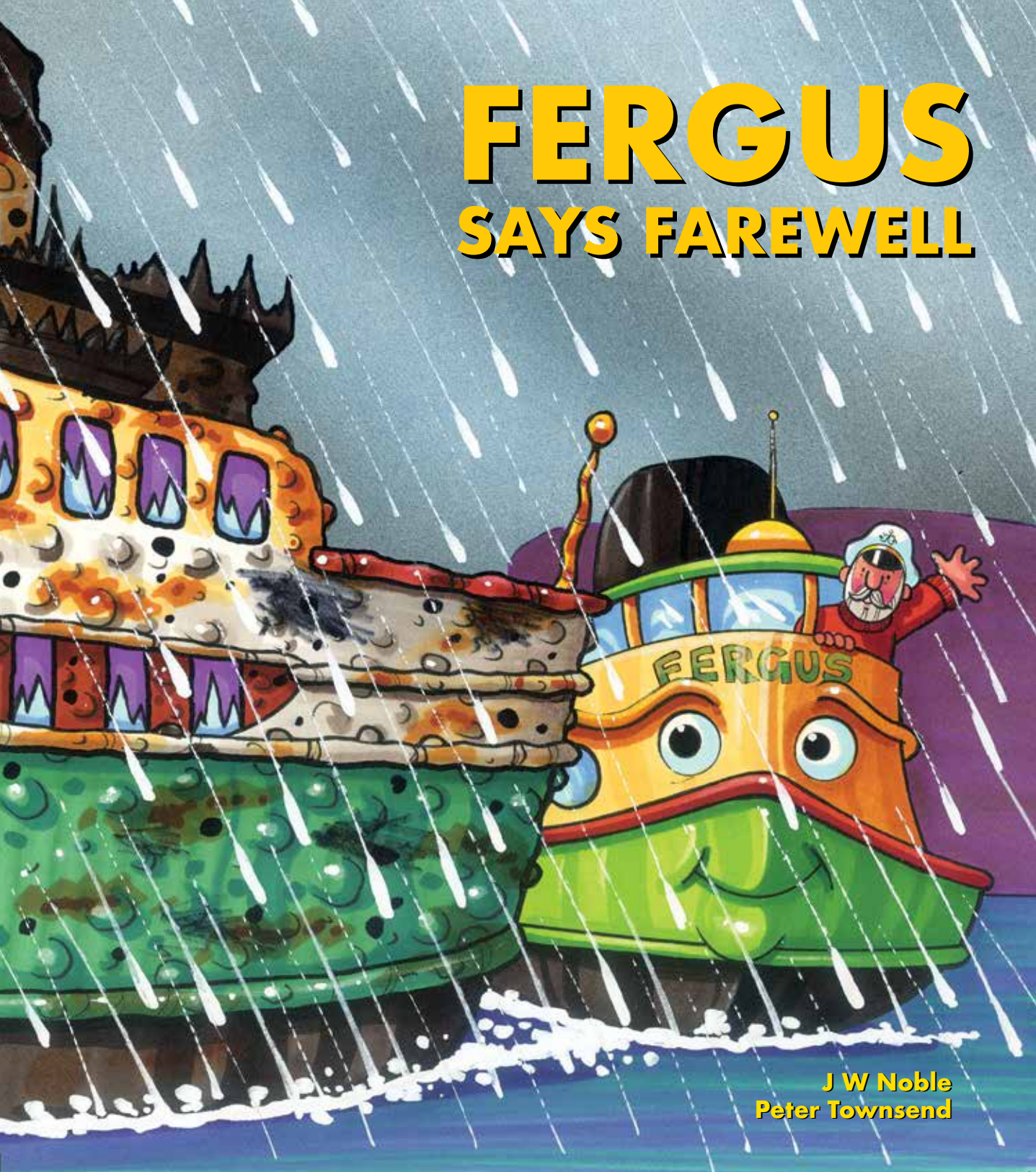


FERGUS SAYS FAREWELL



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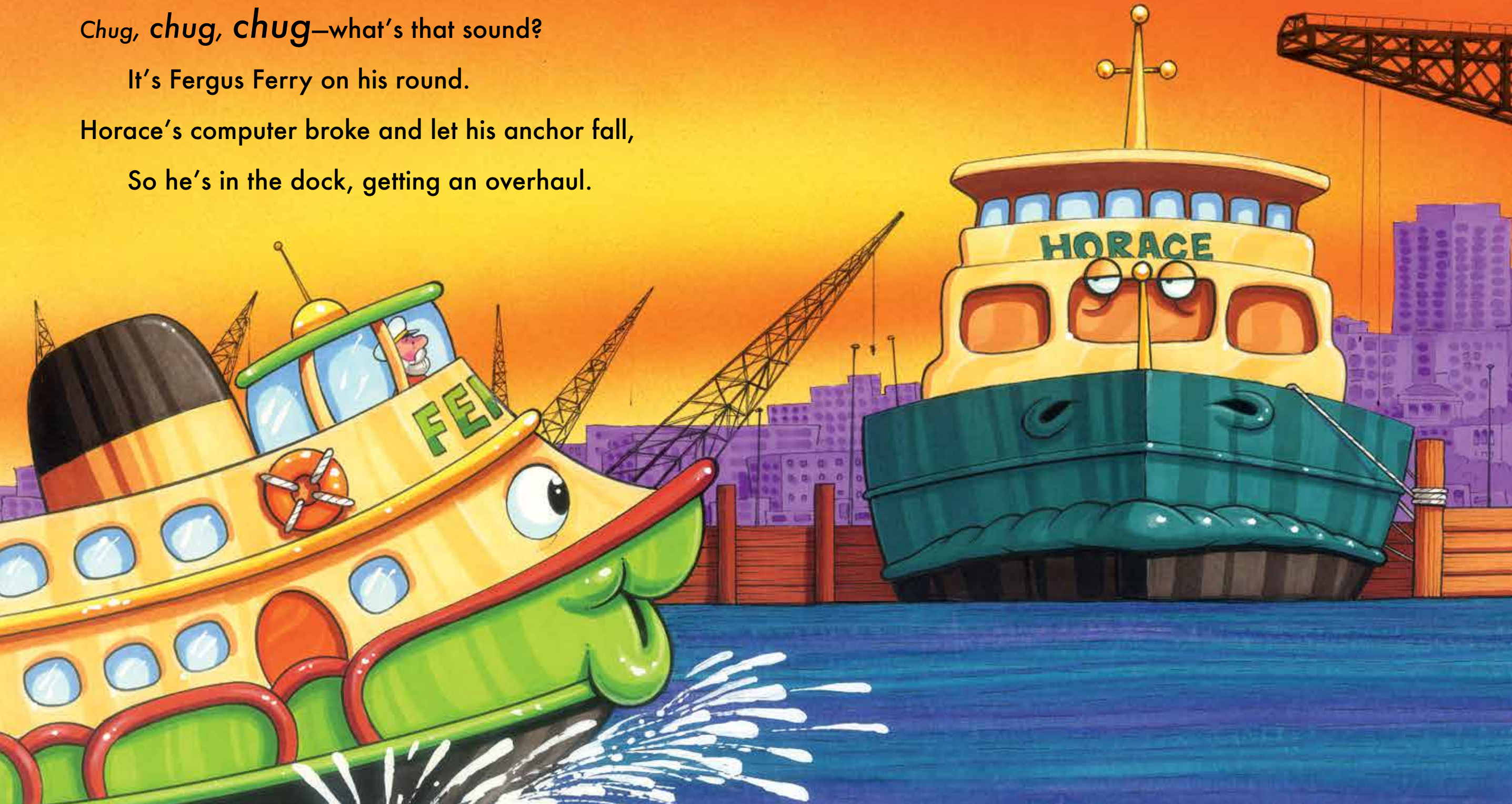
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Chug, chug, chug—what's that sound?

It's Fergus Ferry on his round.

Horace's computer broke and let his anchor fall,

So he's in the dock, getting an overhaul.



To take his place, the old steamer Lady Jane
Is back in service on the harbour again.
Her fireman is shovelling, shovelling in the coke.
Her funnel is trailing a plume of white smoke.

It's getting dark, and it's Jane's final run.
'It's such a shame,' she says, 'that the day is done.'



She steams back to the dock and ties up at the pier.

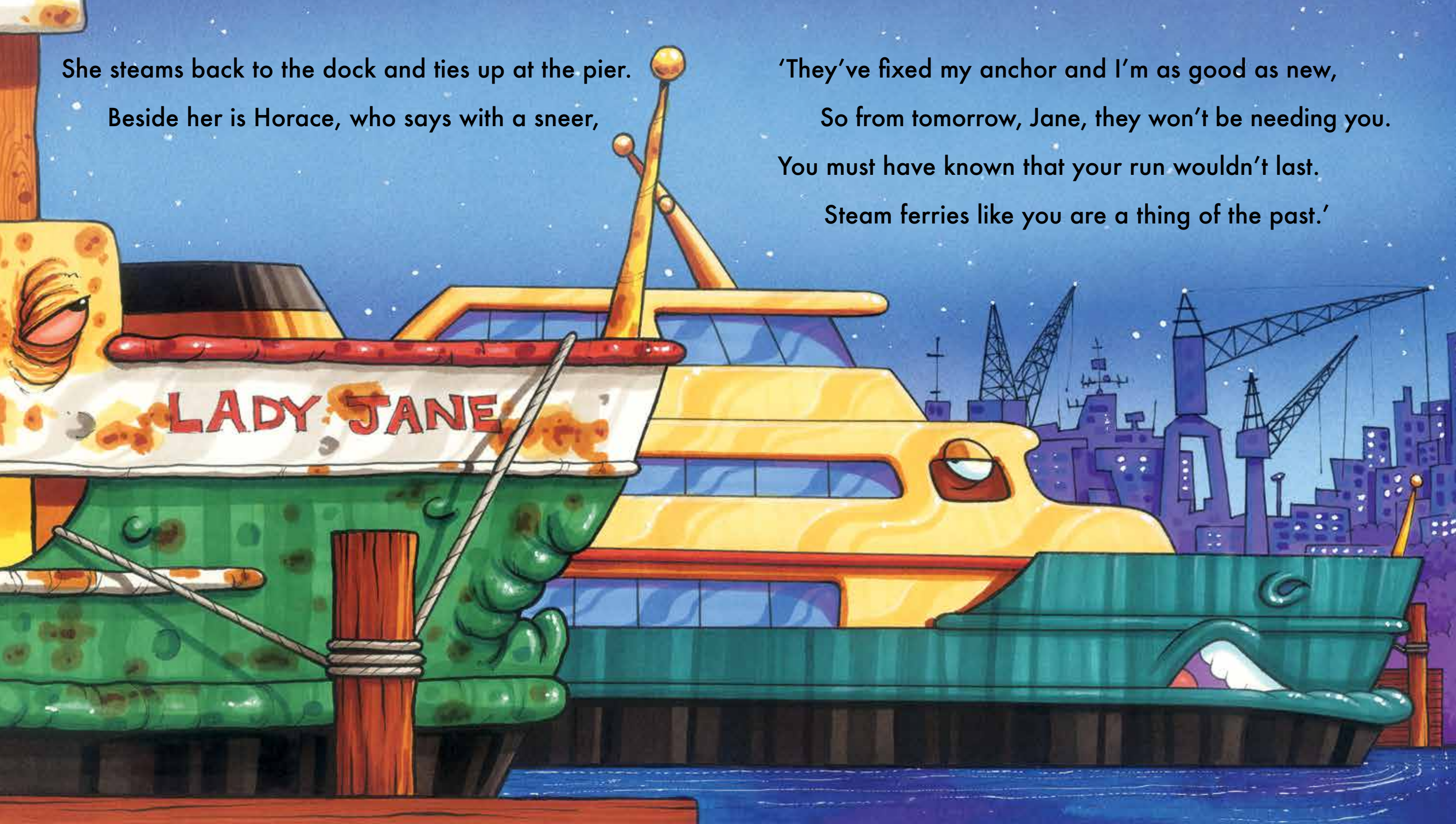
Beside her is Horace, who says with a sneer,

'They've fixed my anchor and I'm as good as new,

So from tomorrow, Jane, they won't be needing you.

You must have known that your run wouldn't last.

Steam ferries like you are a thing of the past.'

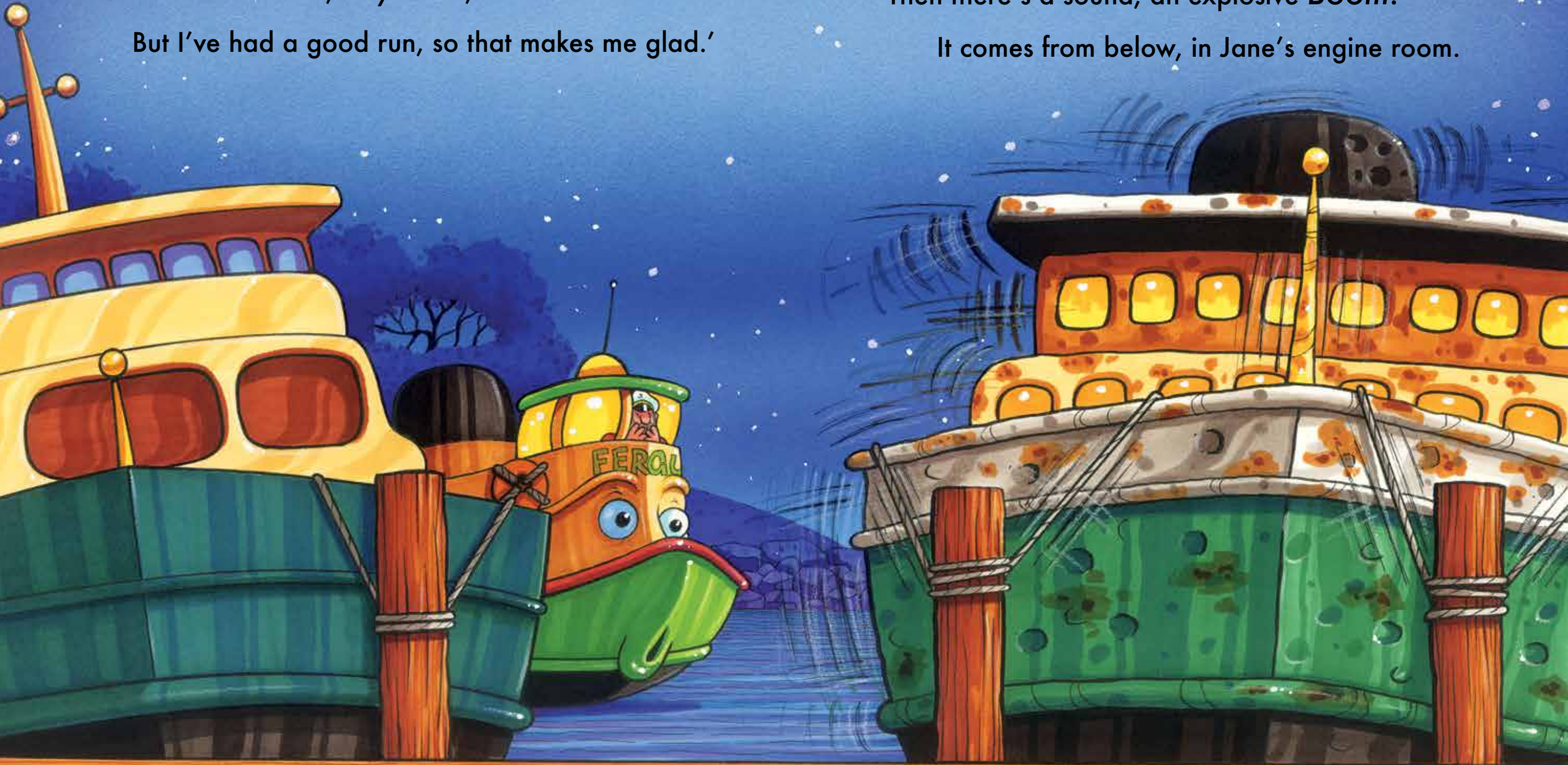


'Not to be in service,' says Jane, 'makes me sad.

But I've had a good run, so that makes me glad.'

Then there's a sound, an explosive *Boom!*

It comes from below, in Jane's engine room.



Smoke rises from her deck, it's rising higher.

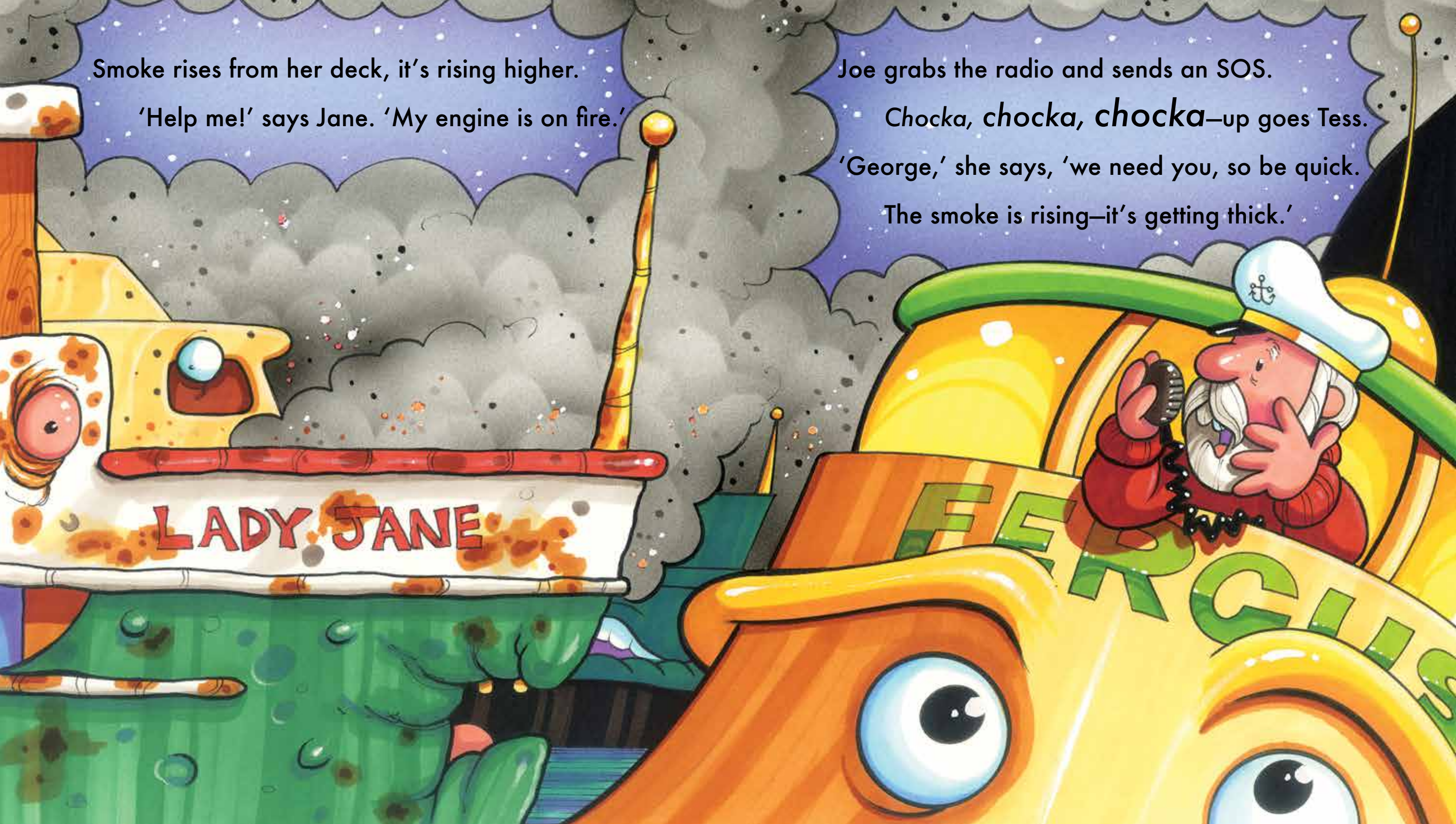
'Help me!' says Jane. 'My engine is on fire.'

Joe grabs the radio and sends an SOS.

Chocka, chocka, chocka—up goes Tess.

'George,' she says, 'we need you, so be quick.'

The smoke is rising—it's getting thick.'

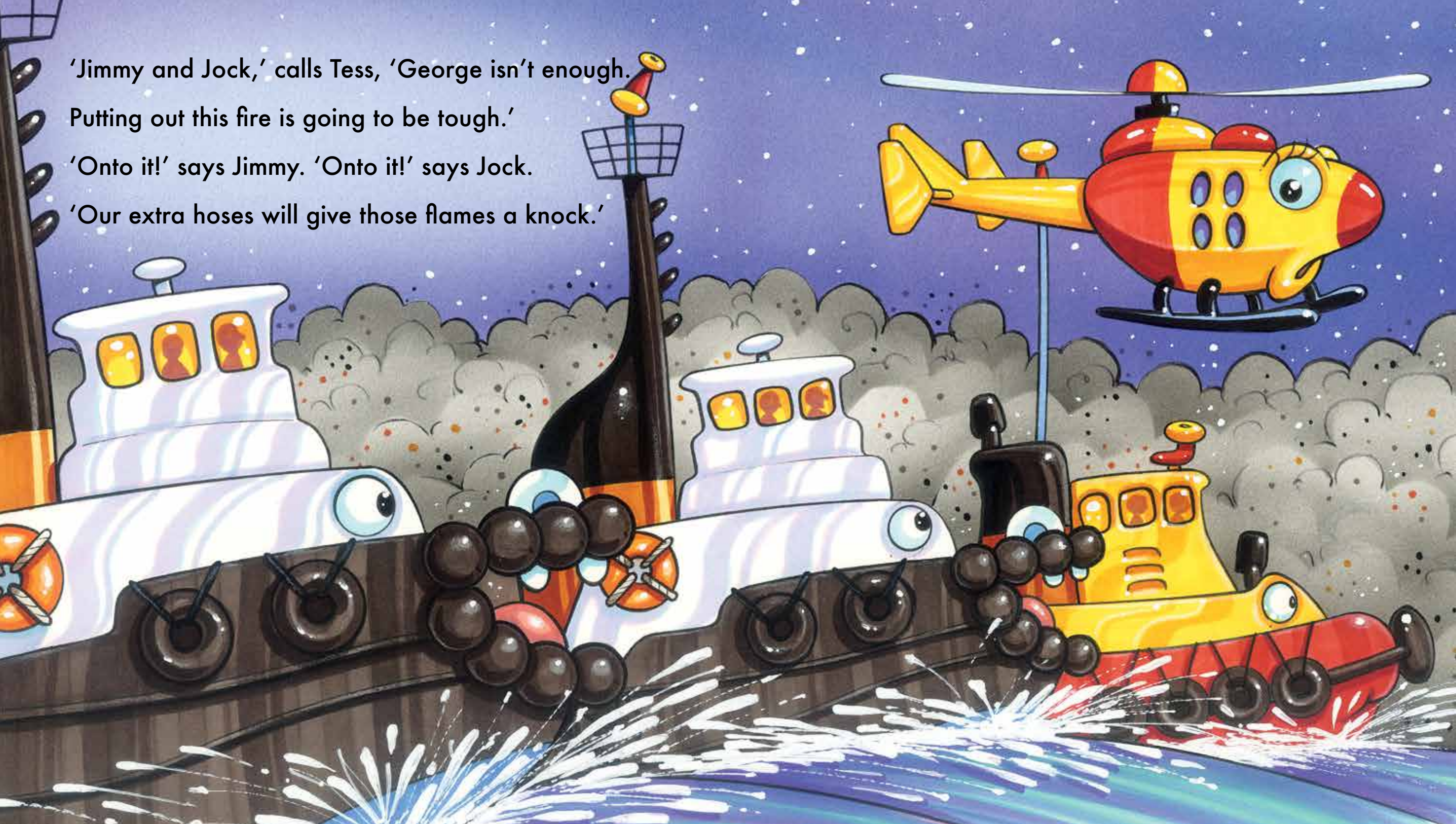


'Jimmy and Jock,' calls Tess, 'George isn't enough.'

Putting out this fire is going to be tough.'

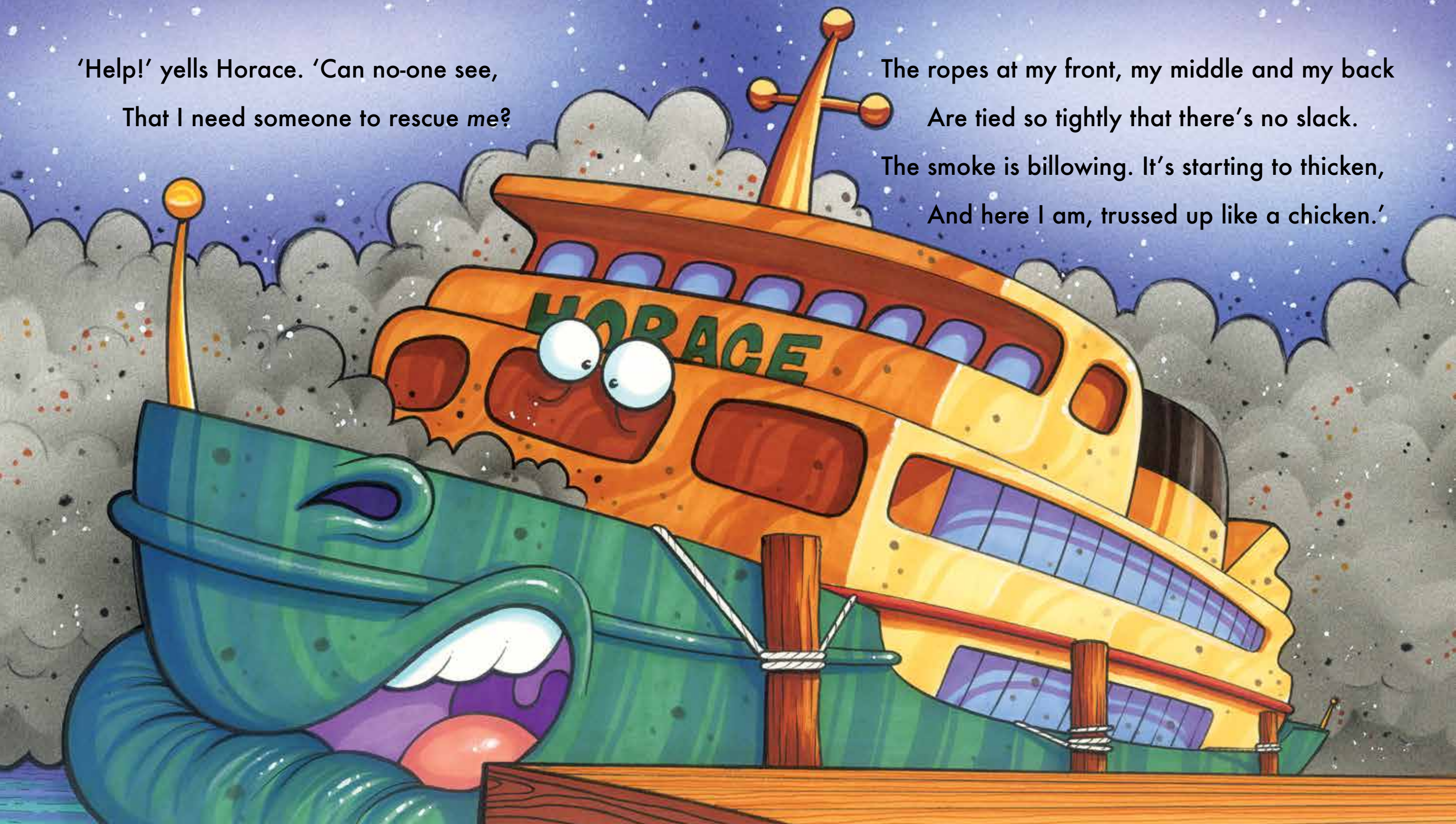
'Onto it!' says Jimmy. 'Onto it!' says Jock.

'Our extra hoses will give those flames a knock.'



'Help!' yells Horace. 'Can no-one see,
That I need someone to rescue me?

The ropes at my front, my middle and my back
Are tied so tightly that there's no slack.
The smoke is billowing. It's starting to thicken,
And here I am, trussed up like a chicken.'

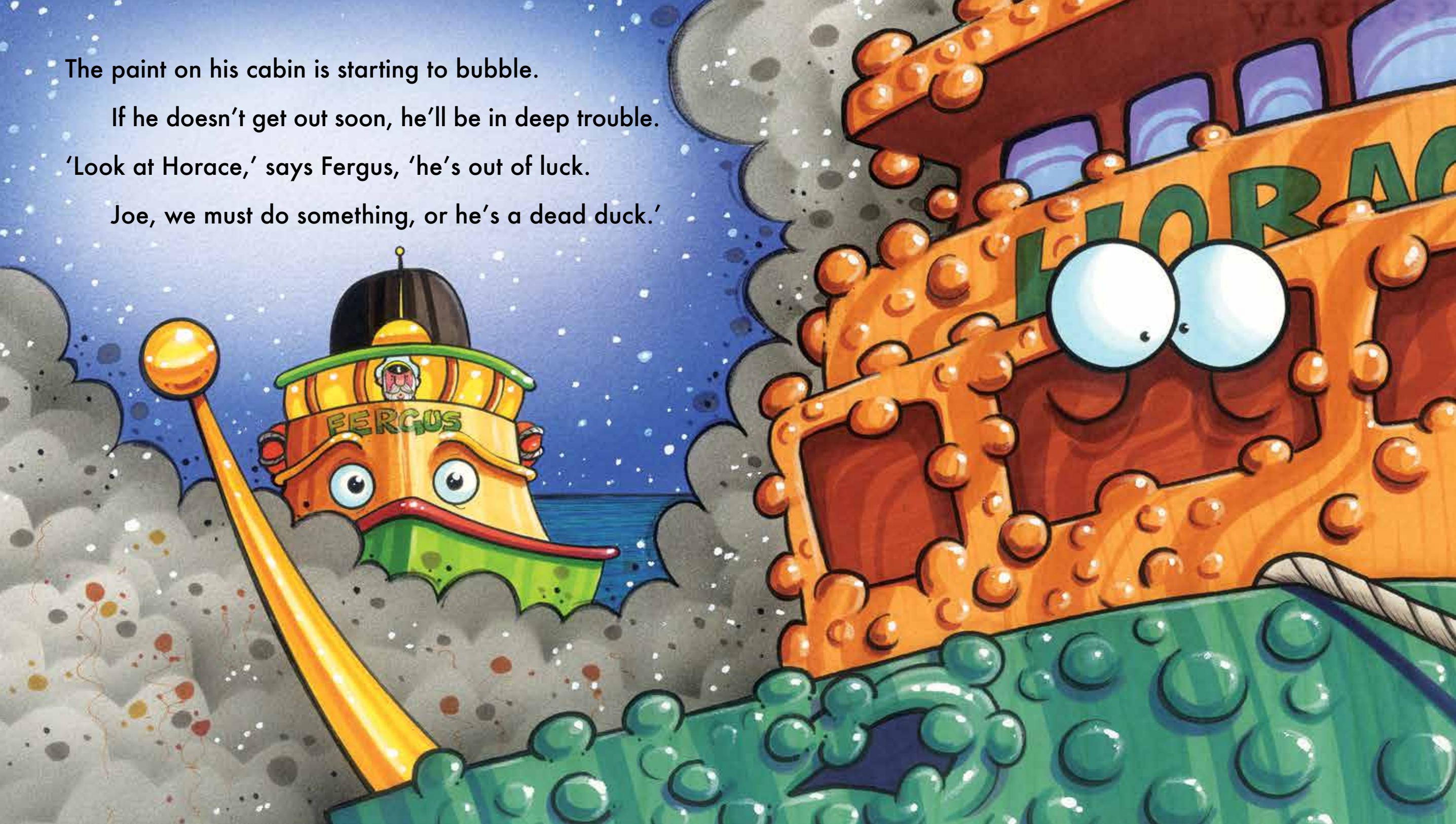


The paint on his cabin is starting to bubble.

If he doesn't get out soon, he'll be in deep trouble.

'Look at Horace,' says Fergus, 'he's out of luck.'

Joe, we must do something, or he's a dead duck.'



They move in close, into the scorching heat.

Joe leaps to Horace's deck, landing on both feet.

He grabs an axe and wildly starts to hack.

He chops the ropes at the middle and the back.

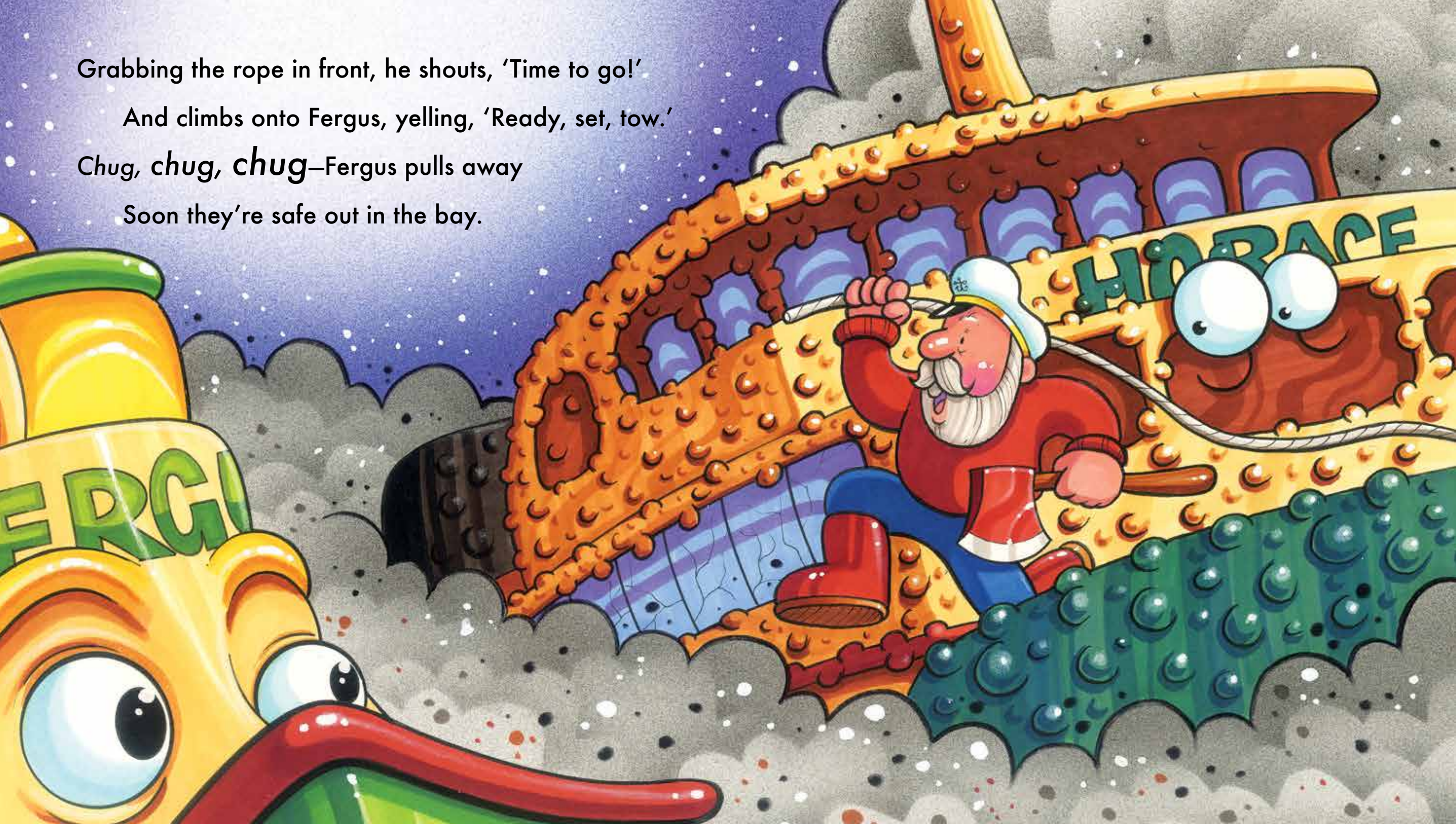


Grabbing the rope in front, he shouts, 'Time to go!'

And climbs onto Fergus, yelling, 'Ready, set, tow.'

Chug, chug, **chug**—Fergus pulls away

Soon they're safe out in the bay.



The fire's still burning. Lady Jane's fate is in doubt.

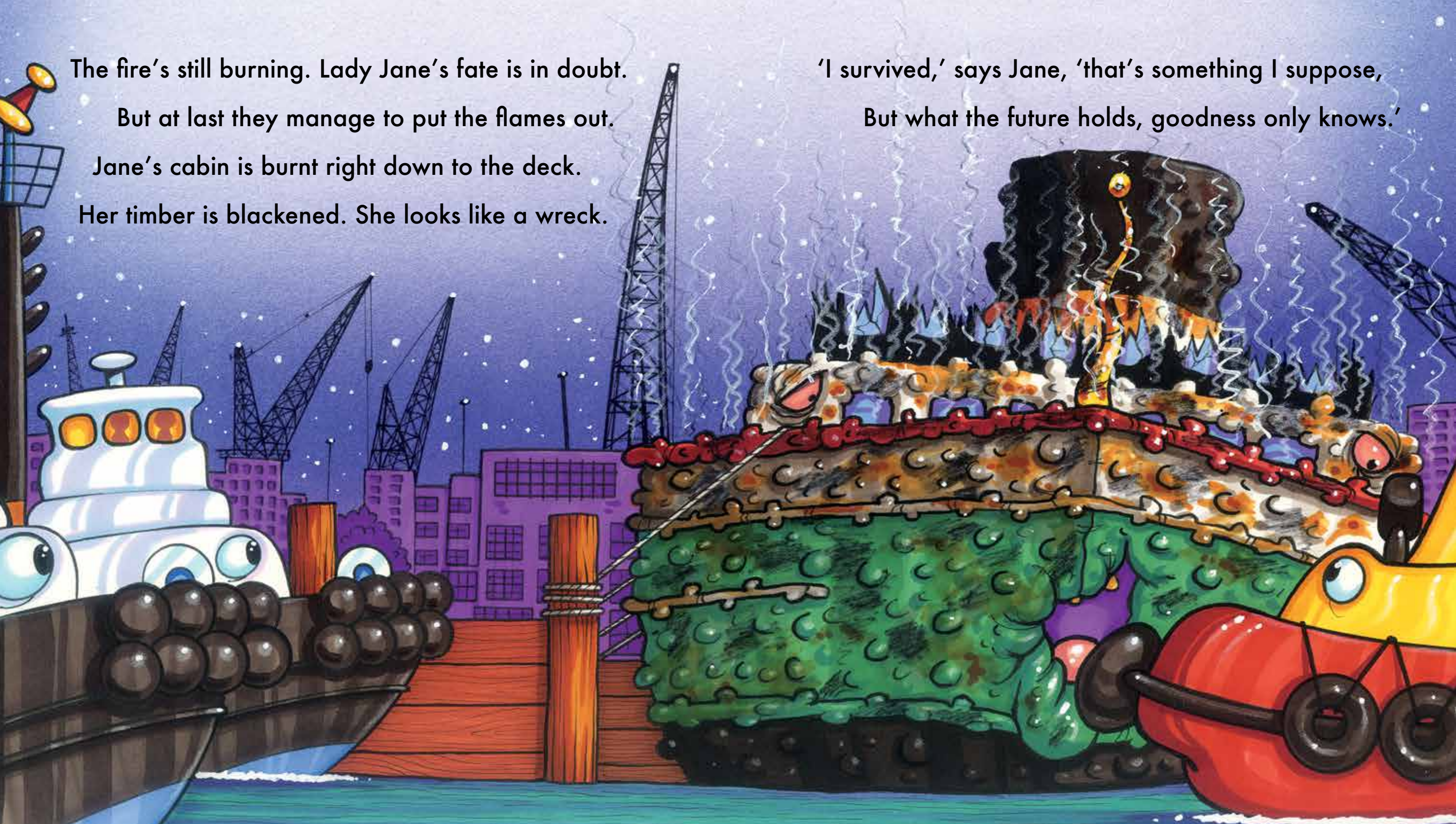
But at last they manage to put the flames out.

Jane's cabin is burnt right down to the deck.

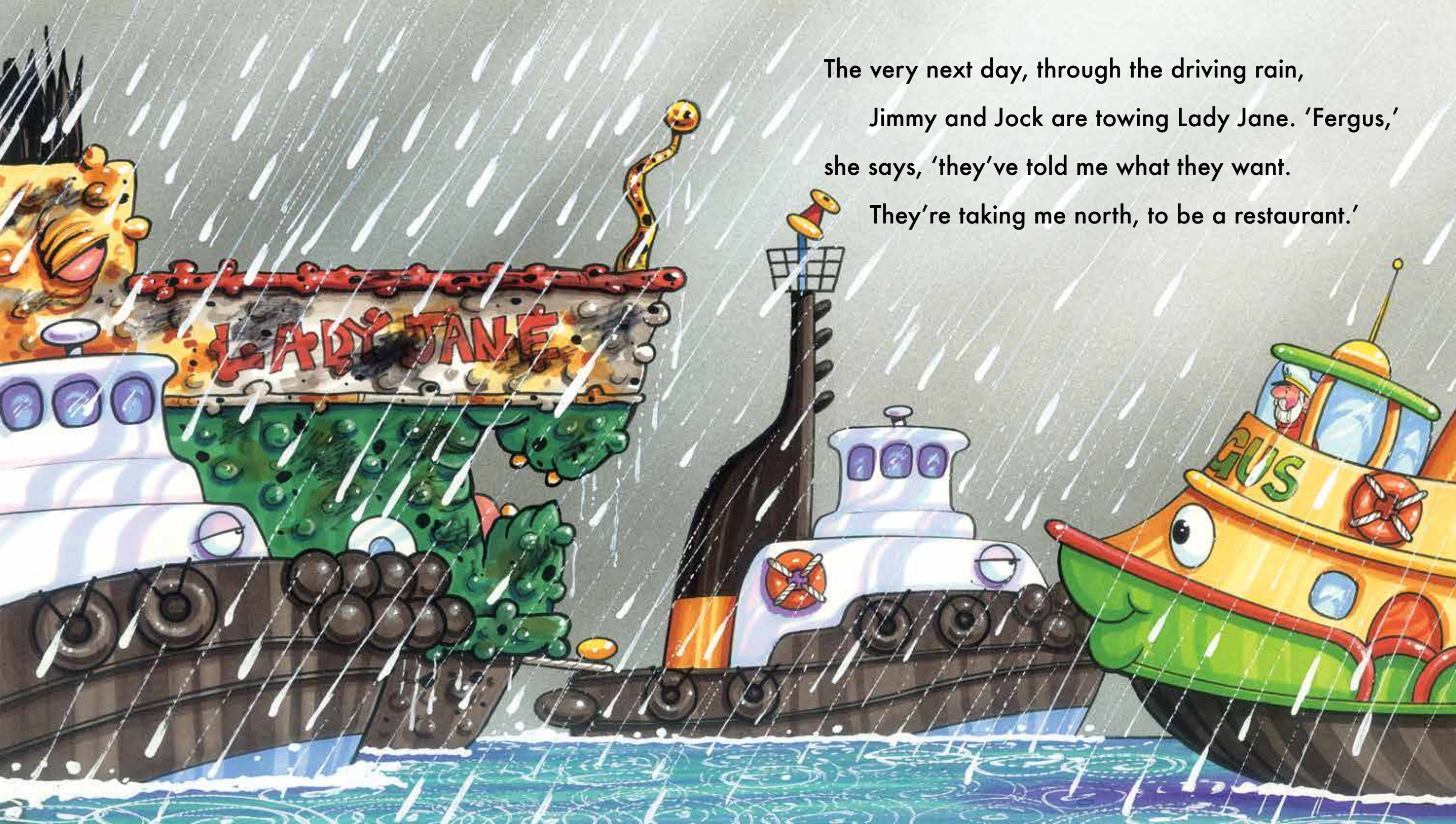
Her timber is blackened. She looks like a wreck.

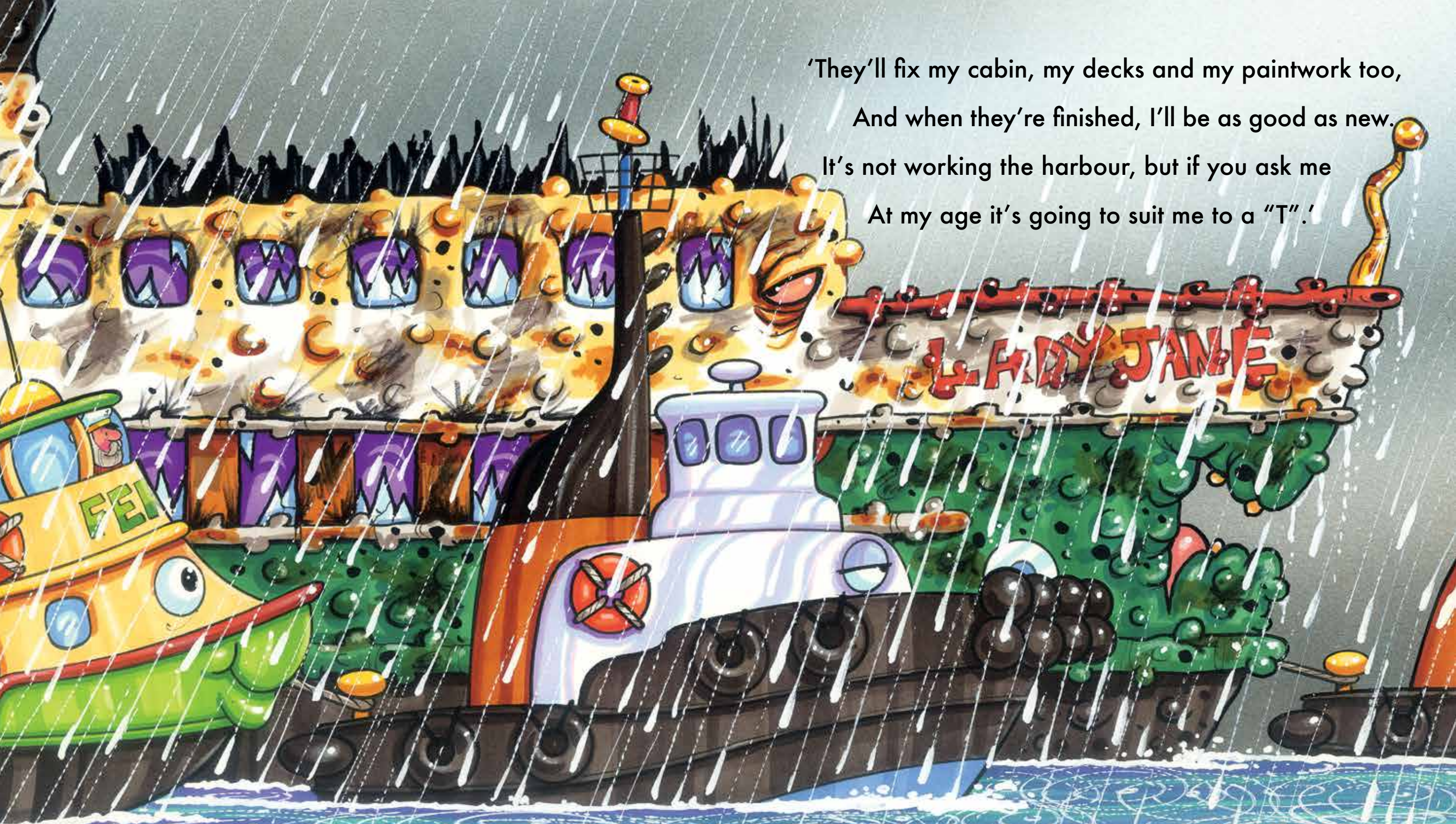
'I survived,' says Jane, 'that's something I suppose,

But what the future holds, goodness only knows.'



The very next day, through the driving rain,
Jimmy and Jock are towing Lady Jane. 'Fergus,'
she says, 'they've told me what they want.
They're taking me north, to be a restaurant.'





'They'll fix my cabin, my decks and my paintwork too,
And when they're finished, I'll be as good as new.
It's not working the harbour, but if you ask me
At my age it's going to suit me to a "T".'



'That's great,' says Fergus, 'it's good to know,

But we'll all be sorry to see you go.'

Then he gives Jane a farewell salute.

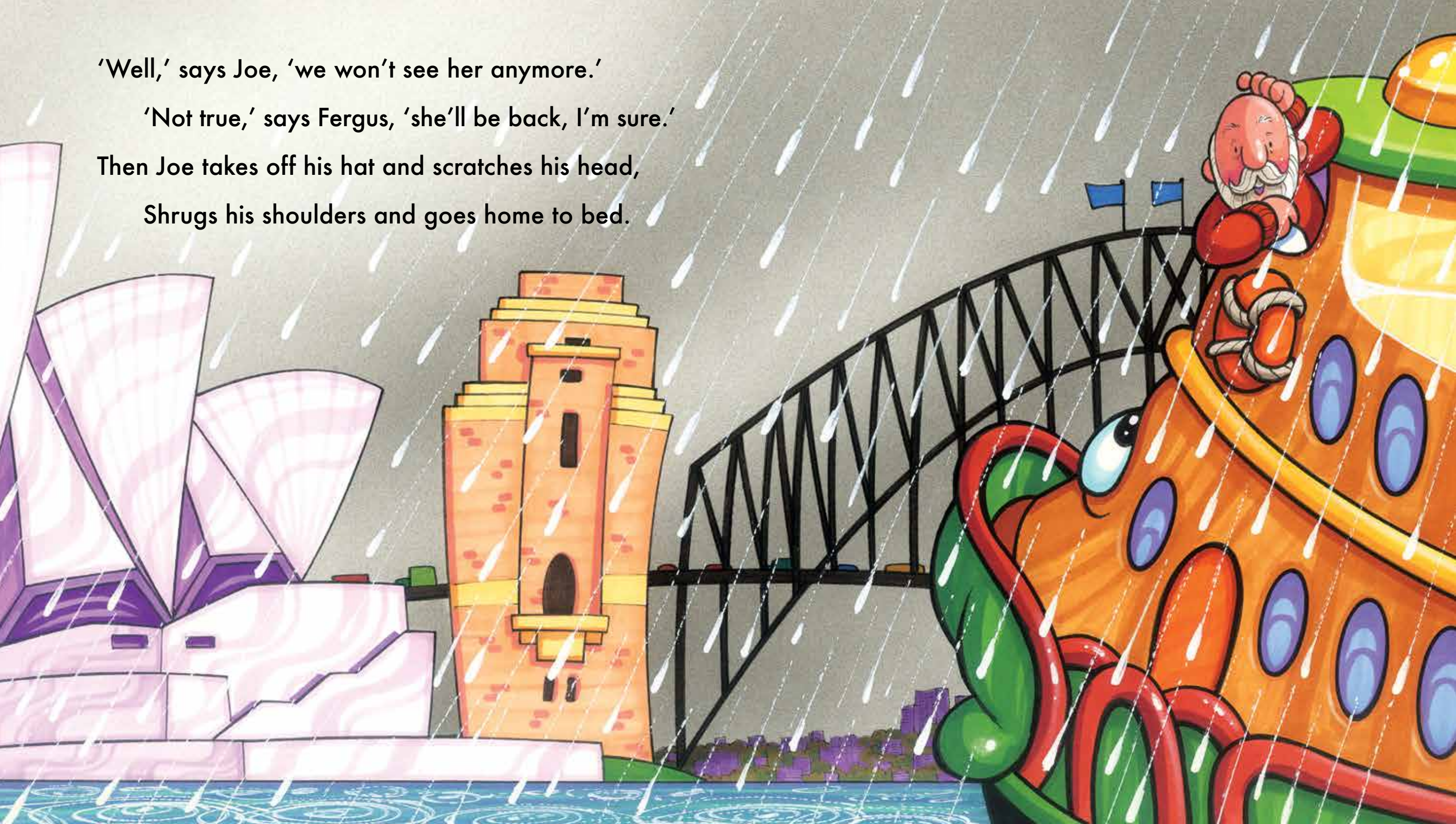
He sounds his whistle, 'Toot, toot, toot!'

'Well,' says Joe, 'we won't see her anymore.'

'Not true,' says Fergus, 'she'll be back, I'm sure.'

Then Joe takes off his hat and scratches his head,

Shrugs his shoulders and goes home to bed.



Loved ones sometimes have to leave us.

For Bée

JWN

For Dr Ian and Ira Townsend

PT

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