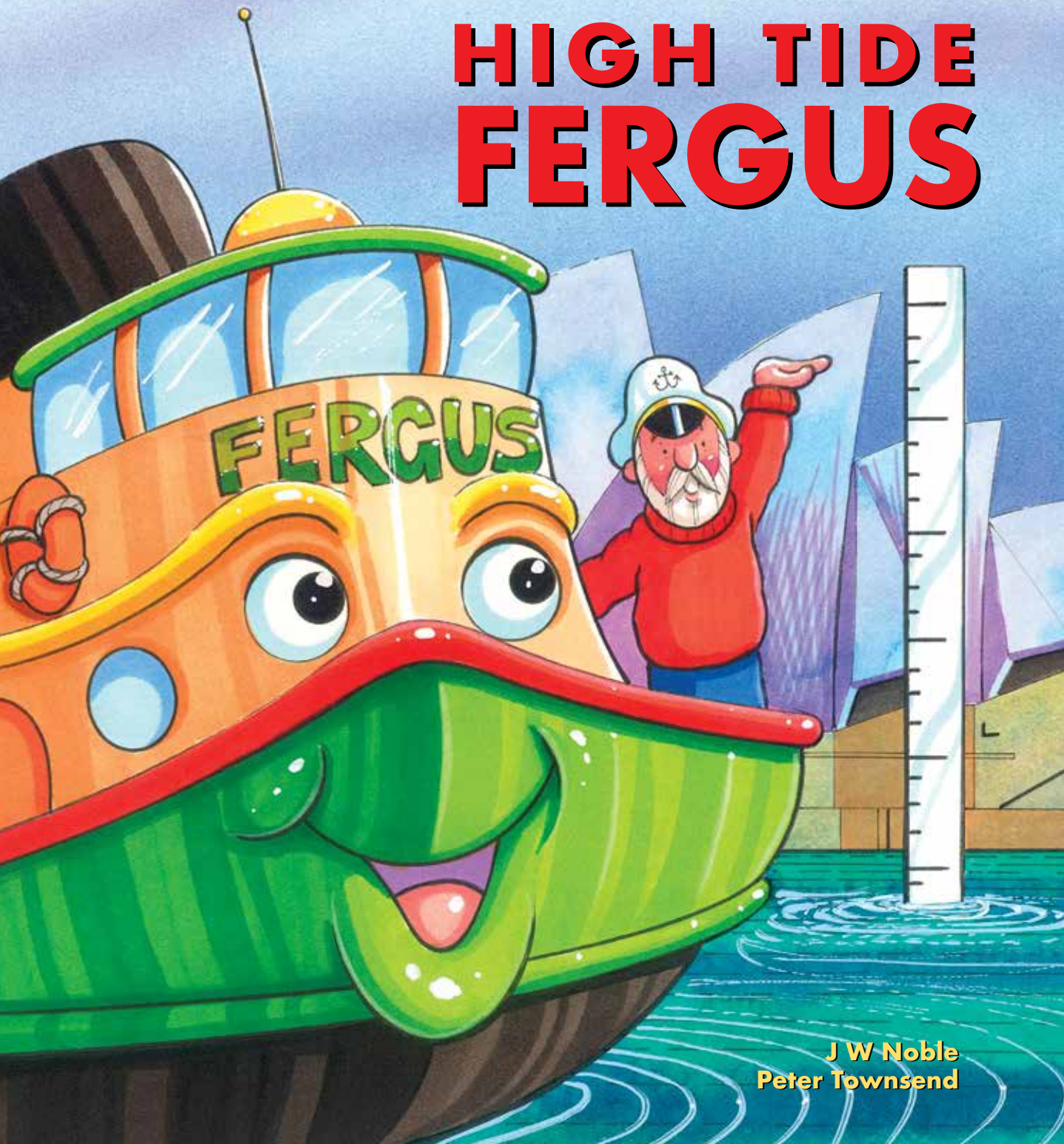


HIGH TIDE FERGUS



J W Noble
Peter Townsend



HIGH TIDE FERGUS

**J W Noble
Peter Townsend**

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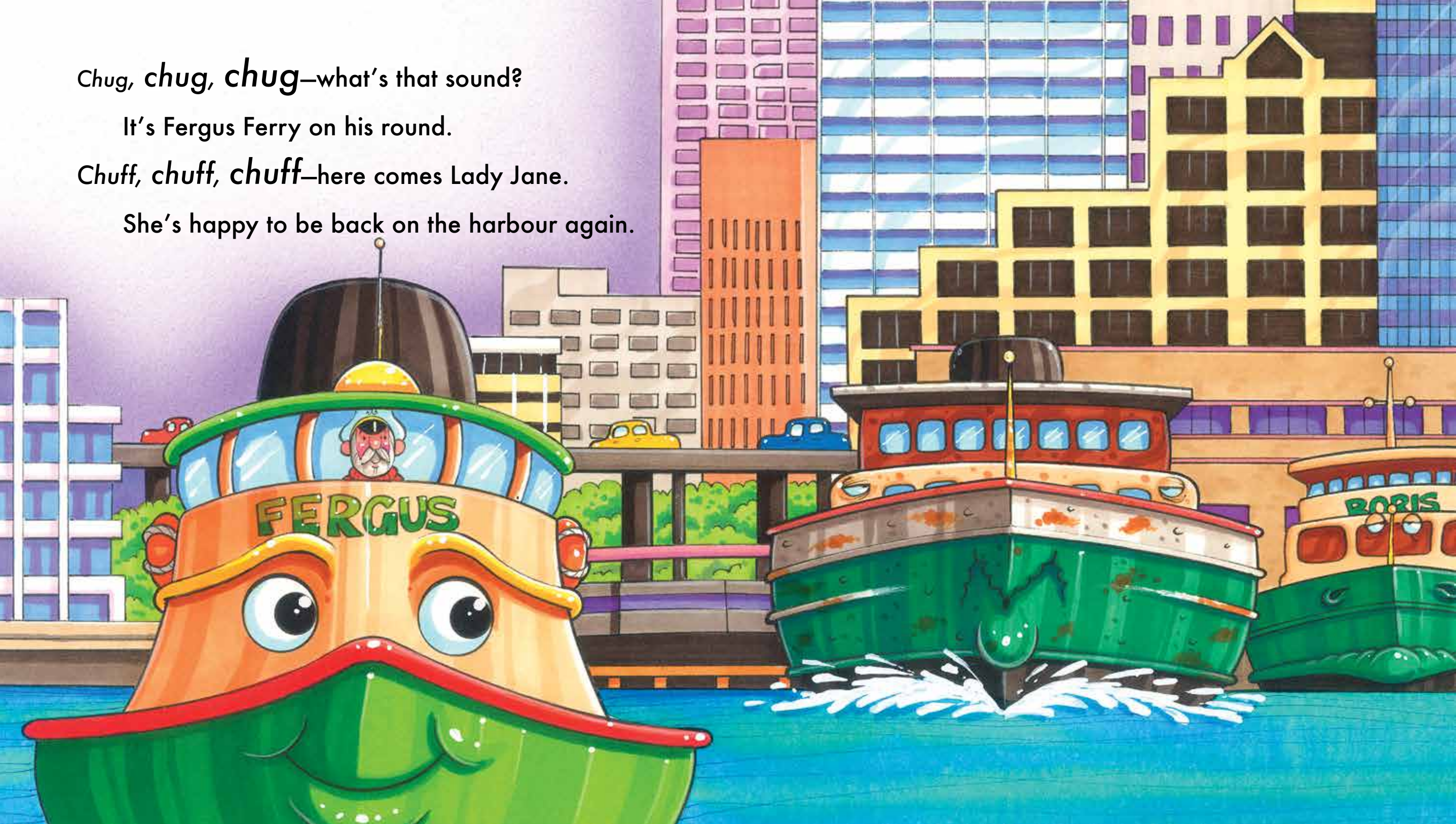
www.fergusferry.com

Chug, chug, chug—what's that sound?

It's Fergus Ferry on his round.

Chuff, chuff, chuff—here comes Lady Jane.

She's happy to be back on the harbour again.



'For years and years, I worked the Manly run.

How I love to feel the wind, waves and sun.

I once ran the harbour in twenty-two minutes flat.'

'Wow!' says Fergus.

'There's still no ferry faster than that!'

'But then,' Jane says, 'they left me on the shelf

And now I'm a shadow of my former self.'



'Barp, barp,' says Boris, 'you there, move aside.

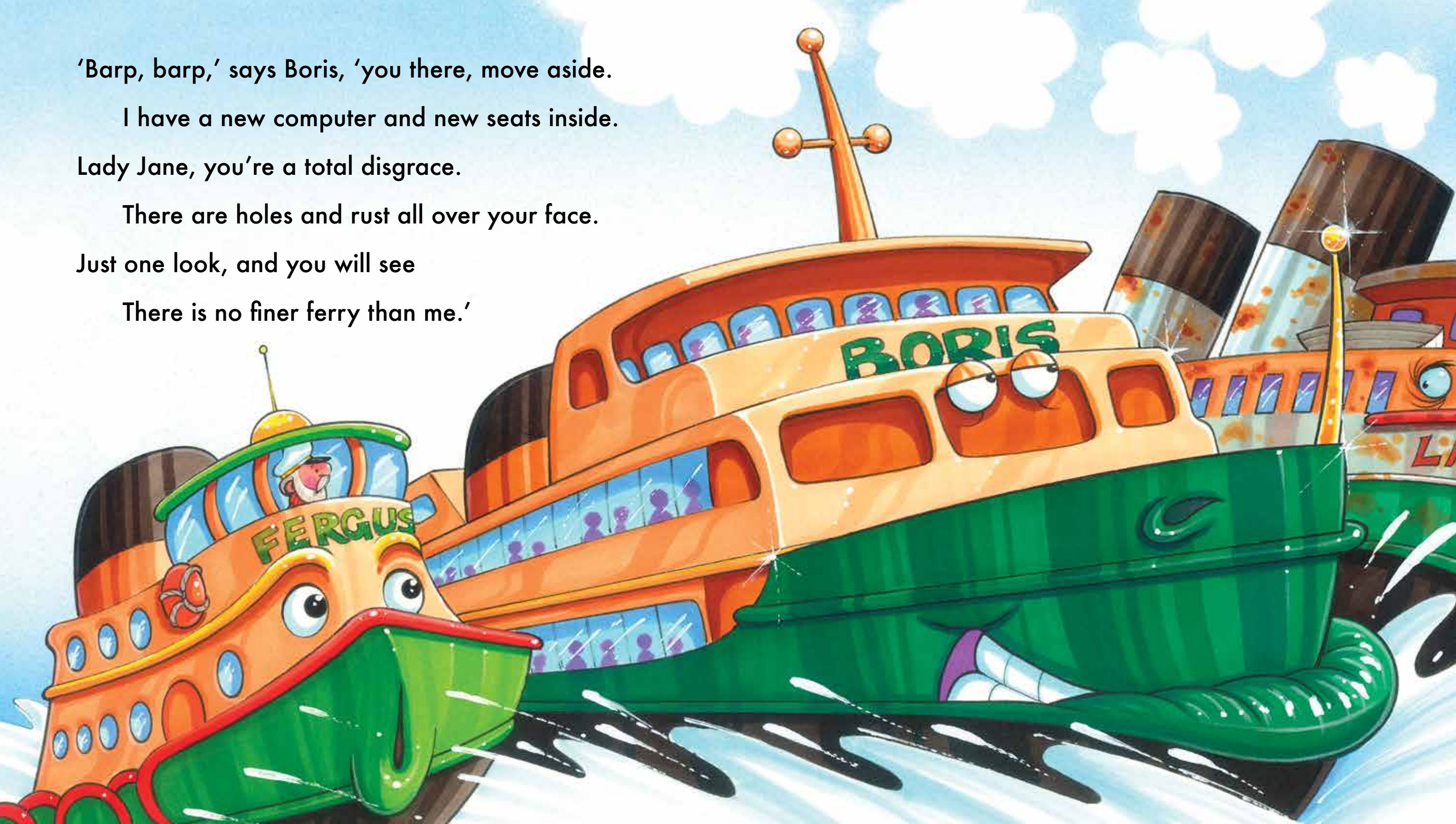
I have a new computer and new seats inside.

Lady Jane, you're a total disgrace.

There are holes and rust all over your face.

Just one look, and you will see

There is no finer ferry than me.'



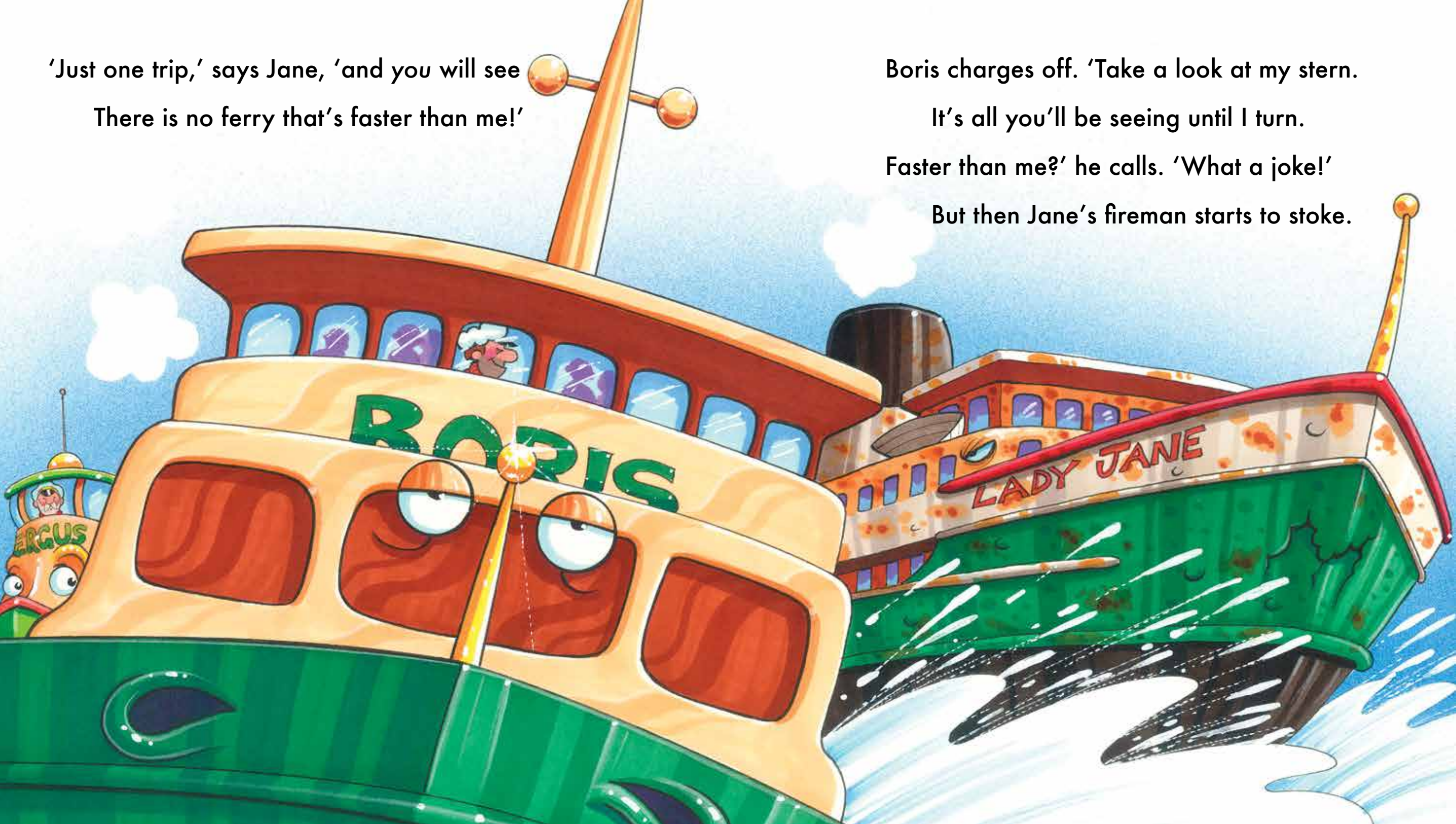
'Just one trip,' says Jane, 'and you will see
There is no ferry that's faster than me!'

Boris charges off. 'Take a look at my stern.

It's all you'll be seeing until I turn.

Faster than me?' he calls. 'What a joke!'

But then Jane's fireman starts to stoke.

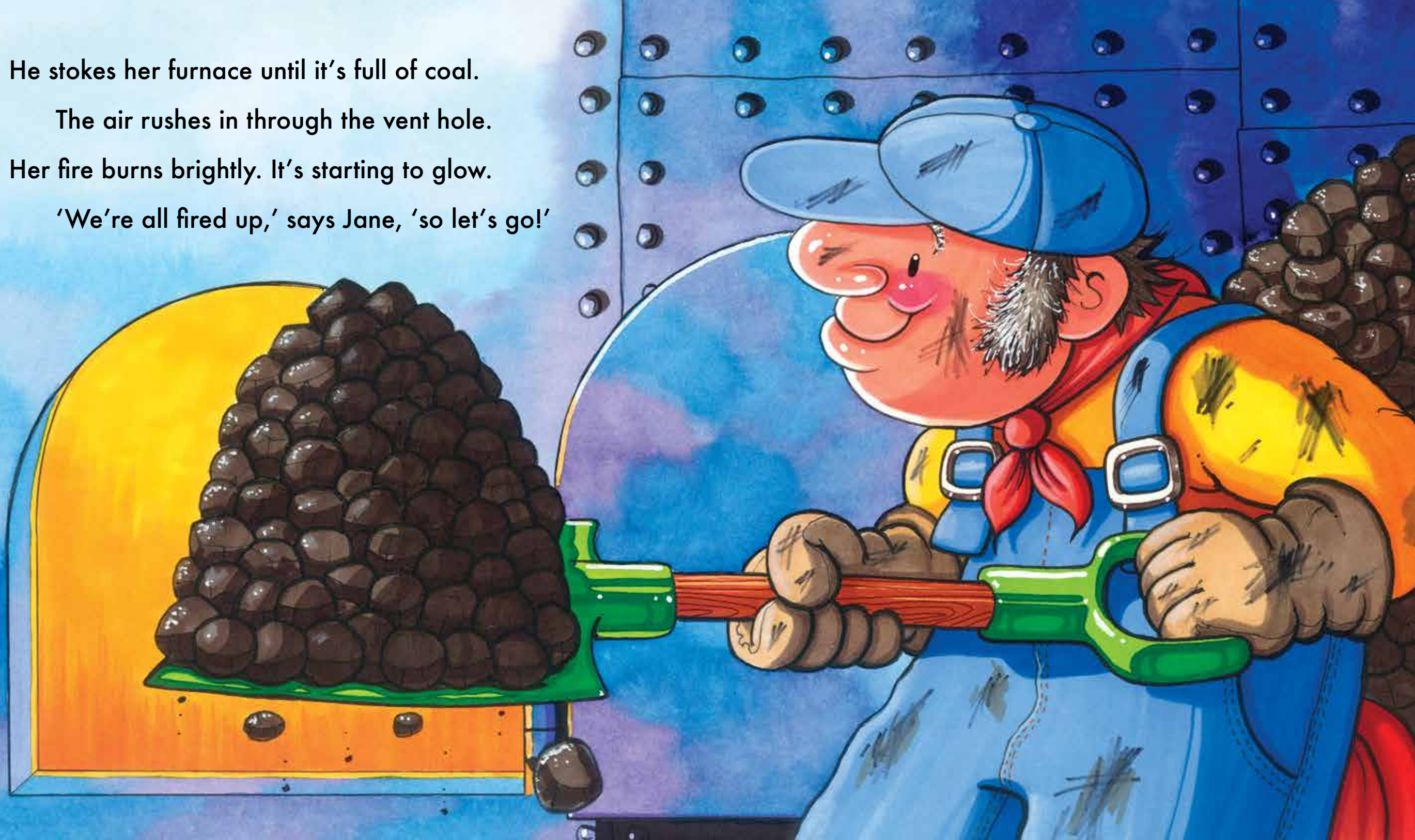


He stokes her furnace until it's full of coal.

The air rushes in through the vent hole.

Her fire burns brightly. It's starting to glow.

'We're all fired up,' says Jane, 'so let's go!'



Boris tries hard. His needle's in the red.

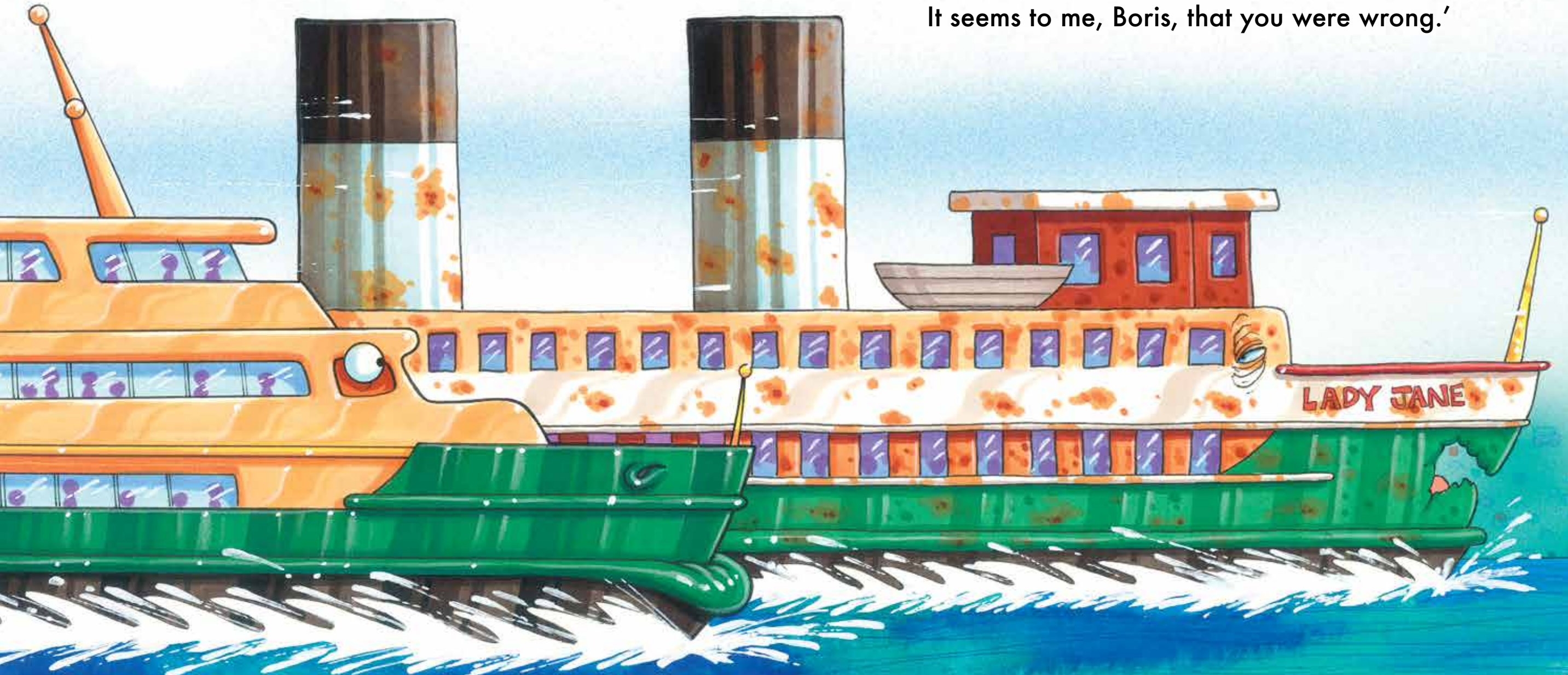
But he's no match for Jane at full steam ahead.

She catches Boris. She's travelling fast.

In no time at all, she's gliding past.

'I'm the Manly ferry,' she says. 'I'm wide and long.

It seems to me, Boris, that you were wrong.'

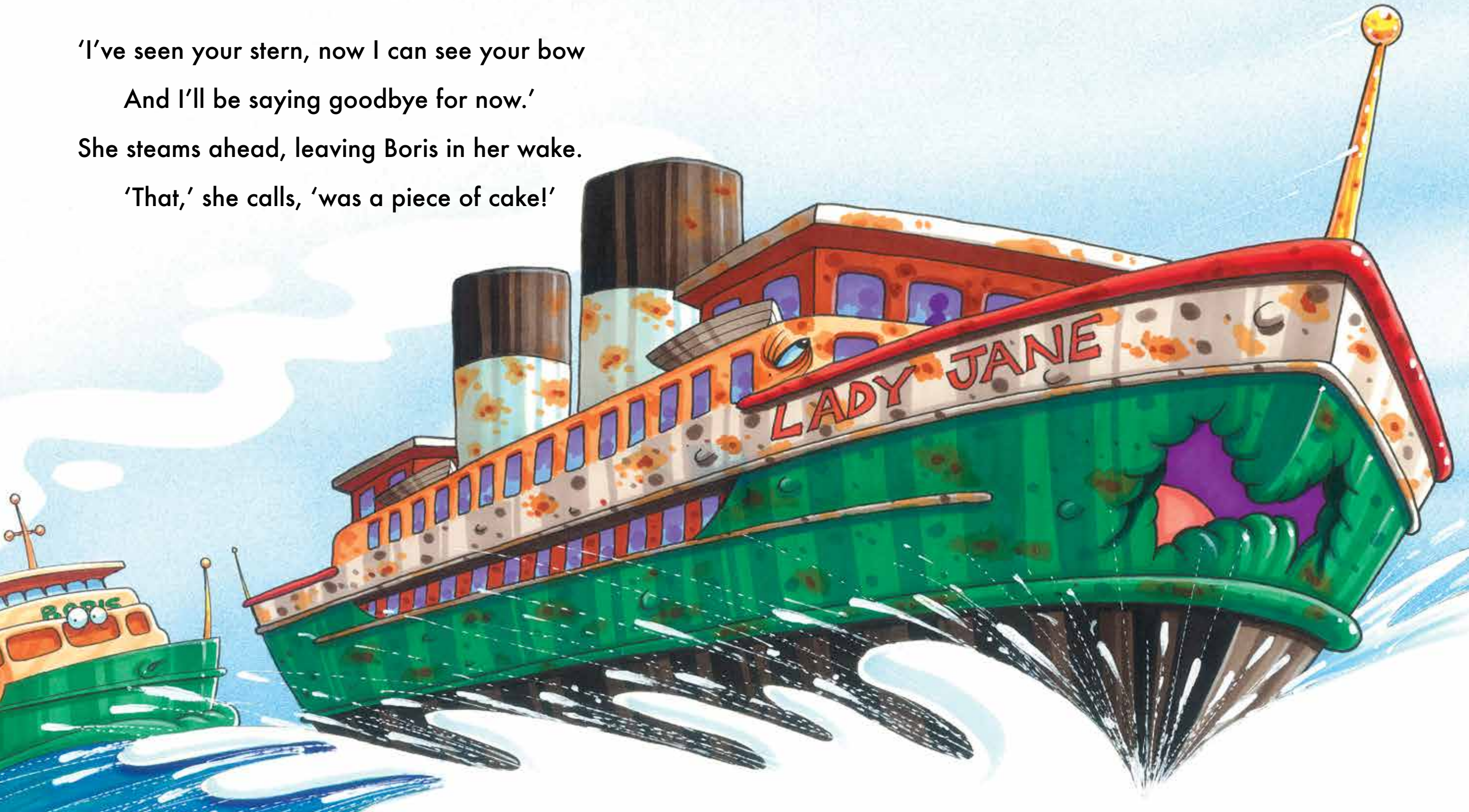


'I've seen your stern, now I can see your bow

And I'll be saying goodbye for now.'

She steams ahead, leaving Boris in her wake.

'That,' she calls, 'was a piece of cake!'



Jane arrives at Manly. Her passengers unload.

Then Boris appears, looking like he'll explode.

'I'm the Manly ferry. I'm long and I'm wide.

My computer's broken! Quick—move aside!'

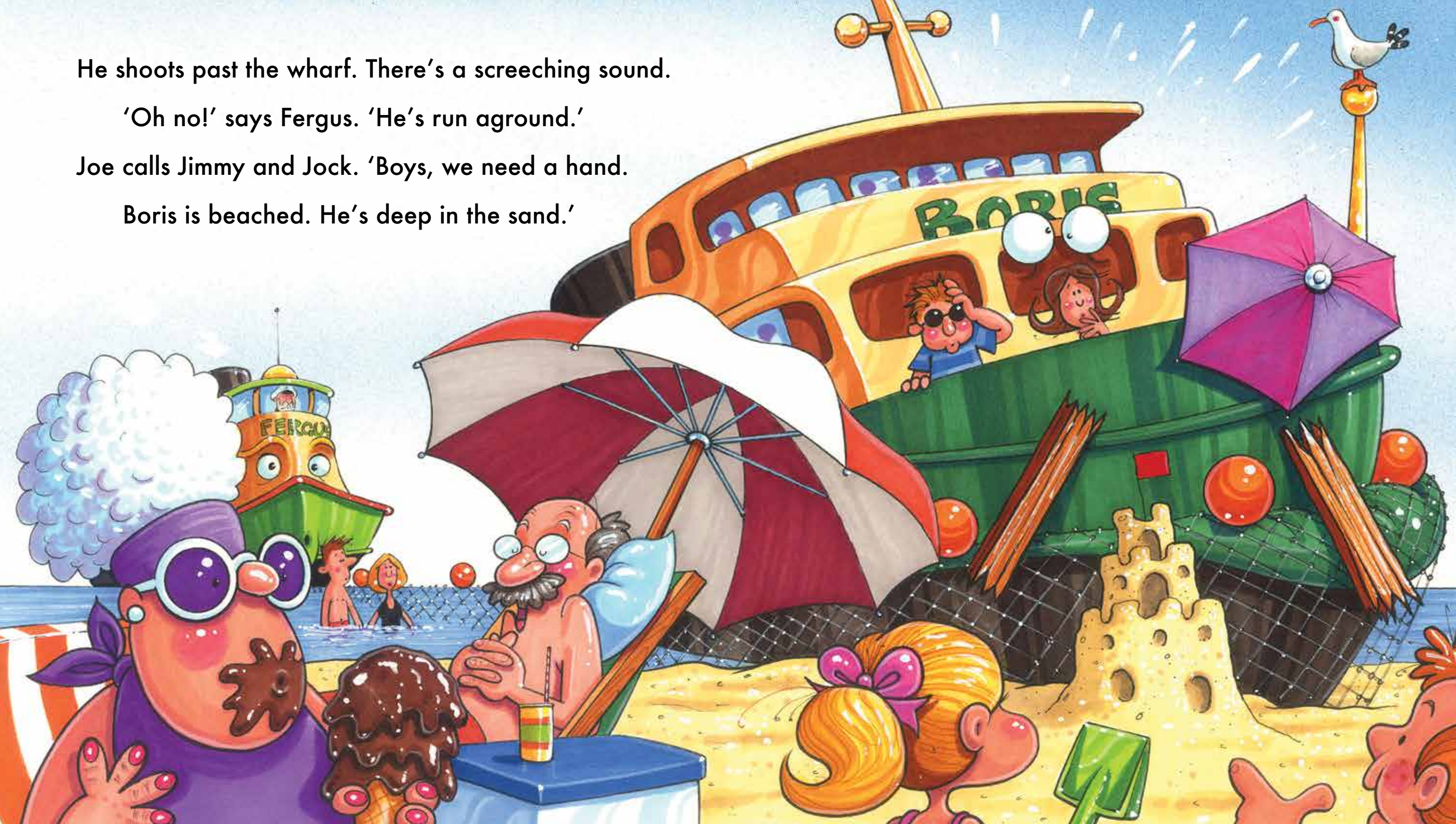


He shoots past the wharf. There's a screeching sound.

'Oh no!' says Fergus. 'He's run aground.'

Joe calls Jimmy and Jock. 'Boys, we need a hand.'

Boris is beached. He's deep in the sand.'

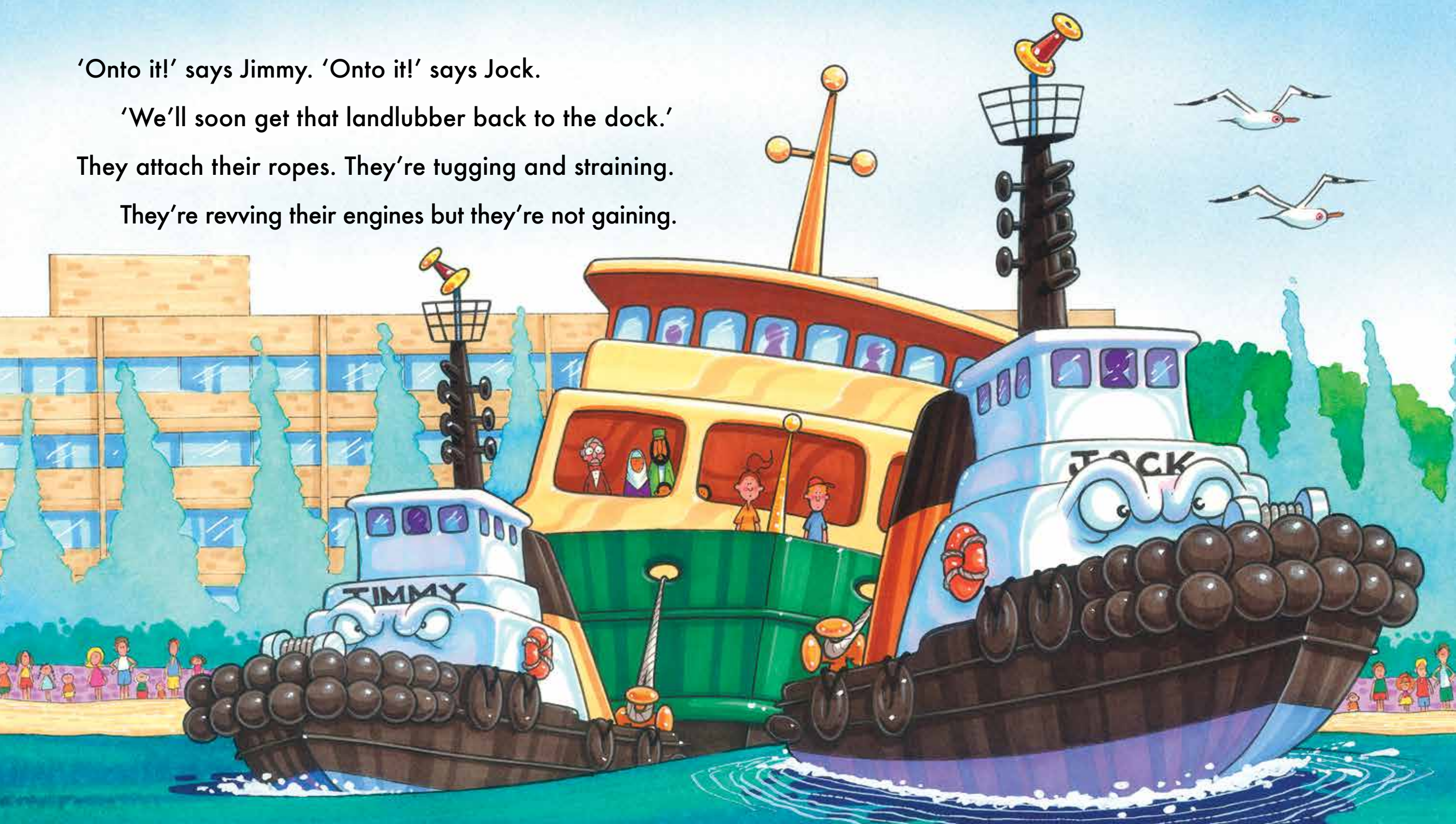


'Onto it!' says Jimmy. 'Onto it!' says Jock.

'We'll soon get that landlubber back to the dock.'

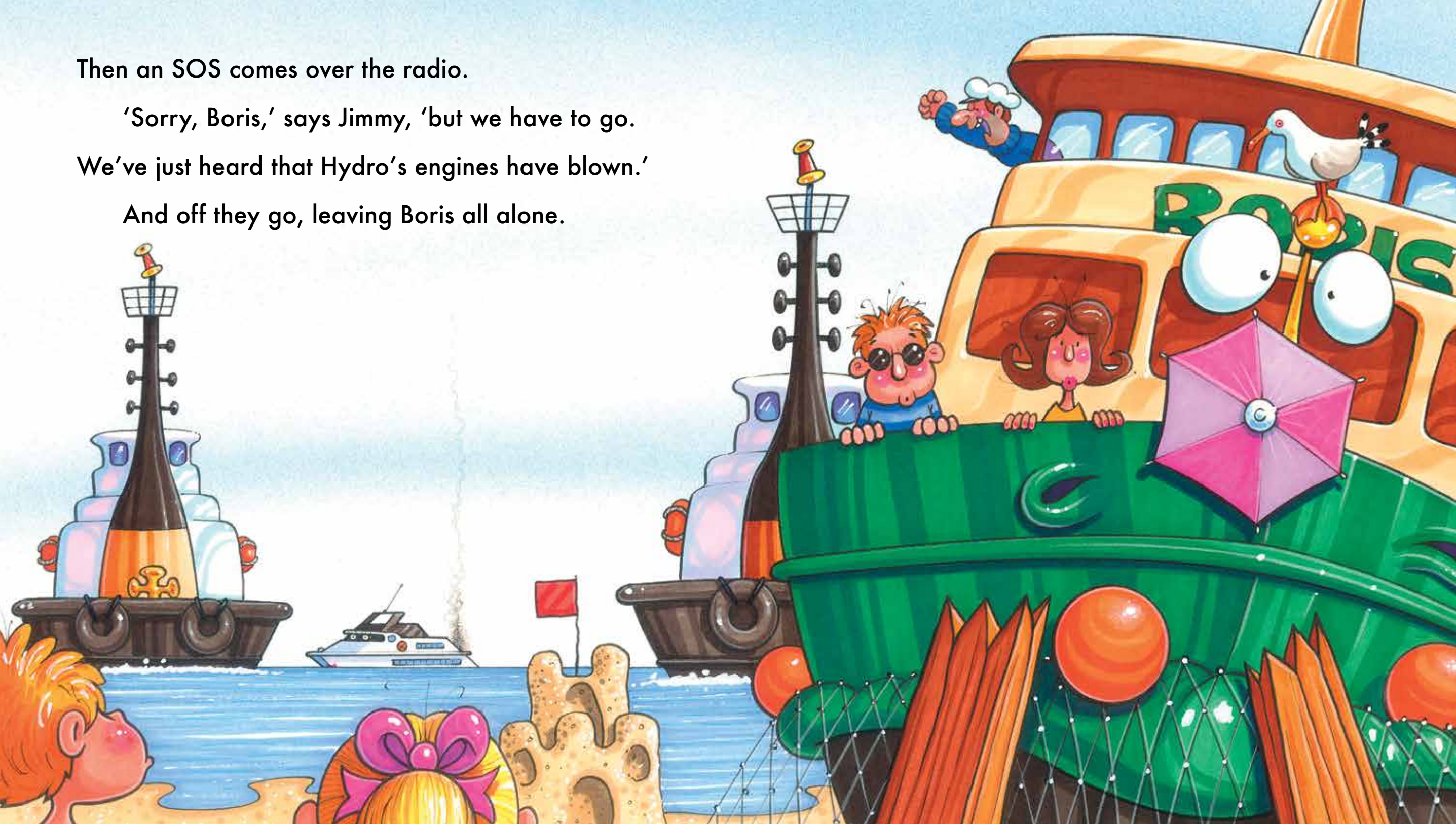
They attach their ropes. They're tugging and straining.

They're revving their engines but they're not gaining.



Then an SOS comes over the radio.

‘Sorry, Boris,’ says Jimmy, ‘but we have to go.
We’ve just heard that Hydro’s engines have blown.’
And off they go, leaving Boris all alone.



Boris isn't well. He's looking pale.

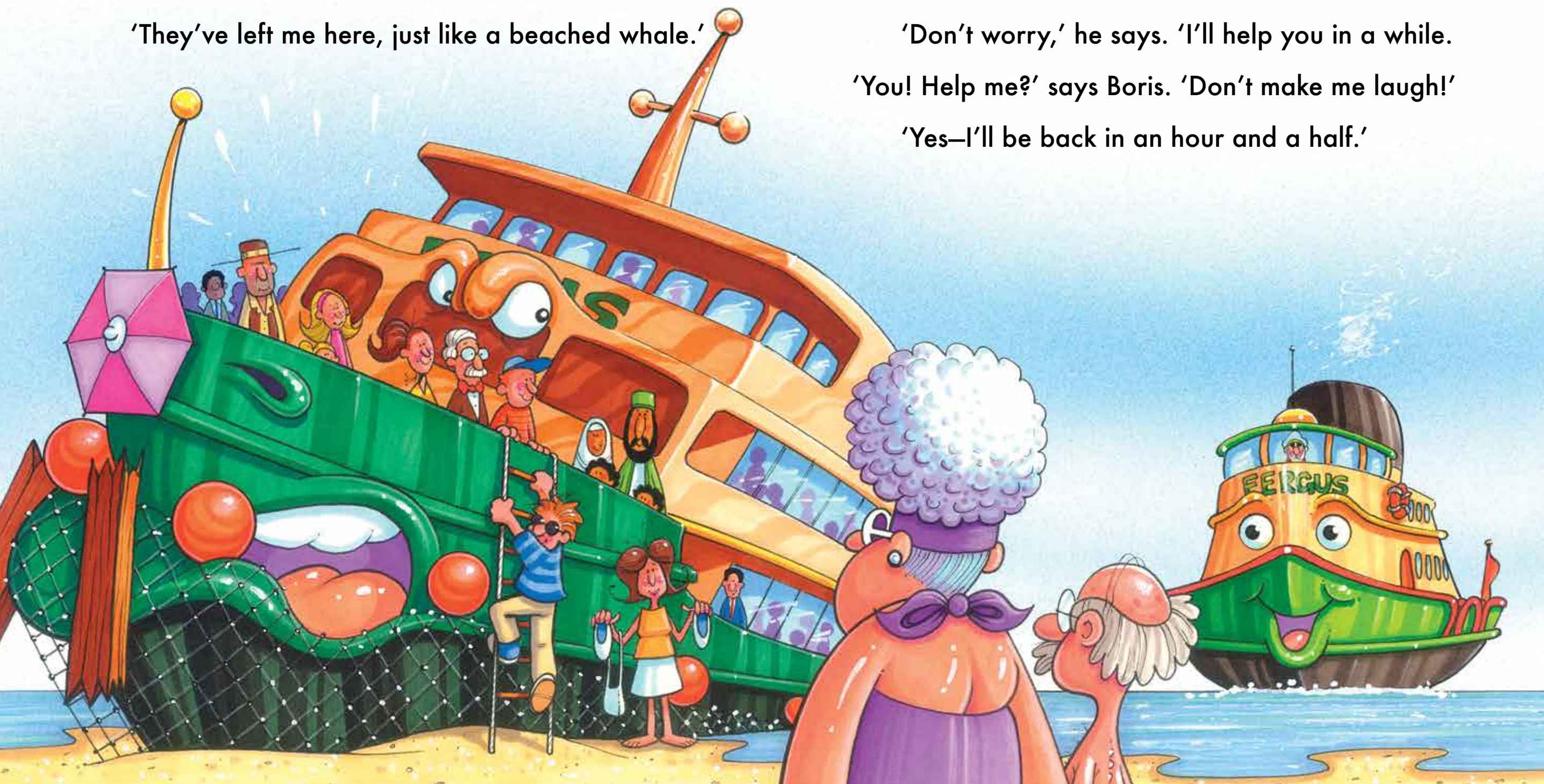
'They've left me here, just like a beached whale.'

Then Fergus comes by. He gives Boris a smile.

'Don't worry,' he says. 'I'll help you in a while.'

'You! Help me?' says Boris. 'Don't make me laugh!'

'Yes—I'll be back in an hour and a half.'



When Fergus comes back, he throws Boris a line.

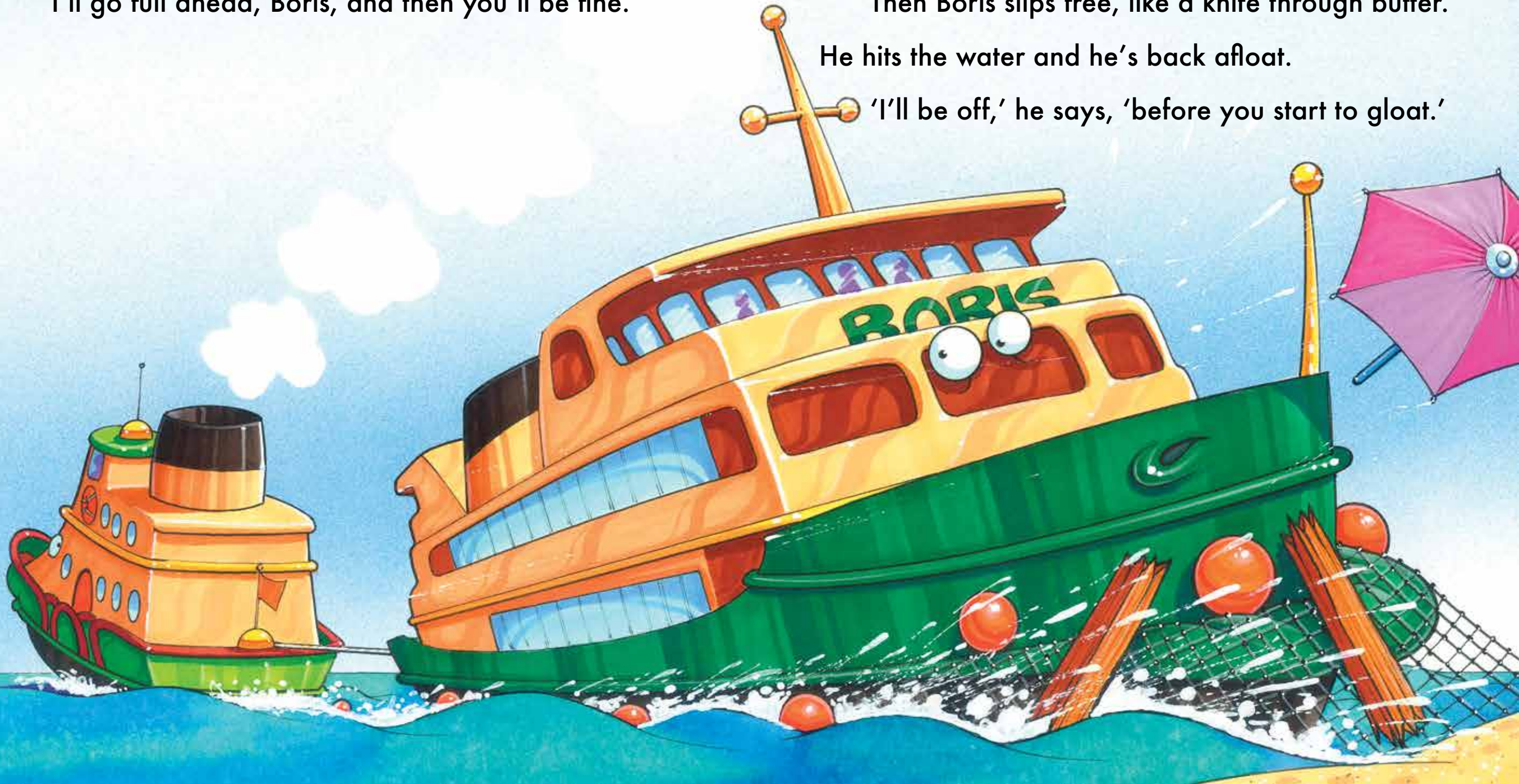
'I'll go full ahead, Boris, and then you'll be fine.'

Fergus's engines strain. They cough and splutter.

Then Boris slips free, like a knife through butter.

He hits the water and he's back afloat.

'I'll be off,' he says, 'before you start to gloat.'



'Jimmy and Jock,' says Joe, 'made no difference at all.

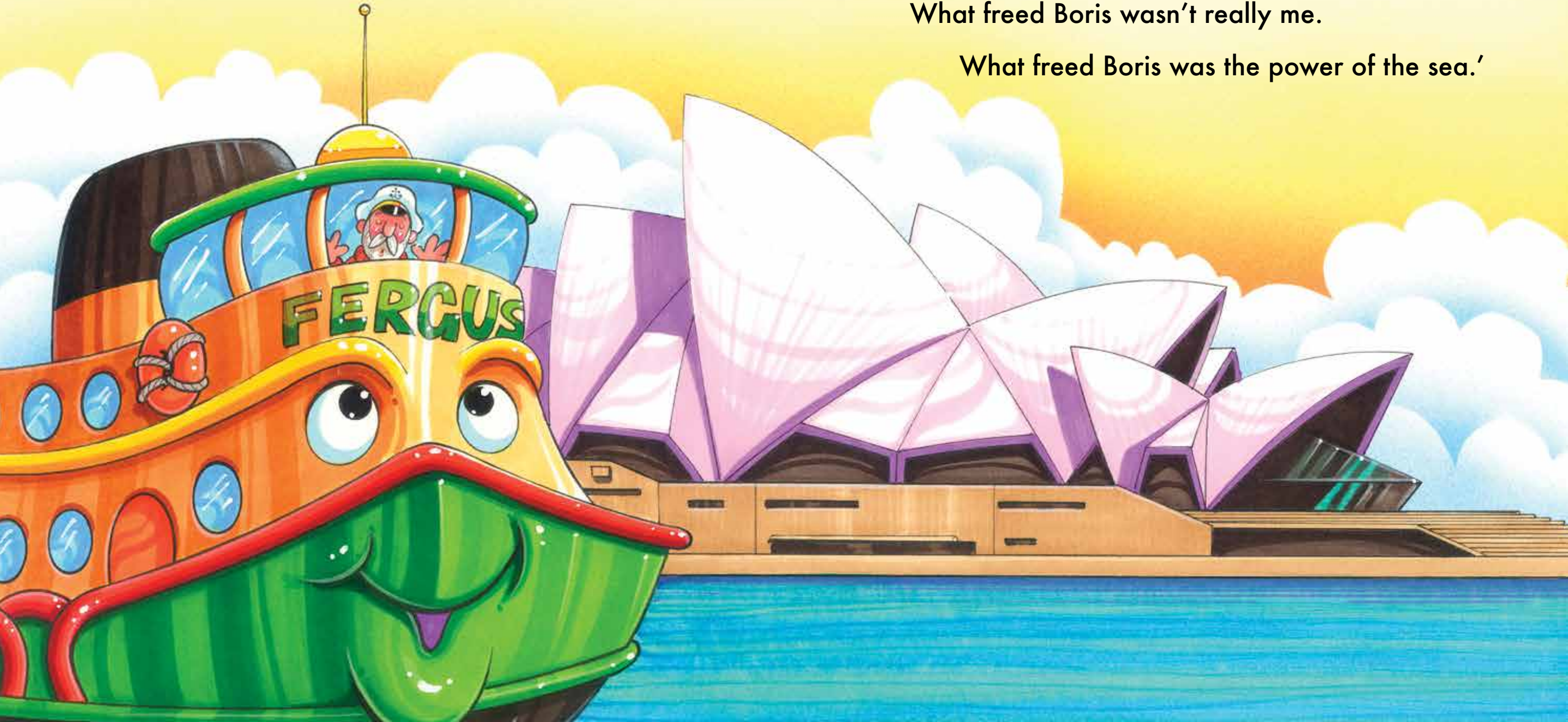
So how could you move Boris, when you're so small?'

'That I moved him,' says Fergus, 'isn't surprising.

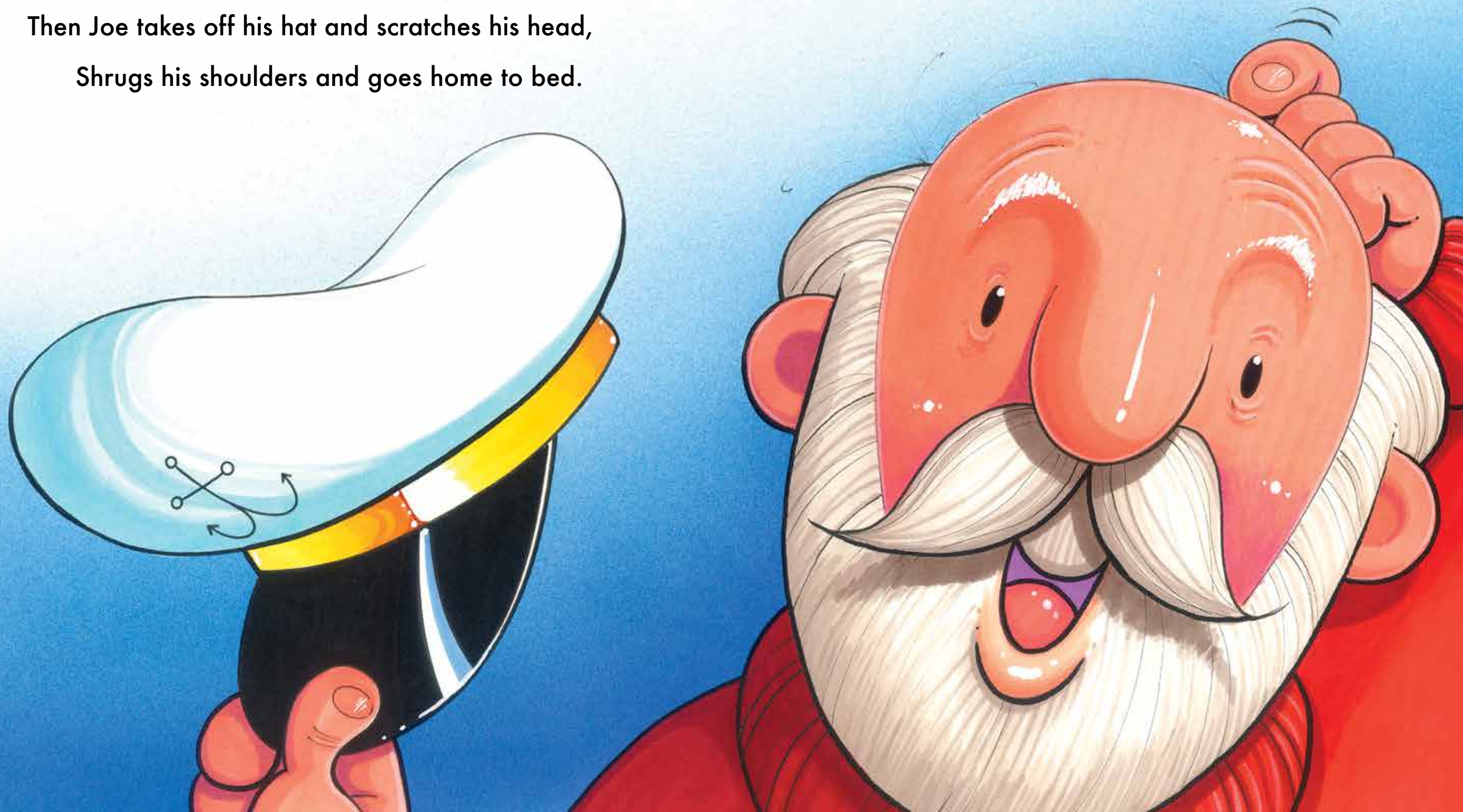
I could do it because the tide was rising.

What freed Boris wasn't really me.

What freed Boris was the power of the sea.'



Then Joe takes off his hat and scratches his head,
Shrugs his shoulders and goes home to bed.



Don't judge a book by its cover.

For Renée and Tom

JWN

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi

PT

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