



Don Quixote

Adventures of a Spanish Knight



Retold by Rachel Bladon
Illustrated by Tom McGrath



Many years ago, in a place called La Mancha in Spain, an old man lived with his niece. The old man had a big house, with many fields. The house and the fields needed a lot of work, but the old man never had time. He was always too busy reading stories about knights. Stories are wonderful, but the man read *all day, every day*, and never did *any work!*

‘You and your books!’ his niece said to him.

‘Go out and look at your fields.’

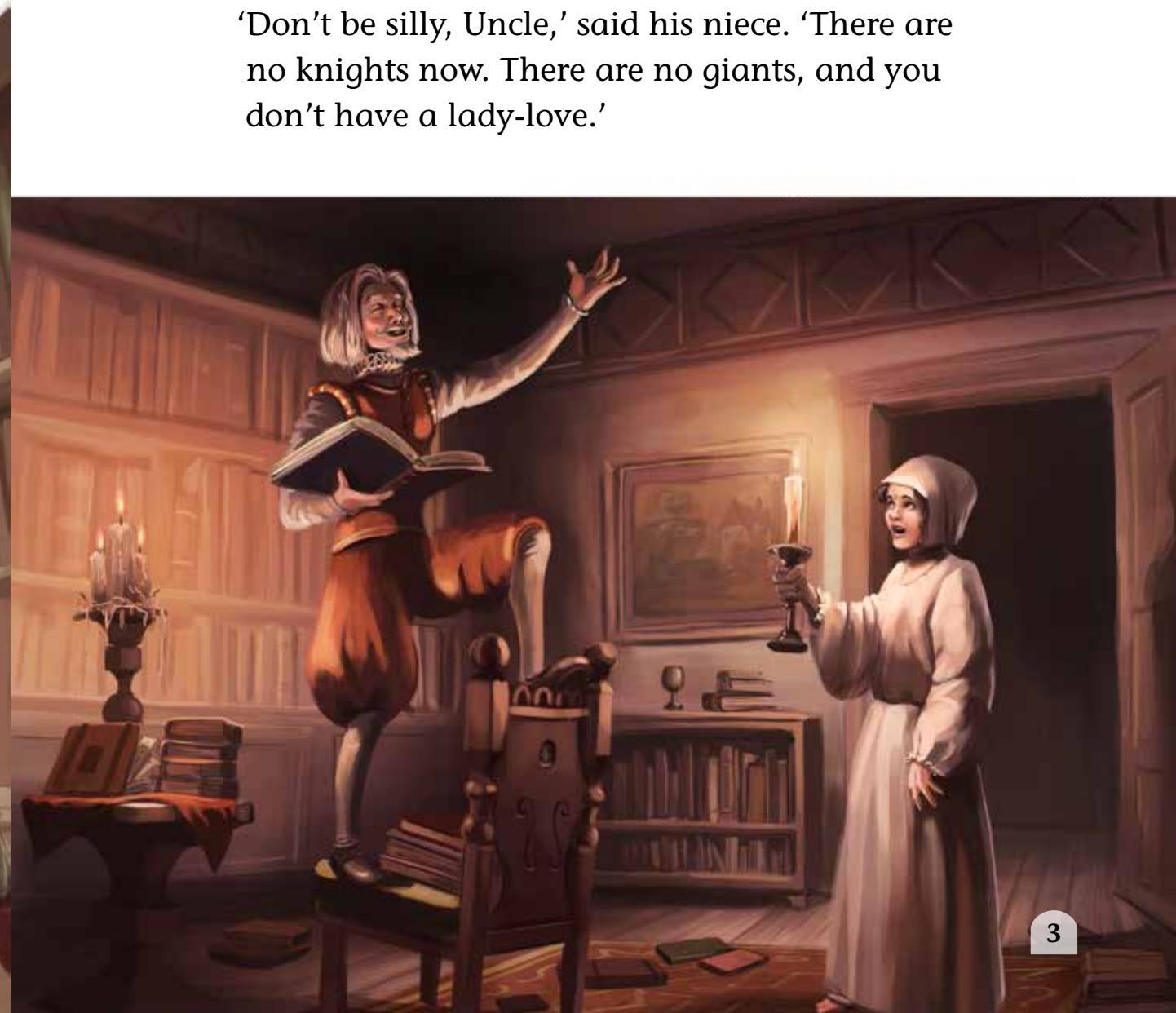
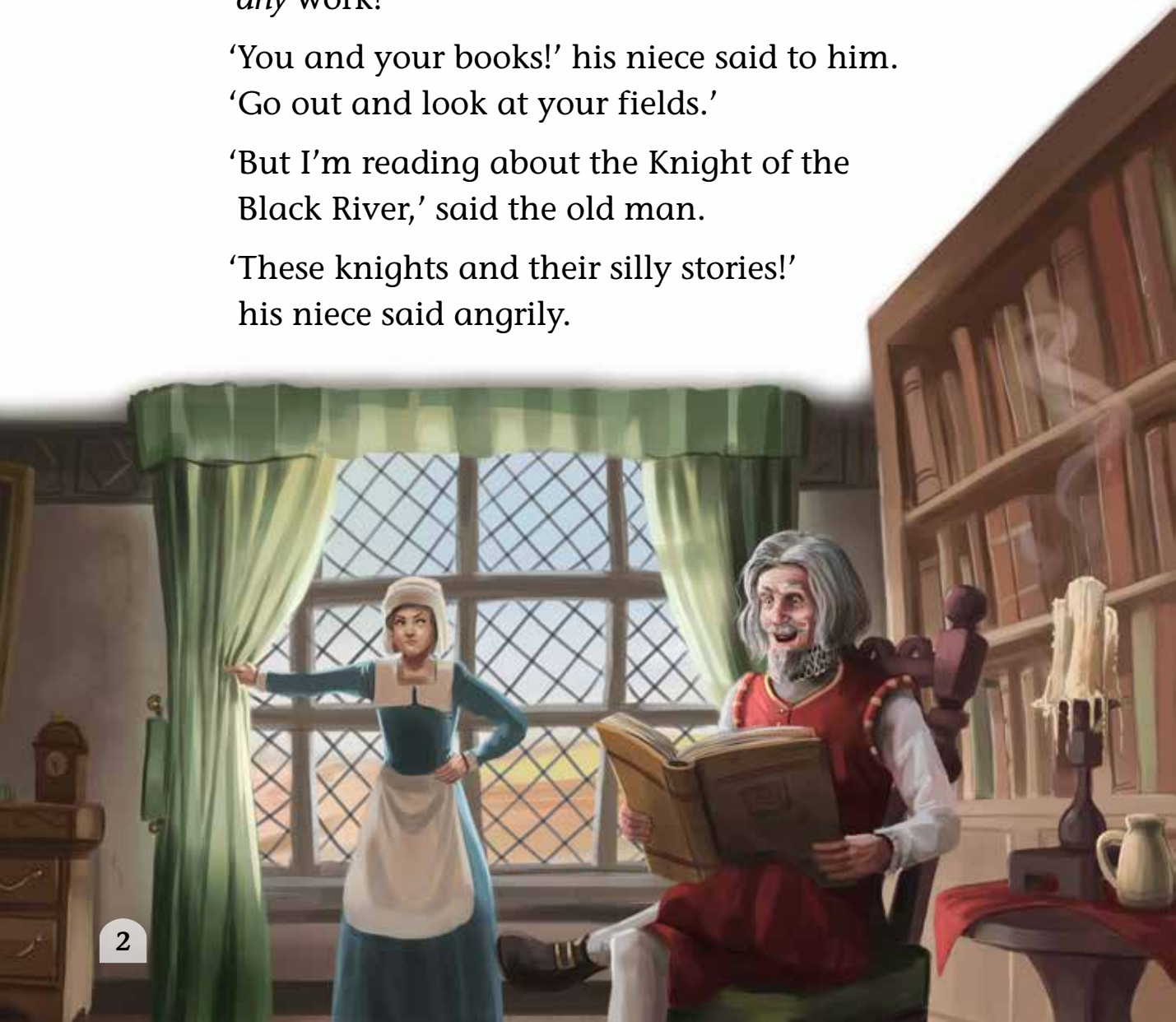
‘But I’m reading about the Knight of the Black River,’ said the old man.

‘These knights and their silly stories!’ his niece said angrily.

The old man read more and more – and soon he read all day, and all night too. He sold his fields because he wanted to buy more books. And, because he never worked and never slept, he began to have many silly ideas in his head.

‘I want to be a great knight like the knights in my books,’ he told his niece. ‘I want to fight giants for my lady-love.’

‘Don’t be silly, Uncle,’ said his niece. ‘There are no knights now. There are no giants, and you don’t have a lady-love.’

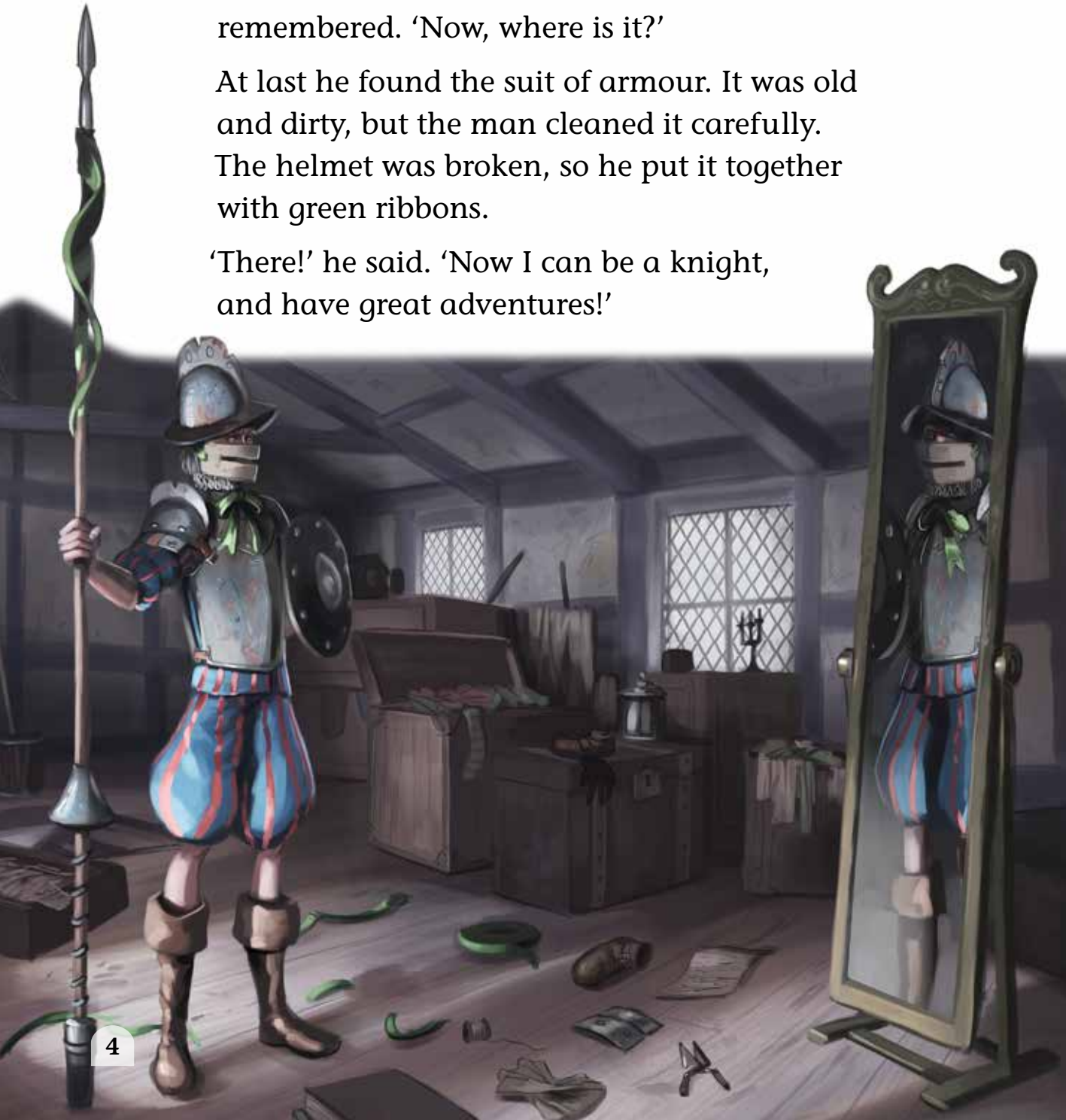


But the old man had more and more silly ideas. One morning, he suddenly thought of something.

‘There’s a suit of armour in the house!’ he remembered. ‘Now, where is it?’

At last he found the suit of armour. It was old and dirty, but the man cleaned it carefully. The helmet was broken, so he put it together with green ribbons.

‘There!’ he said. ‘Now I can be a knight, and have great adventures!’



He went out to his old horse. ‘You are the horse of a great knight now,’ he said. ‘So you need a new name. I will call you Rocinante!’

The horse looked at him, and then went on eating.

‘And my name,’ he said, ‘will be Don Quixote!’





‘Now I need a squire,’ Don Quixote thought.
‘All knights have squires.’

Just then, he saw a farm worker called Sancho outside his house. Sancho was a good man, but not a very clever one.

‘Sancho will be a good squire,’ Don Quixote thought. ‘I’ll go and ask him.’

‘I would like to be your squire,’ Sancho said to Don Quixote. ‘But I can’t leave my wife and daughter.’

‘We’ll have great adventures,’ Don Quixote said. ‘We’ll do good things for people, and we’ll be rich.’

Sancho thought for a moment. ‘I would like to have great adventures, do good things, and be rich. Very well, then, Master, I will be your squire. I will bring my donkey, and come with you.’

‘Good,’ said Don Quixote. ‘Tell no one about this, Sancho. We will leave tonight!’