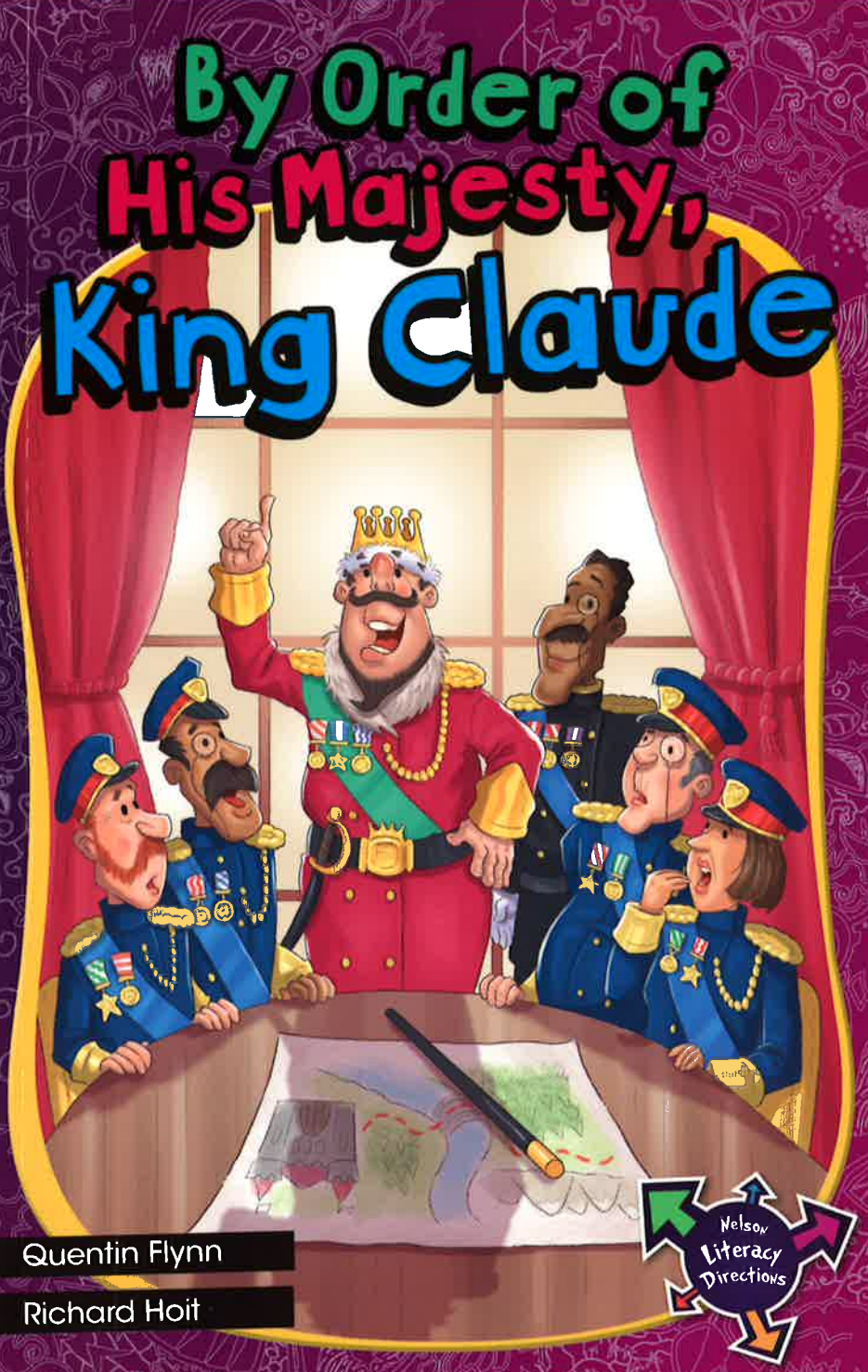
By Order of His Majesty, King Claude



Quentin Flynn

Richard Hoit

Nelson Literacy Directions

For teachers' inspection ONLY

By Order of His Majesty, King Claude

Written by Quentin Flynn
Illustrated by Richard Hoit

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Meet the Characters

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King Claude IV

The ruler of Montpelliovia.



Sir Montgomery-Quince

The lord chamberlain.



Lady Sally

The royal wardrobier.



Joe

A cafe owner.



Lollipop Ladies

A delegation.



Field-Marshals

Commanders of the army.

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Dear Reader

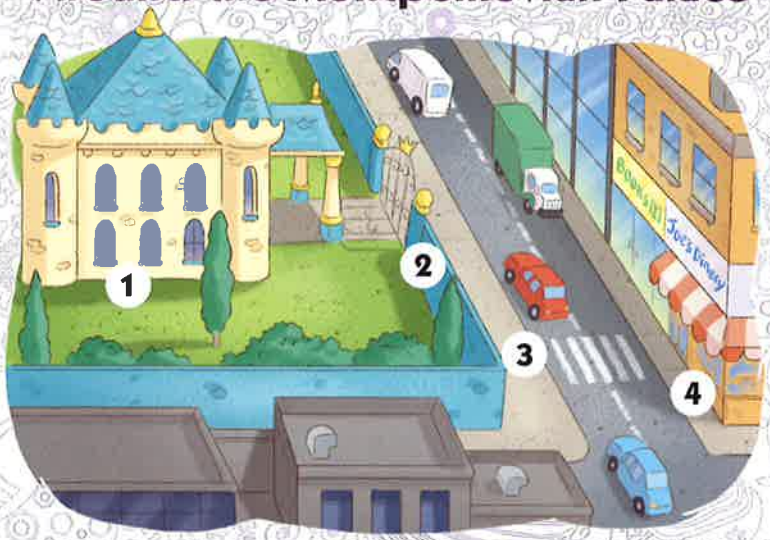
I once went to a shop in a smart area of town. I was nicely dressed, and the shop assistants were all very attentive and helpful. When I went back the next day, I'd been working in the garden, and I had my dirty old gardening clothes on.

POSTCARD

Everyone ignored me! It's funny how what you wear changes people's ideas about how they should behave towards you.

Quentin Flynn
Author

Around the Montpelliovian Palace



1. The palace
2. The palace gates
3. The pedestrian crossing
4. Joe's Dinery

1 A Royal Lunch

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His Majesty King Claude IV, ruler of the small kingdom of Montpelliovia, poked at his royal lunch with a silver fork. Even with a dressing of the rarest grated truffles, the kingdom's rosiest lobster, finest caviar and plumpest oysters were unappetising.



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Even the cup of kopi luwak coffee, ground from the world's most expensive coffee beans, didn't inspire him. He was bored with royal food. He felt like a bacon sandwich and a fizzy drink.

He put his fork down and twiddled glumly with a lobster leg. Then he pushed the specks of caviar around his plate until they made letters.

"B-O-R- …"



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"Is everything all right with your lunch, sire?" came a voice.

"Yes, it's fine, thank you," said King Claude IV, with a noble wave of his lobster leg. He tried to smile at Sir Montgomery-Quince, his lord chamberlain. It was the chamberlain's job to wear white gloves, remind the king of his meetings and put plates of regal food in front of the king three times a day. "Splendid, as always," the king sighed.

King Claude IV ate a single speck of caviar. He screwed up his face as the tiny fish egg burst in his mouth. To take his mind off the taste, he imagined a streaky bacon rasher pressed between two thick slices of bread. In his mind, the sandwich floated off a plate and headed for his mouth. But this only made him feel even more miserable.



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Then it occurred to him that he was the king, and he could do pretty much as he wished without getting into trouble. As long as he didn't invade next-door kingdoms or fire cannons for fun after dark or play marbles with the crown jewels, nobody would tell him off. Actually, nobody had told him off when he had done those things last week. But he could tell from the faint looks of disapproval on the faces of his royal field marshals, neighbouring lords and ladies, and the castle jeweller that he should probably find other ways to amuse himself.

"I'm just nipping out," he said to Sir Montgomery-Quince, pushing his plate away and standing up.

"Shall I order the royal grooms to brush the horses and bring the carriage around to the front?



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Or do you want the royal limousine?" asked the lord chamberlain with a bow.

"No, thanks," replied King Claude IV. "I'm going for a walk."

A faint look of horror crossed Sir Montgomery-Quince's face. "Would you like me to brush your finest English shoes first?" he inquired.

King Claude IV looked down at his black slippers, embroidered in silk with the regal crest of arms. "These will do fine," he declared.

Sir Montgomery-Quince suppressed a gasp. "As you wish, your majesty," he murmured.

The king padded out of the royal dining room. He scuffed his way down a marble staircase. Taking the royal honour guard marching up and down the palace's parade ground by surprise, he headed for the palace gates.

The soldiers at the gates saluted as soon as they saw the king. The king nodded and breezed past.



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On one of his royal trips to wave at his loyal subjects from the window of his limousine, he'd seen a cafe across the road.

"I bet they have bacon sandwiches," he thought to himself. He was so caught up in his dreamy visions of floating bacon sandwiches that he didn't see the lollipop lady at the pedestrian crossing a few paces down the road. He strode into the traffic, oblivious to the squealing of brakes, skidding of tyres and the humble apologies from the drivers – and the lollipop sign being waved in his direction. "And probably fizzy drinks, too," he thought to himself, reaching the other side of the road.

