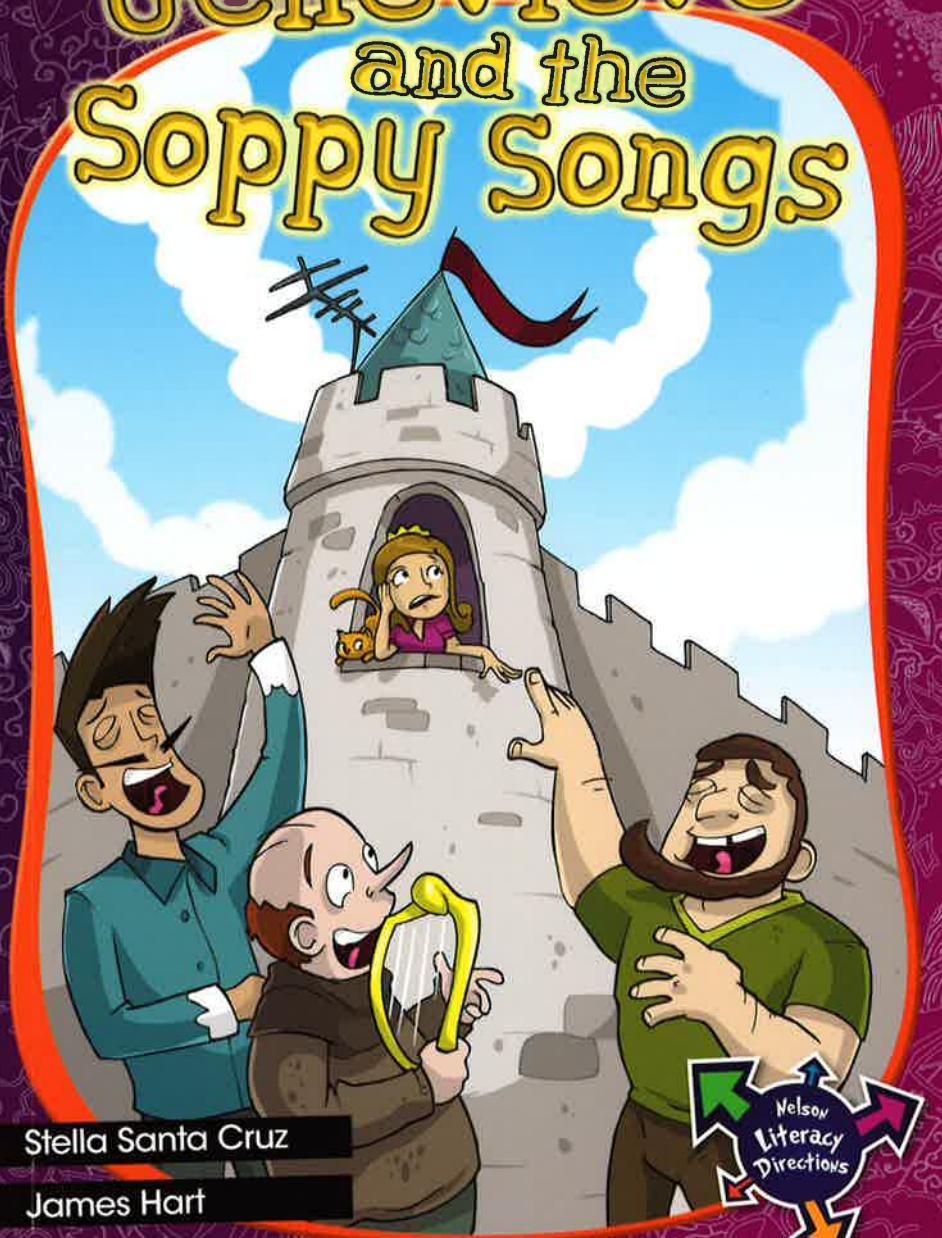
Queen Genevieve and the Soppy Songs



Stella Santa Cruz

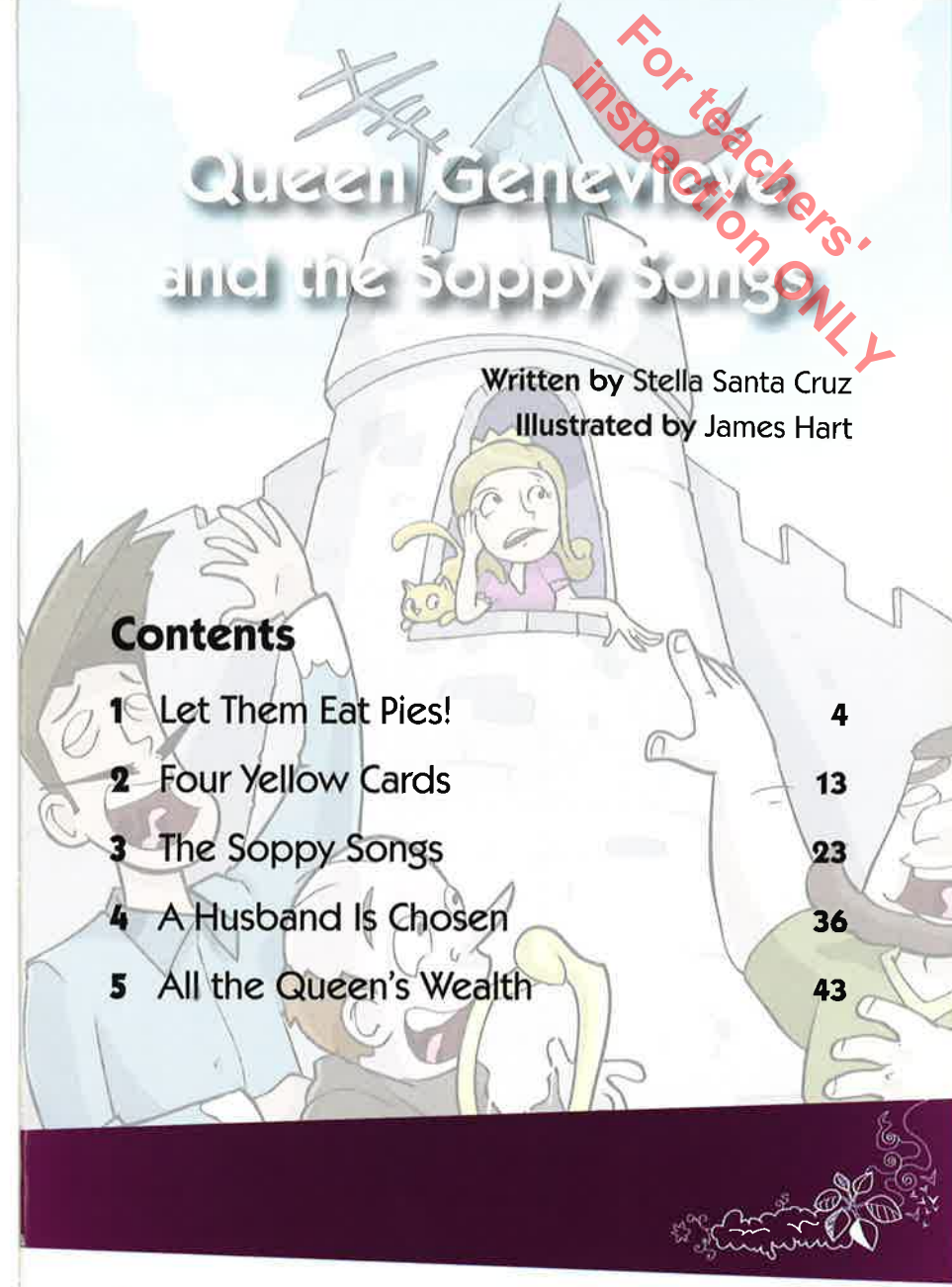
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Queen Genevieve and the Soppy Songs

Written by Stella Santa Cruz
Illustrated by James Hart



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Meet the Characters

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Queen Genevieve

A princess who becomes a queen.



The King

Genevieve's father.



Three Hopeful Suitors

A baker, a barber and a candlestick maker.



The Fourth Suitor

A farmer.

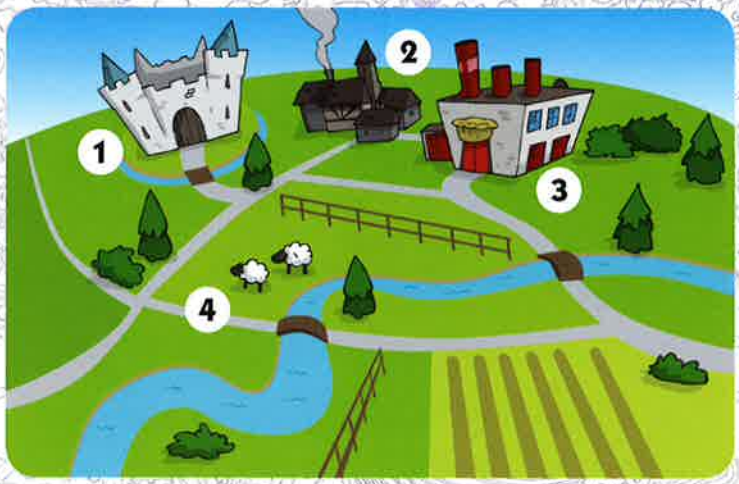
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Dear Reader

For this book, I wanted to write a traditional tale in a not-so-traditional way. In many old stories, people often try to win the hand of a fair maiden in a contest – and, after watching a TV talent show one night, I thought that would be a great way to decide who gets eliminated in this story, too. I hope you enjoy it!

Stella Santa Cruz
Author

The Palace Surrounds



1. The palace
2. The village
3. The meat pie factory
4. Surrounding farmland

1 Let Them Eat Pies!



Once upon a time, not so long ago, there lived a wily old king, who had reigned over his kingdom for as long as anyone could remember. Early on in his reign, a great famine had swept across his lands, causing much hunger and distress amongst his subjects.

"Let them eat pies!" he had decreed. "I shall build a meat pie factory to feed my loyal subjects. Later I shall diversify into factories for making tomato sauce and mushy peas."

And it came to pass that a meat pie factory was built and, because the people had no alternative, the king soon amassed a great fortune. His treasury grew full of gold and silver and precious gemstones.

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His subjects grew full of shortcrust pastry, mince, tomato sauce and pureed peas.

The king married, and soon he and his queen were blessed with a daughter they named Genevieve. For one score years, both the treasury and the people grew larger and larger, and all was well within the kingdom.

Then one day, his queen choked on a rat's tail while she was eating a poorly minced pie, and the king flew into a rage. He gathered the pie factory's senior management team together. There was much wringing of hands and a great feeling of woe amongst the managers. They were panicking because someone in the factory had not followed the strict instructions they had been given. "All tails must be cut off before the rats get put through the mincing machine," the king had decreed. But his order had not been followed, and now his

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beloved queen was dead.

For seven days and seven nights, the senior management team awaited their fate with trepidation, and occasionally sent someone out for coffee and doughnuts. Meanwhile, the furious king pondered what he should do.

Then, on the eighth morning, the king made up his mind. "I am deeply pained by the fate of my dear queen. However, the global stock markets have been kind to me and from this I take some small comfort," he said. "For many years, my dear queen and I invested all the fabulous wealth that would not fit into our bulging treasury into lard factories and saturated fat refineries. My wisdom and foresight has paid off. As fate would have it, I have also been fortunate enough to have been emailed by a Mr Fish from the Impeccably Honest and Never Dodgy Money Growth Society.

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He has graciously offered me the opportunity to quadruple my wealth."

A murmur arose from the senior management team. They were filled with joy at the king's great luck, and with relief that the king appeared to have forgiven them for the unfortunate rat-tail incident.

"In my moment of great grief, I have therefore decided," continued the king, "to abdicate my throne, to leave this kingdom and henceforth to live the high life. I shall take half of all the treasures I have amassed and put them into the clever web of internet bank accounts that Mr Fish has set up for me. The other half shall be left for your new queen to rule her lands."

A great hurrah arose from the senior management team. Soon the news spread throughout the kingdom. The king had his

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servants empty out half the treasury into large trunks and, after much heaving and groaning, he was ready to leave.

The king went to speak with his dear daughter Genevieve, who was soon to become queen. "There's just one thing," he said. "Before I give you the combination code to the treasury, you must find yourself a husband."

"Dear father," replied the princess, who had steadfastly rejected the advances of all suitors over the years. "I need no husband. I have all the skills and wisdom I need to keep both the pie factory and the kingdom in good order."

"That may be so, child," smiled the kindly king. "But without a husband, I fear a terrible fate awaits you."

"What fate?" gasped the princess.

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"You will be forever featured in magazines and gossip columns! You will be stalked by charlatans and rogues bearing cameras with zoom lenses! An eligible queen with her own throne, pie factory and half-full treasury will be hounded by greedy vagabonds who wish to marry her only for her treasure. You must find yourself a good husband, one who loves you for who you are, and make sure he is not just after your money."

"But, father," protested Princess Genevieve. "This is the twenty-first century. The idea that princesses must find husbands is a little outdated, don't you think?"

"You are a beautiful princess about to face many challenges. If you want a fairytale ending, you must stick with the conventions of fairy tales," ordered the king. "I did, and



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look how it worked out for me." He waved his arm over the mountain of trunks piled outside the palace, all full of gold and silver and gemstones.

"But how should I tell a good husband from one who is merely a greedy vagabond?" asked the princess. "They all look the same to me."

"That, my dear," said the king, "is your first challenge."



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