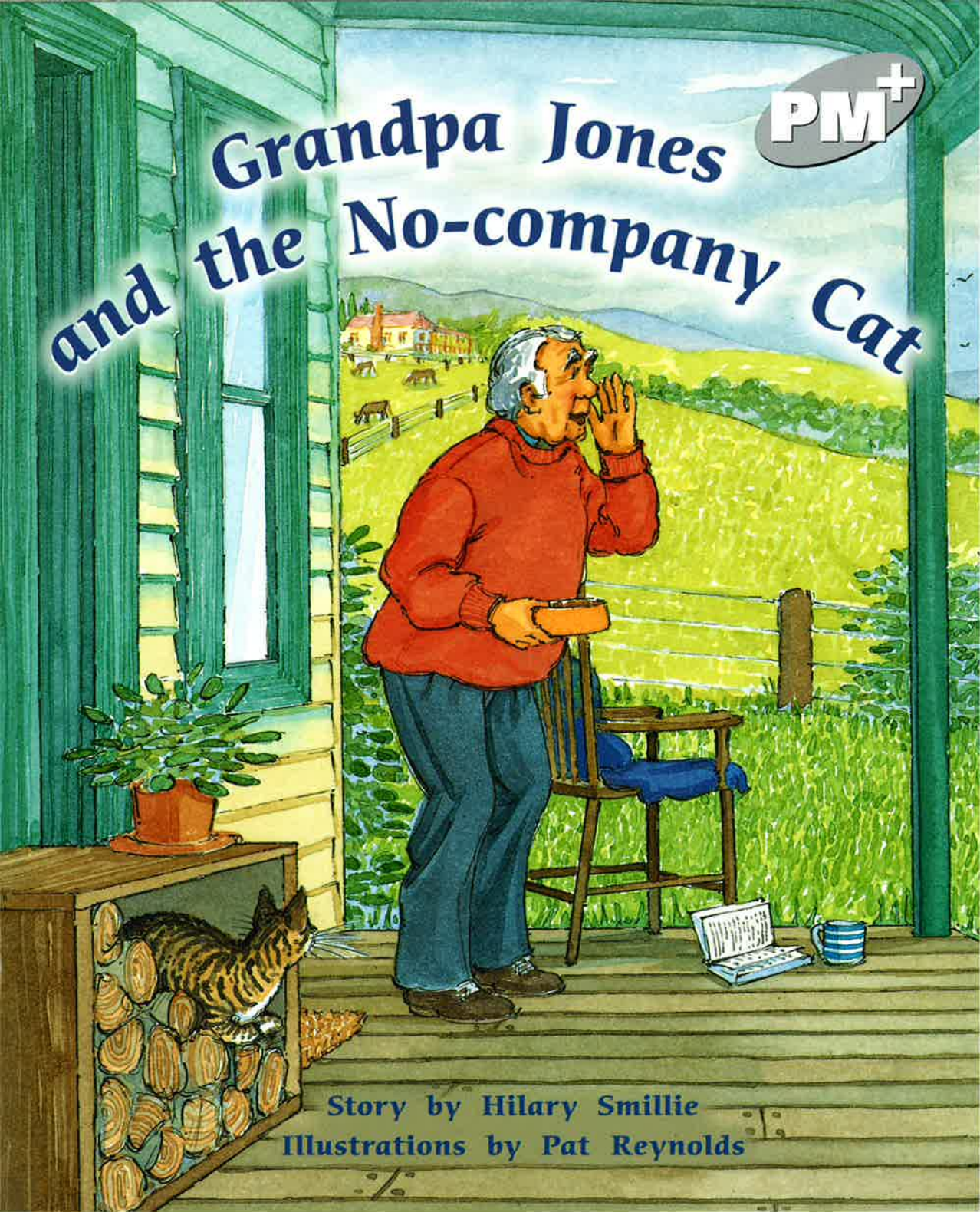

PM+
Grandpa Jones and the No-company Cat
Story by Hilary Smillie
Illustrations by Pat Reynolds

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One sunny morning, Grandpa Jones opened his front door and looked out into the street. A passing truck blew a cloud of black smoke into his face. Grandpa Jones coughed.

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The paper boy tossed a rolled newspaper into the doorway. It hit Grandpa Jones on his knee. "Ow!" he cried.

A police siren began to shriek. Grandpa Jones jumped. "Dear me!" he muttered. He picked up the newspaper, and shut the door with a bang.

Grandpa Jones poured himself a cup of tea. "I need peace and quiet," he said, stirring in an extra lump of sugar to cheer himself up. "I need a change."

He opened the newspaper and read:

Small house for sale near quiet country town.

"That sounds like just the change I need," he said, and he decided to buy the house.

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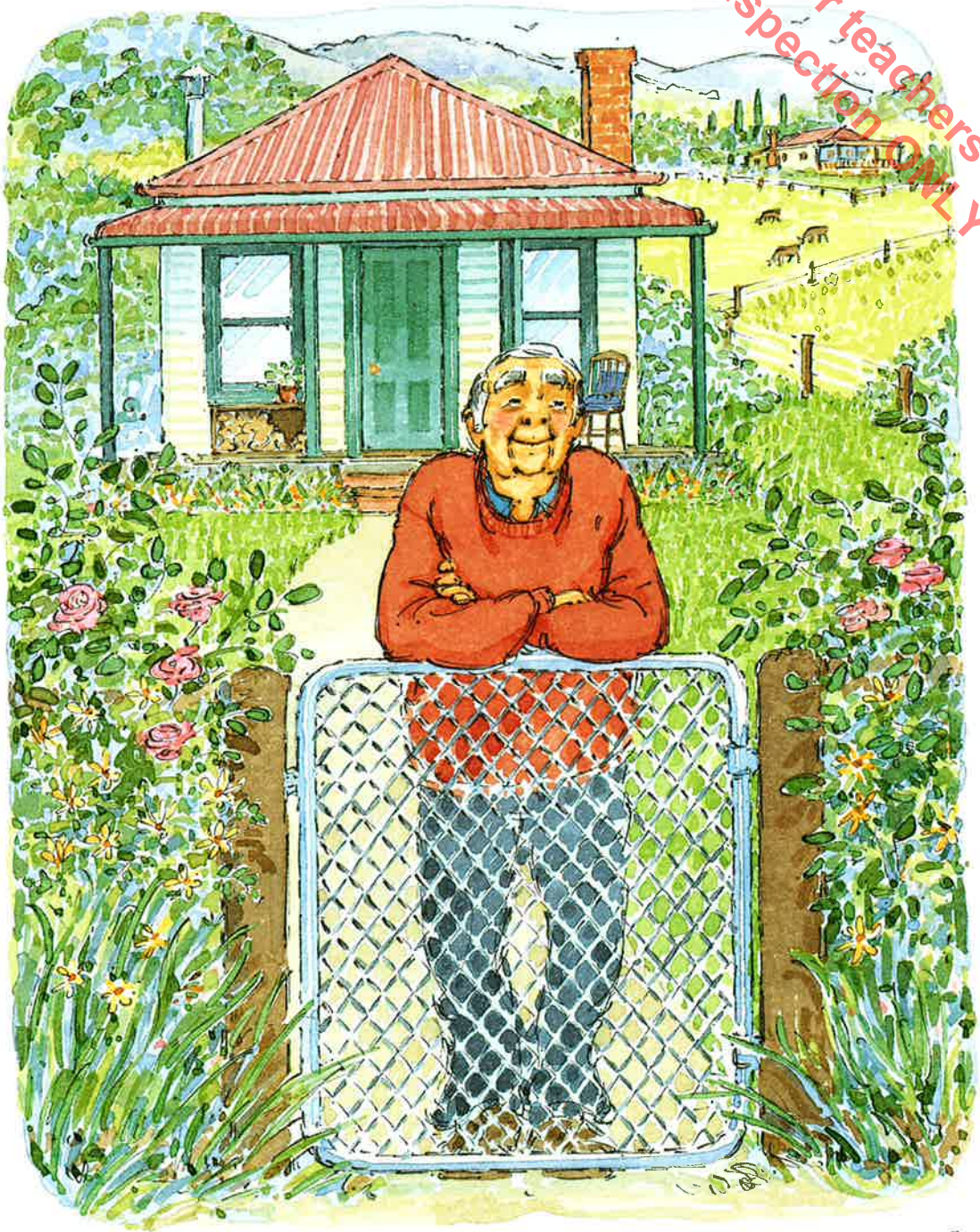
A few weeks later, Grandpa Jones moved into his new house in the country. Now, when he opened his front door, no truck blew smoke into his face. No newspaper whacked him on the leg. No siren made him jump.

Instead, birds sang in the trees, and cows mooed on the hillside. A truck collected milk from a nearby farm, but there was no other traffic.

"Ah, lovely peace and quiet," said Grandpa Jones out loud. "This is the life for me."

It was so quiet that when he was in the living room, he could hear the kitchen clock ticking.

As he did his chores, he could hear the flip-flap of his slippers on the wooden floor.



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Every day, Grandpa Jones woke to his quiet new world. He heard the birds singing, and the leaves rustling, and the cows mooing, but nothing else.

"I wish I could hear that paper boy coming up the street," he sighed one day. "All this quiet is making me feel lonely."

Most afternoons, Grandpa Jones walked across the field to Donaldson's farm to buy some milk and some eggs. Today, he just wanted some company.

Mrs Donaldson came out of the farmhouse, followed by Pete and Maggie. Pete was carrying a small kitten.

"What's up?" asked Mrs Donaldson. "You're looking a bit miserable."

"It's all this quiet," said Grandpa Jones. "It's making me feel lonely. I never thought that I'd miss the noise of the city."