

Summer Stories

Trundle Goes Out to Tea



By Enid Blyton

If ever you go to the little pixie village of Tucked-Away, you will notice a curious thing. You will see that every pixie wears a green leaf sewn onto his tight little breeches, just over his right knee-cap. And you are sure to wonder why.



Well, I will tell you the reason, because I'm sure you wouldn't like to ask the pixies. We shall have to go right back to the day when Trundle the pixie went out to tea.

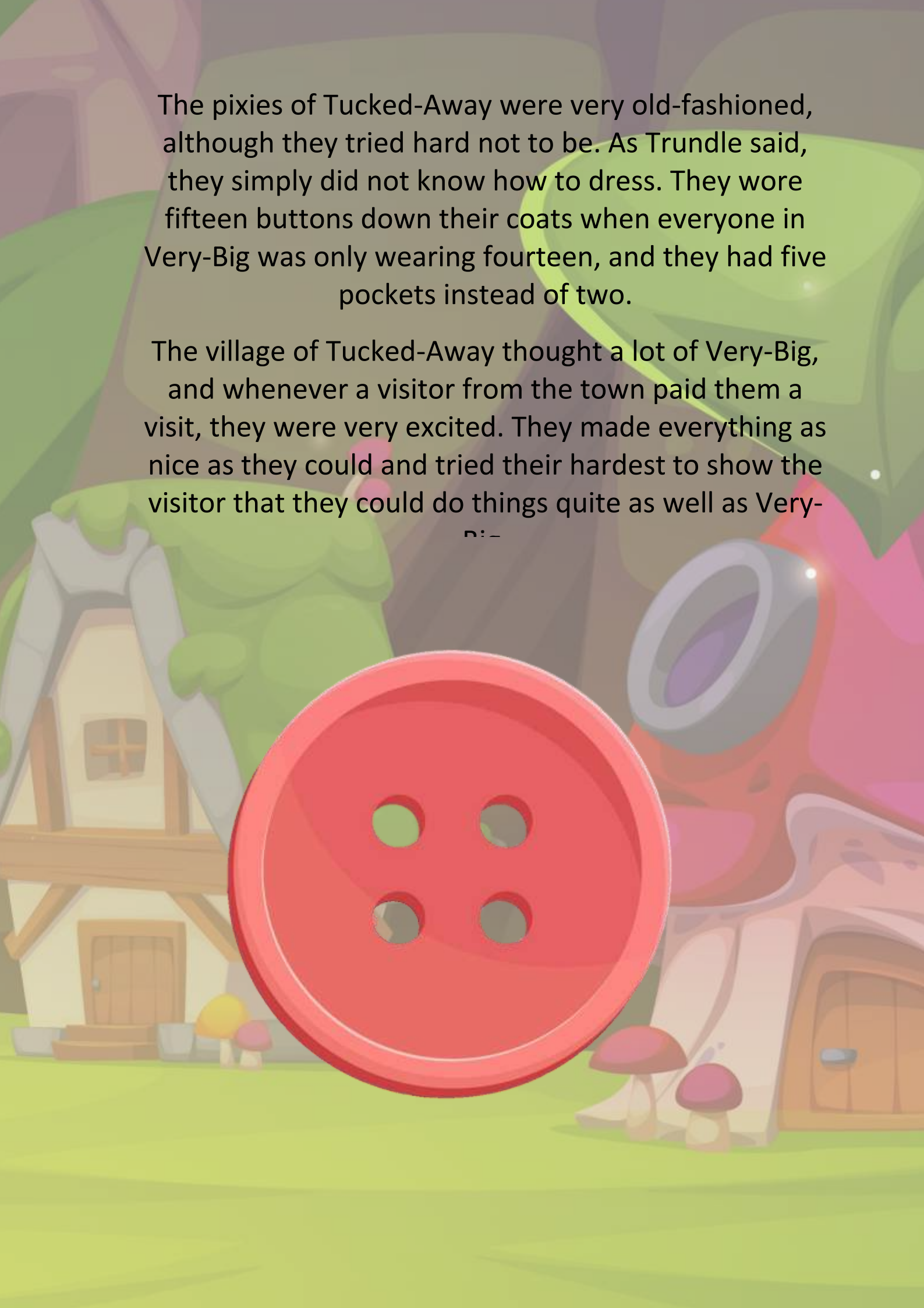
Now, Trundle didn't live in the village of Tucked-Away. Oh, dear me, no — he lived in the town of Very-Big, where everything was up-to-date, and all the pixies wore the very latest thing in pointed caps, and knew how many buttons go on a coat, and important things like that.



The pixies of Tucked-Away were very old-fashioned, although they tried hard not to be. As Trundle said, they simply did not know how to dress. They wore fifteen buttons down their coats when everyone in Very-Big was only wearing fourteen, and they had five pockets instead of two.

The village of Tucked-Away thought a lot of Very-Big, and whenever a visitor from the town paid them a visit, they were very excited. They made everything as nice as they could and tried their hardest to show the visitor that they could do things quite as well as Very-

Big.



So, you can imagine that when Trundle said he would go and have tea with his cousin in Tucked-Away, there was great excitement. Jinks was a very up-to-date pixie himself, and couldn't keep the news to himself when he got Trundle's letter. He rushed round to all his friends to tell them that a pixie from Very-Big was coming to tea the very next Friday.



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Jinks made lots of scones and cakes and bought three different sorts of jam from the jam woman. He made a yellow jelly and a red one, and when the day came you should have seen his tea table. It was enough to make your mouth water! The pixies going by his cottage in the morning peeped in through the window, and what they saw made them long for the afternoon to come.

Jinks had asked everybody to come at four o'clock. Trundle was coming at half past three, and Jinks thought that his visitor would just have time to wash and polish up his shoes before all the guests arrived.

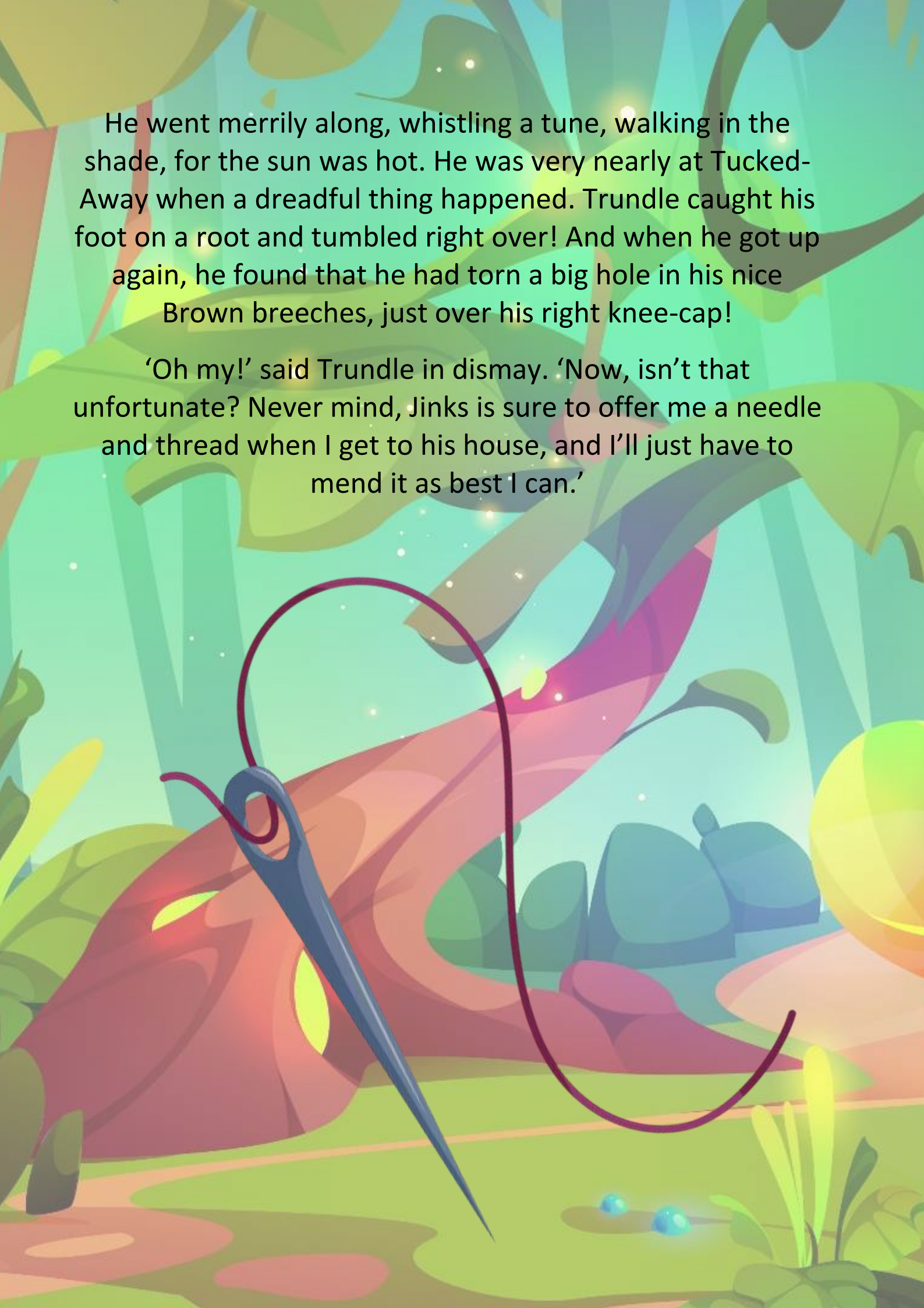


At half past two, Trundle started out from the town of Very-Big to walk to Tucked-Away, which was four miles away. He had on his newest suit, and a fine new hat with a red feather in it. He liked his cousin Jinks, and he was looking forward to the tea party, for he hadn't had much lunch.



He went merrily along, whistling a tune, walking in the shade, for the sun was hot. He was very nearly at Tucked-Away when a dreadful thing happened. Trundle caught his foot on a root and tumbled right over! And when he got up again, he found that he had torn a big hole in his nice Brown breeches, just over his right knee-cap!

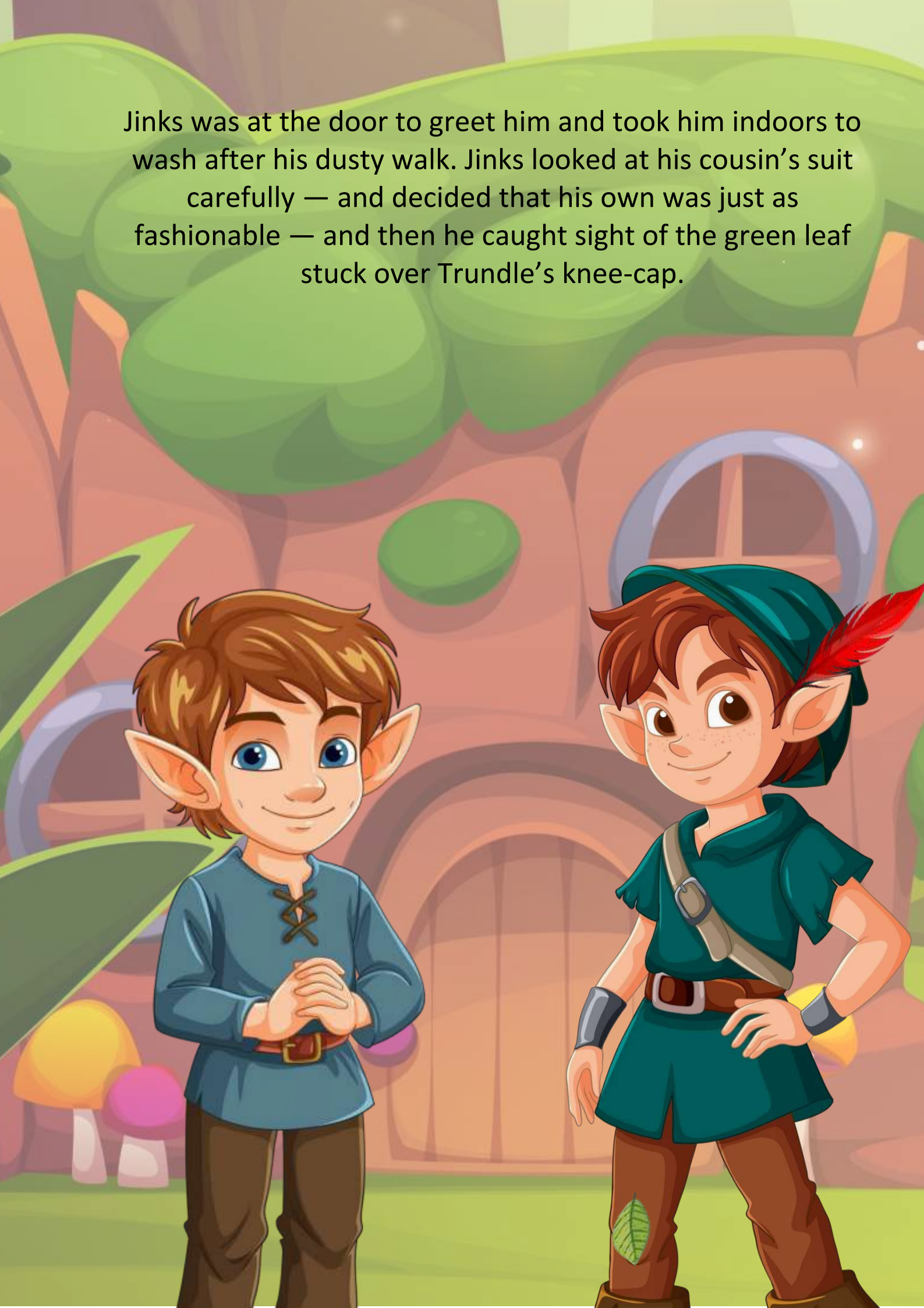
‘Oh my!’ said Trundle in dismay. ‘Now, isn’t that unfortunate? Never mind, Jinks is sure to offer me a needle and thread when I get to his house, and I’ll just have to mend it as best I can.’



He took a green leaf and tucked it into the hole, for his knee was grazed and bleeding a little, and he didn't want his socks to be stained. Then he went on his way again and soon arrived at Jinks's little cottage.



Jinks was at the door to greet him and took him indoors to wash after his dusty walk. Jinks looked at his cousin's suit carefully — and decided that his own was just as fashionable — and then he caught sight of the green leaf stuck over Trundle's knee-cap.



Dear me! he thought. That's a new idea, surely! I suppose it's a sort of trimming. Dear, dear, dear — and not one of my guests will be in fashion now, for none of us has got green-leaf trimming on his right knee! What can I do? There's half an hour before the tea party begins, so perhaps there's just time to send little notes round and tell everyone to wear a green leaf sewn to their right knee.



‘The guests won’t be here for a little while, Trundle,’ said Jinks to his visitor. ‘Would you like to go and sit out in the garden and rest after your long walk?’

So, while Trundle was resting in the garden, Jinks hurriedly wrote lots of little notes and gave them to his servant to deliver.

Please be sure to wear a green leaf as a trimming, sewn over your right knee-cap.

It is the latest fashion in Very-Big. Trundle is wearing one this afternoon.



You can guess that when the guests received these notes they all rushed out in a great hurry and got green leaves to sew onto their right knee-caps. That took time, so they were all a bit late when they arrived.

Trundle fell fast asleep in the garden, and when he awoke he saw the first of the guests coming in at the gate.

‘My goodness!’ he cried. ‘I haven’t mended this hole in the knee of my breeches! Whatever will the guests think of me?’



He got up to go and shake hands with the little pixie coming into the garden. When he saw the first one, he was very much astonished.

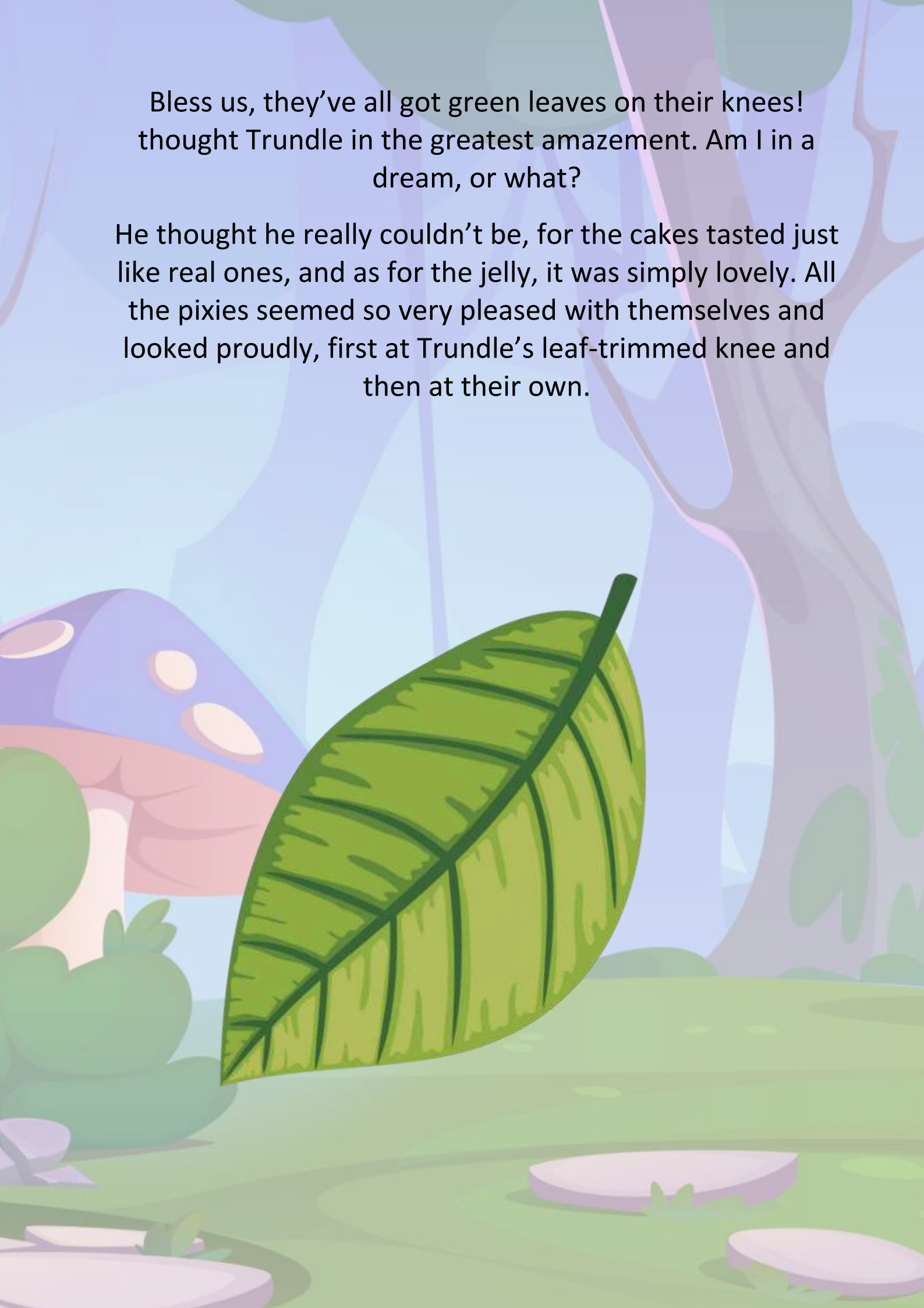
What an extraordinary thing! he thought. Here's another pixie who must have tumbled down and torn his suit too, because he's got a green leaf over his knee-cap like me!

His astonishment was even greater when he saw that the second pixie had a green leaf over his knee as well. And the third one, and the fourth! And his cousin — who certainly hadn't had one when he had met him at the door!



Bless us, they've all got green leaves on their knees!
thought Trundle in the greatest amazement. Am I in a
dream, or what?

He thought he really couldn't be, for the cakes tasted just
like real ones, and as for the jelly, it was simply lovely. All
the pixies seemed so very pleased with themselves and
looked proudly, first at Trundle's leaf-trimmed knee and
then at their own.



Trundle was more and more puzzled, until a pixie suddenly helped him to solve the mystery.

‘Such a pretty new fashion, the leaf-trimming on the knee, isn’t it?’ said the pixie to Trundle. ‘As you see, Tucked-Away is not behind Very-Big in fashion!’



Well! thought Trundle. Why in the world do they think that there's a fashion of that sort in Very-Big? There certainly isn't and never will be! I wonder — I wonder — is it possible that Jinks thought I was wearing this leaf as a sort of trimming and didn't guess I'd tumbled down and torn my breeches? He certainly didn't offer me a needle and thread to mend it with as I thought he would. I suppose he sent round notes to all the guests to tell them to wear leaves too, so as to be in the fashion? Oh, dear me, what a joke!



Trundle had guessed quite rightly, and it made him smile to look round the tea party and see everyone proudly wearing leaves over their right knees, thinking that they were very fashionable indeed.

I mustn't let them know that there's no such fashion, he thought. They would be so terribly upset — but, oh dear, if this isn't the very funniest thing that ever I saw!



Trundle tried his hardest not to laugh, for he was a kind-hearted pixie, but for once he was quite glad when the party came to an end. He wanted to laugh and laugh!

And all the way home he did laugh! You should just have heard him! Even the rabbits peeped out of their holes and laughed too, although they didn't know why!



From that day to this, the village of Tucked-Away has kept to the fashion — so if ever you meet a pixie wearing a green leaf on his right knee, you will know where he comes from!



