Learn English

Level 4

Don Quixote

Adventures of a Spanish Knight

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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.'

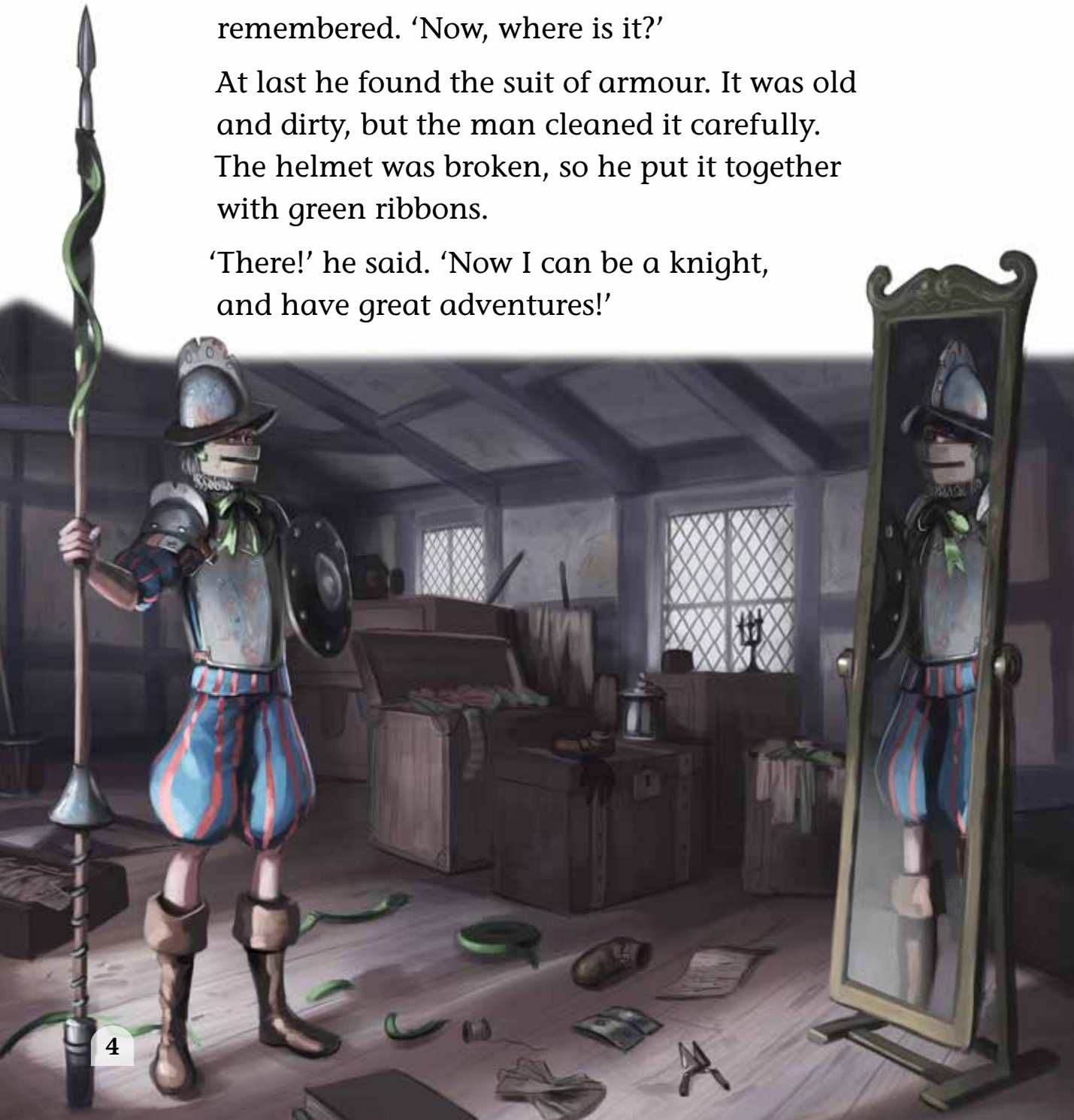
'Don't be silly, Uncle,' said his niece. 'There are no knights now. There are no giants, and you don't have a lady-love.'

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!’

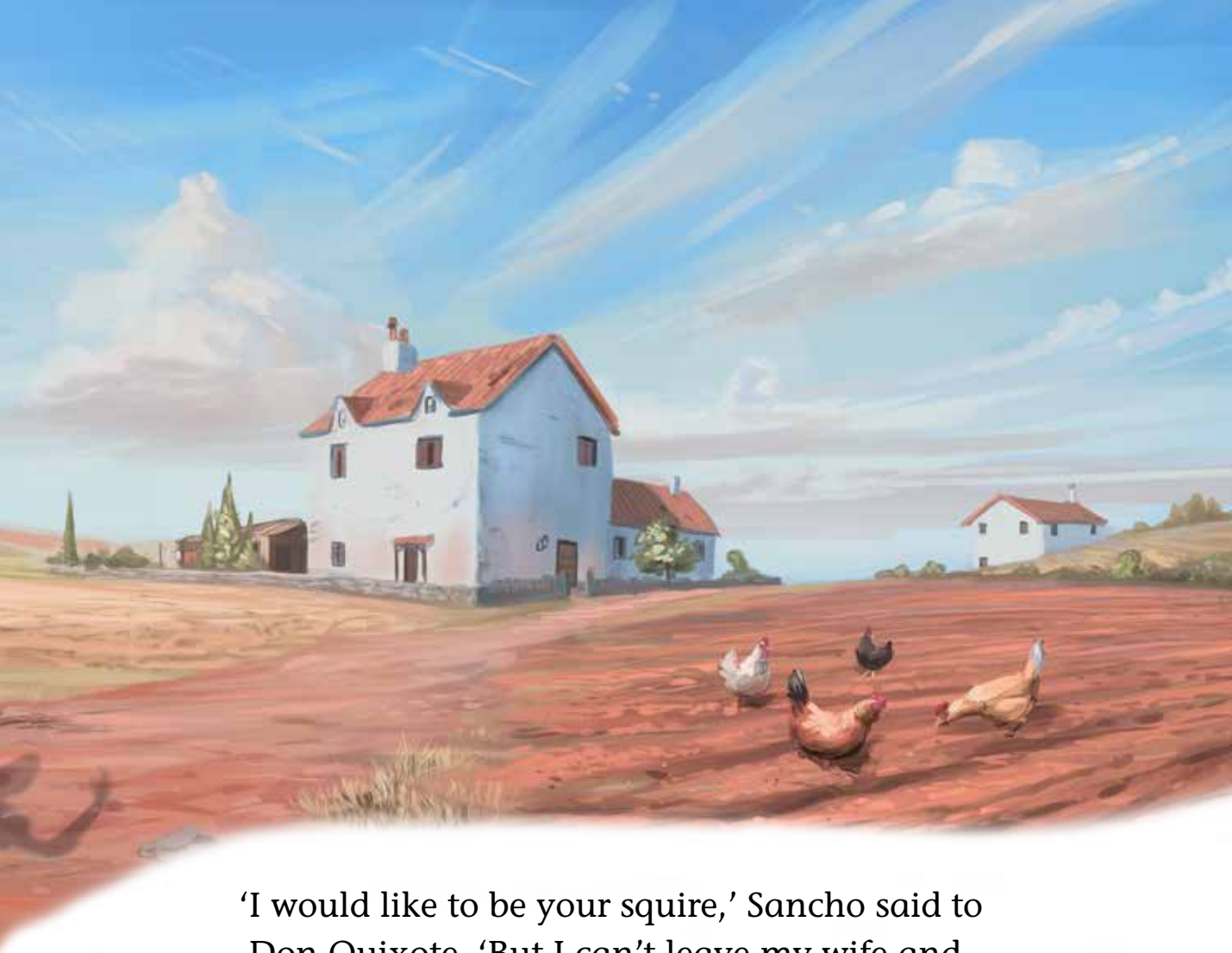
The horse looked at him, and then went on eating.

‘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.’

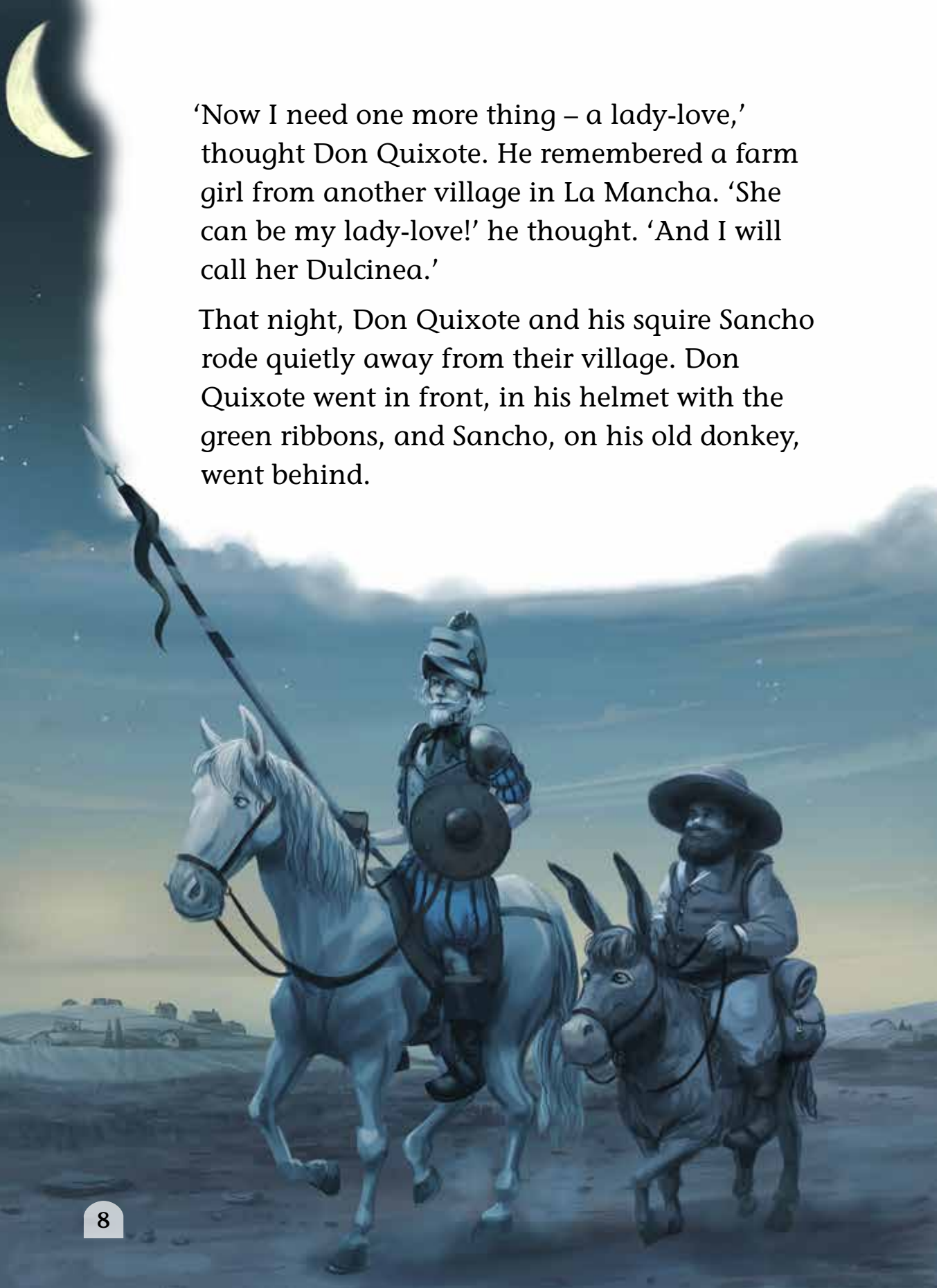
‘We’ll have great adventures,’ Don Quixote said. ‘We’ll do good things for people, and we’ll be rich.’

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!’

‘Now I need one more thing – a lady-love,’ thought Don Quixote. He remembered a farm girl from another village in La Mancha. ‘She can be my lady-love!’ he thought. ‘And I will call her Dulcinea.’

That night, Don Quixote and his squire Sancho rode quietly away from their village. Don Quixote went in front, in his helmet with the green ribbons, and Sancho, on his old donkey, went behind.



All the next day, the two men rode slowly on, but they saw nothing and met nobody. Then, they came up a hill and saw some windmills.

'Look at these giants, Sancho,' said Don Quixote. 'I will fight them, and we will take their money.'

'I don't see any giants,' said Sancho.

'They're right there!' said Don Quixote. 'Look at their long arms.'

'But Master,' said Sancho, 'Those are windmills.'

'Sancho, those are giants!' said Don Quixote. 'I can see that you're afraid. Wait here and I will fight them.'

Before Sancho could stop him, Don Quixote started to ride fast towards the windmills.

'Come back, Master!' Sancho shouted, but Don Quixote did not listen. When his horse Rocinante came near to one of the windmills, Don Quixote hit it with his lance. But just then, the windmill started to turn, and it broke his lance and threw him and his horse to the ground.