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PART 7

STORY Teller 2

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STORY Teller 2

CONTENTS PART 7

Traveller Ned.....169

When a poor young man enters a deserted castle he little knows that it will change his life for ever.
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Gobbolino and the Little Wooden Horse..173

Before Gobbolino can save his sister Sootica, he and the Little Wooden Horse must brave dangers of their own. Francis Phillippo's portrayal of the two friends brings extra magic to their adventures.

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Little Bear and the Beaver.....179

The stories of Evelyn Davies are often set in the pioneer days of the Wild West. This one is taken from *Little Bear's Feather*, published by Hamish Hamilton Limited.

© Evelyn Davies 1973

The Ju-Ju Man.....183

First published in *The Cherry Stones*, this story appears by permission of Wm. Heinemann Ltd.
© Ruth Ainsworth 1960

A Song for Slug.....188

Nick and Linnie Price worked together to produce this quaint, musical entertainment. Nick drew the pictures, Linnie wrote the words. Guitar played by Steven Cowdroy

Larkspur Gets Her Wings.....192

An original story by Christine Boardman, but one which draws upon the tradition of classic fairy tales. The illustrations are by John Lupton.

Windy Nights..inside cover

The excitement and pace of Robert Louis Stevenson's famous poem have guaranteed its popularity for almost 100 years.

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Engineered by John Rowland & Jill Landskroner

A Creative Radio Production

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GUARANTEE

The price of this publication will remain unchanged throughout the series, unless there are changes to the rate of VAT.

Typeset by ABM Typographics Limited, Hull. Colour work by Tempus Litho, London. Printed in England by Varnicoat, Pershore.

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Traveller Ned

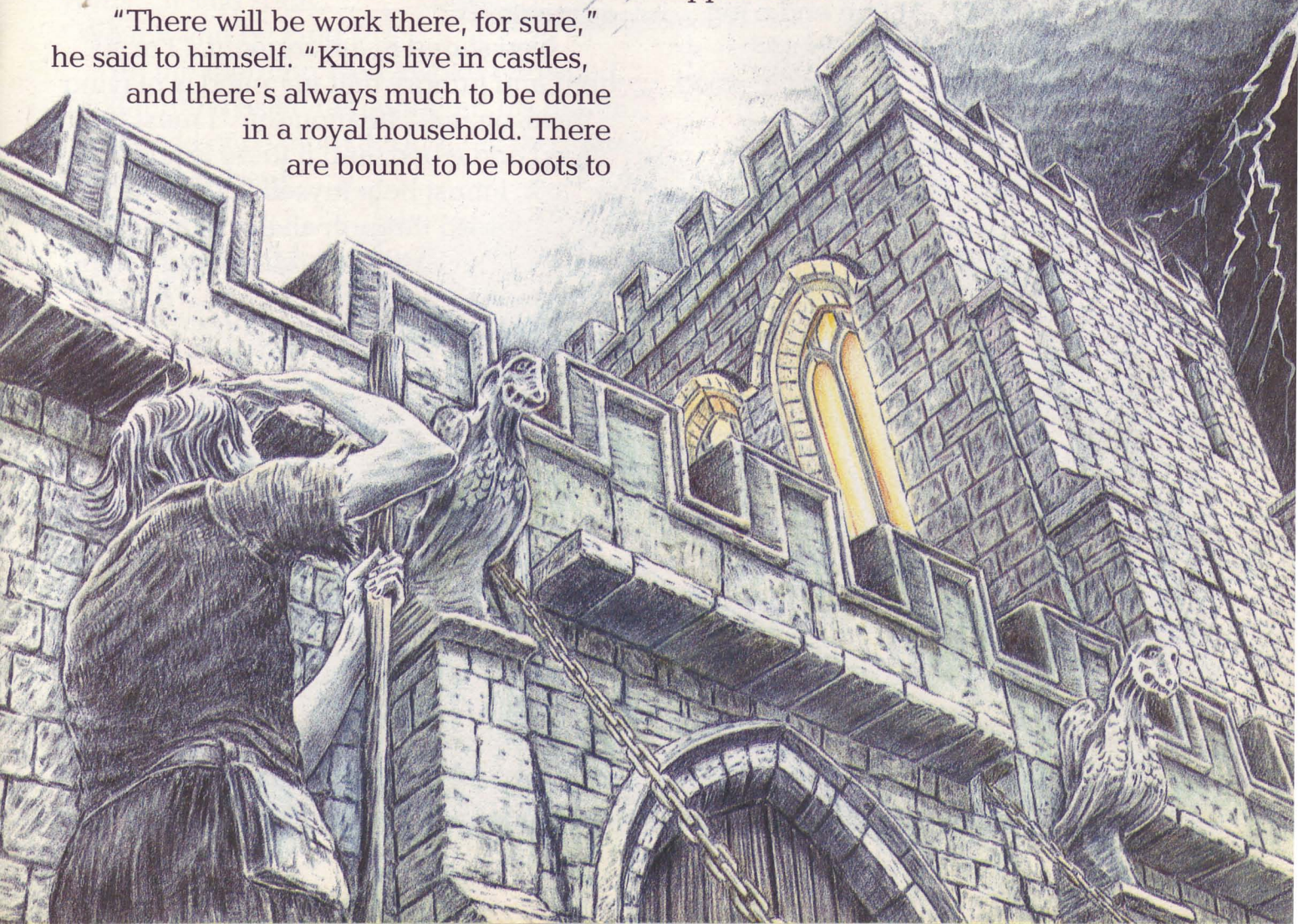
There was once a young fellow called Ned who travelled across the country, earning a meal here and a bed there, and sometimes a coin or two. He could harvest corn and play the fiddle, shoe horses and write letters, shear sheep and sing songs. He could do none of these things very well, but people were pleased enough to see him coming, and gladly gave him work.

Now one day, young Ned was travelling through a distant part of the country, where he had never been before. He was tired and hungry, and it was beginning to rain. In the distance he could see the towers and battlements of a castle.

"There will be work there, for sure," he said to himself. "Kings live in castles, and there's always much to be done in a royal household. There are bound to be boots to

clean, dishes to wash and horses to groom and shoe. And, kings are often of a musical turn of mind, and my songs have been much admired."

Looking forward to a meal and a bed, the young fellow tramped on towards the castle. At last, after a weary walk, he arrived under its walls, tired out and soaked to the skin. The drawbridge was down across the wide moat, and no sentry challenged him as he went into the courtyard. In all the windows lights were blazing, but no sound came from within. The great door stood open, and when no answer came to his knock, Ned stepped inside.





He found himself in a great hall hung with tapestries. At one end a log fire crackled under an enormous chimney-breast, and in the middle stood a huge oak table, covered with a richly embroidered cloth of red and blue. In the centre of the table was a red velvet cushion, and on the cushion sat a crown — all

shining gold and set with rubies as big as walnuts.

Ned stared in amazement. "I'm so tired and hungry that my mind is playing tricks on me," he thought. "I must find food and a bed, and if there is no-one to ask, I must help myself." Then he passed through all the rooms of the castle, searching and calling,



but not a single soul did he meet, though fires burned and lights blazed, and laden tables groaned with food and drink.

At length, having climbed to the very top, he found a tiny attic under the roof. Here there was no fire, the light was dim, and the only furnishings were a rough mattress on the bare floor and a rough-hewn table. On the table stood a jug of water and a crust of dry bread. Ned looked slowly around the room. "I've done no work for my board and lodging, so these humble quarters will do well for me." So, after eating the bread and drinking the water, he fell fast asleep.

No sooner had he fallen asleep than he began to dream, and in the dream a white swan came to him and spoke. "The crown is yours," it said softly. "Wear it and be king."

In the morning Ned awoke refreshed, and laughed as he remembered his dream. He passed once more through all the rooms of the castle, where the fires still burned, the lights still blazed, and the food on the tables lay untouched.



At last he came to the great hall, and as he stepped over the threshold, a huge white swan rose into the air, spread its wings and landed on the table beside the jewelled crown. Then, Ned remembered his dream, and he took up the crown and put it on his head.

There came a sound like the ripping of a thousand silk sheets, and a flapping and a fluttering of feathers. The swan disappeared, and in its place stood a beautiful princess in a white gown encrusted with pearls and threaded with satin ribbons. She walked up to Ned and took him by the hand. "You are the first traveller in many sad years who has taken only what he deserved," she said. "Others have eaten like swine, drunk like fishes, wrapped their bodies in silken robes, and thrust their boots between white satin sheets. By your honesty you have broken the witch's spell under

which I have been sleeping, and you have set me free. Now you shall be king of this castle and I, if it pleases you, shall be your queen."

She led the astonished Ned around the castle, now bustling with life! Maids were working in the kitchens, footmen hurried from room to room. Grooms led horses from the stables, gardeners tended beds of roses, musicians played and sang. Ned could not believe his good fortune, for the princess was charming, and the crown not too heavy, and the two of them lived happily in the castle for the rest of their lives.



GOBBOLINO

and the Little Wooden Horse

As the first shade of evening crept across the plain, Gobbolino and the Little Wooden Horse — pursued by a pack of baying hounds — sought refuge in the deserted churchyard.

Suddenly, an old priest opened the church door, and the two friends flew towards him. The next moment there was a fearful clanging of bells. A crowd of terrified bats flew out of the church tower and the hounds turned tail and fled, howling.

"Ah, my little cat," said the old priest, stooping down and stroking Gobbolino. "I think the haunted church has saved your life."

"Haunted?" asked Gobbolino and the little horse, struggling to recover their breath.

"Yes. You heard for yourselves the terrible clamour of the bells, though nobody rings them. None of the villagers will come to the church any more."

At first the two friends were too shaken to tell the priest their story, but as they recovered they asked him if they might stay overnight.

"Why yes, of course you can stay. I would invite you to spend the night in my house, but cats make my housekeeper feel quite unwell. However, I know she will give you some food."





The priest went away and soon returned with a bowl of bread and milk. "I hope you have a good night's sleep."

When they finished their supper, Gobbolino and the Little Wooden Horse decided to spend the night in the bell-tower, for they were afraid that the hounds might brave the ghosts and enter the church.

Wearily they climbed the winding stairs, until reaching the top, they saw hundreds and hundreds of bats clinging to the bell-ropes with their wings folded one across the other.

Suddenly, one of the bats called, "It's time to get up brothers. Now! Now!"

With a terrible clamour every bat left the bell-ropes and dived below into the body of the church. Round and round they flew, up and over the organ, in and out of the pulpit, while above and around them the peel of bells filled every corner of the building.

Gobbolino and the Little Wooden Horse cowered against the wall, overwhelmed by the dreadful noise and the flurry of whirling black bodies. But at last the bats disappeared and the two

friends, exhausted by their days' adventures, fell fast asleep.

When they woke up, they were surprised to find the bats had returned very quietly.

Gobbolino yawned and stretched, then turned to speak to them.

"Gentlemen," he said, "do you realise how much trouble you are causing by making the bells ring every night? The villagers think the church is haunted. Wouldn't you prefer to have another home?"

"Why, yes we would," said the bats, "it's very noisy and crowded here."

"Up in Hurricane Mountain, where I used to live, there are hundreds of empty caves. There's room for thousands of bats!"

"Are you sure? Do you promise?" asked the bats.

"I *am* sure! And I *promise*! But you will have to enter the caves quietly, because a witch lives in the highest cave and if you annoy her she might turn you into something horrid."

Two by two, the bats left the ropes and vanished in the early dawn towards Hurricane Mountain.

Later that morning a very happy priest said goodbye to Gobbolino and the Little Wooden Horse.

"I can hardly believe it," he said. "Who would have thought that the haunting which



terrified the village was nothing more than the bats jumping off the bell-ropes. I will always be grateful to you, my good little friends."

So the two again set off for Hurricane Mountain to find Gobbolino's twin sister Sootica. The way was long and difficult but eventually they saw that they were within reach of the great purple mountain.





They did not notice the small black cloud which was forming over the peaks, a cloud that circled and quivered and gradually became bigger and bigger. The cloud began to advance towards them, and at the same time there was a high screaming sound.

The Little Wooden Horse looked up to see the cloud swoop lower and lower, till it was flying just above the level of the

plain. In an instant he knew what it was. The bats were coming back!

"After them! After them! Revenge! Revenge!" screamed the bats as they dived on the two friends. Both instinctively ducked their heads and the next minute they were in the centre of a whirling mass of raking claws and flashing teeth.

Gobbolino bit and scratched and tore, and the Little Wooden Horse battered. Soon they were surrounded by wounded bats, but still more bats dived down row upon row.

At last there was a lull in the fighting and the Little Wooden Horse jumped on his hind legs and shouted, "Stop! Stop! Tell us why you're so angry."

"Promises! Promises!" hissed the bats. "Empty



promises and lies. No sooner had we found a home for our families than we were driven out again and again by that wicked witch's cat. Now we'll have to go back to the church."

"Wait! Please wait!" Gobbolino begged them. "I'm on my way to help my sister Sootica, the witch's cat. Perhaps, in exchange for my help, she will allow you into the caves."

The bats became calmer and agreed that this was a much better idea than going back to the church. A number of them hooked their wings together to form two flying hammocks. Gobbolino and the Little Wooden Horse climbed into the hammocks and flew, with the bats, to the foot of Hurricane Mountain. Leaving the bats to spend the night in rabbit burrows, the two friends began the steep climb to the summit.

The path wound up and up. The sun went down, and the mountains looked dark and angry. Soon they came across

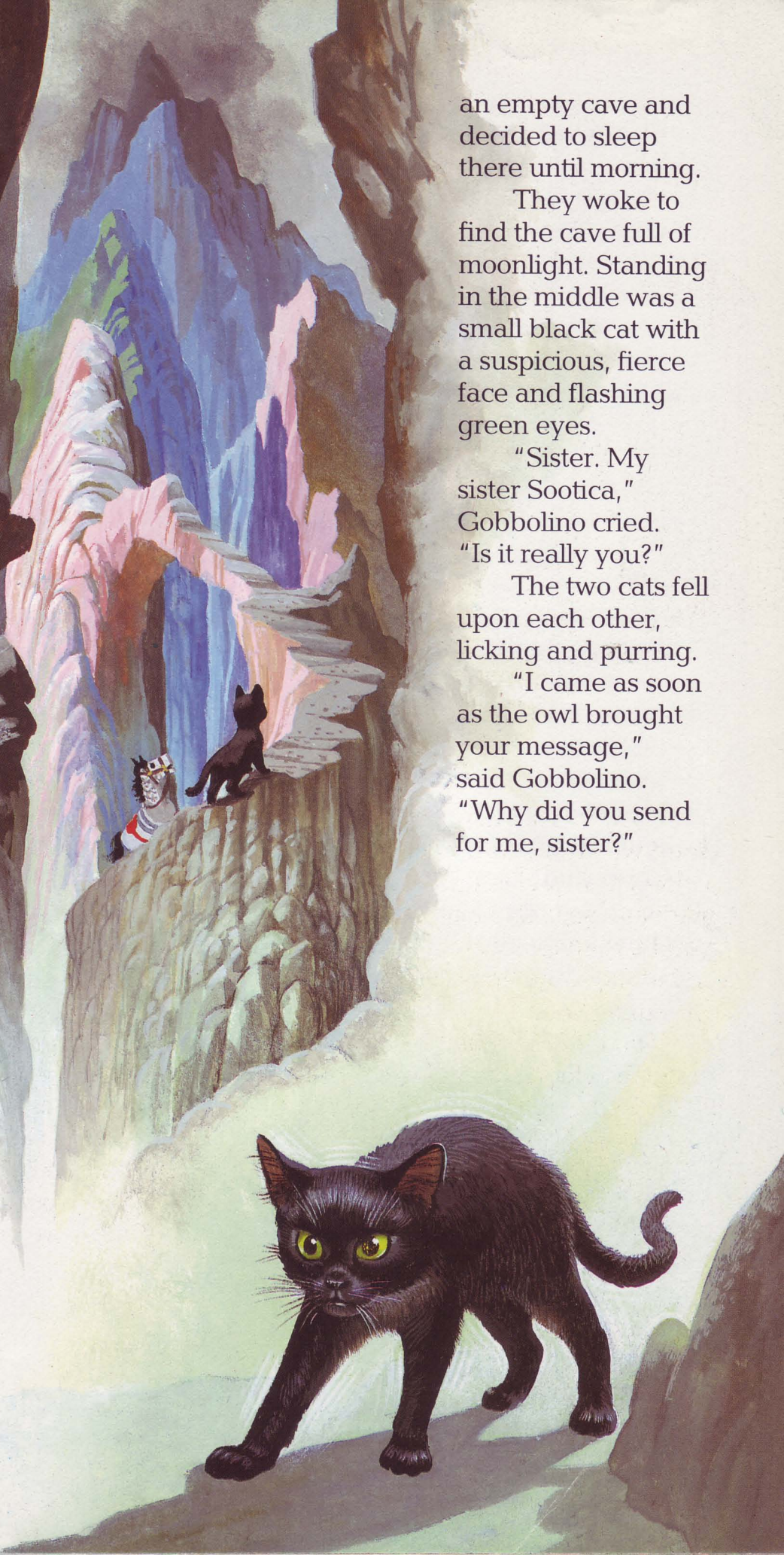
an empty cave and decided to sleep there until morning.

They woke to find the cave full of moonlight. Standing in the middle was a small black cat with a suspicious, fierce face and flashing green eyes.

"Sister. My sister Sootica," Gobbolino cried. "Is it really you?"

The two cats fell upon each other, licking and purring.

"I came as soon as the owl brought your message," said Gobbolino. "Why did you send for me, sister?"



Sootica's green eyes filled with tears.

"I want to be a kitchen cat," she sobbed. "I'm tired of being a witch's cat, being wicked from dawn to dark. I don't enjoy it any more. I want to be good like you."

"But will the witch allow you to leave?" asked Gobbolino, almost sobbing himself.

"Oh no, never, never, never. I must go while she's asleep — in the early morning perhaps, after she's been out all night."

"But what if she were to wake up and find you gone?" shuddered Gobbolino.

"Oh, she would chase me," chuckled Sootica, her eyes drying.

"But, if I passed through running water she wouldn't catch me. Witches can't pass through running water, but witches' cats can! And this is how you can help me brother," said Sootica, half closing her eyes. "My mistress is old and almost blind. She would never know if, for a few hours, you took my place, just long enough for me to reach the stream that runs across the plain."

Gobbolino trembled at the idea. But how could he refuse to help his sister? And then there were the bats. If he helped Sootica to escape they would move into the caves and leave the church in peace. There was no alternative. The next morning he would have to return to the witch's terrible cave.

[Will Sootica's plan work? Find out in Part 8].





LITTLE BEAR AND THE BEAVER

Every day Little Bear went to the oak tree at the edge of the forest to practise shooting. He practised until his arms ached from holding the bow. He practised until his fingers became numb from clutching the arrows. But no matter how hard he tried, no matter how carefully he took aim, he just could not hit the gnarled trunk of that big oak tree.

He cheated a little and moved closer, but still he could not hit it. He moved up even closer, and then a little closer still, until he was so close he just could not miss, and all the arrows hit the trunk of the tree one after the other.

Little Bear was really rather ashamed of himself, but he was tired of practising all day. So he slung his bow over his

shoulder, tucked his arrows in his belt and strode off into the forest. He kept a sharp look-out for buffalo, bear or deer tracks. But all he saw was the tiny scurrying prints of the wood mice and the nervous stop-and-go-wait-and-see marks of the rabbits.

Little Bear knelt and put his ear to the ground. Listen! Was that the thunder of buffalo hooves? A herd of deer leaping through the forest? A bear lumbering heavily past? No. Just two chipmunks stepping daintily over the leaves, a green lizard slithering through the grass and a mole, dazzled by the light, shuffling clumsily through the bracken.





Well, he *would* be ready next time. Little Bear pulled an arrow from his belt and fitted it to his bow, ready to aim at the first rabbit, squirrel or fat pigeon that dared to come near him.

The path now brought him to a narrow, fast-flowing river that swirled

A rabbit leaped on to the path directly in front of Little Bear and sat there on its haunches, looking at him. Little Bear stared back. Then, feeling for his bow, trying to hold the rabbit with his eyes, he slowly got to his knees. Too late! Already the rabbit had leaped aside and disappeared into the undergrowth.

What a shame! Little Bear was confused and angry with himself. He had not been ready. He had been taken by surprise — by a rabbit! And now it seemed that all the woodland creatures were laughing at him. The squirrels high in the oak branches mocked him. A jay flew off screaming in delight.

around a rough island of logs and broken boughs. A beaver was building his lodge, using clods of earth and weeds to seal the cracks in the island. Little Bear smiled. A beaver would be a good prize to take home. From the skin his mother would make him a cap, or perhaps a quiver for his arrows.

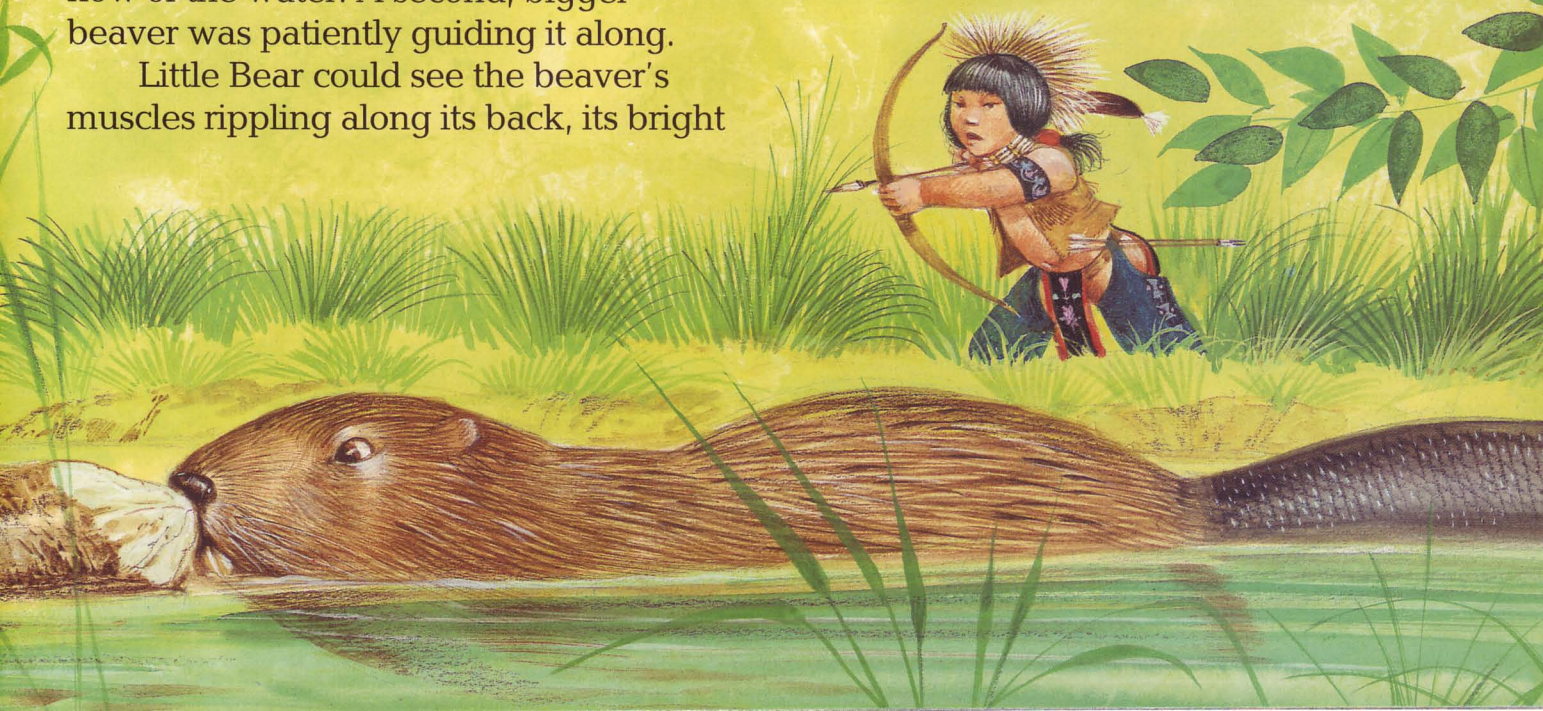


He lifted his bow, but then, out of the corner of his eye, he noticed a huge oak branch floating up-stream, against the flow of the water. A second, bigger beaver was patiently guiding it along.

Little Bear could see the beaver's muscles rippling along its back, its bright

eyes shining with effort. It was the biggest beaver he had ever seen! Oh, the praise if he took this one home!

Slowly the beaver edged the branch along. Now his nose was in line with the tip of Little Bear's arrow. Now his eye. Now his strong, stretching neck.





He began to yell. He jumped up and down and beat the water with his bow. In an instant, the eagle lifted and soared into the sky and the beaver — released from its terror — dived to the safety of its lodge.

The ripples on the water slapped all around the island, then spread out and slowly disappeared.

Little Bear waited. Nothing moved.

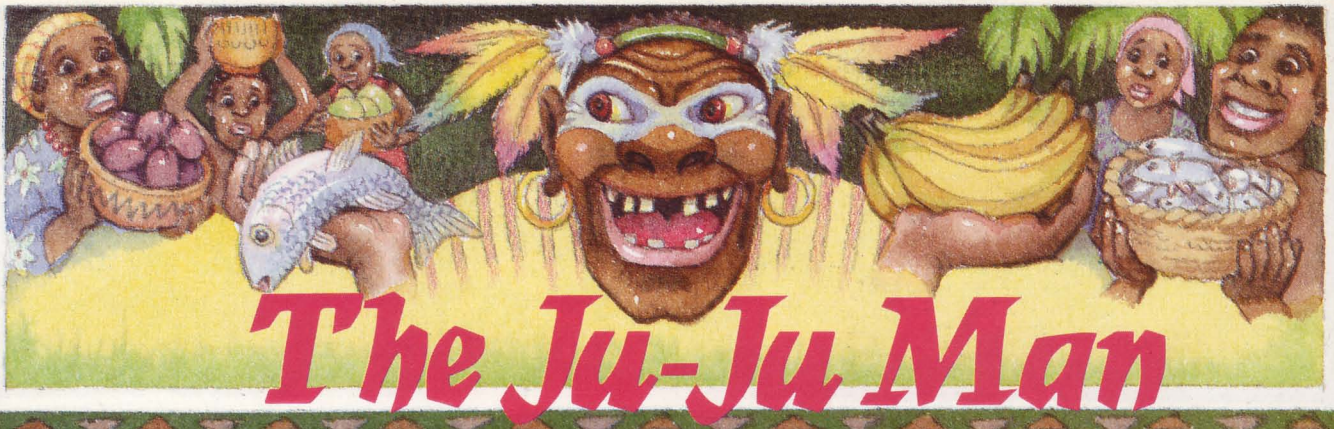
He was glad. Now he did not want to catch that beaver. He did not want him for a cap or a quiver for his arrows. He was glad that the beaver had got away.

Then, suddenly, out of the sky, out of nowhere, a huge eagle swooped across the water, hurling itself on to the unsuspecting beaver. Powerful claws stretched for the beaver's neck.

Taken by surprise, the beaver swung round and the great bird lifted into the air, turned and swooped down again. The frightened animal scrambled over the log as the enormous wings thrashed over him. The beaver seemed too terrified to move as the fierce eagle swooped once more.

Little Bear could not take his eyes off the beaver. Suddenly, he felt very angry. That was *his* beaver!





In a cave, in the middle of a forest, there lived a Ju-Ju man, who made magic. The people who lived in the forest were afraid of the Ju-Ju man. So they gave him presents to make him like them — a bunch of ripe bananas, a bowl of plums or some fresh fish from the river.

But the presents did not make him kind. The Ju-Ju man just ate them up and waited for the people to bring him more.

A little girl named Lily lived in the forest. When she had nothing special to do, she often hid among the bushes and watched the cave where the Ju-Ju man lived. She liked to watch him

when he swept out his cave with a broom of stiff leaves.

When he did this, he put all his belongings outside the cave so that he could sweep in the nooks and corners. He had so many things, Lily thought he must be very rich. There were more things in his cave than in the whole forest!

One evening, when Lily was watching from among the bushes, a striped tiger strolled past the cave. The Ju-Ju man came to the door and said kindly, "Good evening, striped tiger. Will you come in and have supper with me? I've plenty for the two of us."

"Thank you," said the tiger, and he went into the cave.





Lily waited and waited, but the tiger never came out again.

The next time the Ju-Ju man swept out his cave, Lily saw that he had something else new. It was a striped mat for the floor. She wondered where it had come from. She had never before seen a mat like it.

One evening, a grey monkey with a long tail frisked past the cave. The Ju-Ju man came to the door and said kindly, "Good evening, grey monkey. Will you come in and have supper with me? I've plenty for the two of us."

"Thank you," said the grey monkey, and he went into the cave.

Lily waited and waited, but the monkey never came out again.

The next time the Ju-Ju man swept the cave, Lily saw that he had something else new. It was a grey fur hat with a long tassel. He wore it on his head while he swept, and the tassel swung to and fro. She had never before seen a hat like it.

Then one evening, a pink parrot flew by the cave. The Ju-Ju man came to the door and said kindly, "Good evening, pink parrot. Will you come in and have some supper with me? I've plenty for the two of us."

"Thank you," said the pink parrot, and he went into the cave.





Lily waited and waited, but the parrot never came out again.

The next time the Ju-Ju man swept out his cave, Lily saw that he had something else new. It was a fan made of pink feathers. This time she guessed what had happened. She knew he had turned the parrot into a fan!

She also guessed what had happened to the striped tiger and the grey monkey. They had been turned into the striped mat and the hat with a long tassel!

Lily made up her mind not to let the wicked Ju-Ju man turn *her* into anything by his magic. But one day, when she was hiding near the cave, she saw that the Ju-Ju man was asleep. She crept into his cave on tip-toe to see the magic things he used when he put spells on people.

She saw a bone in a corner. Perhaps it was a magic bone. She was just going to touch it when the Ju-Ju man sat up and grabbed her tightly with his hands.





"Little black girl," he said kindly, "will you have supper with me? I've plenty for the two of us."

"No thank you," said Lily, "I have had my supper."

"Never mind! You can stay here with me and have some more of my supper. You must. Or I will have to make you."

"Very well," said Lily, who knew she could not get away from the Ju-Ju man, he was so strong and cunning.

The Ju-Ju man began to stir the broth which was cooking on the fire.

"You have some nice things in your cave. I think you must have everything you need."

"There is just one thing I want, that's a stool to sit on."

"What kind of a stool?"

"A little black stool."

Then Lily knew that she must be very careful indeed or the Ju-Ju man

would turn *her* into a black stool.

When the broth was cooked, he put some into two bowls. And when he thought Lily was not looking, he put a pinch of powder into one bowl and whispered some magic words. He gave this bowl to Lily, and kept the other for himself. But when he was fetching two spoons, and his back was turned, Lily changed the bowls round. She gave him the one with the powder in it.

"Eat up your broth! Eat it up like a good girl!"

"It is too hot."

"Then blow on it."

So Lily blew on her broth.

"Now eat it up! Spoon it up!" said the Ju-Ju man, dancing up and down.

"I don't know how to use a spoon. Please show me. We haven't any spoons in our hut."

"Watch me. Hold the handle like this. Dip the other end in like this. Lift it





up. And drink." The Ju-Ju man drank a spoonful, and she tried to copy him. But her hands were shaking so much that she spilled the broth on the floor.

"Hurry up! Hurry up! Let's have a race to see who can finish first."

Lily ate as fast as she could but the Ju-Ju man was winning easily.

When the Ju-Ju man had eaten half his broth, he began to shrink and shrink. He grew smaller and smaller. His head got flatter and flatter. His legs got shorter and shorter. And in no time at all he had turned into a little black stool!

Then Lily looked around the cave and found a pot of magic powder that the Ju-Ju man had sprinkled on the soup. She put a pinch on the mat and

the hat and the fan, and they turned back into the tiger, the monkey and the parrot.

Then they all danced for joy and ran home to their mothers. And though the Ju-Ju man was now only a black stool, and quite safe, they never went near his cave again.

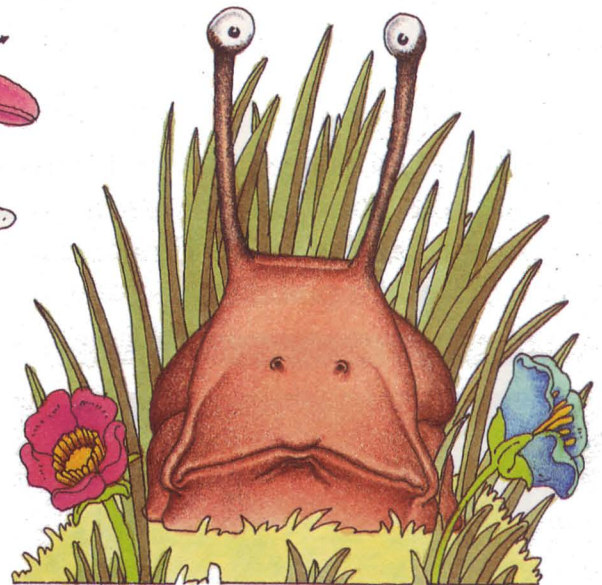
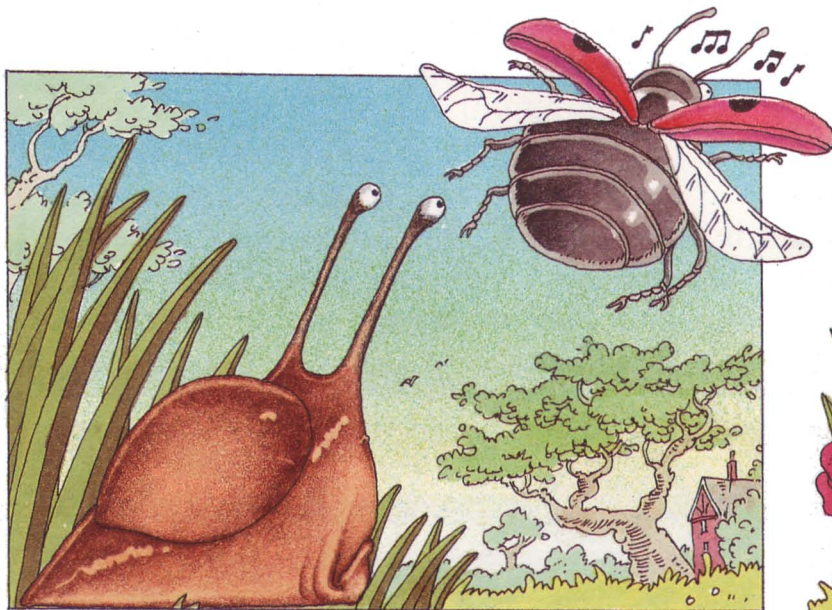


A SONG FOR SLUG



"I just don't understand," said Slug sadly to himself one day, "why nobody loves a slug. I don't smell nasty, I don't make a noise, I'm well-mannered and I'm very attractive even though I *do* say it myself."

Just then a Ladybird landed right in front of him. "Oh, hello Slug. It's you, is it?" "Of course it's me. And I can't think why you're not delighted to see me." "It must be because you're so slimy — yuk!"

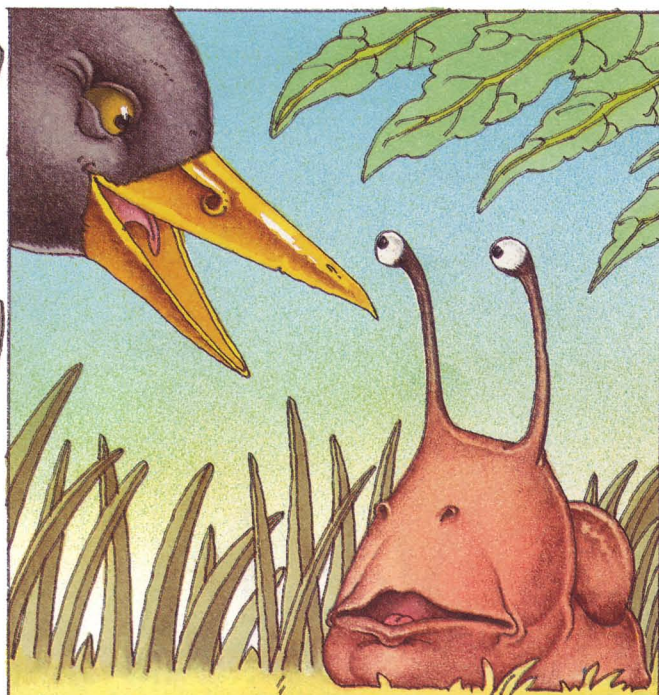
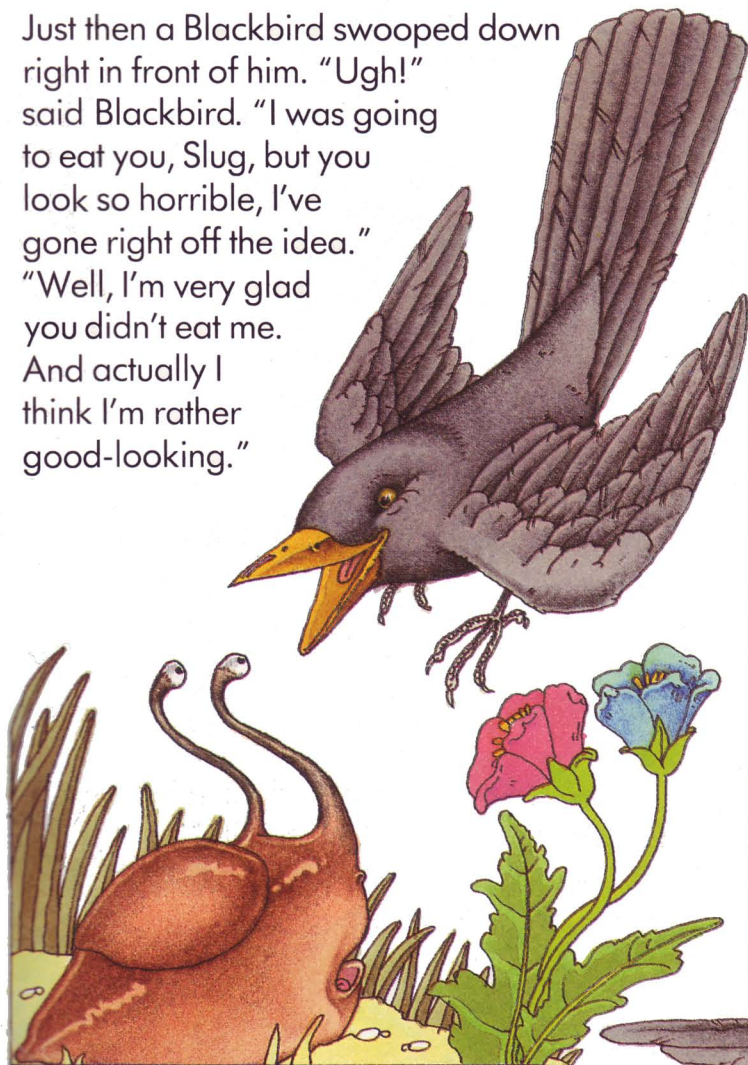


"Well, I must fly. I have to go and amuse the children. They like to sing to me." So Ladybird flew away, singing as she went:

"Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home, Your house is on fire, your children are gone."

Slug was now even sadder than ever. He wished the children would sing to him. "Nobody loves a slug," he said to himself, and heaved a great sigh as he proceeded slowly down the garden path.

Just then a Blackbird swooped down right in front of him. "Ugh!" said Blackbird. "I was going to eat you, Slug, but you look so horrible, I've gone right off the idea." "Well, I'm very glad you didn't eat me. And actually I think I'm rather good-looking."

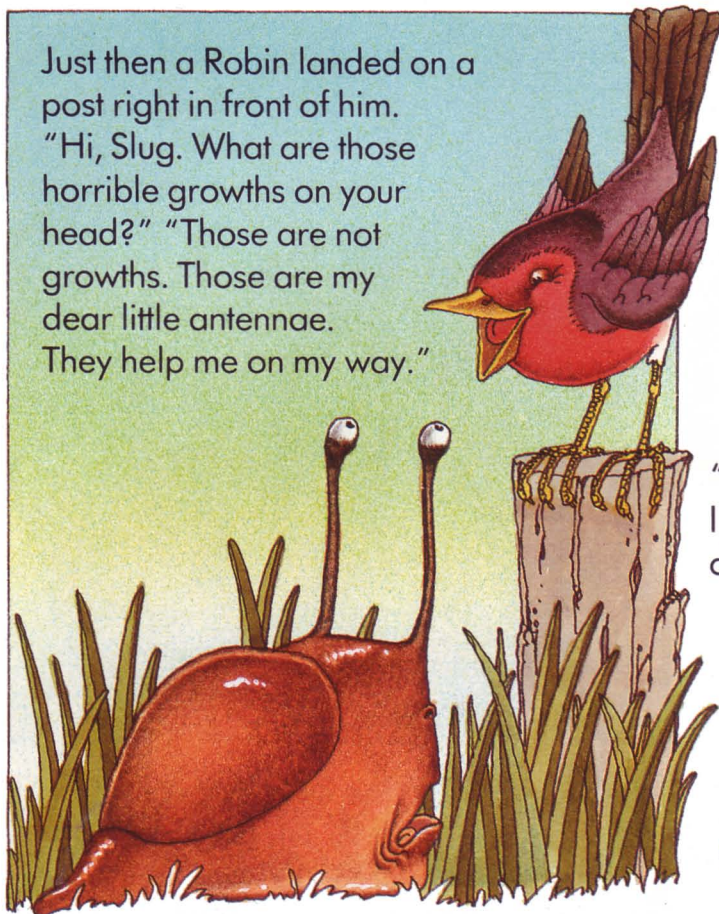


"Hardly!" scoffed Blackbird. "Anyway, I must fly. I'm going to sing to the children, and then they'll sing back to me."

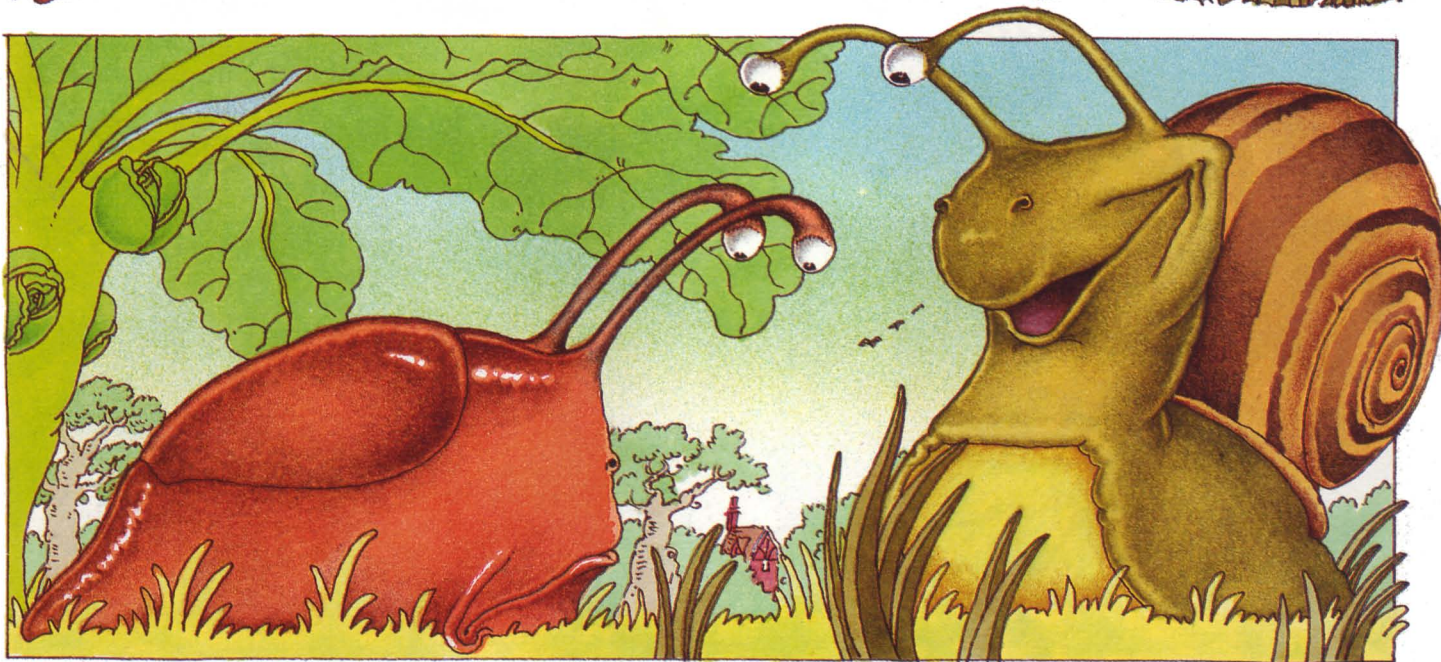
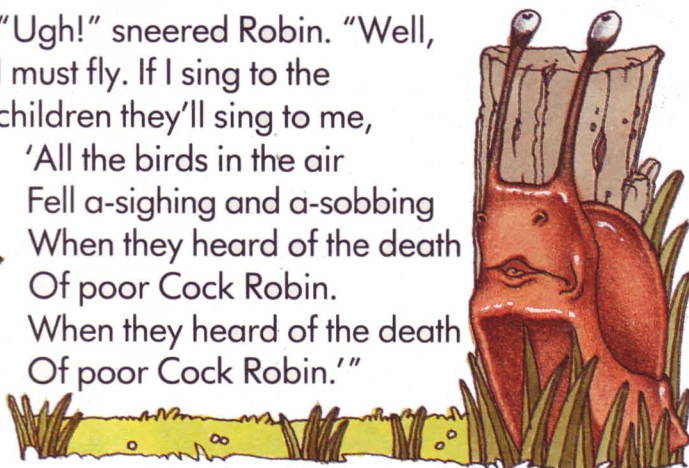


So Blackbird flew away, singing:
"Sing a song of sixpence,
A pocketful of rye,
Four and twenty blackbirds
Baked in a pie."
Slug was miserable. He wished the children would sing to him. "Nobody loves a slug," he sighed.

Just then a Robin landed on a post right in front of him. "Hi, Slug. What are those horrible growths on your head?" "Those are not growths. Those are my dear little antennae. They help me on my way."



"Ugh!" sneered Robin. "Well, I must fly. If I sing to the children they'll sing to me, 'All the birds in the air Fell a-sighing and a-sobbing When they heard of the death Of poor Cock Robin. When they heard of the death Of poor Cock Robin.'"



Slug was now very depressed. He wished the children would sing to him. "Nobody loves a slug," he sighed. "I just don't understand it. I *don't* smell nasty, I *don't* make a noise, I'm well-mannered and I'm very attractive — even though I do say it myself."

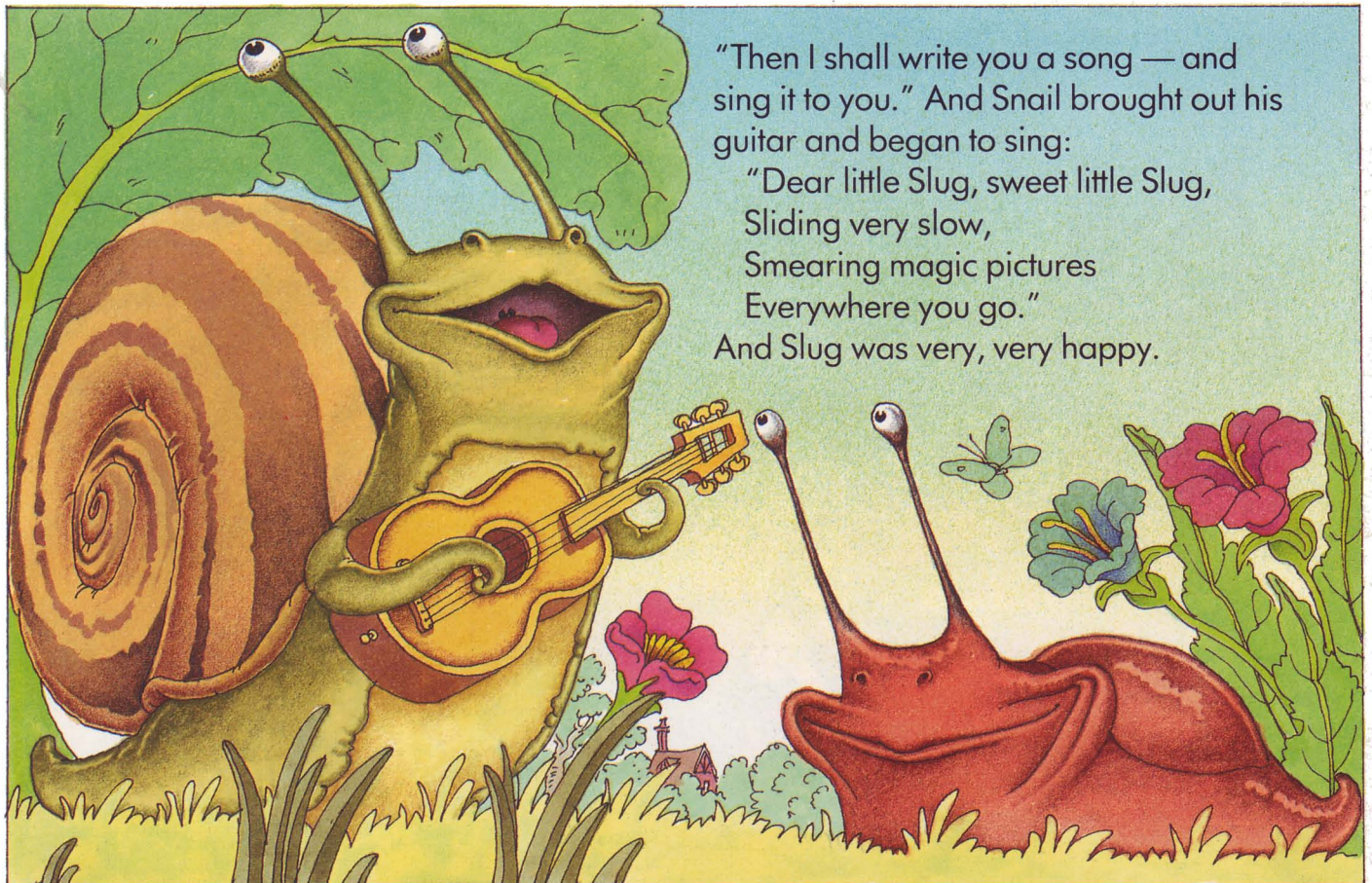
"I agree," said a voice. Slug looked up and saw a handsome creature leaning against a cabbage stalk. It was Snail. "I've been watching you closely and I think it would be hard to find such a charming and attractive creature — apart from a snail, of course."

"In that case," said Slug slowly,
"perhaps you can tell me why there
are no songs about slugs."
"Why, that's because the songs are
horrible and you're nice,"
explained Snail.



"Would you really like to have
your house on fire, or be baked
in a pie, or be killed like Cock
Robin?"

"Well, no," said Slug, "but I
would so love to have a song,
and someone to sing it to me."



"Then I shall write you a song — and
sing it to you." And Snail brought out his
guitar and began to sing:

"Dear little Slug, sweet little Slug,
Sliding very slow,
Smearing magic pictures
Everywhere you go."

And Slug was very, very happy.



▲ LARKSPUR ▲ ▲ GETS ▲ HER ▲ ▲ WINGS ▲



Larkspur the fairy stared at her reflection in the deep, clear pool. "Oh, why don't I have wings?" she wailed. "Why am I such a bad fairy?"

Her eyes filled with tears, so she did not see a new reflection appear in the water. It was only when the Fairy Queen spoke softly to her that she looked up.

"You're not a bad fairy, Larkspur. You're just taking a little longer than usual to learn a few things. Now dry your eyes and tell me what you see in the pool."

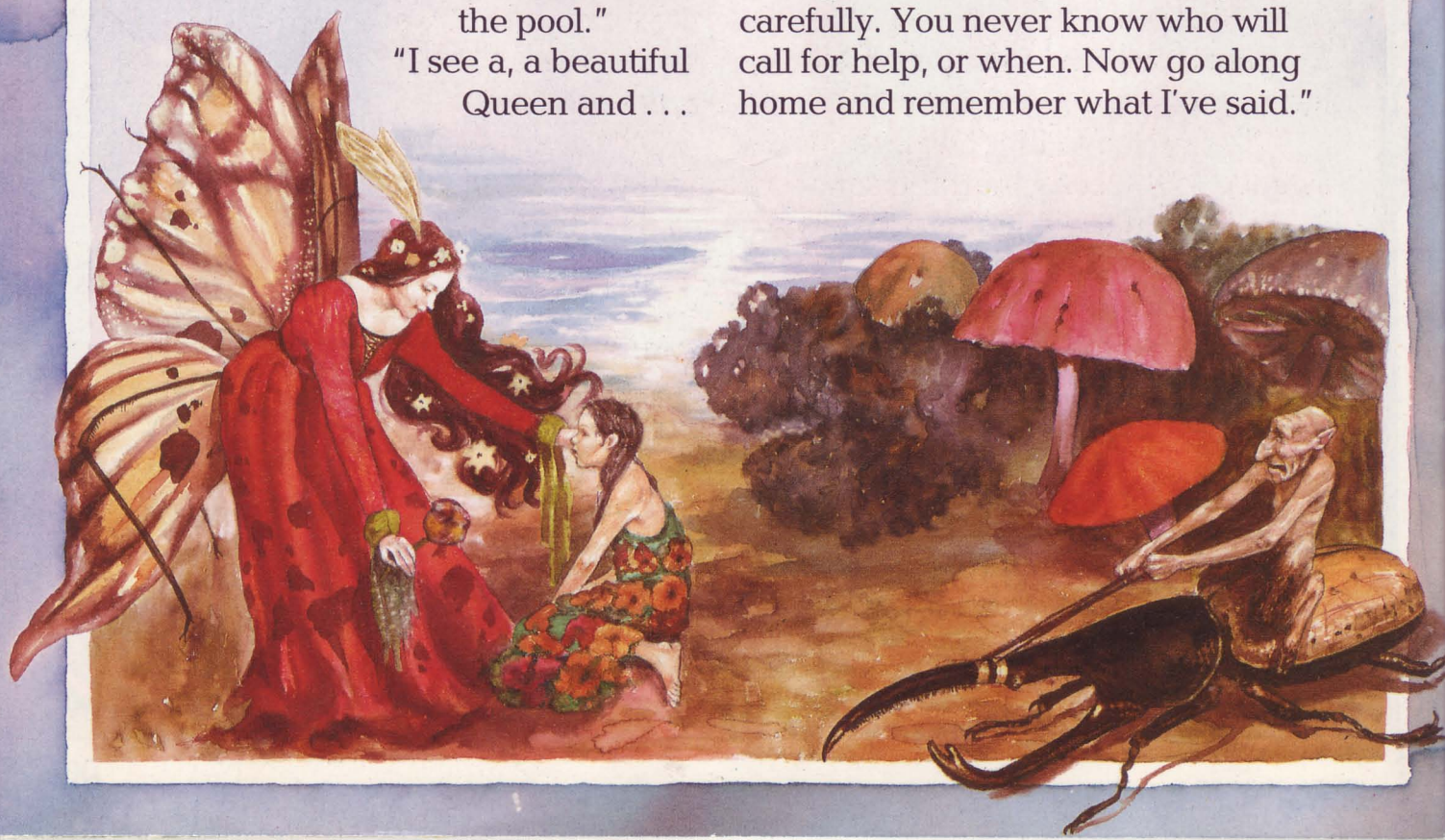
"I see a, a beautiful Queen and . . .

and . . . and an ugly, miserable little fairy."

"There's no ugly fairy here, Larkspur. But there is a pretty fairy who has a frown on her face. And fairies shouldn't frown, they should smile. It's much easier you know."

Larkspur looked at her frowning reflection and smiled. Then she frowned, and smiled — and smiled again. "You're right," she cried. "It is much easier."

"There's something else all fairies should do," said the Queen. "They should always listen very carefully. You never know who will call for help, or when. Now go along home and remember what I've said."





Early next morning Larkspur was woken by the cheerful song of Beryl Blackbird. "Thank you Beryl," she called as she stepped outside her house.

She smiled at the flowers and listened to the early morning sounds. It was then that she heard a strange noise coming from the direction of the pool. She tip-toed forward and peered through the rushes.

A little girl was sitting on the bank, shedding tears into the water below.

"Hello," said Larkspur. "What's the matter?"

The girl stopped crying and stared. "It's all right. I'm real," whispered Larkspur. "I'm a fairy,

so perhaps I can help you."

The girl picked up a doll from the long grass. "I've, I-I've broken Lucy," she sobbed. "H-her face is all dirty and torn."

"Let me see her. Dear me, she really is a mess, isn't she? Never mind, I think I know what to do."

Larkspur took a tiny box of magic dust from her pocket. Then, sprinkling the dust over Lucy's face, she chanted:

*"Magic dust, please make haste
And give Lucy a brand new face."*

There was a flash of silver, and in an instant Lucy had a new face.

"Oh thank you, oh thank you. Lucy's even prettier than before. I must go and show her to mummy."



The little girl ran off, and smiling happily, Larkspur wandered back home. In her bedroom, she peered into the mirror to make sure her smile was just right.

Then, as she turned away, she noticed something which made her squeal with delight. There, on her back, was the start of two lovely wings.

"They're only small," she told herself. "But I'm sure they'll grow."

The next day, she was in the garden when she heard a loud, angry bark. It was followed by a jingling, clanging noise and then a pitiful whimper.

Larkspur hurried out of the garden to see if she could help. Not far away a dog was standing at the side of the road, desperately trying to shake a string of tin cans off his tail.

"Oh you poor thing," Larkspur cried. "Who did this to you?"

"Those nasty boys down the road," whimpered the dog. "They thought it was a great joke, but I tell you, it's not my idea of a joke."

"I should think not. Now keep still and I'll try to untie the knots."

Larkspur struggled with the knots, but they were too tight for her to untie. So, she sprinkled some magic dust over the dog's tail and chanted:

*"Magic dust, act without fail
Remove the cans from this
dog's tail."*





With a flash,
the cans were
gone. The dog
barked his
thanks and,
cheerfully
wagging his tail,
he trotted off
down the road.

Larkspur
went to sit by the pool for a rest. It was
a windy day and the water rippled
round the rushes. But, for a brief
moment, it became quite still, and
she saw her reflection.

"Oh, my wings! They're nearly
full grown. How beautiful they are."

Suddenly, she heard a voice.

"Joey. Where are you Joey?" And then
an old lady carrying an empty bird-cage
was standing right beside her.

"Oh dear, oh dear. I forgot to
shut the window and my parrot flew
away. Oh I do hope he's all right."

"Don't worry," said Larkspur
gently. "I'll find him. Why don't you
sit down here and rest?"

Larkspur whistled a special note
and waited. There was no answer.
She wandered through the woods,
every so often stopping to whistle.

At last she heard a faint whistle
in reply. She followed the sound until
she came to poor Joey, hopelessly
entangled in a bramble bush.

Then sprinkling the magic dust
over the bush she chanted:

*"Magic dust, please don't amble
Release poor Joey from the bramble."*

There was a flash, and in an
instant Joey was back in his cage.



The old lady was delighted. But Larkspur was so tired that all she could think of was how to get home quickly to bed.

"You could try flying, Larkspur."

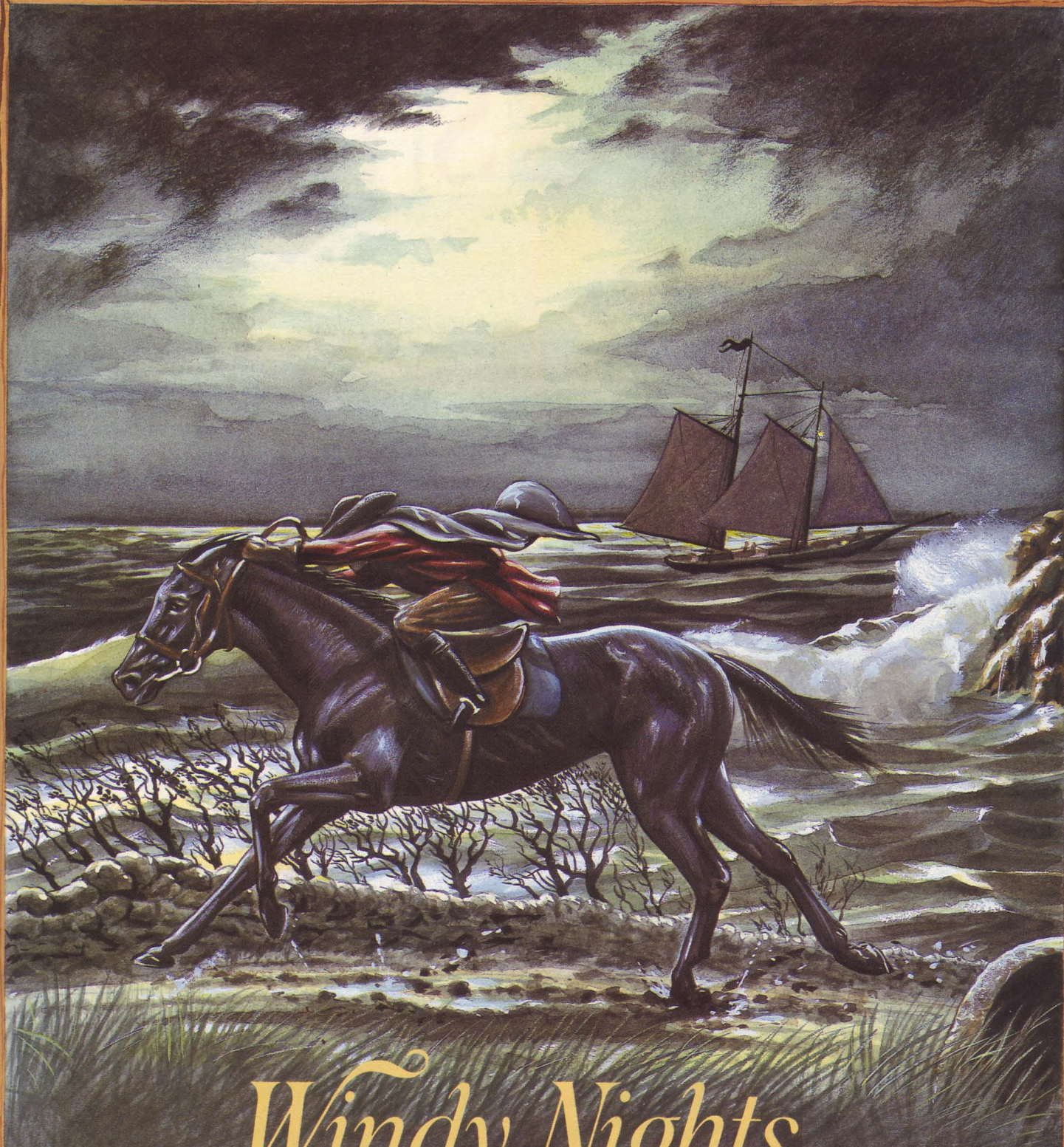
Larkspur turned and there behind her was the Fairy Queen.

"Well done, my dear. Like all good fairies you have learned to smile and show kindness to others. You deserve your beautiful wings."

Larkspur smiled thankfully. Then, very proudly, she fluttered her wings and flew — flew all the way home.

She could have cried for joy. At last she was a fully-fledged fairy.





Windy Nights

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

IN PART 8 OF

STORY Teller 2

GOBBOLINO AND THE LITTLE WOODEN HORSE

risk everything to save little Sootical!

Once upon a time the animals held beauty contests — and that's **HOW THE POLAR BEAR BECAME** what she is today

What is the tramp's secret recipe for **STONE SOUP?**

The people who lived there thought it was **THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HOUSE** in the world — even though it was made of paper!

It wasn't the conductor who caught cold, it wasn't the musicians who missed the show — it was **THE ORCHESTRA THAT LOST ITS VOICE**

In **THE MAN WHO KNEW BETTER**, a man swops places with his wife for the day. He should have known better!

PLUS a classroom monster called **THE MARROG**

Readers include
**SHEILA HANCOCK,
ROBIN NEDWELL &
STEVEN PACEY**

