

The Gingerbread Man

Once upon a time, a little old lady and a little old man lived together in a little old house on a hill. They had lived there for a long and happy time together.

One day, the little old lady decided to bake a gingerbread man as a special treat for her husband.

She carefully kneaded the dough, rolled it out and cut out the perfect shape. She gave the gingerbread man currants for its eyes and its nose and put it in the oven to bake.

When the little old house was filled with the sweet aroma of warm ginger, she knew that the gingerbread man must be ready. But when she opened the oven door to take it out, she got quite a surprise. The gingerbread man stood up, leapt out of the oven and ran across the floor at great speed towards the kitchen door! ➔



The old man, who had been looking forward to this tasty treat very much, chased after him, shouting “Hey! Stop, Gingerbread Man! You look good enough to eat!”

But the Gingerbread Man just laughed and said:

“Run, run, as fast as you can! You can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man!”

And off he dashed, through the door and down the garden path. The old man and the old lady tried their best to catch up, but they just weren’t quick enough. The Gingerbread Man ran through the garden gate and down the lane, where a big hairy sheepdog was blocking his path.

The sheepdog thought that the Gingerbread Man smelled quite delicious.

“Mmmm... Don’t run away, Gingerbread Man!” woofed the sheepdog.

“You look good enough to eat!”

But the Gingerbread Man just laughed and said:

“I ran away from the old lady and the old man, and I can run away from you!

Run, run as fast as you can! You can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man!”

The hungry sheepdog chased after him, but the Gingerbread Man darted through a small hole in a hedge and disappeared.



The Gingerbread Man ran across a meadow, all the time chuckling to himself. He soon came to a black cow grazing on some daisies.

When the cow saw him coming, she licked her lips. “Mmmm... Don’t rush off, Gingerbread Man!” she mooed. “You look good enough to eat!”

But the Gingerbread Man just laughed and said:

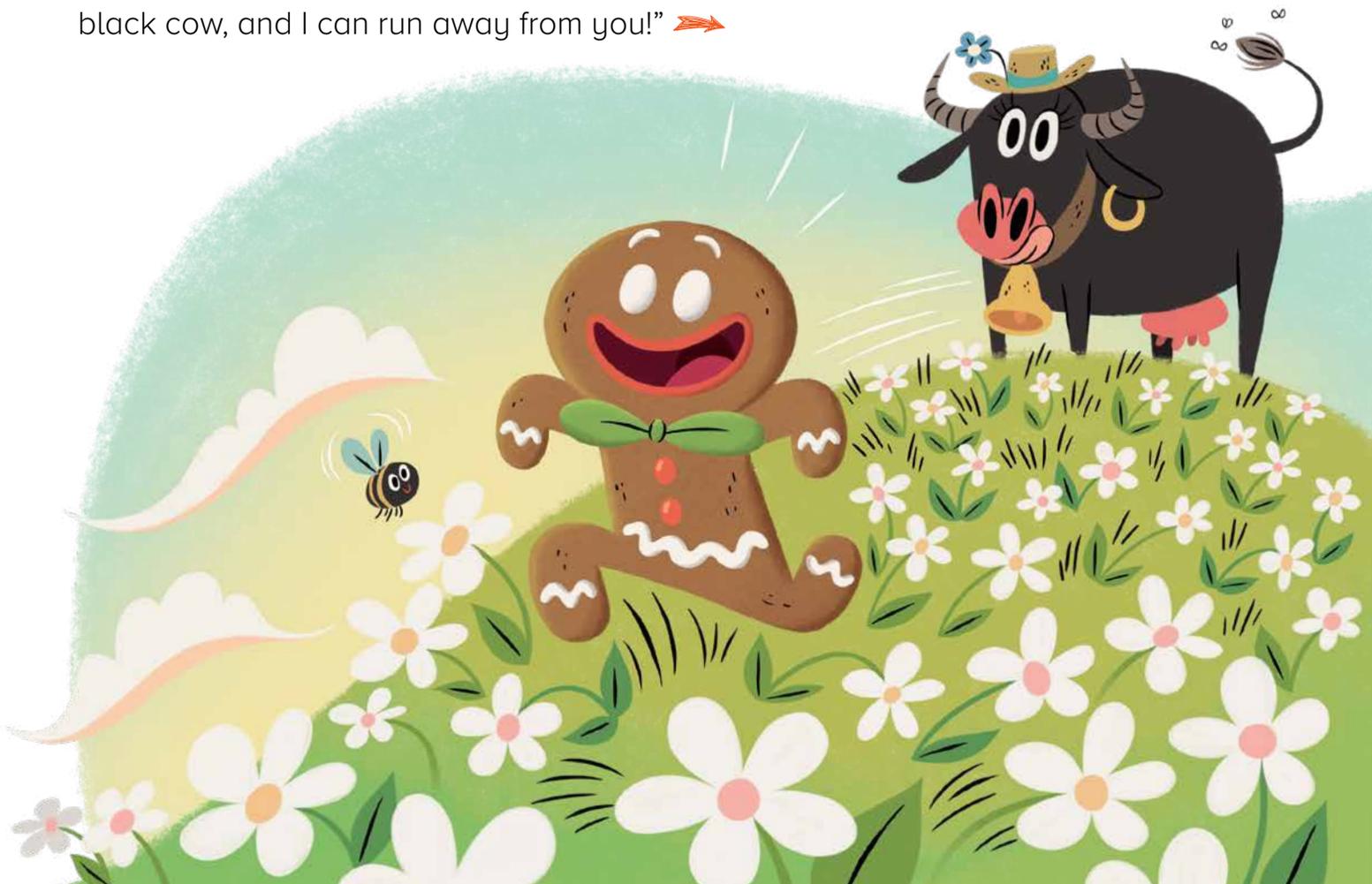
“I ran away from the old lady, the old man and the big hairy sheepdog, and I can run away from you! *Run, run as fast as you can! You can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man!*”

The cow wasn’t a very fast runner, so the Gingerbread Man soon got away. Off he went again, across the meadow and into the pasture, where he found a brown horse munching on some hay.

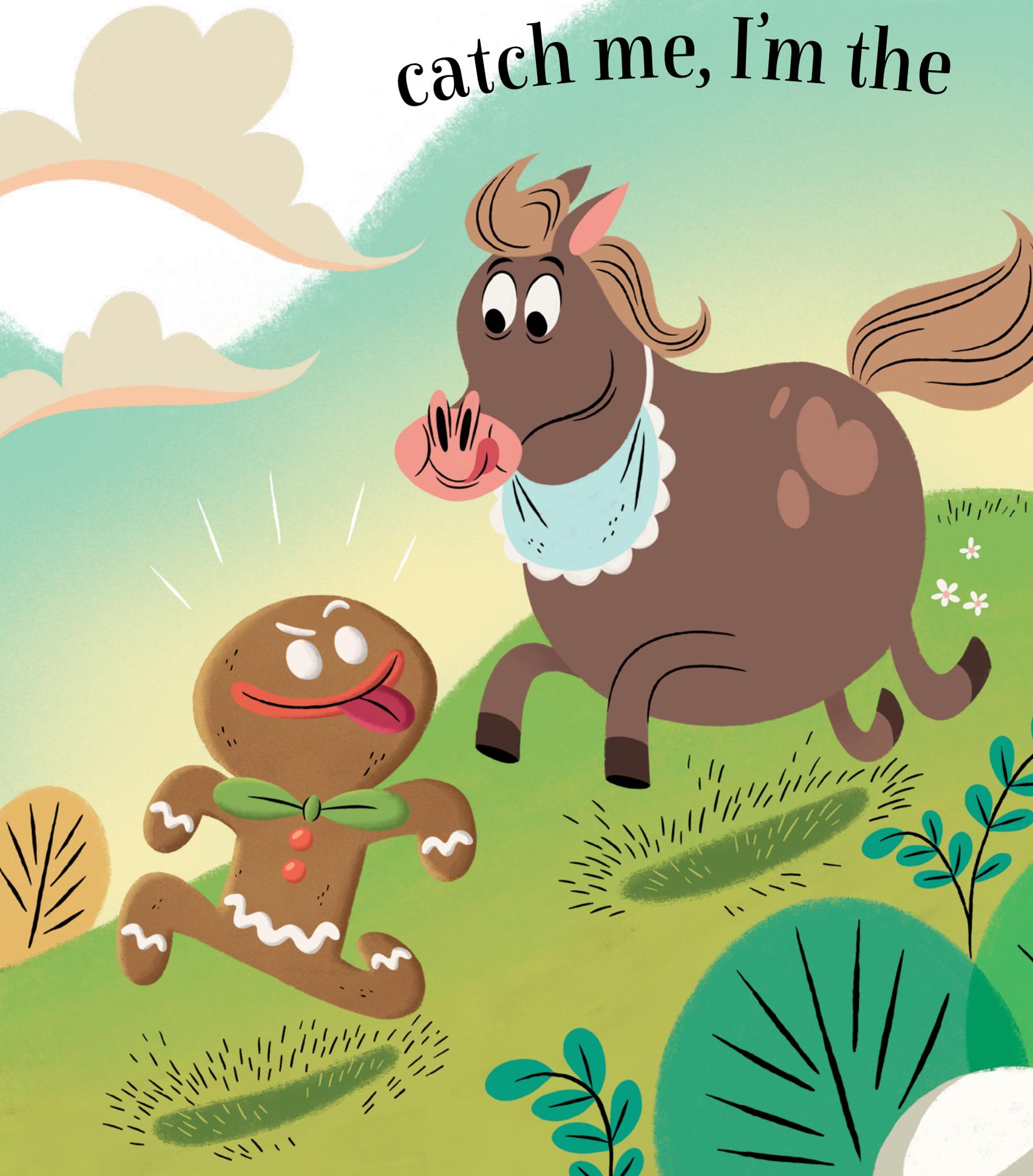
The horse’s tummy rumbled when it saw the Gingerbread Man. “Mmmm... Don’t dash, Gingerbread Man!” neighed the horse. “You look good enough to eat!”

But the Gingerbread Man just laughed and said:

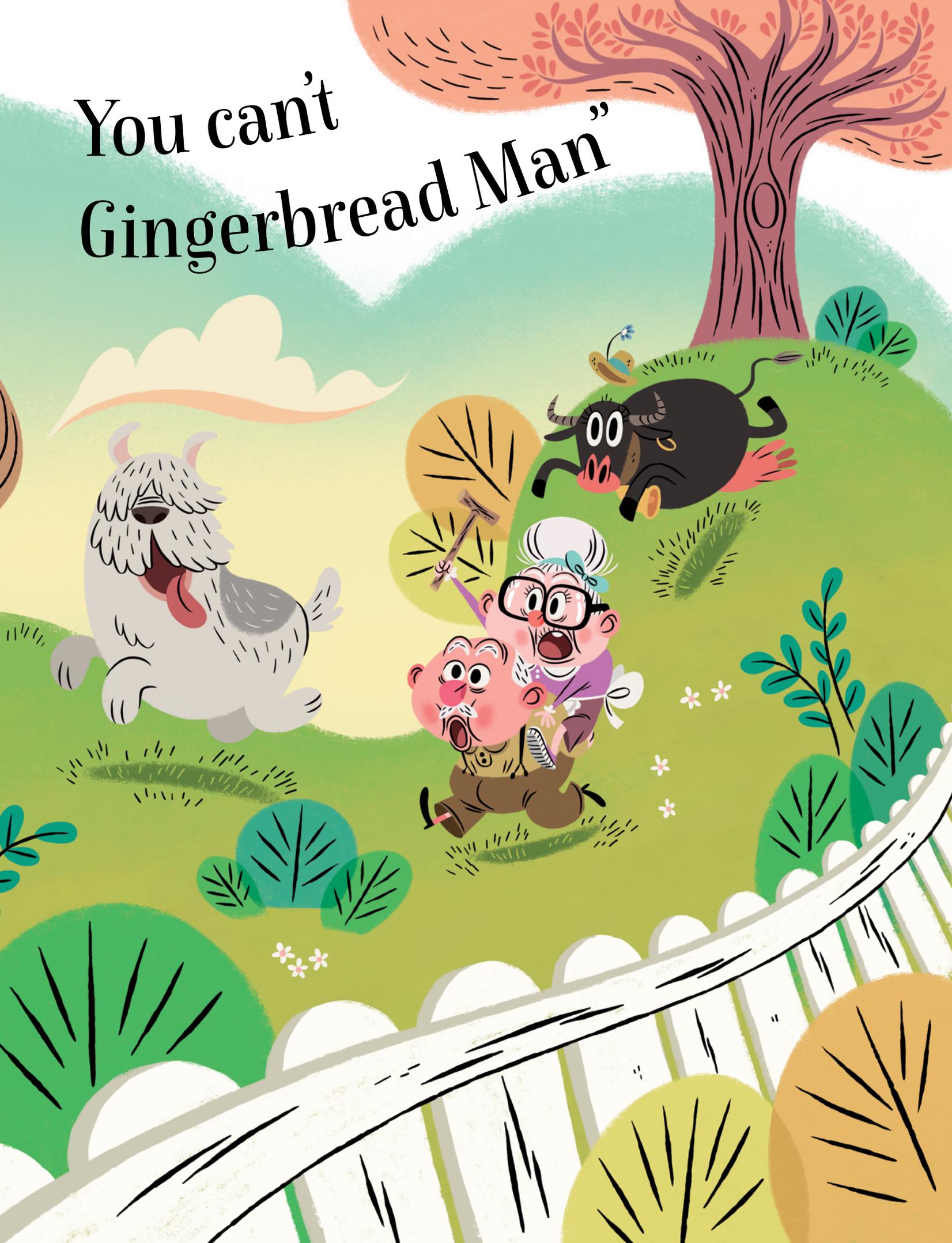
“I ran away from the old lady, the old man, the big hairy sheepdog and the black cow, and I can run away from you!” ➡



*“Run, run as fast as you can!
catch me, I’m the*



You can't Gingerbread Man™





With that, the Gingerbread Man darted through the horse's legs and to the other side of the pasture. The horse galloped after him, but the Gingerbread Man was just too fast.



Soon, the Gingerbread Man reached the river, where he found a fox sitting by the water's edge. The Gingerbread Man wanted to get to the other side, but he knew he couldn't swim there or he'd get terribly soggy.

"You're very fast!" said the fox, sniffing at the sweet gingerbread. "Who are you running away from?"

"I ran away from the old lady, the old man, the big hairy sheepdog, the black cow and the brown horse, and I can run away from you, too!" said the Gingerbread Man proudly.

"Why would you run away from me? I'm not chasing you," said the fox. "Anyway, who else will take you to the other side of the river?"

The fox stood up lazily and walked into the water. "Jump onto my tail," he said to the Gingerbread Man, "and I'll ferry you across."

The Gingerbread Man stepped onto the fox's bushy tail and the fox started paddling across the wide river.

They hadn't got very far when the fox turned his head and said, "Gingerbread Man, you're too heavy for my tail. I'm afraid you'll slide off. Why don't you jump onto my back instead?" So the Gingerbread Man jumped onto the fox's back.

The fox swam a little more, then he turned again and said, "Gingerbread Man, the water is getting deep. I'm afraid you'll get wet. Why don't you step onto my shoulder instead?" So the Gingerbread Man climbed up onto the fox's shoulder.

The fox swam some more, then he said, "Gingerbread Man, the water is getting deeper again. I'm afraid you'll get splashed. Why don't you stand on the end of my nose?" So the Gingerbread Man carefully tiptoed onto his nose.

They paddled for a little while longer, and just as the fox reached the other side of the river, he opened his mouth wide and bit off the Gingerbread Man's leg!

"Oh dear!" said the Gingerbread Man. "I'm a quarter gone!"

The fox took another bite and the Gingerbread Man said, "Oh dear! I'm half gone!"

Then the fox bit off both of the Gingerbread Man's arms and he said, "Oh dear! I'm three-quarters gone!"

Then, before he knew it, the sly fox gobbled him all up, and the Gingerbread Man said, "Oh dear! I'm all gone!"

• **And that was
the end of the
Gingerbread
Man!**

