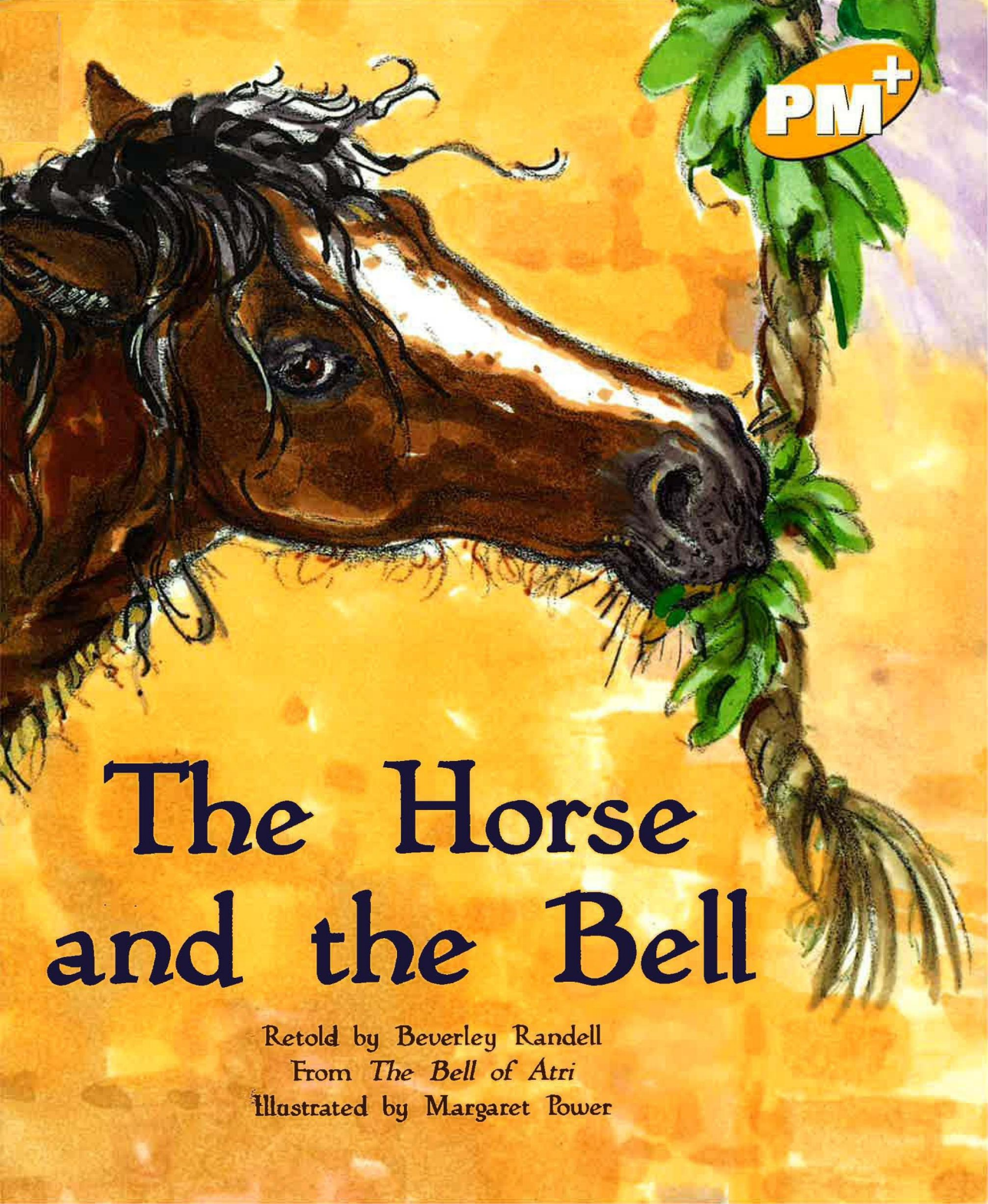
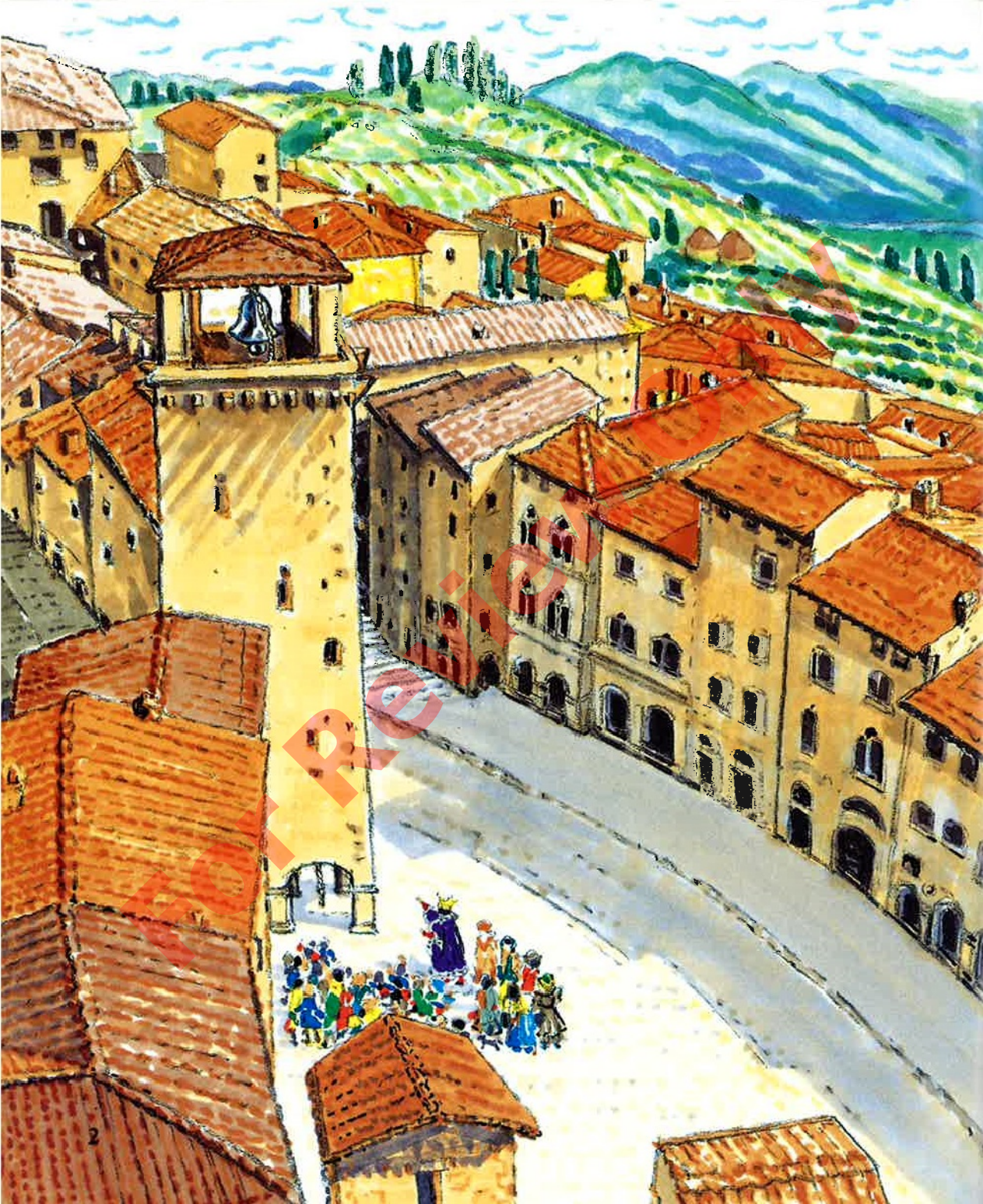


The Horse and the Bell

Retold by Beverley Randell
From *The Bell of Atri*
Illustrated by Margaret Power



Once upon a time, many years ago,
a good king ruled over a town in Italy.

He would not allow
anyone in his kingdom
to be cruel or unfair to anyone else.

In the middle of the town,
beside the market place,
there was a tall tower with a bell.

"If people need my help
because a cruel thing
has been done to them," said the king,
"they must ring the bell.
Then I will come to the tower
and listen to what they have to say."

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For many years,
no one in the kingdom rang the bell.

Every child was cared for.
Sick people were cared for.

No one was cruel, or unfair, or unkind.



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Then, one day,
a soldier looked at his old horse.
"You are too old
to carry me about any more," he said.
"Why should I go on feeding you?"

He struck the horse with his hand,
and sent him away down the dusty road.



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At first the old horse wandered about,
feeding from the hedges and grass
by the roadside.

But soon the weather grew colder.
It was wintertime,
and snow covered the ground.



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