

Classic Tales



Level 2

# King Arthur and the Sword



OXFORD



# King Arthur and the Sword

*Retold by Rachel Bladon  
Illustrated by Andy Catling*



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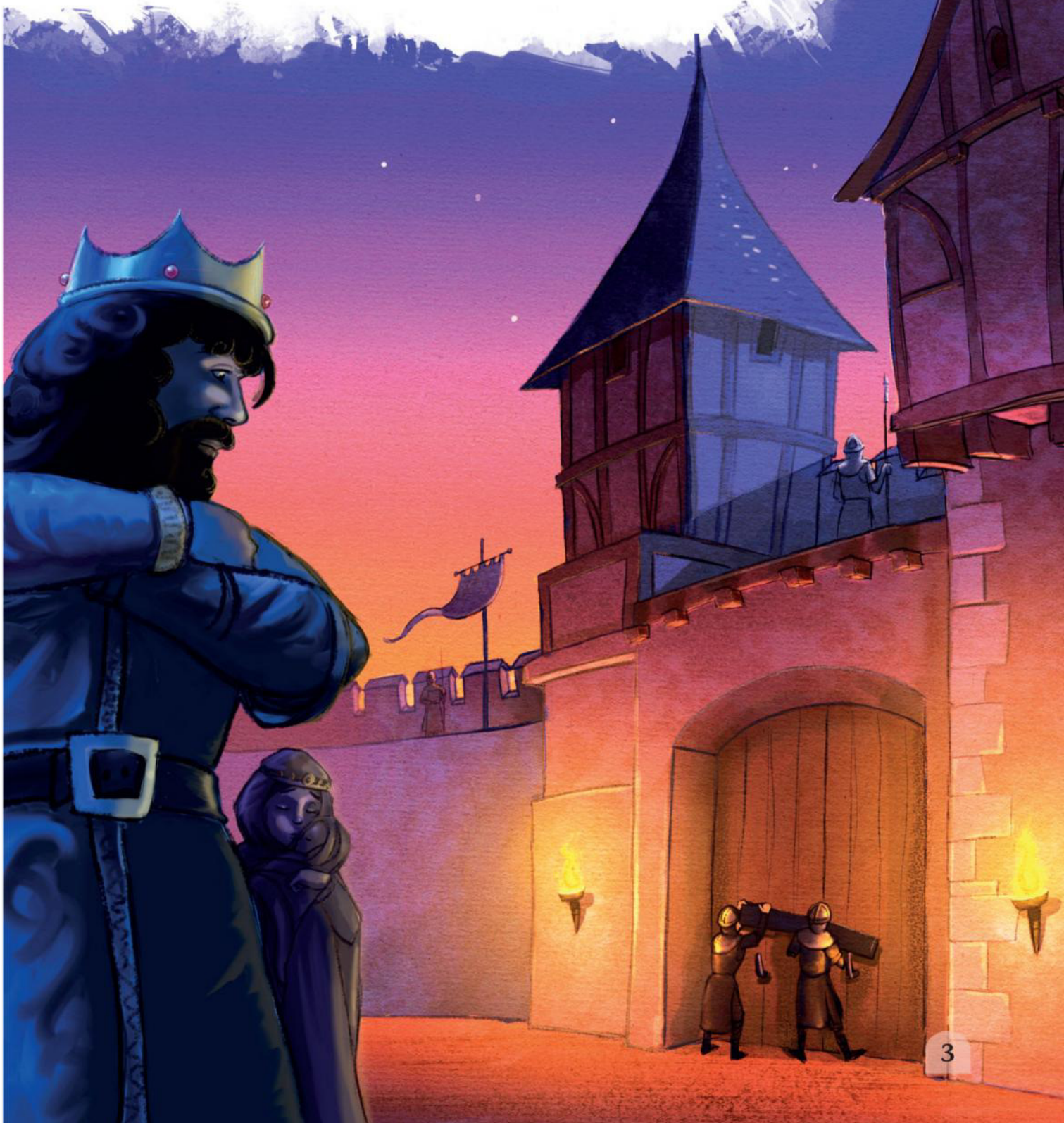
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Uther is the king of England. He is a good king. He and his queen have a beautiful baby boy.



But England is not a safe place.  
There are many bad men, and they  
want to be king. The boy cannot live  
in the castle, because it is not safe.

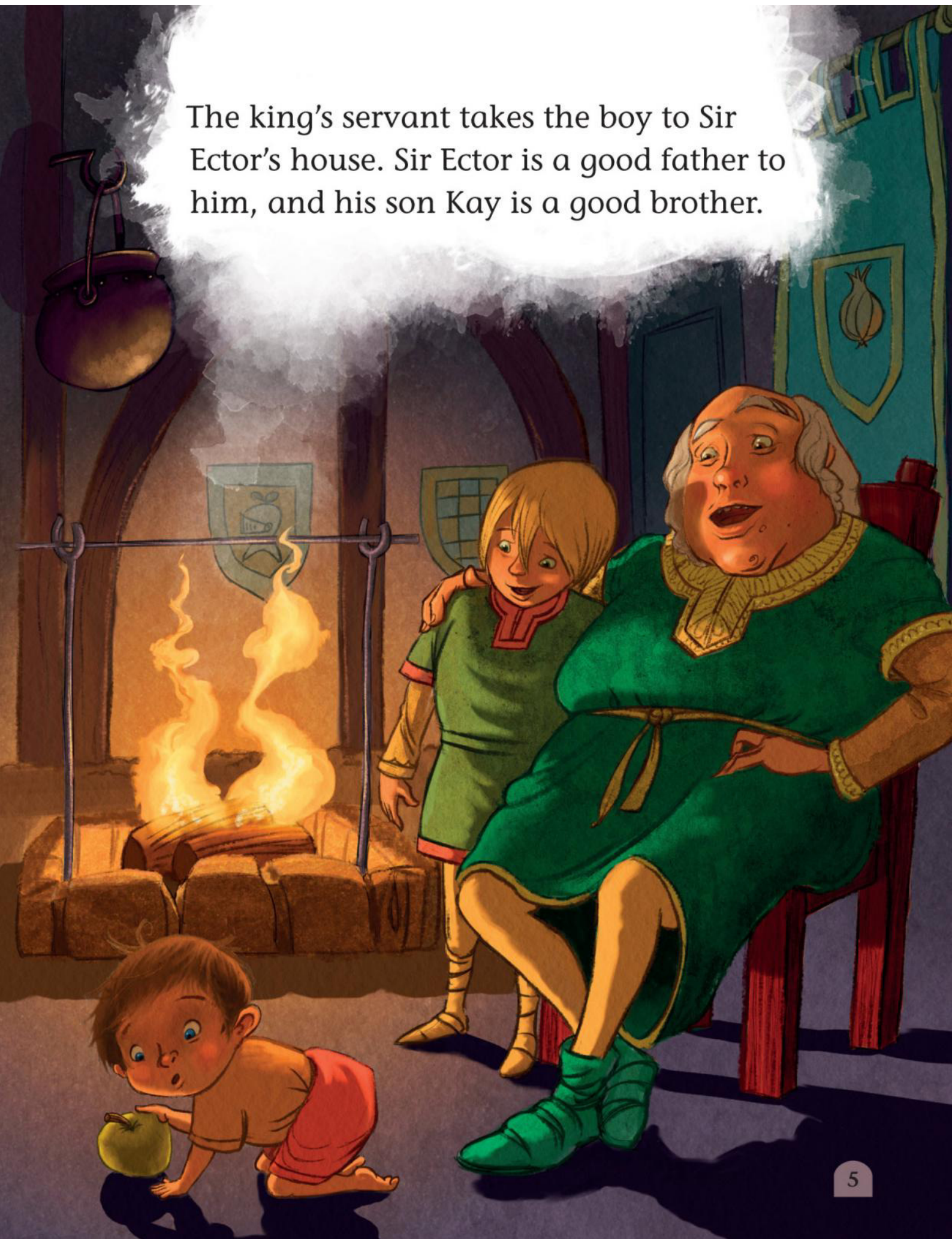


One day the king says to the queen, 'Sir Ector is a good man. He is a good knight. Our boy can live with Sir Ector and his son.'

So the king says to his servant, 'Take my boy to Sir Ector. But do not say, "This is the king's son." Tell nobody.'



The king's servant takes the boy to Sir Ector's house. Sir Ector is a good father to him, and his son Kay is a good brother.



The boy, Arthur, is soon big and strong. He is the king's son, but he does not know it. He loves Sir Ector, and he loves Sir Ector's son Kay.

Sometimes Sir Ector takes the boys to a tournament. They like to see the beautiful horses, and the strong knights.

'I want to fight in tournaments,' says Kay, 'when I'm older.'



An illustration showing a scene from a story. On the right, a servant in a red tunic and hood sits on a brown horse, holding a scroll with a crown icon and some illegible text. A speech bubble above the scroll says "King Uther is dead." In the center, an older man in a green tunic with gold trim is kneeling on the ground, covering his face with his hands in grief. To his left, a young girl in a green dress stands with her hands on his shoulders, looking down sadly. Further left, a younger child in an orange tunic stands with their hands clasped in prayer. The background shows a stone building with an arched doorway and a wooden structure in the distance under a blue sky.

King Uther is dead.

One day a servant comes to Sir Ector's house.

'King Uther is dead,' the servant says.

Sir Ector falls to his knees, and he cries for the king of England.

'Come tomorrow to the big stone on the road to London,' says the servant. 'All the king's knights must go there.'





So, the next day, Sir Ector goes to the big stone on the road to London. Merlin and all the knights of England are there.

Merlin is a good man. He is a friend of the kings of England, and he knows many things.

There is a sword in the stone. It is a beautiful sword, with jewels on it.

‘Only the king of England can take this sword out of the stone!’ Merlin says. ‘Who wants to try?’

One knight comes to the stone. He pulls and he pulls, but the sword doesn’t move.

Then another knight tries, and another. But nobody can take the sword out of the stone.





I can take the sword out.

Every day, men come to the big stone on the road to London.

‘I am a good, strong man,’ each one says. ‘I can take the sword out, and be king of England.’

Everyone tries, but nobody can take the sword out. And so England has no king.

Kay and Arthur are older now. Kay is a knight, and he fights in many tournaments.

One day there is a tournament in London. It is a big tournament, and Merlin, the queen, and all the knights of England are there.

But Kay suddenly says, 'Where is my sword?'

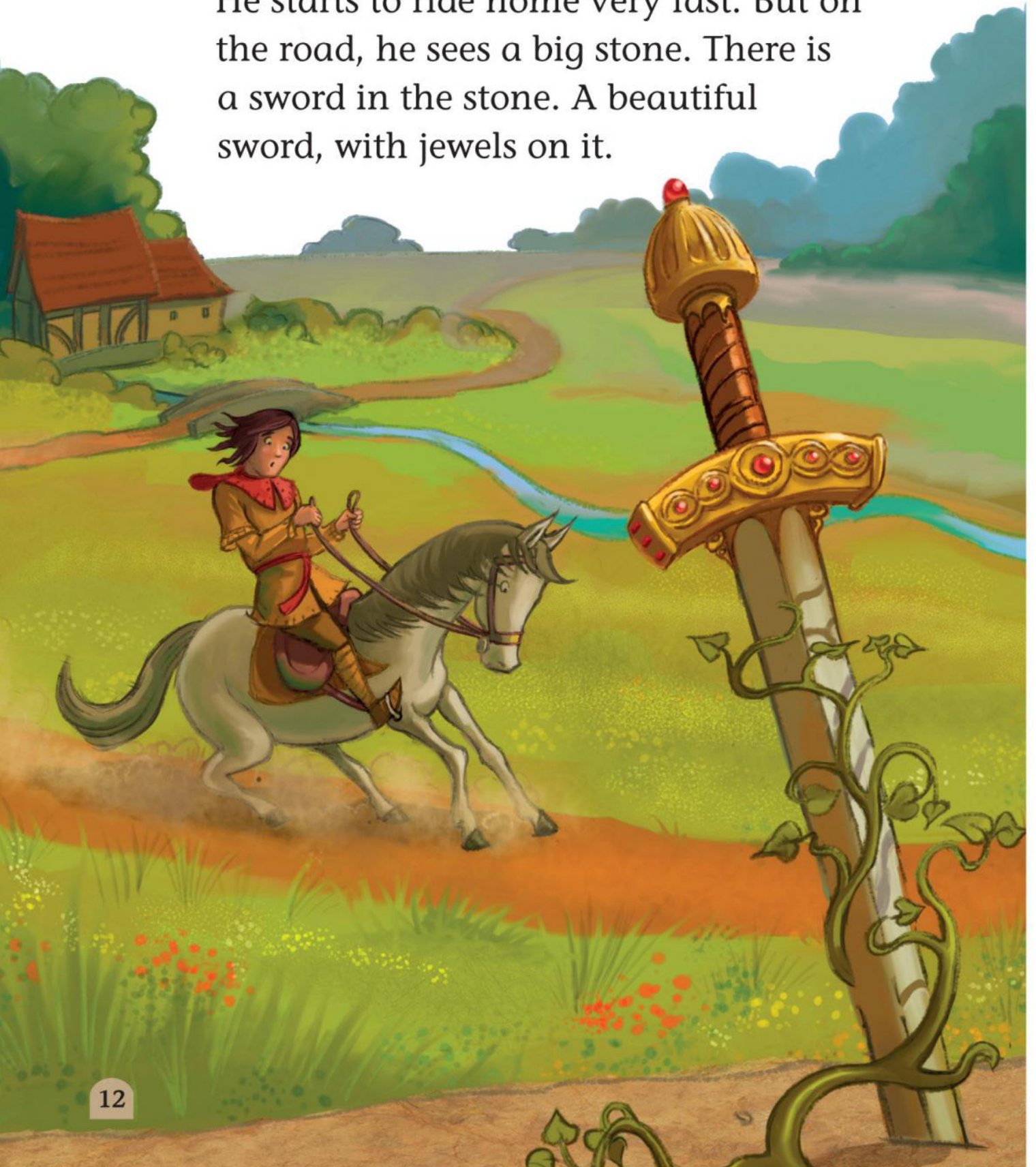
Oh no! Kay's sword is at home, in his room.

Where is my sword?



‘I can ride home, Kay,’ says Arthur. ‘I can ride home fast, and get your sword!’

He starts to ride home very fast. But on the road, he sees a big stone. There is a sword in the stone. A beautiful sword, with jewels on it.





‘Kay can fight with this sword,’ Arthur thinks. ‘Then I can put it back after the tournament.’

Arthur pulls the sword, and it comes out of the stone. Then he rides to the tournament.



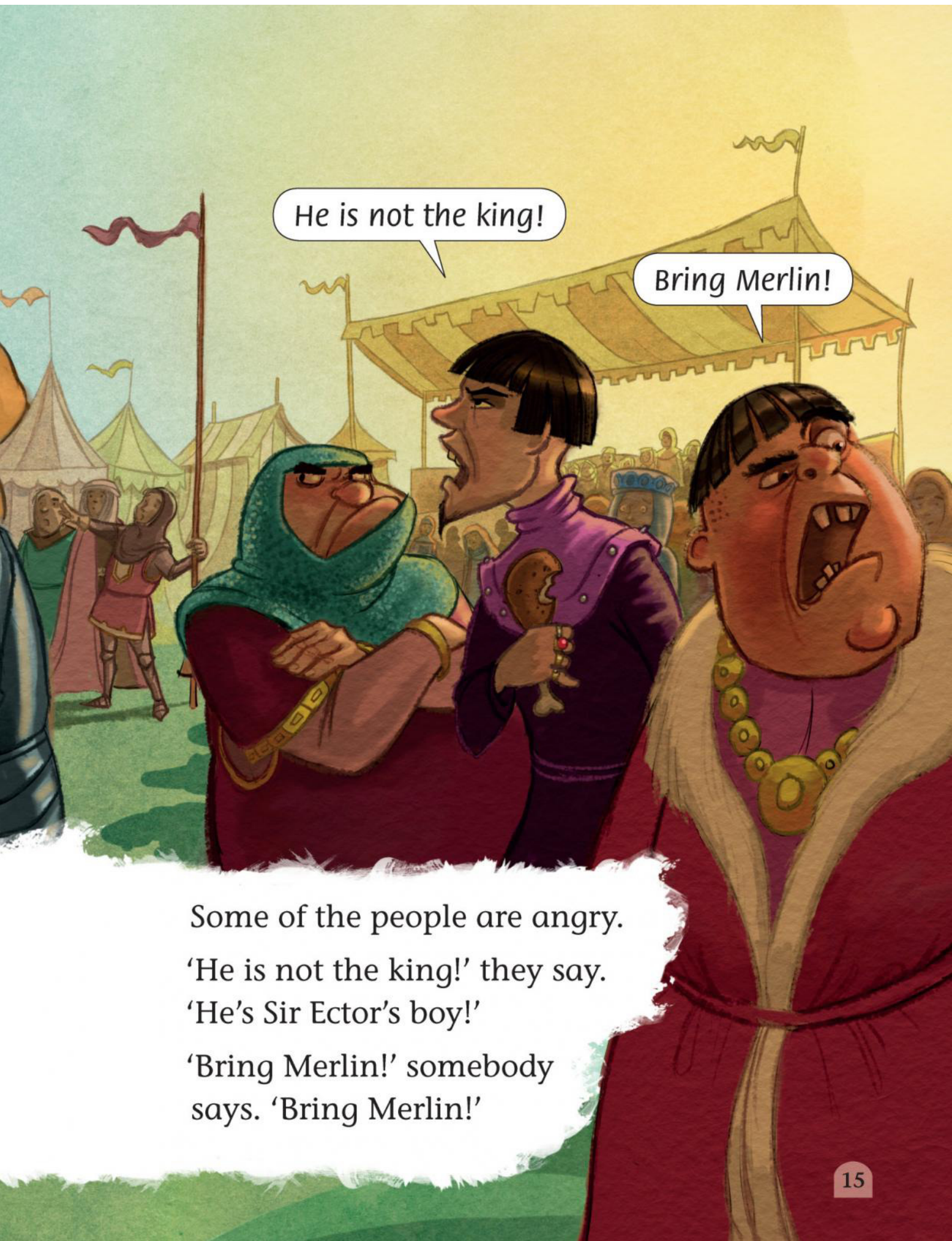
Here's a sword, Kay!

This boy is  
the king!

Arthur takes the sword to Kay and says, 'Here's a sword, Kay! You can fight with this sword. Then I can put it back.'

But the people at the tournament all stop and look.

'It's the sword!' one person says. 'The sword from the stone! This boy is the king! He is the new king of England!'

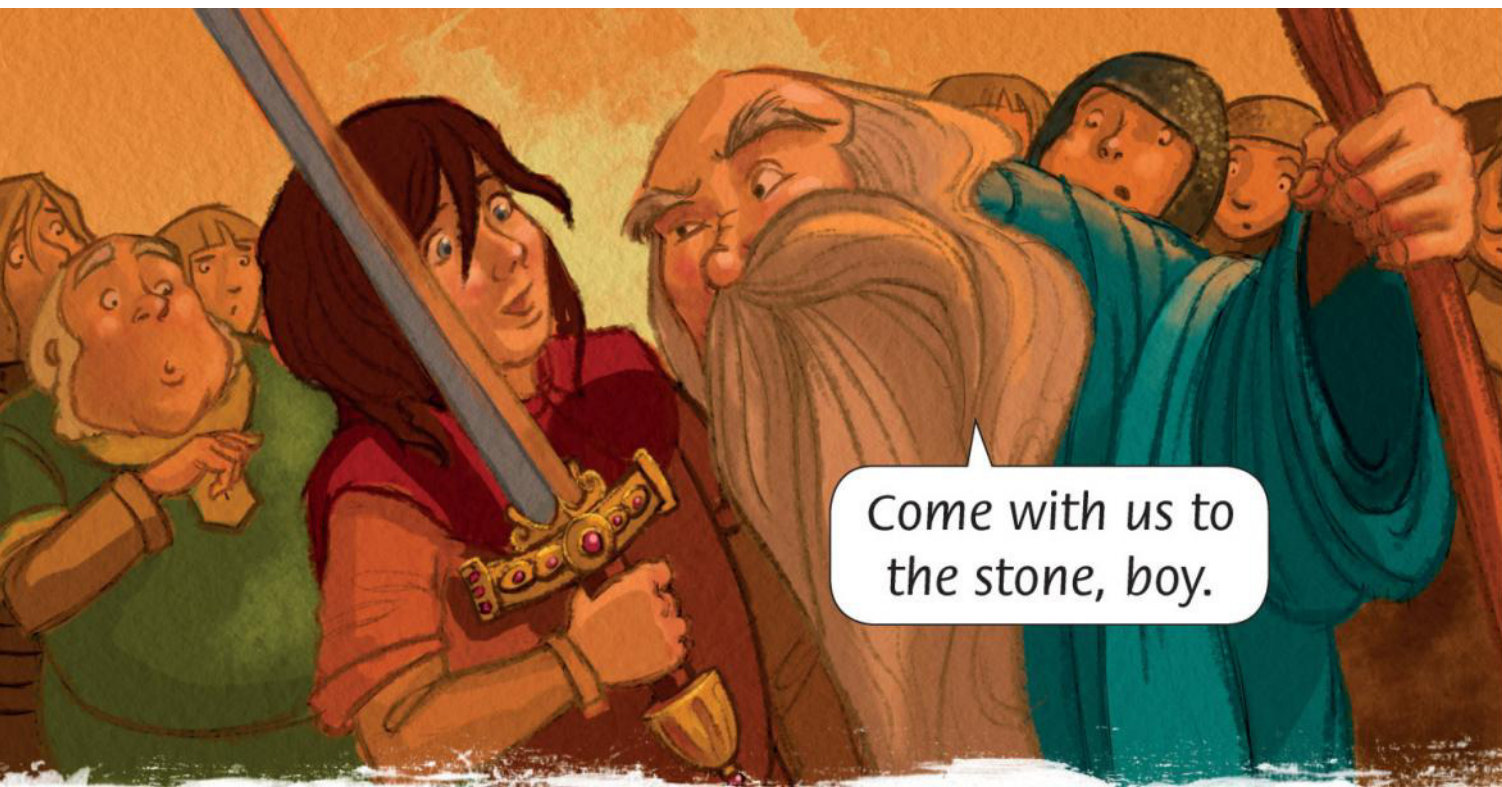


He is not the king!

Bring Merlin!

Some of the people are angry.  
'He is not the king!' they say.  
'He's Sir Ector's boy!'  
'Bring Merlin!' somebody  
says. 'Bring Merlin!'



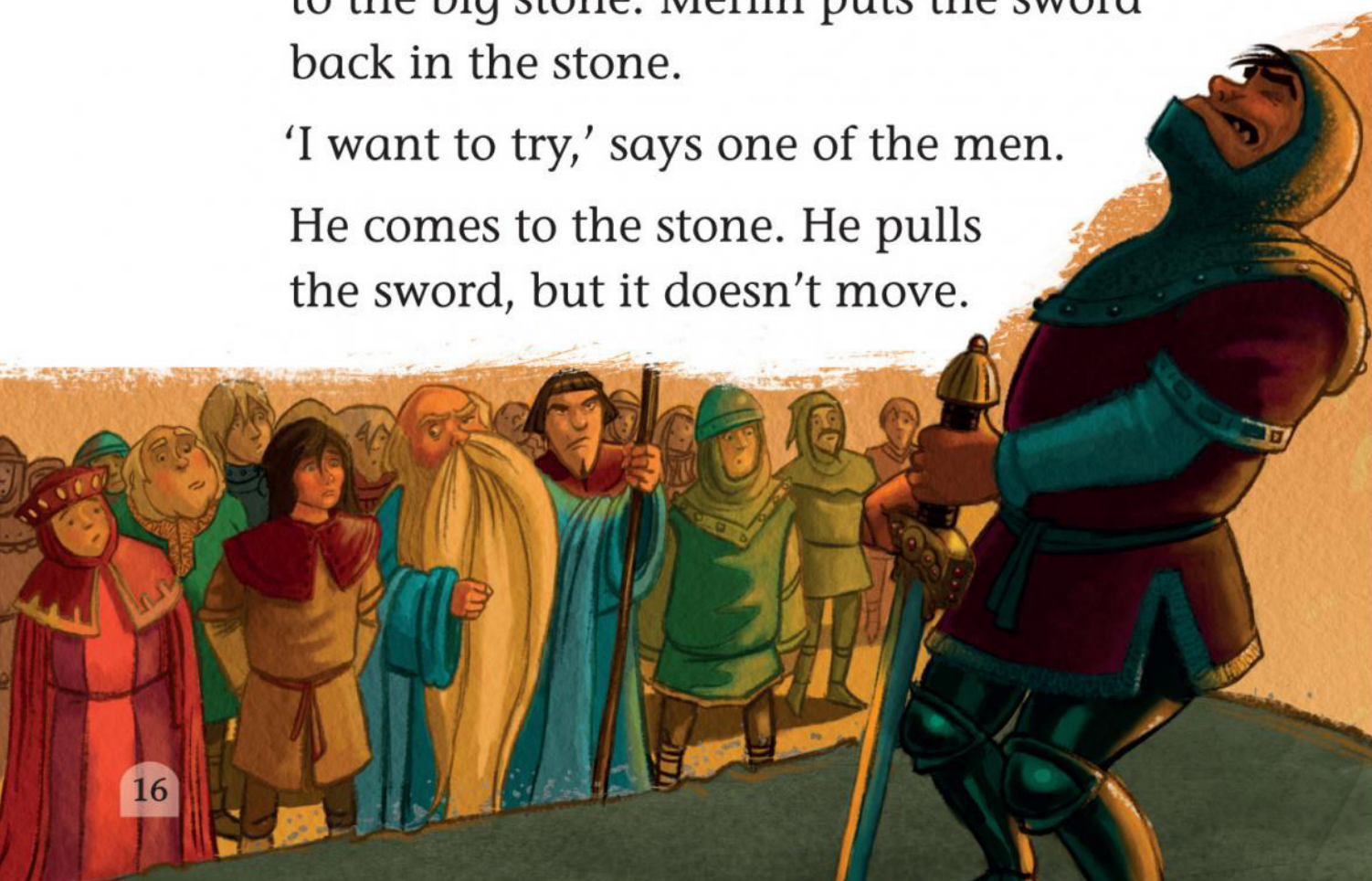


Merlin sees the sword, and he says,  
'Come with us to the stone, boy.'

So Merlin, Arthur, and all the people go  
to the big stone. Merlin puts the sword  
back in the stone.

'I want to try,' says one of the men.

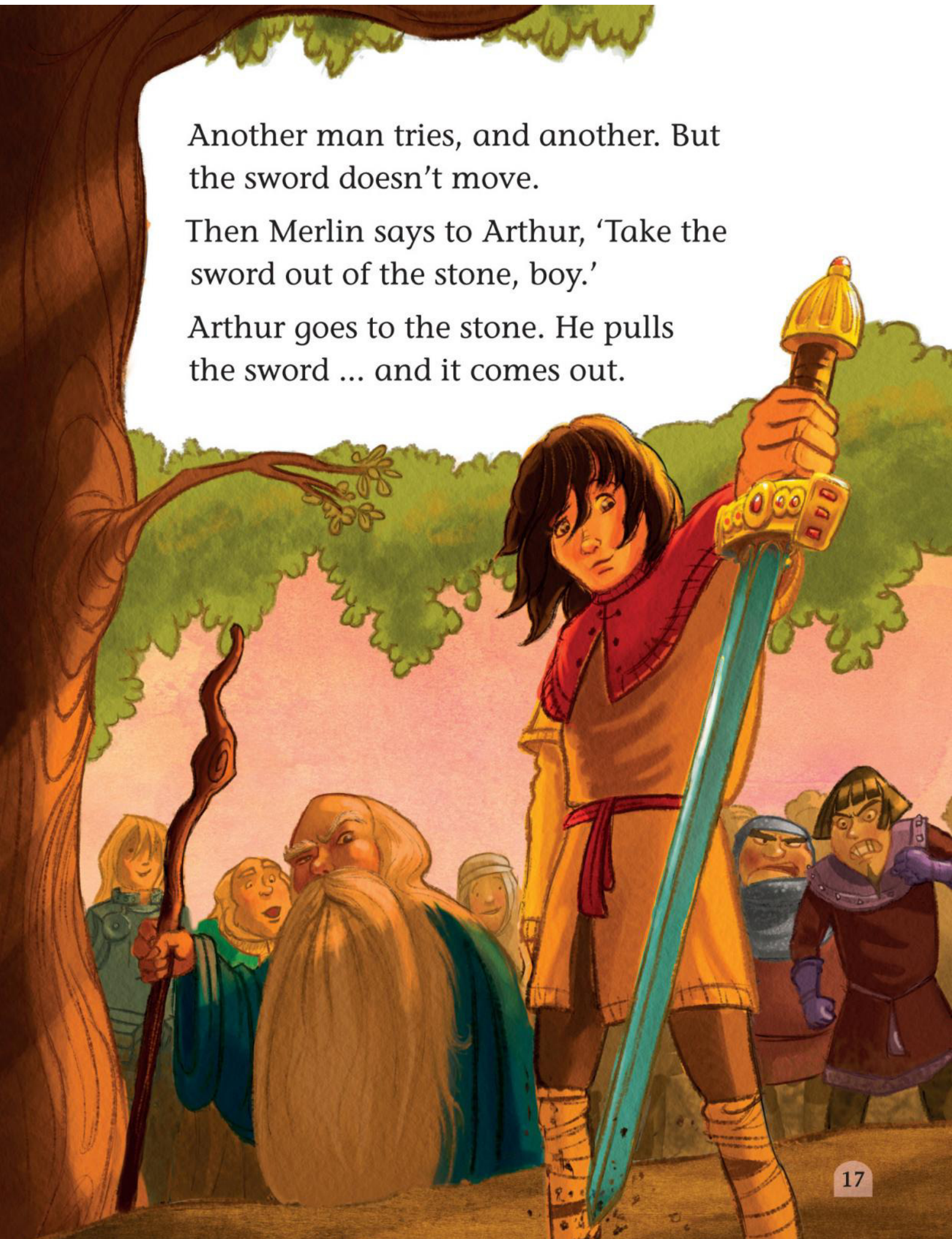
He comes to the stone. He pulls  
the sword, but it doesn't move.



Another man tries, and another. But the sword doesn't move.

Then Merlin says to Arthur, 'Take the sword out of the stone, boy.'

Arthur goes to the stone. He pulls the sword ... and it comes out.



'He is the king!' the people say.

'I am not a king,' Arthur says.

'My father is Sir Ector.'

Now King Uther's servant comes to Arthur and falls to his knees. 'Sir Ector is not your father,' he says.

'You are the son of King Uther.'

'And now you are king of England,' says Merlin.

'We have a king!' the people say. 'England has a king!'

And now you are king of England.

You are the son of King Uther.





So from that day, Arthur is king of England. He lives in Uther's castle, with Merlin and his mother, and with Sir Ector and Kay.

Soon King Arthur has a beautiful queen, Guinevere. He is a good king and the people love him. And he always carries the beautiful sword – the sword from the stone.



# Exercises

## 1 Write the names.

Arthur Kay King Uther ~~Sir Ector~~ Merlin Guinevere

- 1 The servant takes King Uther's baby boy to Sir Ector.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ wants to fight in tournaments when he's older.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ is a friend of the kings of England.
- 4 A servant tells Sir Ector, ' \_\_\_\_\_ is dead.'
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ pulls the sword out of the stone.
- 6 England soon has a new queen, \_\_\_\_\_.

## 2 Answer the questions.

- 1 Who's this? It's Arthur.
- 2 Can he pull the sword out of the stone? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Does he take the sword to Kay?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Is he Sir Ector's son?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Is he King Uther's son?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Is he the new king of England? \_\_\_\_\_



### 3 Match and write the words.

safe ~~beautiful~~ strong bad baby big



a beautiful horse



a \_\_\_\_\_ knight



a \_\_\_\_\_ boy



a \_\_\_\_\_ stone



a \_\_\_\_\_ place



a \_\_\_\_\_ man

### 4 Make sentences about the story. Then number them 1–5.

1 Arthur arrives at the tournament ...

Arthur goes to the stone ...

All the people at the tournament ...

Arthur pulls the sword, ...

Arthur is the new king of England, ...

with Merlin and all the people.

and he lives in Uther's castle.

and it comes out of the stone.

with the sword from the stone.

stop and look.

# Picture Dictionary

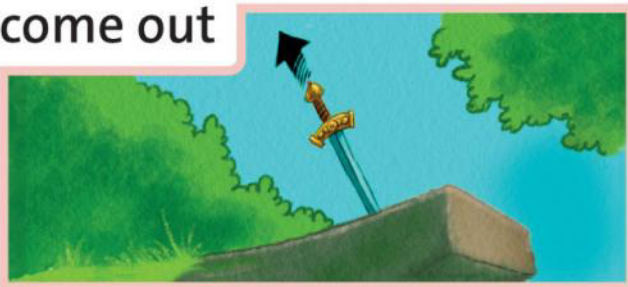
castle



horses



come out



jewels



cry



king



dead *He is dead.*



knees



fight



knight



pull



servant



put back



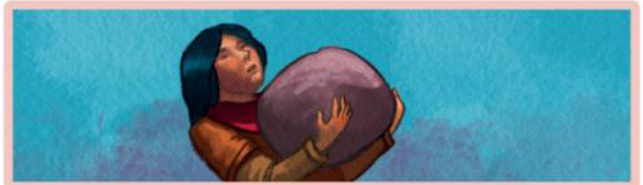
stone



queen



strong *He is strong.*



ride



sword



road



take out



safe *She's safe.*



tournament





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Level 2

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Enjoy this famous English tale of King Arthur  
and the sword in the stone.

**A retelling of the classic story for learners of English**

Retold by Rachel Bladon  
Illustrated by Andy Catling

**Classic Tales – bringing the magic of traditional  
storytelling to language learning**

The stories are carefully graded at Levels 1–5 to provide easy and enjoyable reading. Beautiful illustrations on every page work closely with the text to help understanding. Each *Classic Tale* also includes activities related to the story, and a picture dictionary or glossary.

-  Level 1: 100 headwords
-  **Level 2: 150 headwords**
-  Level 3: 200 headwords
-  Level 4: 300 headwords
-  Level 5: 400 headwords

**Word count for this story: 832**

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