a jolly thickness with green sugar on it. We will leave the cake on the shore of the



The boys emerged into the open and looked up to see what they thought was a great white bird flying overhead. "Poor Wendy," they could hear it crying.

But even more distinct was the shrill voice of Tinker Bell. "Peter wants you to shoot the Wendy bird!"

Only Tootles had his bow and arrow with him.

"Out of the way, Tink!" he shouted. He fired an arrow, and Wendy fluttered to the ground.

All the boys crowded round Wendy and, as they looked, a terrible silence fell upon the wood.

"This is no bird," said Slightly. "I think it must be a lady."

At this tragic moment they heard a ringing crow, and Peter landed on the ground in front of them.

"Great news, boys!" he cried. "I have at last brought a mother for you all. Have you not seen her?"

Silently, the boys stood aside to show Wendy lying on the ground with an

arrow in her breast. Peter looked at her for some time and then pulled out the arrow. "She's dead," he said.

"Whose arrow is this?"

"It's mine," said Tootles desperately, falling on to his knees and baring his chest. "Strike Peter, strike true."

Peter raised the arrow to plunge it into Tootles, but at that moment Wendy raised her arm and murmured, "Poor Tootles."





"She lives!" cried Peter. Then he knelt beside her and found his acorn button on the chain round her neck. "See," he said. "The arrow struck against this. It is the kiss I gave her. It has saved her life."

The boys now had the problem of what to do with Wendy in her present delicate state of health. Peter said that they must build a little house around her, and they were soon scurrying this way and that, down for bedding and up for firewood. When John and Michael appeared, they, too, were ordered to hack and hew and carry.

At last, when the house was really and truly finished, Peter knocked politely. The door opened and out came Wendy looking surprised.

The boys went down on their knees and holding out their arms cried, "Oh, Wendy lady, be our mother."

"I'm only a little girl," said Wendy, "and I have no real experience. But I'll do my best. Come inside at once you naughty children. I'm sure your feet are damp. And before I put you to bed I just have time to finish the story of Cinderella."

Eventually, Wendy tucked up the boys in the great bed in the underground

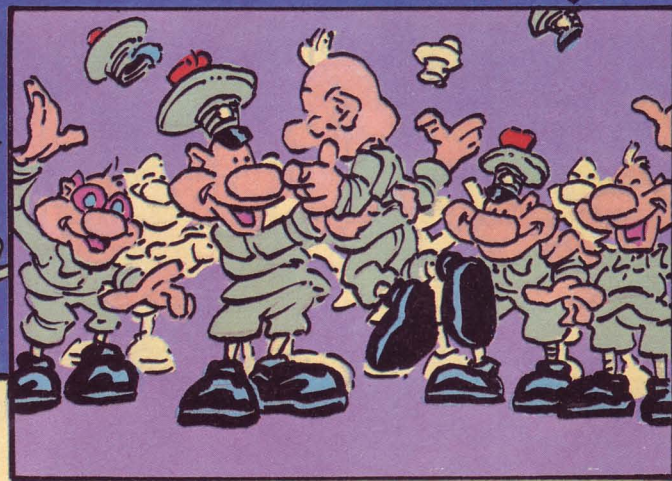
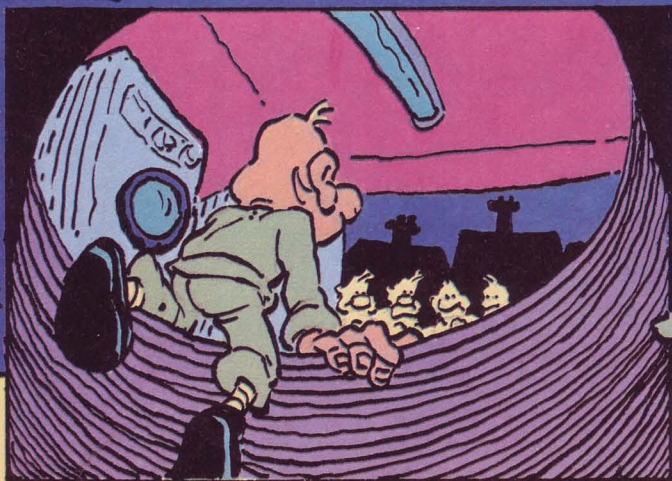
home. But she herself slept that night in the little house and Peter kept watch outside. He stood with his sword drawn, for the pirates could be heard singing far away and the wolves were on the prowl.

[More adventures in the Neverland in Part 16]

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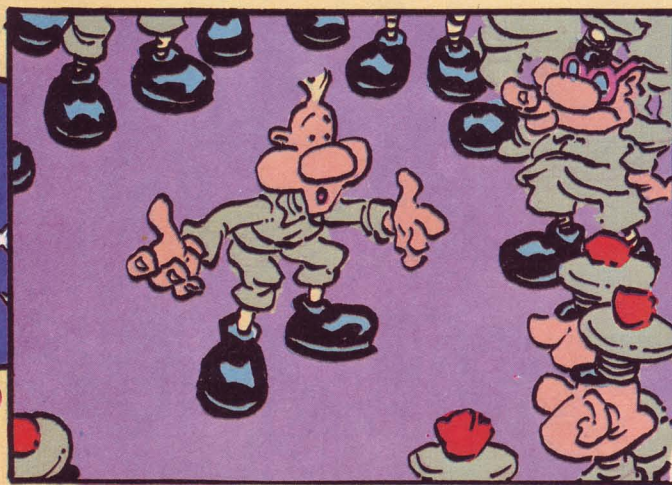


The SCRUBS and the DUBS



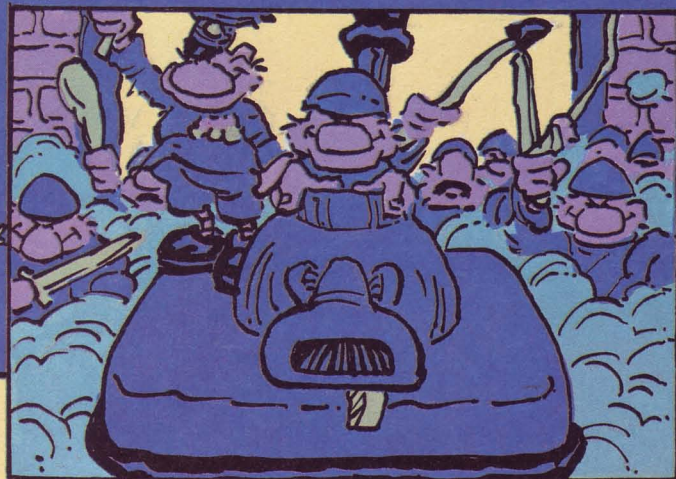
Nubby Scrub peeped out of the top of the drain and looked around. "Home at last," he said, climbing out. A group of Scrubs were talking together. Some were crying. "He was such a *friendly* sprite," said Spanny Scrub.

"Always cheerful and helpful," added Spinny. "He was so handsome and clever and such a good dancer," said Nubby. "Well, he wasn't all *that* handsome." "Nubby? Nubby! It's you — you're alive!"



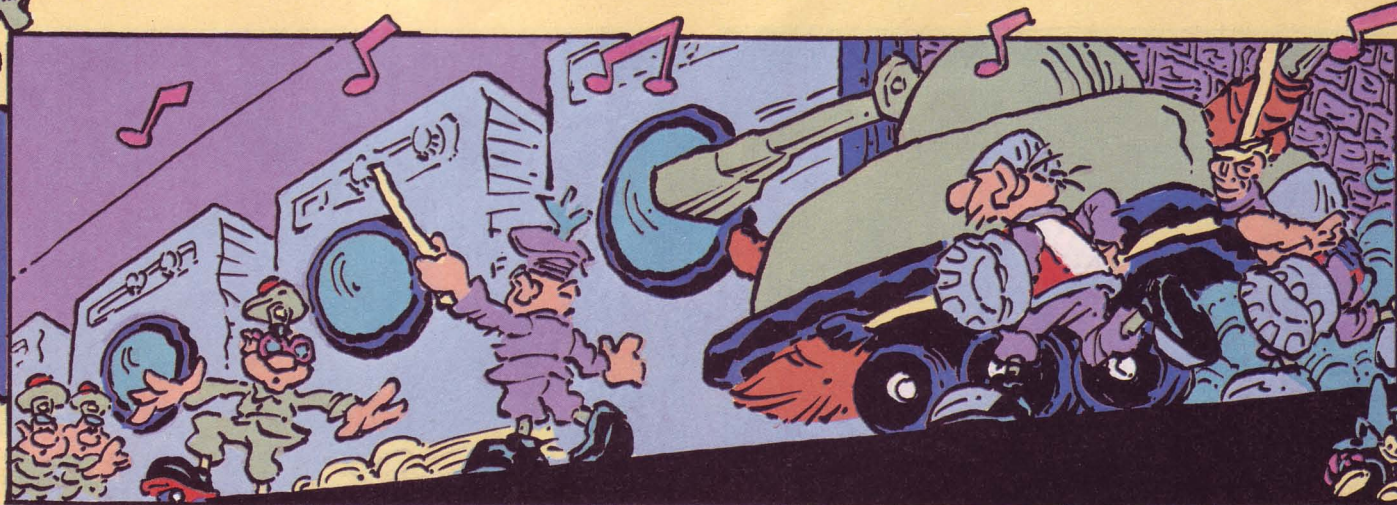
The Scrubs all started chattering at once. "Are you all right? Where've you been?" Nubby told them how he had found his way into Greasie's Laundromat and overheard their plan to attack Muffin's Laundrette

with their grease tank. The Scrubs were quiet for a moment. Then Baron Spin Dry Scrub spoke. "Gather round, my lovely Scrubs. We must make a plan to teach those Dingy Dubs a lesson. Now, here's what we'll do . . ."



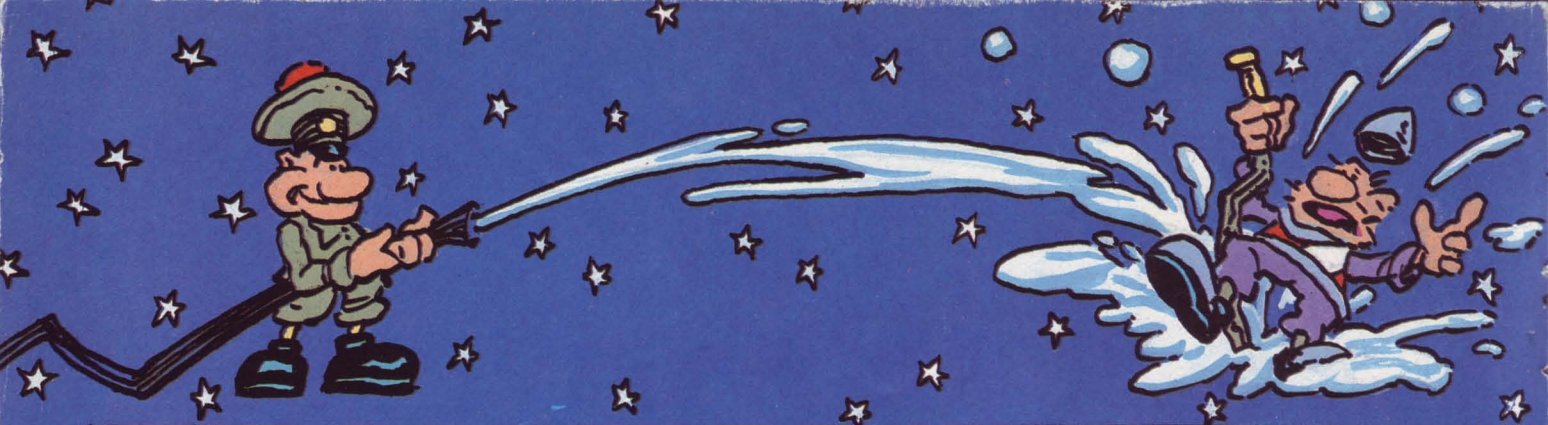
The next night the Dubs came out from under their machines and prepared for the attack. "Put on your armour, my Dirty Dubs. Tonight we're going to grease the Scrubs," bellowed Big Tub Dub.

The grease tank came chugging out from behind the spin dryers. The Dubs marched out into the street behind it, chanting, "We are the Dubs, we've got the gun. We hate the Scrubs, we'll spoil their fun."



Inside Muffin's Laundrette the disco music was pounding away, but there were only three Scrubs skating around. The door burst open with a terrific crash — and there was Big Tub Dub leading the charge, the grease

tank looming behind him. "Aha, you Scrungy Scrubs, it's time for you to get covered in grease! The Dubs are here so you'd better watch out. The grease tank is coming and it's going to blast you."



In rumbled the tank, followed by more and more Dubs. "Not so fast, you Grubby Dubs!" shouted Baron Spin Dry Scrub standing on top of the soap machine, "Here's a surprise from Muffin's Scrubs!"

Scrubs appeared on top of every washing-machine, each one armed with a waste pipe. "Fire!" roared the Baron. Spinny pressed a switch. Soapy water shot out of the pipes soaking the Dubs and their tank.



"Help! I'm drowning!" The Dubs all slithered into each other. The soapy water even got into the engine of the tank. Spluttering, the tank turned round and chased the Dubs back over the road firing grease at them.



It fired this way and that until the Dubs and the walls and the floor and the washing-machines in the Laundromat were covered in splodges of black oily grease. Some of it even oozed out on to the street.



The next morning Mr Greasie came down and saw the mess. "You stupid sprites!" he screamed. "What have you done?" His foot slipped on the oil and he went skidding on his bottom across the floor.

When he got up he was so mad that he went round kicking all the machines, knocking the Dubs out of bed. He banged his foot so hard on the last one that he hurt his toe, which made him madder than ever.



"Ow, ow!" he yelled, hopping around holding his foot. "You'll pay for this, you dozy Dubs. Tonight all you'll get to eat will be cardboard-and-mud sandwiches. In fact, that's all you'll get for the rest of the month."



Mrs Muffin looked out of her window and saw Mr Greasie hopping up and down and yelling at the top of his voice. "I wonder what all the fuss is about?" she said, as she let in the first customers of the day.

CATH'S CRADLE

In the heart of a great forest lived two peasants who, more than anything, wanted a baby. At last, in the middle of winter, a baby daughter was born to them. They called her Cath, and though they worried about bringing her up in the wild and

hazardous forest, neither of them said so.

Then one night, as they bathed their baby they heard wolves howling in the snow. "It's the wind," they told each other, "just the wind in the trees." But they both knew it was wolves. When a sudden knocking came on the door of their little hut, they hurried to open it, not wanting anyone to be locked out on a night like that.



They found an old beggar-man sheltering under the porch. On his back was a threadbare canvas sack.

"Your pardon, good people," he said, "but may I sleep here tonight? This is bitter weather to travel in, and the wolves are hunting in the forest."

"Aye, gladly. Come in, and welcome." They drew the old man over to the fire, and bolted and barred the door behind him.

The old man thanked them for their kindness, but said little else. He sat up late that night, long after the good couple had gone to bed. In the dying red light of the fire,

his eyes kept turning to the rough wooden box that baby Cath slept in. At last he smiled, and opened his sack. From it he took some twenty sticks. He laid them out carefully on the hearth, muttering under his breath.

When Cath's parents got up the next morning, there was no sign of the old beggar-man. But the baby lay sleeping in a lovely cradle, made from lengths of a dark wood they had never seen before.

"I can't think how he got out," the





woman said. "Everything's still shut fast and bolted."

"Never mind that now," said her husband. "Come and see what the old man's left us. I swear, no baby ever slept in so grand a cradle."

Grand it certainly was, but it was strange, too. There were no nails in it, and no joints. Finally Cath's parents stopped thinking about the strangeness of it all, and were just glad that their baby had so fine a bed.

Even in winter there was work to be done outside. The goats had to be milked and fed, firewood and berries to be gathered and brought home. So it was that Cath was left alone, sometimes for hours. She was comfortable in her little crib, and warm in front of the fire.

One day her parents both went out early to fetch wood. Baby Cath lay quietly, watching flames flickering in the fireplace, until suddenly the door flew open with a crash.





yell and swung his axe. But the wooden soldier dodged and brought his stick-sword down with a crack on the bandit's head. With a howl of terror, the bandit ran to the door, and plunged out into the snow. The stick-soldier watched until he had disappeared into the trees, then closed the door and went back to the hearth.

The sticks fell apart around Cath. Some of them slid underneath the little blanket she lay on, while the others made walls all around her, or legs for the cradle to stand on.

Winter passed slowly into spring. Often Cath's cradle was moved outside, while her parents did their chores. One day when they were both out in the forest, Cath chuckled happily, kicking her little feet in the air.


A huge bearded man stood there with a vicious axe in his hand. He looked around the hut, then strode over to where Cath lay. "There's not much for me here, but I'll take their goats, and their baby, too!"

He got no further, for at that moment, the cradle stirred and shifted.

The bandit jumped backwards, and stared in disbelief. The cradle fell apart before his eyes, lowering Cath gently to the floor. Then all the sticks jumped up on end, and joined together in a new shape. Two stood firm to be the legs, while the others jumped up to make the body, arms and head. The last was a wooden sword.

As the magic stick-soldier came towards him, the bandit gave a mighty





Cath grew up safely. Her parents kept her old cradle, just in case they had another baby, but finally, her father said, "Put this out on the wood-heap, Cath. I'll break it up tomorrow, when I've got time."

But next morning when he went outside, there was no sign of the cradle. All he could see was a line of tracks leading to

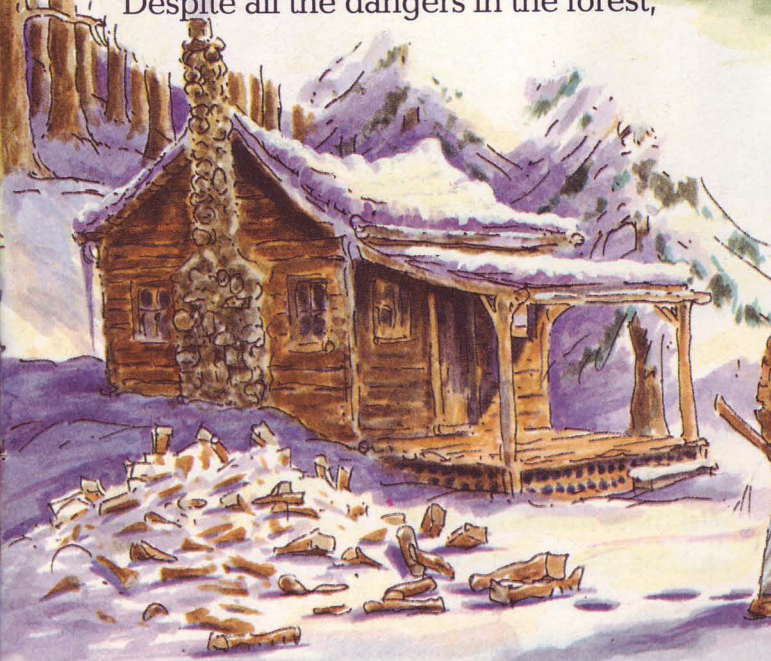
But deep in the forest's shadow, something heard her chuckling. Something that was feeling very hungry after sleeping all winter. It came out from the trees at the clearing's edge — it was a huge grizzly bear.

It padded quickly across the clearing towards Cath's cradle. But quick as it was the magic cradle was quicker. In a trice, it dropped to pieces, so that Cath landed on the ground with a bump. Then all the sticks shaped themselves into a cage around her.

The bear stopped, and sniffed at the wooden bars. It tried to fish through them, but its paw was too big. It tried to bite them, but they were strong as iron. The old grizzly got so angry it stalked off into the forest.

Meanwhile, Cath's parents had found bear-tracks in the forest, and turned home. But when they got there, Cath was sleeping peacefully in her cradle.

Despite all the dangers in the forest,



the wood-pile and away into the forest. They were the tracks an old beggar-man might make, if he was walking with a stick — or a wizard, leaning on his staff.

Willow Pattern

Great was the power of the mandarins of old China, and great was their wealth. One such mandarin lived in a mansion two storeys high. While common men slept on the ground beneath humble roofs, the mandarin slept each night on a level with the blossom of his peach trees.

The gardens of his mansion were a paradise of pools and flowers, lawns, bridges and pavilions. But the greatest beauty in the gardens of the mandarin was the mandarin's daughter, Li-chi.

The mandarin often worked all day in his library, with his secretary — a young and handsome man named Chang. While the mandarin ate sumptuous meals, Chang would walk in the gardens. He liked to stand on a bridge which led to the island of a large ornamental lake, and watch the golden fish swim by below.

Li-chi, too, loved to stand on the bridge and watch the golden fish. She loved still more to watch the sloe-black eyes of Chang and to drink



in his words, as he spoke of Peking and Anyang and the distant lands of Tibet.

Before long, Li-chi loved Chang, and Chang loved Li-chi — although he said, "You are high above me, being the daughter of the mandarin. I am nothing but a humble secretary."

"But you own a garden of wisdom and the flowers of poetry," she said. "You are therefore as noble and rich as my father. Let us stand beneath the orange blossom and promise to love one another for ever!" So hand in hand they stood beneath the orange tree and vowed vows of love. But the mandarin, sitting at his window upstairs, overheard them!

"Be gone, Chang! And never let me see your worthless, low-bred face in my garden, in my mansion or in my realm! How dare you talk of marrying her?"

So Chang was banished and Li-chi's tears fell, just as the willow began to shed its leaves into the glassy lake.

But under cover of night, Chang crept back to the garden of the mandarin and called Li-chi's name in a whisper. "Come away with me to my home which is farther than Anyang or Peking and stands among the hills of Li." She climbed down to him through the branches of the orange tree.

"We will hide in the gardener's hut on the island in the centre of the lake," said Li-chi. "My father will never think of looking for me in so foul a place. Tomorrow night, when he has stopped searching, we will escape!"





So it was that they crossed their beloved bridge hand in hand, and hid all night in the gardener's hut, where earwigs crawled and spiders wove their webs, and silk worms glowed and wet slugs nestled.

All next day they heard the noise of the search. The mandarin's servants searched the mansion from top to bottom. They searched the pavilions and the flowery grove. They even shook the last leaves from the weeping willow, while the mandarin himself roamed his garden swearing vengeance on Chang.

Evening came. Huddled on their island in the gardener's hut, Li-chi and Chang kissed and prepared to make their escape.

But as they stepped on to the bridge to cross from island to shore, there, barring their way, stood the mandarin, a huge whip in his hand. "There is no escape!" he shouted. "I've trapped you, treacherous Chang. Prepare to die!"

Li-chi gave a cry of terror. "Oh Chang, Chang, what have I done to you? There is no way off the island but across this bridge!"

On and on, the mandarin came, cracking his whip. It seemed certain that Chang would be beaten to death. "Jump, Chang!" cried Li-chi. "Jump with me into the water. For if we cannot be together in life, we shall be together in death!" And hand in hand they leaped to certain death in the waters below the bridge!

Great was the power of the

mandarins of old China. But greater still was the power of the gods! Looking down from the mountain tops, the gods loved Li-chi and Chang for their faithfulness and courage.

Just as the mandarin's whip slashed the air where they had been standing, Li-chi's white arms were turned into the loveliest of feathers, and Chang's body dissolved into dove's down.

The gods had transformed the lovers into two turtle doves!

They flew far, far away — out of sight and out of reach of the cruel old mandarin. It is said that they built a nest, far away, among the hills of Li. And now all the world knows their story. For the potters of China painted it, in saddest blue, on finest porcelain, and sold their wares far across the seas — farther even than Peking, Anyang or the distant lands of Tibet.





There was once a Strong Man called Gary. He worked at a fair. Every day he put on his shiny red shorts, his white vest, and his boxing gloves. He stood on a platform and shouted, "Roll up, roll up! Come and watch me, Gary the Greatest! Watch me fight! Watch me lift tremendous weights. Watch me bend iron bars! You've never seen anyone as strong as me."

The people goggled as Gary flexed his muscles and lifted enormous weights. Then they cheered and threw money.

Sometimes Gary would shout, "Ladies and Gentlemen! I will give a super prize to anyone who can knock me down or lift something I can't lift. No-one has done it yet. Gary is the greatest!"

Often, men would jump up on to Gary's platform and challenge him to fight. But one biff from his boxing gloves and they were flat on their backs.

Other people tried to lift his weights, or bend his bars. But the gong would sound, *doooooing!* And Gary would say, "Time's



laughed. And all the crowd laughed too.

"Why, that is exactly what I was thinking," Miss Maisie said. "I think I have something you won't be able to lift. It's in my handbag."

Gary the Greatest was so tickled when he heard this that he laughed and laughed and laughed. "Well, ma'am," he said. "If you have anything in that old handbag that I can't lift, I promise to give you that super prize. Ha, ha, ha! Perhaps you'll make sure my gloves are tied really tight. I want to be quite ready for this tremendous weight-lifting. Ha, ha, ha!"

So little Miss Maisie tied up the laces of his boxing-gloves as tightly as she possibly could.

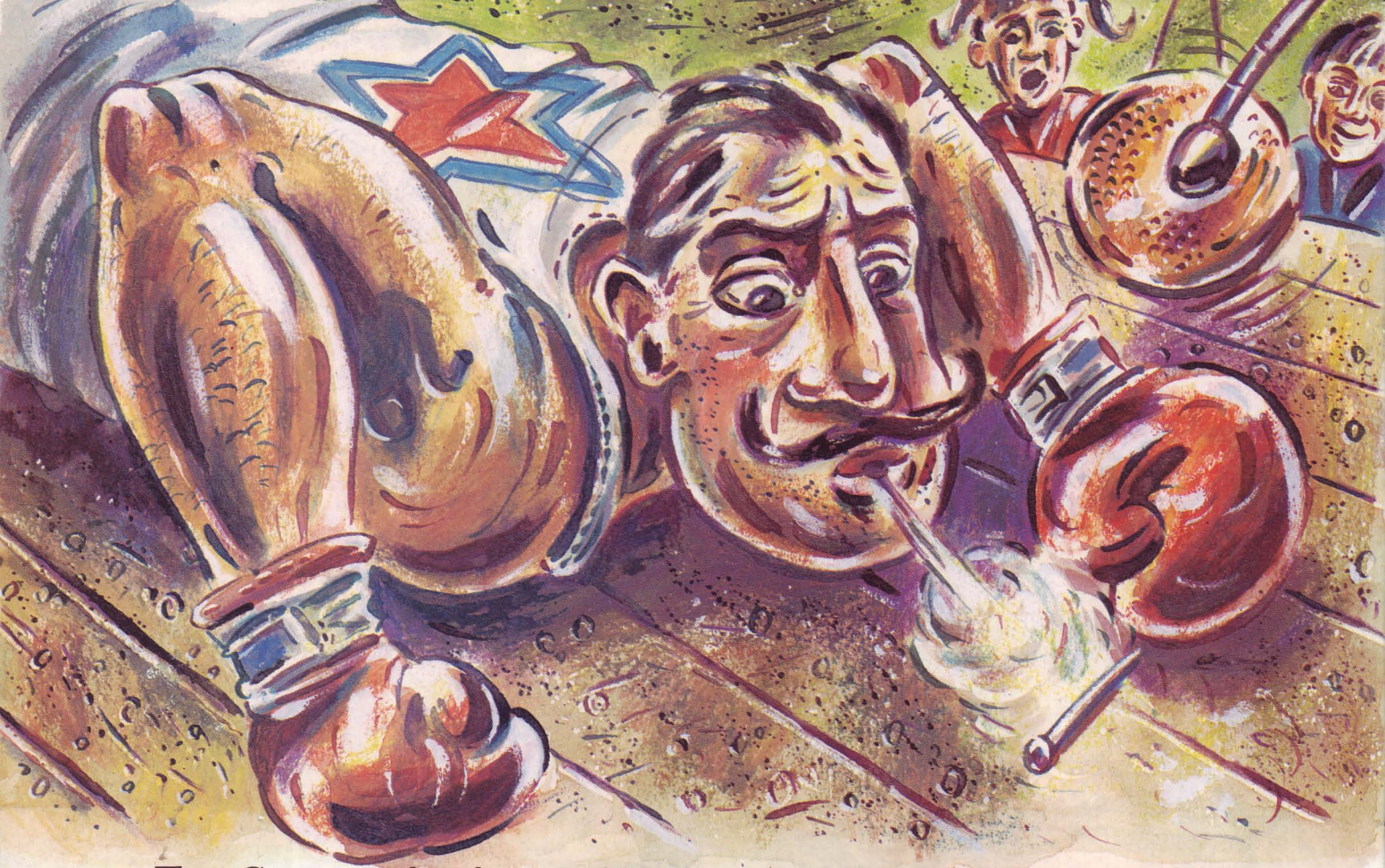
up. No-one has ever won my prize. I can beat anyone!"

Then one day a little old lady called Miss Maisie was at the fair. She was having a lovely time. She had been on the roundabouts three times. She had been in the Hall of Mirrors. She had been on the Ghost Train. And now her purse was quite empty!

"Listen to that Strong Man!" she said. "I wish I could beat him." She stood and watched Gary for some time, then she said, "Hi! Mr Gary, hi!"

She was so little, Gary did not see her at first. "Did you want me, ma'am?" he said with a grin. "Perhaps you'd like to try for the super prize? Ha, ha, ha," he





Then Gary started to shout again, "This little old lady says I can't pick up something in her handbag! Hold up your handbag, ma'am." Miss Maisie held up her old black handbag.

"Now, are you still sure you mean it, ma'am?"

"Oh, yes, yes," said Miss Maisie.

"Right then, put the object on my platform."

Miss Maisie opened her bag, and carefully placed a pin, an ordinary pin, in the middle of the platform.

With a great laugh Gary bent down and tried to pick it up. Then he tried again. He was not laughing any longer. He tried again.

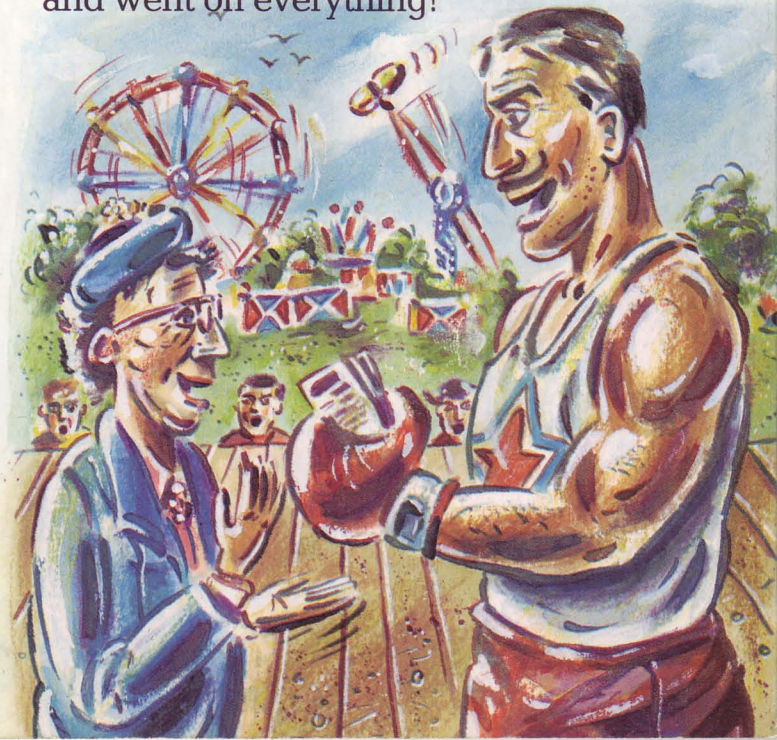
But he had his great gloves on, firmly tied by Miss Maisie, and he could not get hold of that tiny pin!

He knelt down. He crouched. He lay on his stomach and blew the pin along the ground. Then — *doooooing!* The gong

went. Miss Maisie's pin was still lying on the platform.

Gary the Greatest handed Miss Maisie a ticket. "You've certainly won my super prize — free turns on anything here at the fair. You can stay all day and it won't cost you a thing!"

Miss Maisie had a wonderful day — and went on everything!



CAMPBELL

Finds a Castle



Campbell the cat was glad to sit down and rest. He had been walking for three days. He flopped down thankfully beside the river, and cooled his aching paws.

A man wearing a shabby tweed jacket and old Wellington boots was fishing. "You're new around here," he remarked. "Are you looking for somewhere to stay?" Campbell nodded.

"They need another cat over at the castle." He pointed across the fields. "The last one left. All those mice were too much for him. Come along and I'll show you round."

Campbell was surprised. The man looked so shabby. "Do you work there?"

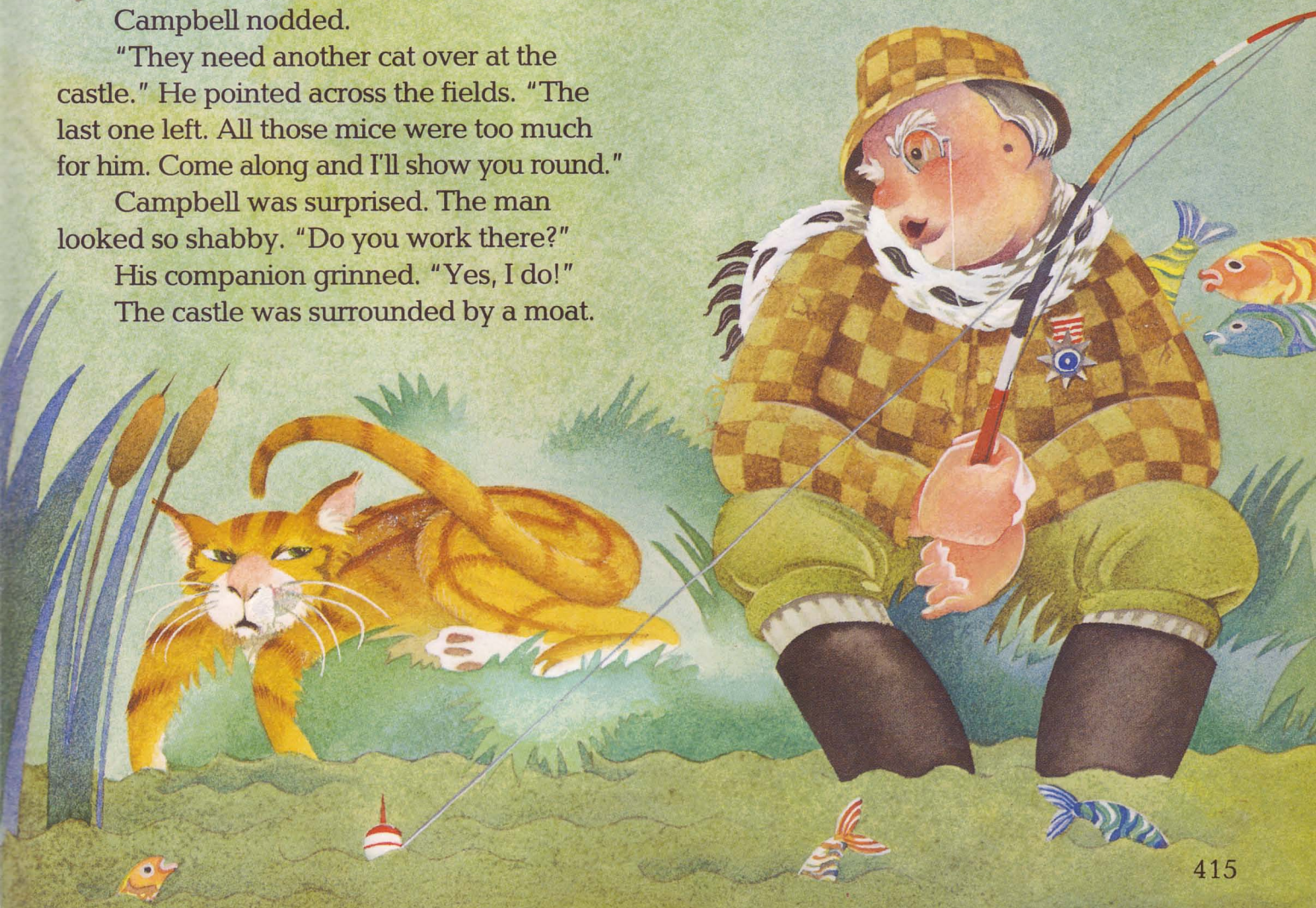
His companion grinned. "Yes, I do!"

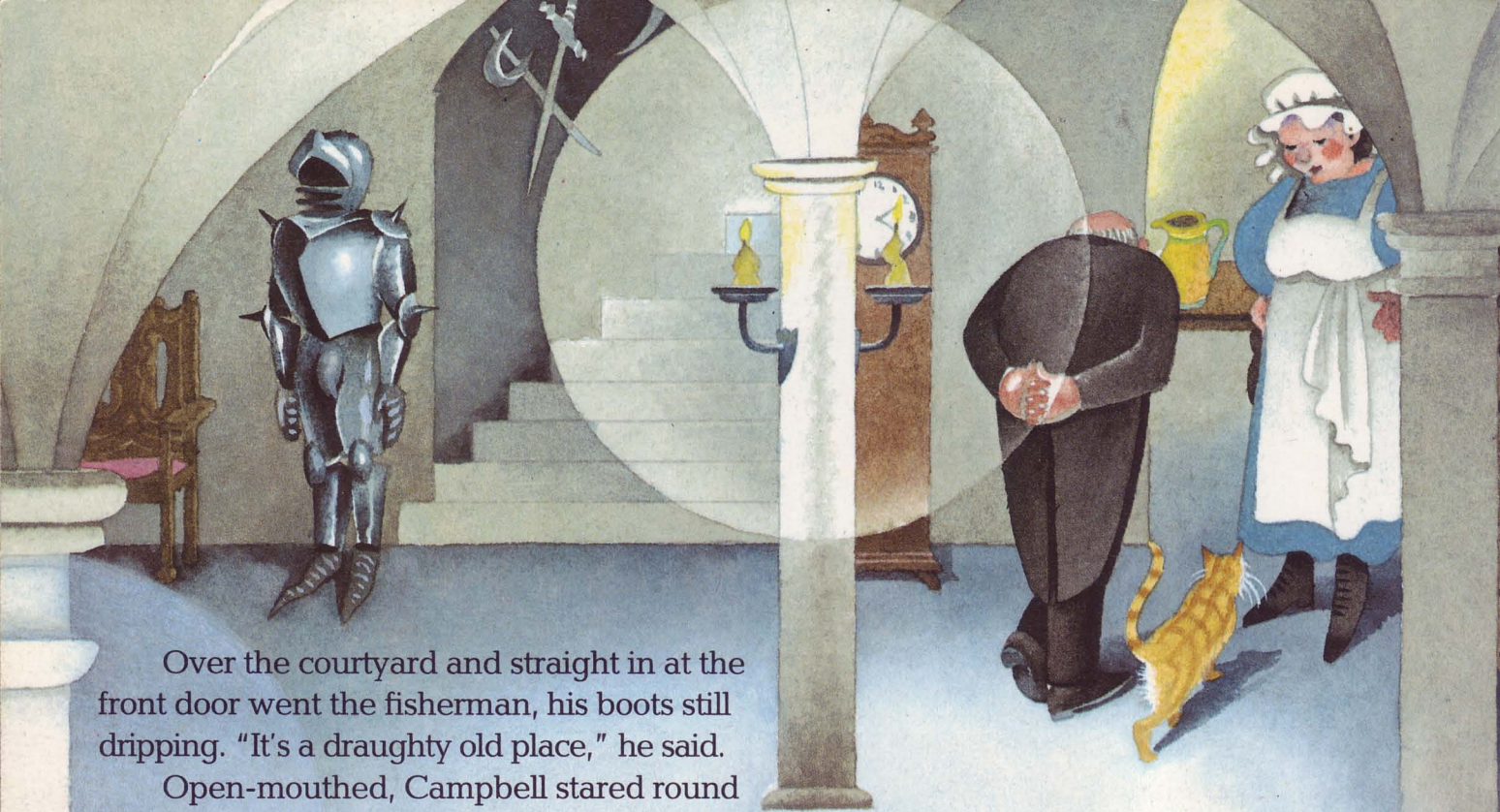
The castle was surrounded by a moat.

"How will we get across?" Campbell asked.

"You'll see!" The man rang a huge, brass bell which hung from a strong pole. There was a lot of creaking and grinding as a wooden drawbridge came slowly down.

"Keeps out unwelcome visitors," explained the man, striding across. Campbell ran to keep up with him.





Over the courtyard and straight in at the front door went the fisherman, his boots still dripping. "It's a draughty old place," he said.

Open-mouthed, Campbell stared round the big hall, with its carved chairs and wooden chests. At the foot of the staircase stood a suit of armour. A door in the far corner opened, and a bent old servant hobbled across. "Dinner will be served in half-an-hour, your Grace."

Campbell turned to the fisherman in amazement. He did not look a bit like a Duke!

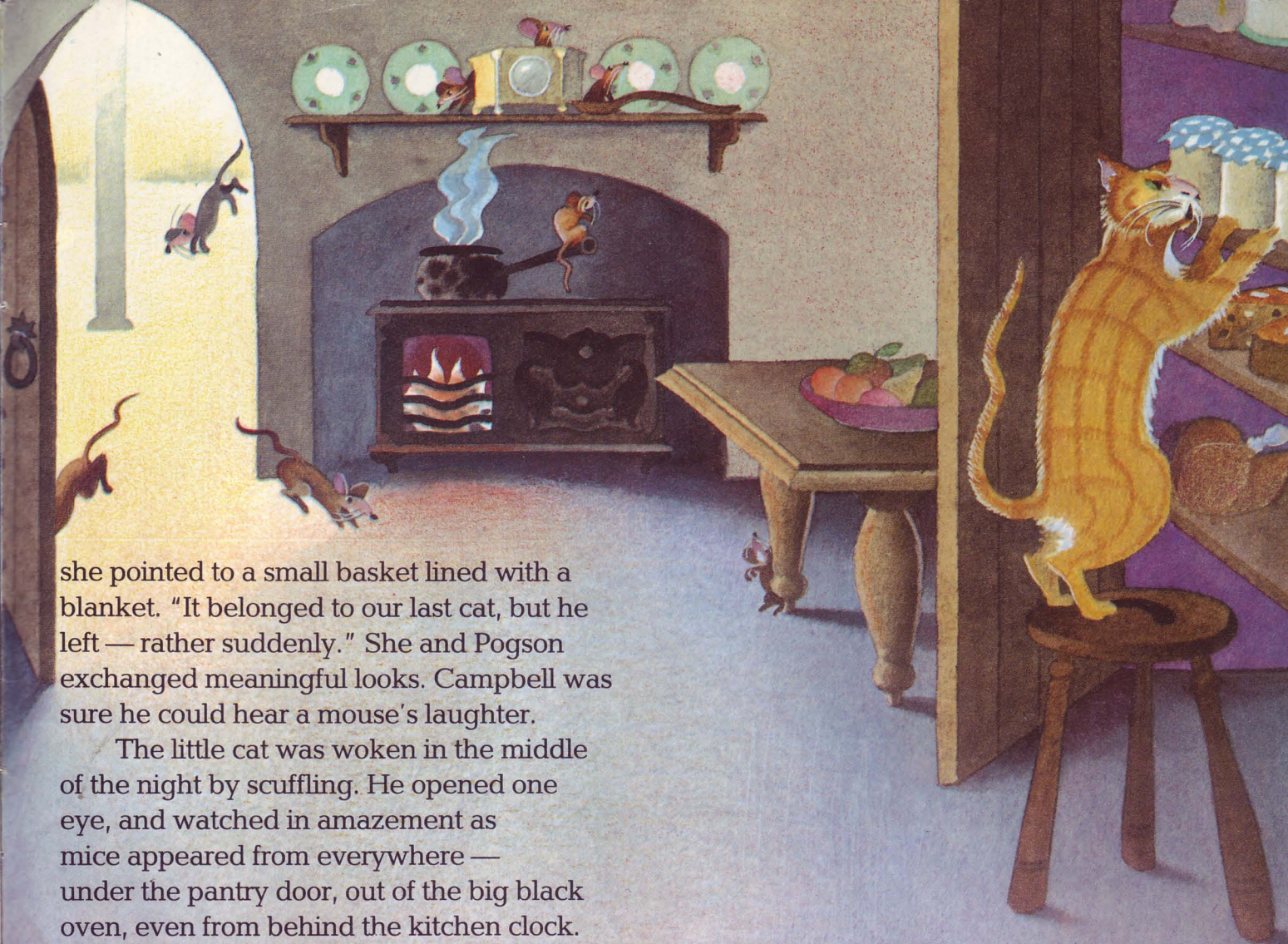
"Very well, Pogson. Take these fish to the kitchen. We'll have them for breakfast. Now then, m'lad," he smiled at Campbell, "you're welcome to stay if you'll chase all the troublesome mice out of my castle!"

Campbell hesitated. "I'll try." It was true he had tricked fifty-two mice into leaving a bakery. But *chasing* was different. Because he had flat feet, he could not run fast, and there was sure to be plenty of running to be done in a castle!

The Duke bent to stroke him. "Just do your best. But I warn you — they're a cunning bunch!"

Pogson took the little cat to the kitchen to meet Cook, a fat, jolly woman who looked as if she tasted everything she made. "You can sleep in that corner, my dear,"





she pointed to a small basket lined with a blanket. "It belonged to our last cat, but he left — rather suddenly." She and Pogson exchanged meaningful looks. Campbell was sure he could hear a mouse's laughter.

The little cat was woken in the middle of the night by scuffling. He opened one eye, and watched in amazement as mice appeared from everywhere — under the pantry door, out of the big black oven, even from behind the kitchen clock.

They met in the middle of the kitchen, whiskers twitching, tails waving, whispering and squeaking with excitement. Then another mouse appeared, squeezing under the back door. They all turned to greet him.



When he saw the newcomer's big ears, Campbell groaned. He might have known he had not seen the last of Jiggs, the one mouse he had never managed to outwit.

Swaggering across to the cat's basket, Jiggs grinned cheekily. "I knew you'd turn up sooner or later. *I've been here since yesterday!*"

Campbell pretended to ignore him, but in an odd way he was pleased to see Jiggs' familiar face. Still, the Duke had offered him a home, so he must *try* to get rid of all the mice, including Jiggs.

Turning his back and pretending to be asleep, Campbell waited, thinking out a plan. When all was quiet once more, he crept across the kitchen, jumped on a stool, and hooked open the pantry door with his paw.



His face brightened. Helping himself to a wedge of strong-smelling cheese, he hid it in his basket. All he had to do was wait.

Next morning, the postman arrived, and propped his bike by the back door. "Come in and have some tea, Jim!" called Cook.

This was Campbell's chance. Slinking out with the cheese, he dropped it into the empty letter bag behind Jim's saddle. He had kept a few crumbs of cheese to scatter in the kitchen. So when Jim rode off, the mice streamed after him, noses twitching eagerly as they followed the delicious smell.

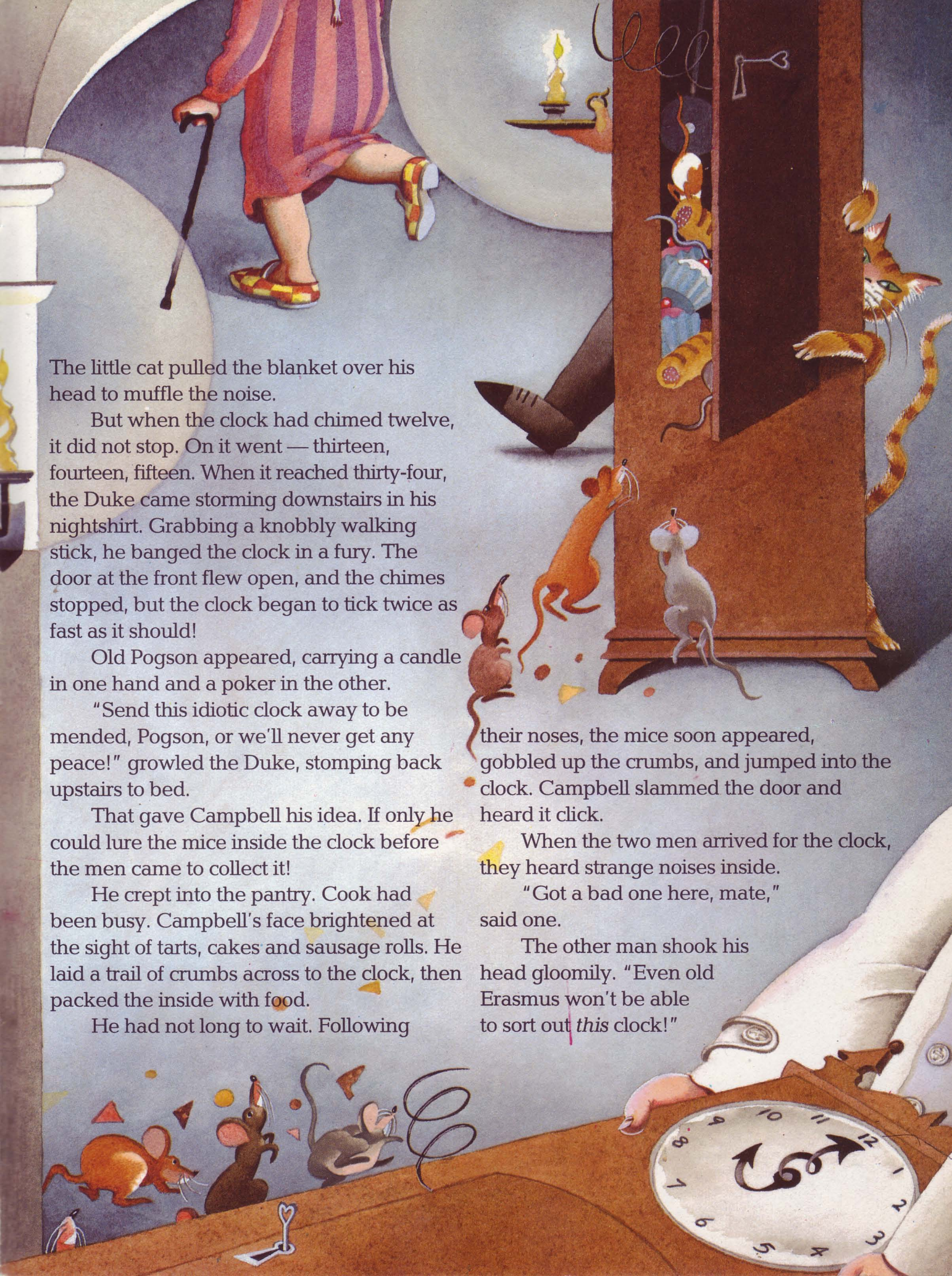
After Jim had gone, old Pogson pulled up the drawbridge. Campbell smiled to himself. "I've done it!"

But when the laundry van called in the afternoon, Campbell was in for a shock. As the housekeeper opened the basket, she shrieked and jumped up on to a chair. Fifteen mice of all shapes and sizes scrambled out of the basket.

Campbell watched them in dismay.

"You got too clever *that* time," said Jiggs. "I knew they'd never keep up with that postman!" Grinning, Jiggs dodged out of Campbell's reach.

At midnight, Campbell was woken by the grandfather clock in the hall chiming twice as loudly as usual.



The little cat pulled the blanket over his head to muffle the noise.

But when the clock had chimed twelve, it did not stop. On it went — thirteen, fourteen, fifteen. When it reached thirty-four, the Duke came storming downstairs in his nightshirt. Grabbing a knobbly walking stick, he banged the clock in a fury. The door at the front flew open, and the chimes stopped, but the clock began to tick twice as fast as it should!

Old Pogson appeared, carrying a candle in one hand and a poker in the other.

"Send this idiotic clock away to be mended, Pogson, or we'll never get any peace!" growled the Duke, stomping back upstairs to bed.

That gave Campbell his idea. If only he could lure the mice inside the clock before the men came to collect it!

He crept into the pantry. Cook had been busy. Campbell's face brightened at the sight of tarts, cakes and sausage rolls. He laid a trail of crumbs across to the clock, then packed the inside with food.

He had not long to wait. Following

their noses, the mice soon appeared, gobbled up the crumbs, and jumped into the clock. Campbell slammed the door and heard it click.

When the two men arrived for the clock, they heard strange noises inside.

"Got a bad one here, mate," said one.

The other man shook his head gloomily. "Even old Erasmus won't be able to sort out *this* clock!"

When Cook found food missing from the pantry, she turned on Campbell. "You thieving cat! I'll tell the Duke!" she shouted, chasing him with a rolling pin.

The little cat was terrified. Dodging this way and that, he reached the hall — and took a flying leap straight into the suit of armour. The visor clanged shut behind him.

The rattling and howling from inside the armour alarmed the Cook. When the Duke came downstairs, she ran to him, still waving the rolling pin. "We're haunted, your Grace! There's a ghost inside that armour!"

The Duke lifted the visor, peered down, and lifted out a bruised and bedraggled cat. Campbell told the Duke what had happened.

His Grace was much amused. "So I've sent old Erasmus a family of mice as well as a crazy clock! Good for you, little cat. I knew you were smart, but I never thought you'd

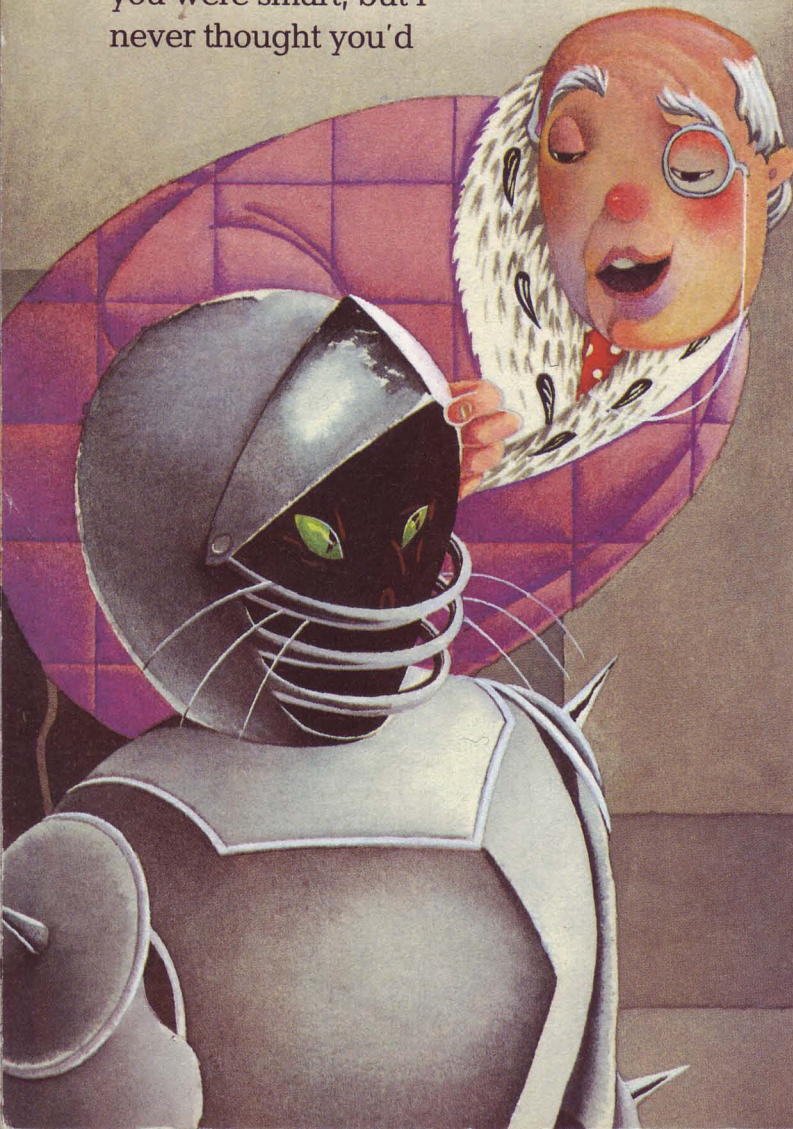


get rid of those plaguey mice so quickly. Give him some milk, Cook — at once!"

Campbell finished the milk, cleaned his whiskers, and padded outside to curl up in the sunshine. And that night, he slept with a peaceful smile on his face, knowing he was alone in the kitchen.

But when he went out to greet Jim the postman next morning, a familiar face peered down at him from the letter bag.

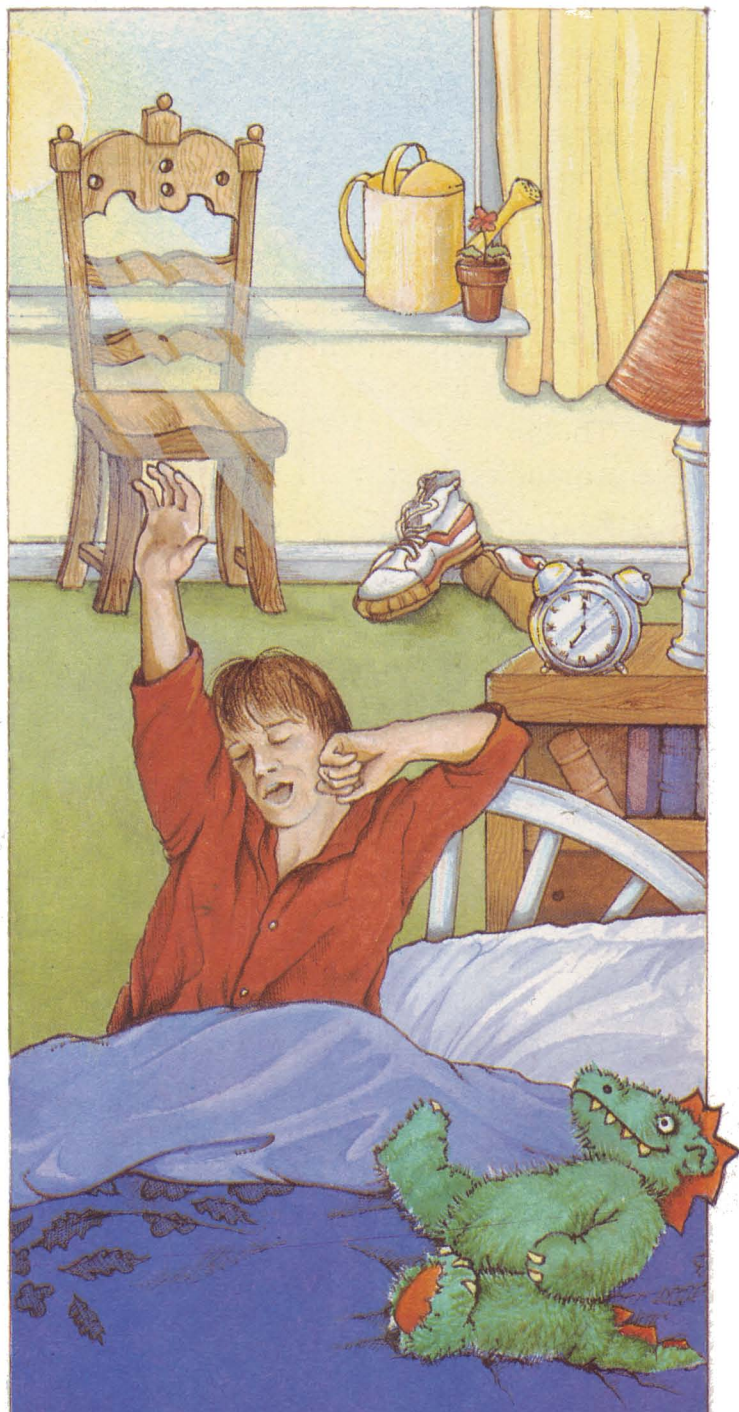
"Hi!" said Jiggs, jumping out. "I'm back! Couldn't stand it with old Erasmus. Too many clocks. All that ticking and chiming — it kept me awake! Besides," he grinned cheekily and skipped out of Campbell's reach, "I knew you'd miss me!"



A Child's Thought



At seven, when I go to bed,
I find such pictures in my head:
Castles with dragons prowling round,
Gardens where magic fruits are found;
Fair ladies prisoned in a tower,
Or lost in an enchanted bower;
While gallant horsemen ride by streams
That border all this land of dreams
I find, so clearly in my head
At seven, when I go to bed.



At seven, when I wake again,
The magic land I seek in vain;
A chair stands where the castle frowned,
The carpet hides the garden ground,
No fairies trip across the floor,
Boots, and not horsemen, flank the door,
And where the blue streams rippling ran
Is now a bath and water-can;
I seek the magic land in vain
At seven, when I wake again.

IN PART 16 OF STORY Teller 2

Noggin the Nog is here! And together,
NOGGIN AND THE BIRDS save the
Northland from famine

Discover magic and myth in
THE SWORDS OF KING ARTHUR: one pulled
from a stone, one from a glistening lake



There's trouble in store when the genie
of the teapot meets **BORED BRENDA**

THE THIN KING AND THE FAT COOK
change places – thanks to an enormous cake

CLASSIC SERIAL **PETER PAN** crosses swords with
the pirates but befriends the redskins



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