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A Dragon's Lullaby

by George Capaccio

illustrated by Jacqueline Decker



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In a castle high on a mountain lived a kindly dragon called Dario. The dragon looked after the people who lived in the village below. Each evening, Dario stretched his golden wings and flew over the village. When the sky grew dark, Dario began to sing his lullabies.

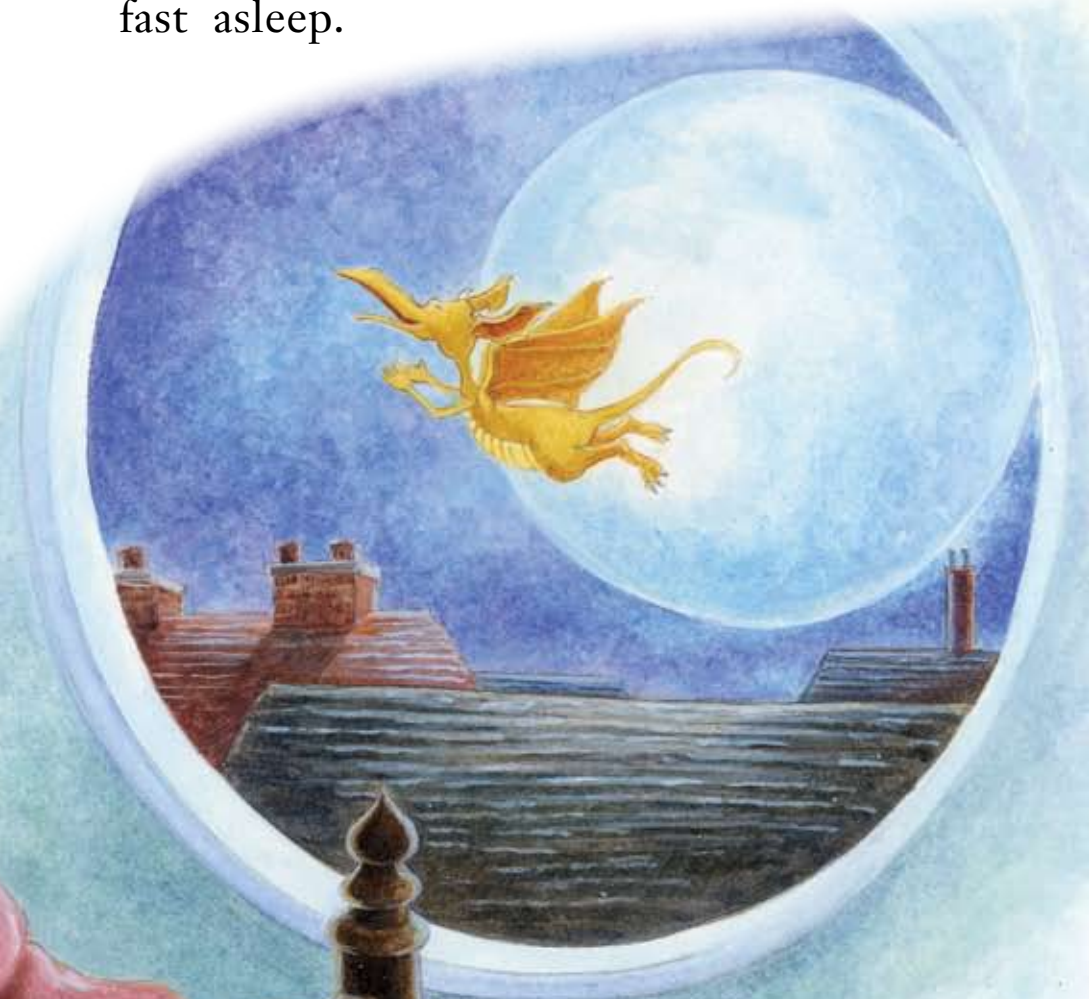
“Now that day has turned to night,
and all the stars look so bright,
climb into bed and close your eyes,
and I will sing some lullabies.”



When Dario began to sing, the children ran to their windows. They stood on tiptoes and looked for Dario in the sky. Dario was easy to see. His long, golden wings sparkled in the moonlight.

Dario's lullabies made the children so sleepy that they crawled into bed and closed their eyes. The dragon's lullabies soon put everyone in the village to sleep. The village was so still you could hear a star shoot across the sky.

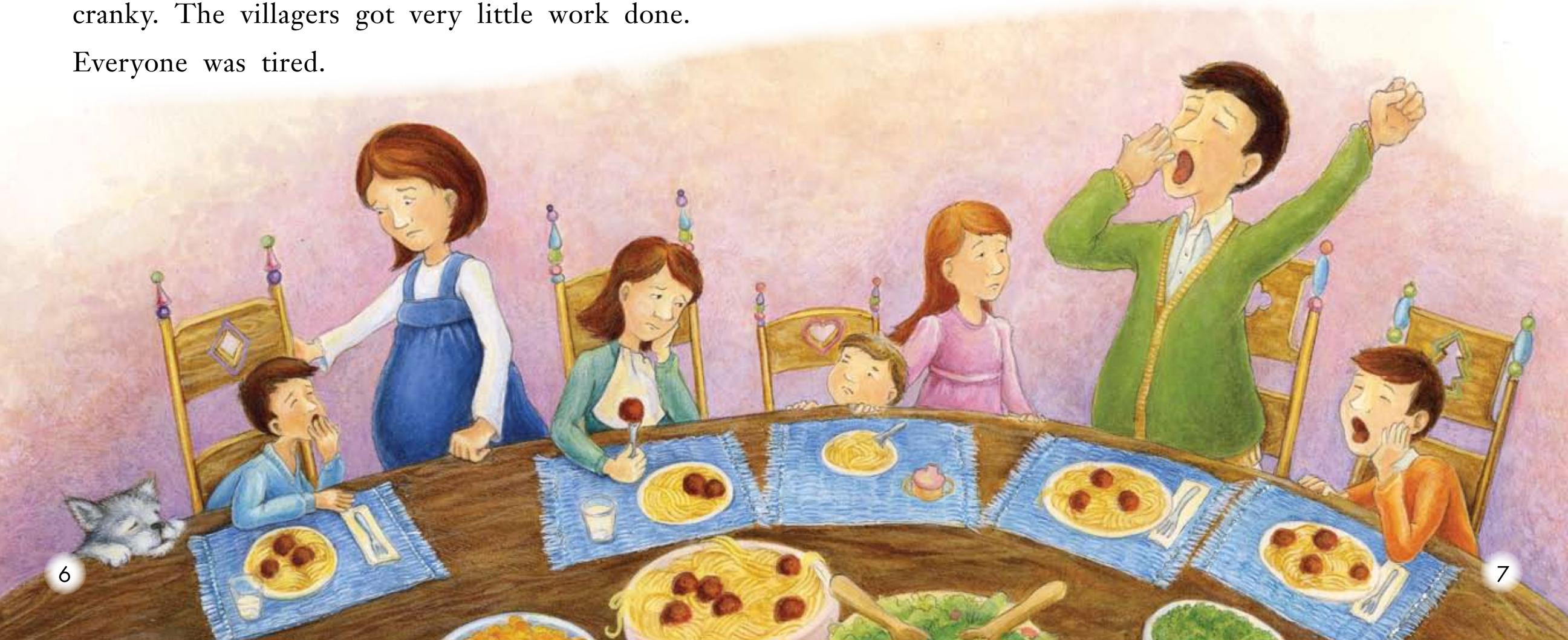
After singing his lullabies, Dario said, "Good night, everyone. Sleep tight." But no one ever answered. All the villagers were fast asleep.



One night, Dario did not appear in the night sky. The dragon's soothing lullabies were not heard in the village.

Without the lullabies, the villagers couldn't fall asleep. The next day, the children were cranky. The villagers got very little work done. Everyone was tired.

A week passed. Dario still did not sing his lullabies. The villagers were miserable. They couldn't sleep. They couldn't work. They were even too tired to eat! Something had to be done.



At last, the mayor spoke up. “I’ll go see Dario,” she said. “I’ll ask him why he has stopped singing to us.”

The mayor climbed and climbed until she reached Dario’s castle on top of the mountain. It was daytime, but the mayor found Dario in bed.

“What’s wrong, Dario?” the mayor asked. “Are you sick? Is that why you don’t sing to us anymore?”



Dario looked sadly at the mayor. “I will tell you why I stopped singing,” he said. “Every night I sing lullabies to the villagers. Then I wish them good night. But no one ever wishes me good night. The villagers don’t care about me.” Then Dario cried and hid under the covers.

“Oh, no, Dario!” the mayor answered. “That’s not true!”

But Dario wasn’t listening.

The mayor went back down the mountain. She called a meeting and told all the villagers what Dario had said.

“Dario thinks we don’t care about him!” she said. “How can we show him that we do care?”

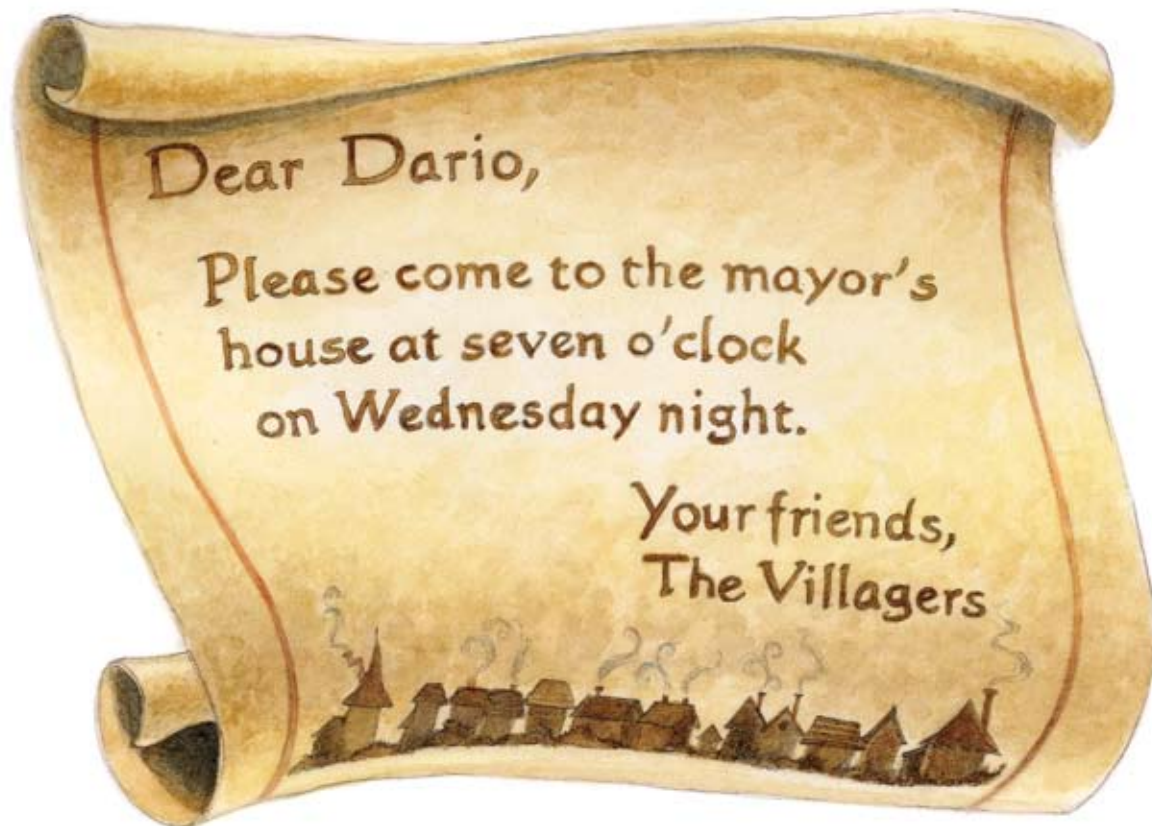
“I know!” said a small voice at the back of the room. “We can sing Dario a lullaby!”

The people turned around to see who had spoken. It was a little girl named Olivia.

“When Dario sings us a lullaby, we know that he loves us,” Olivia said. “If we sing to him, he’ll know that we love him, too!”



Everyone agreed. They decided to write a special lullaby for the dragon. All the villagers helped write the lullaby. Then they sent a card to Dario. The next day, Dario got this card in the mail:



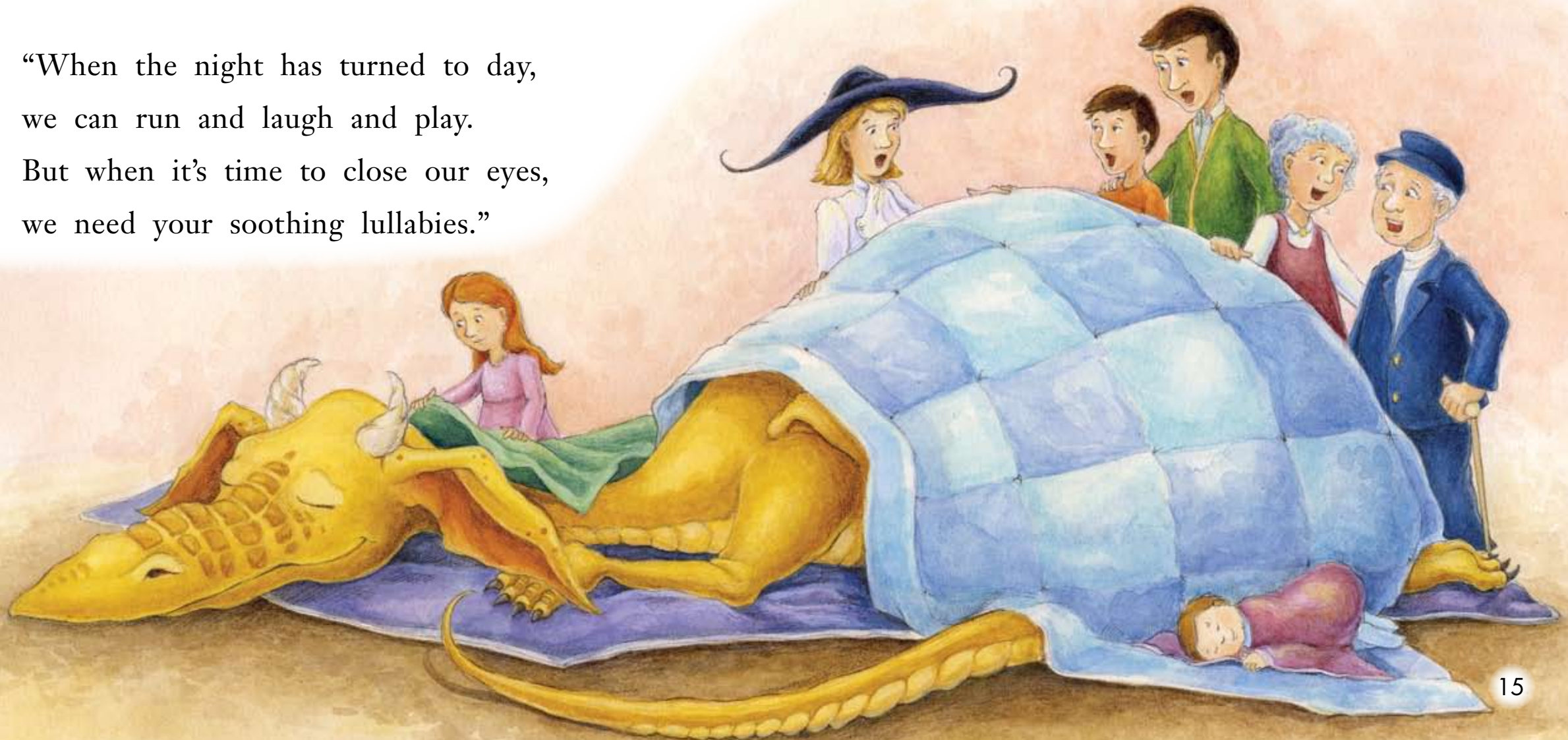
Dario didn't know what to think. But on Wednesday night, he flew down the mountain and into the village. The mayor's house was dark when Dario arrived. A sign on the front door said "Please Come In."

Dario slowly opened the door. Suddenly, the lights came on. The villagers shouted, “We love you, Dario!”

Then they sang their lullaby:

“When the night has turned to day,
we can run and laugh and play.
But when it’s time to close our eyes,
we need your soothing lullabies.”

Dario’s heart filled with joy. He wanted to thank the villagers for their kindness, but he fell asleep!



The next night, Dario returned to the sky with his songs. When he said, “Good night,” no one answered. But this time Dario knew why. His lullabies had put all the villagers to sleep!

