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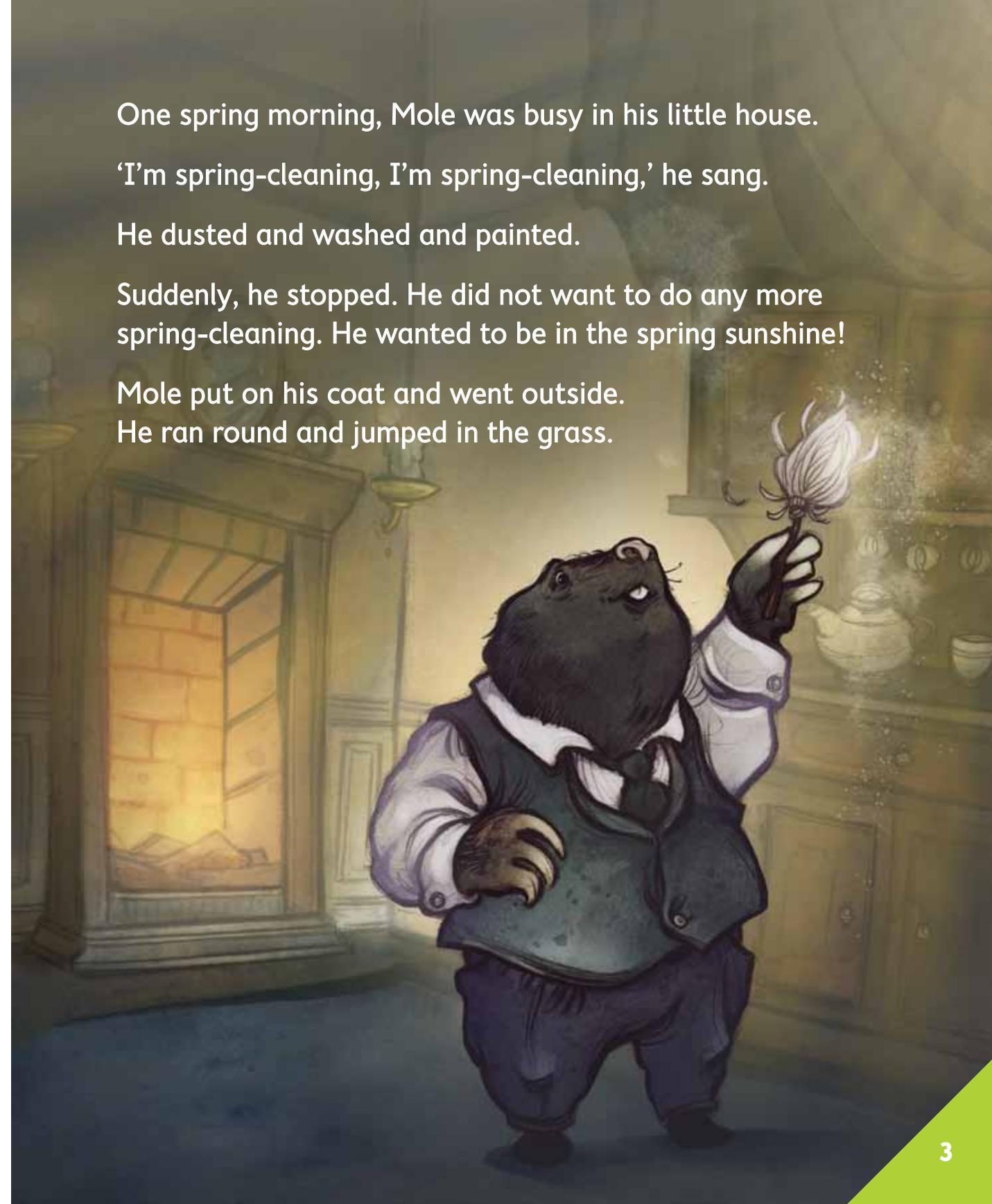
One spring morning, Mole was busy in his little house.

‘I’m spring-cleaning, I’m spring-cleaning,’ he sang.

He dusted and washed and painted.

Suddenly, he stopped. He did not want to do any more  
spring-cleaning. He wanted to be in the spring sunshine!

Mole put on his coat and went outside.  
He ran round and jumped in the grass.



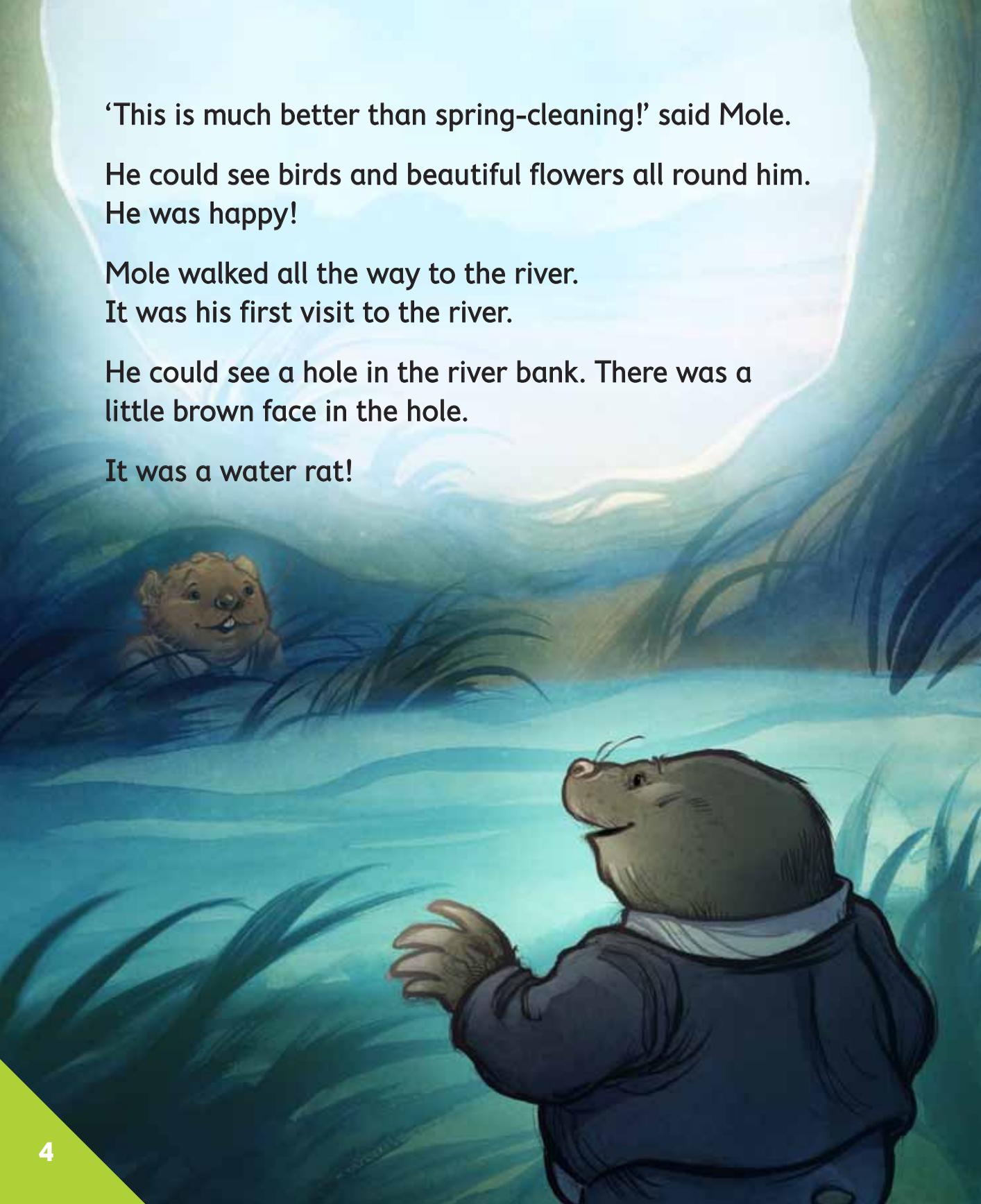
‘This is much better than spring-cleaning!’ said Mole.

He could see birds and beautiful flowers all round him.  
He was happy!

Mole walked all the way to the river.  
It was his first visit to the river.

He could see a hole in the river bank. There was a  
little brown face in the hole.

It was a water rat!



‘Hello, Mole!’ said Water Rat.

‘Hello, Rat!’ said Mole.

Rat rowed across the river in his little boat. Mole jumped in.



‘Let’s take some lunch in a basket and go for a row down  
the river,’ said Rat.

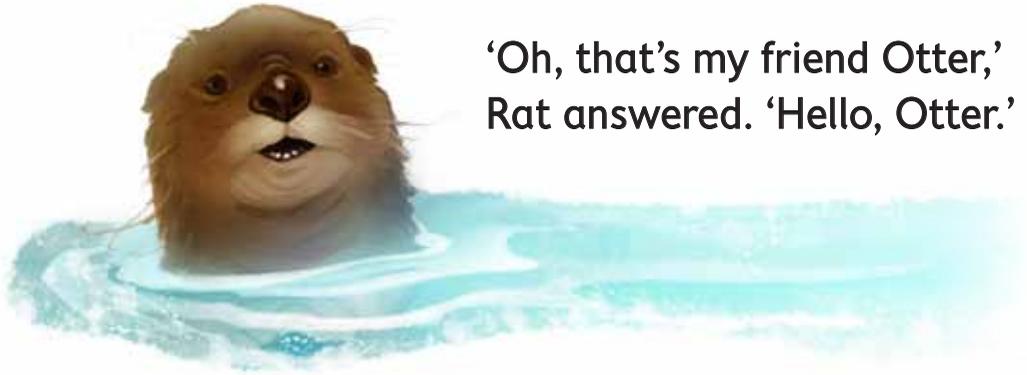
‘That’s a good idea!’ said Mole.

Rat put some food into the basket.

Then the two new friends rowed down the river.

Rat rowed and rowed. Mole looked at the water and listened to the sounds of the river. He was very happy.

‘What’s that in the water?’ asked Mole.



‘Oh, that’s my friend Otter,’  
Rat answered. ‘Hello, Otter.’

‘And WHO IS THAT in the boat?’ asked Mole.

‘Ah,’ laughed Rat. ‘That’s Toad! Hello, Toad.’



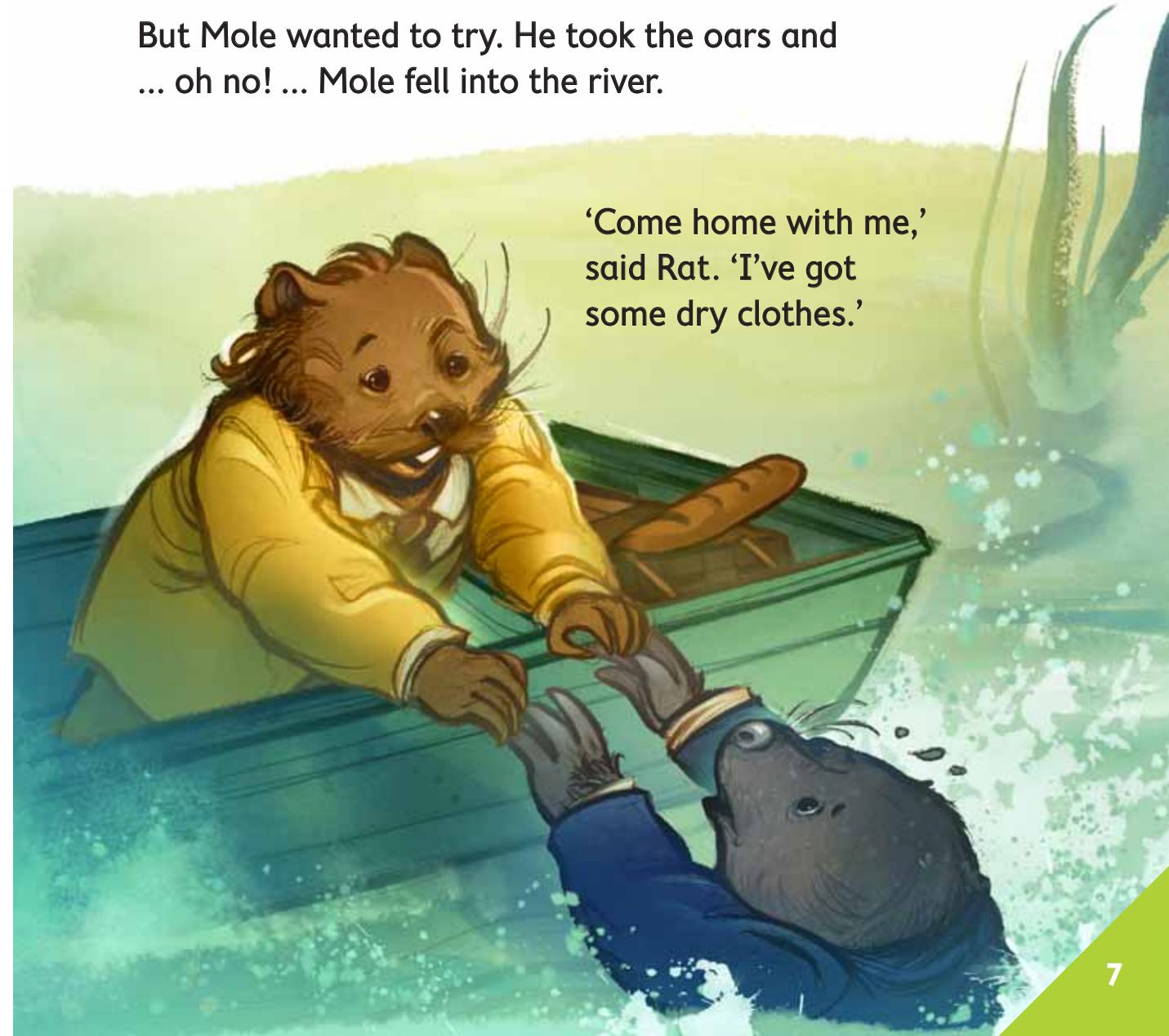
Mole and Rat ate their lunch on the grass by the river bank.

Then Rat started to row again.

‘I want to row now,’ said Mole.

‘It’s not easy,’ said Rat.

But Mole wanted to try. He took the oars and ... oh no! ... Mole fell into the river.



‘Come home with me,’  
said Rat. ‘I’ve got  
some dry clothes.’

Mole stayed in Rat's house for many weeks.

One summer day Mole said, 'Let's go and visit Toad.'

'That's a good idea,' answered Rat.

The two friends got into the boat and Mole rowed them up the river.

'There it is! There's Toad Hall,' said Rat.



'Hello my friends,' said Toad. 'Lovely to see you, yes, lovely. Follow me.'

'Look at that!' Toad said excitedly.

'Www ... what is it?' asked Mole.

'It's a gypsy caravan, my friend. It's the new thing!' answered Toad. 'Going to new places, you know.'



After lunch, they all climbed on to the caravan.

'Now we're ready.'

'Come on horse, let's go,' said Toad. 'This is the life for me!'