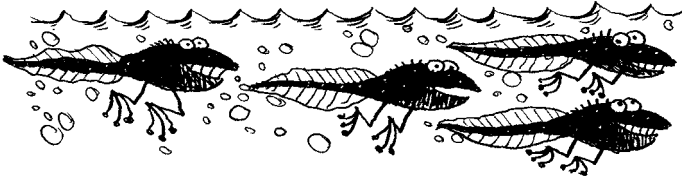




Winnie's Wet Weekend

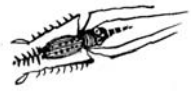


Plip! Plop! Water drip-dropped down from Winnie's ceiling. **Slosh!** Winnie's wellies waded ankle-deep through the water and **slap-splash!** her broom-mop squelched water into a bucket.

'Oh, soggy blooming sausages!' moaned Winnie. 'We'll have to start building an ark soon, Wilbur!'

'Mrrow,' agreed Wilbur, shivering on a high-up shelf.



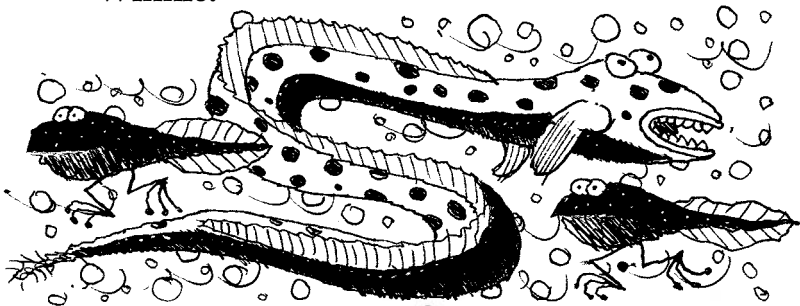


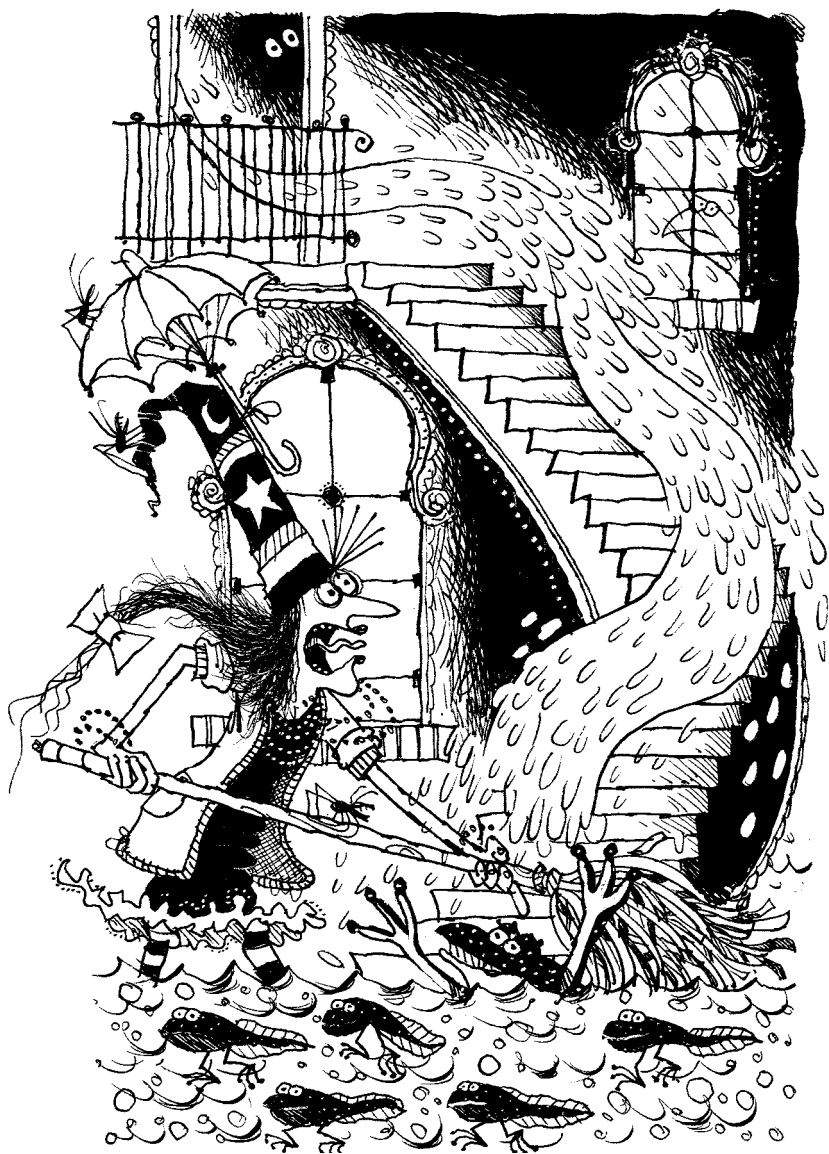
‘I hope Jerry can mend our leak soon,’
said Winnie. ‘Or we’ll all get flushed out of
the house just like . . .’

Wallop!-clonggggg! went Jerry’s
mallet on the water tank upstairs, and
moments later—**sloossh!**—water came
pouring, tumbling down the staircase. It
was now up to Winnie’s knobbly knees.

Croak! said a happy frog who was
gazing up at Winnie. **Splish-splash**
danced tadpoles like mini dolphins.

Swish-slither swam an eel towards
Winnie.







‘Eeek!’ Winnie scrambled up to join Wilbur on the shelf. **Creak!** went the shelf because it wasn’t built for the weight of witches. ‘Well, that’s it!’ said Winnie, as the shelf tipped them both—**splash!**—into the flood. ‘If I’m going to wade in water and shrivel my toes to raisin-wrinkles, I’d rather wade and shrivel in warm water and in the sunshine.’





Maybe even licking a nice-cream! Let's go to the seaside!

'Meeow!' agreed Wilbur. He didn't much like the wet sea, but he did like sunshine and nice-creams.

So Winnie waved her wand.

'Abracadabra!'

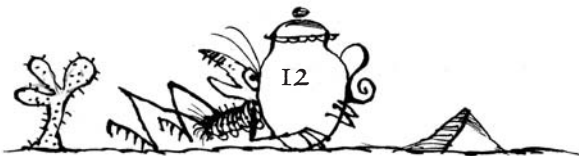


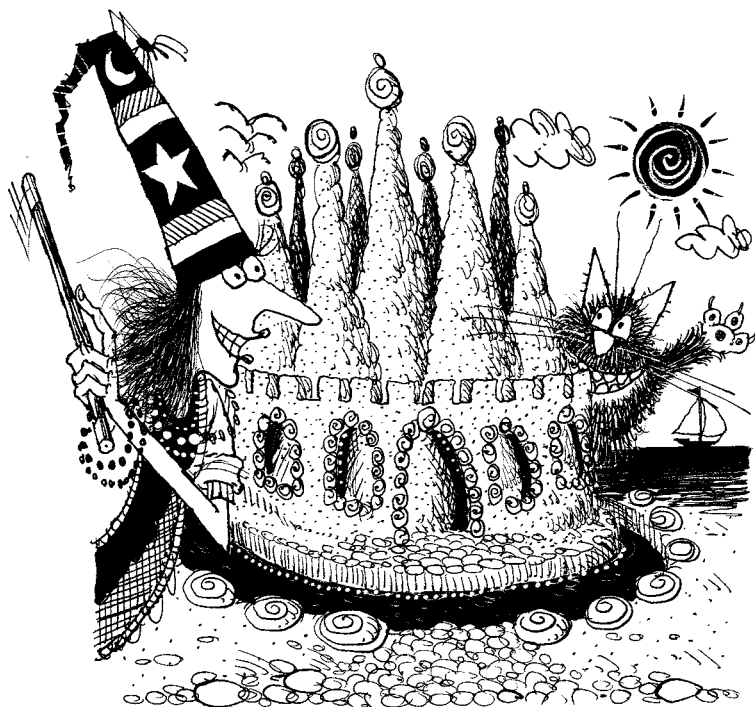


And instantly they were at the seaside.
‘Ah!’ sighed Winnie, kicking off her wellies and tucking her dress into her knickers. ‘Just look at that sea sparkling like a beetle’s back!’

‘Mrrow,’ scowled Wilbur.

‘You’re right,’ said Winnie. ‘I’ve had enough wetness for today, too. Let’s make a sandcastle instead.’





They dug a moat and threw all the sand into the middle to make a big castle mound. Then they shovelled sand into Winnie's hat, and upended it to make turrets. They used Winnie's wand to scrape door and window shapes, and they slapped on shells to make it all look lovely.

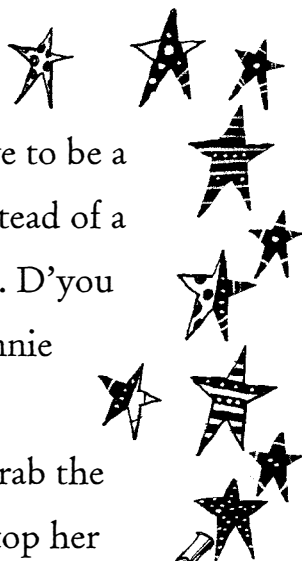




‘There! As pretty as a ferret in fairy wings!’ said Winnie. ‘I reckon we’ve earned ourselves a lice-lolly!’

They couldn’t decide which flavour lice-lollies to choose, so they had four each . . . which meant a lot of fast licking—**slurp slurp!**—and sticky paws. Then they used the lolly sticks to make a drawbridge over the moat.

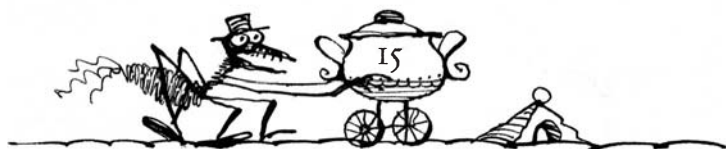


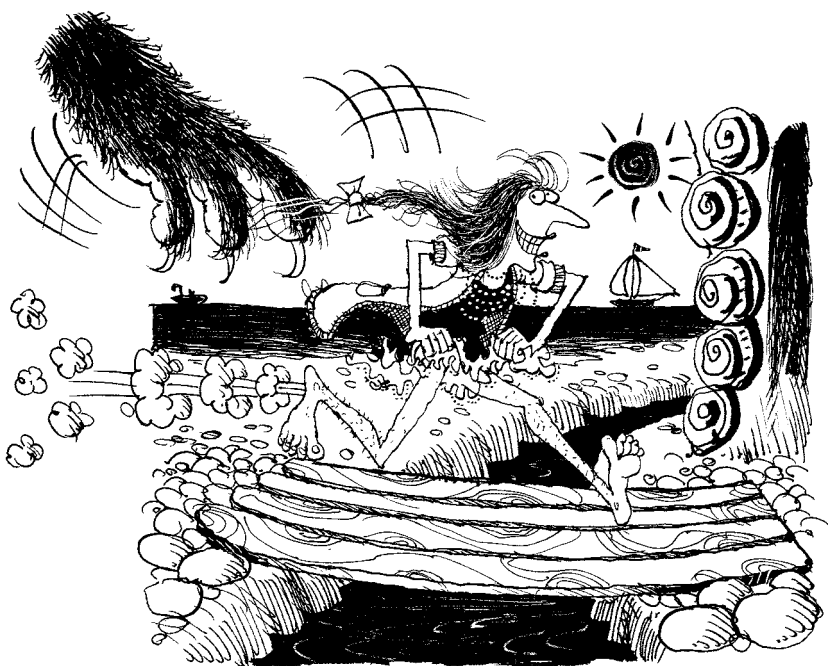


‘Ah!’ sighed Winnie. ‘I’d love to be a princess living in our castle instead of a witch living in a flooded house. D’you know, Wilbur, I think . . .’ Winnie picked up her wand.

‘Meeow!’ Wilbur leapt to grab the wand from Winnie’s hand to stop her from waving it. But he was too late.

‘Abracadabra!’





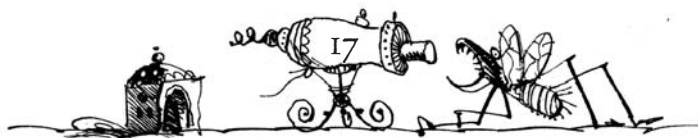
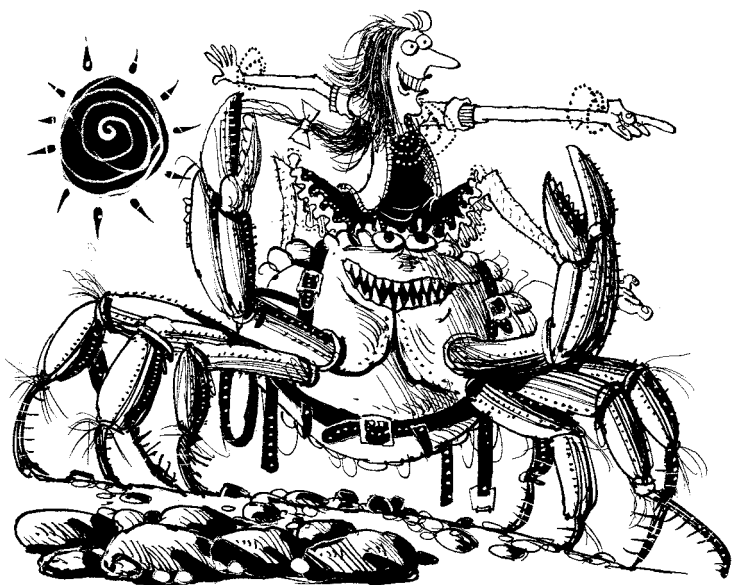
Winnie was a princess. A very very tiny princess, just the right size to fit into their sandcastle.

‘Mrrrow!’ said Wilbur, trying to catch her as if she was a mouse. But tiny Princess Winnie had picked up her skirts and run over the drawbridge and into the castle before he could stop her.



‘Oh!’ said Winnie as she looked around.
‘Oh, how princessy!’

There were seashell dishes and cups
on a table sculpted in the sand. There
were seaweed hammocks swinging in the
breeze outside. There was a crab neighing
in the sand-stable. Winnie flung herself
into the saddle. ‘Giddy-up!’ she said.





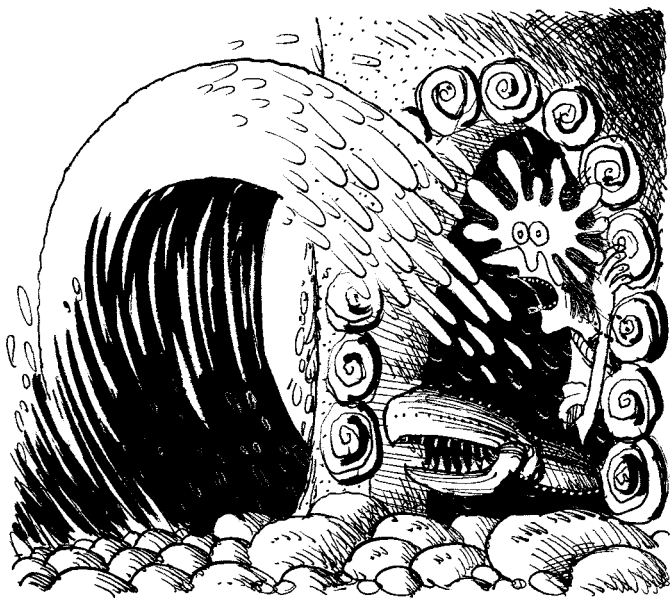
But—**swerve-whoops!** the crab scuttled sideways. ‘Eeeeeerrrrrr,’ said Winnie, holding on tight. ‘Please stop!’



Plop! Off she fell, then she staggered, all dizzy-dizzy, before, ‘Eeeek!’ she screamed because there was a huge eye looking through the sand-stable door at her.

‘Meeow!’ Wilbur was trying to tell her something urgent.





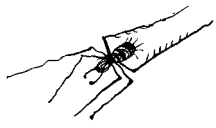
‘What water?’ Winnie leaned out of the stable door.



Slop! A wave whacked against the wall of the castle, saltily slapping Winnie in the face.

‘Heck in a handkerchief, the blooming tide’s coming in!’ said Winnie. ‘And it’s crumbling my walls!’





Wilbur dug, trying to make the moat take water around the castle instead of through it. But the sea is big and powerful, and Winnie's princess castle was small and made of sand.



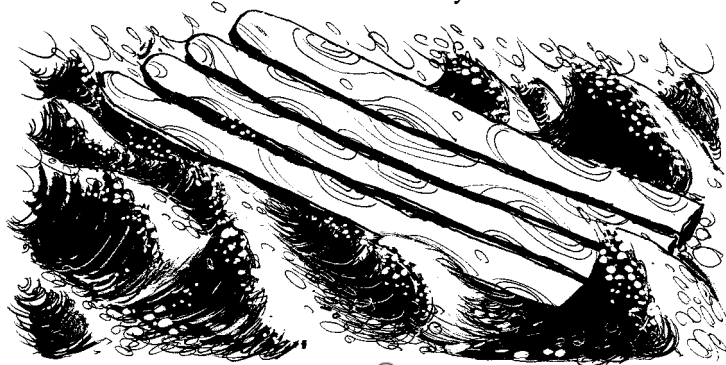
'Help!' shouted Winnie. 'This castle is collapsing!' The wet walls were sagging and slipping all around her. 'Where's my wand?' wailed Winnie.



But she'd left it out on the sand.

'It'll get washed away! And I'm sinking into the sand! It's sucking me in as if I was a string of spaghetti in a monster's mouth. Oh, Wilbur!'

Wilbur was dig-dig-digging so fast his paws and spade were a blur. But the tide was rising higher and higher, and the castle was crumbling lower and lower. What could Winnie do? Then she saw the lolly stick drawbridge, bobbing on top of the water. 'A raft!' shouted tiny Winnie.



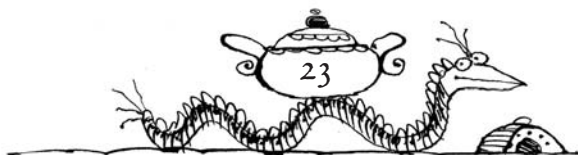
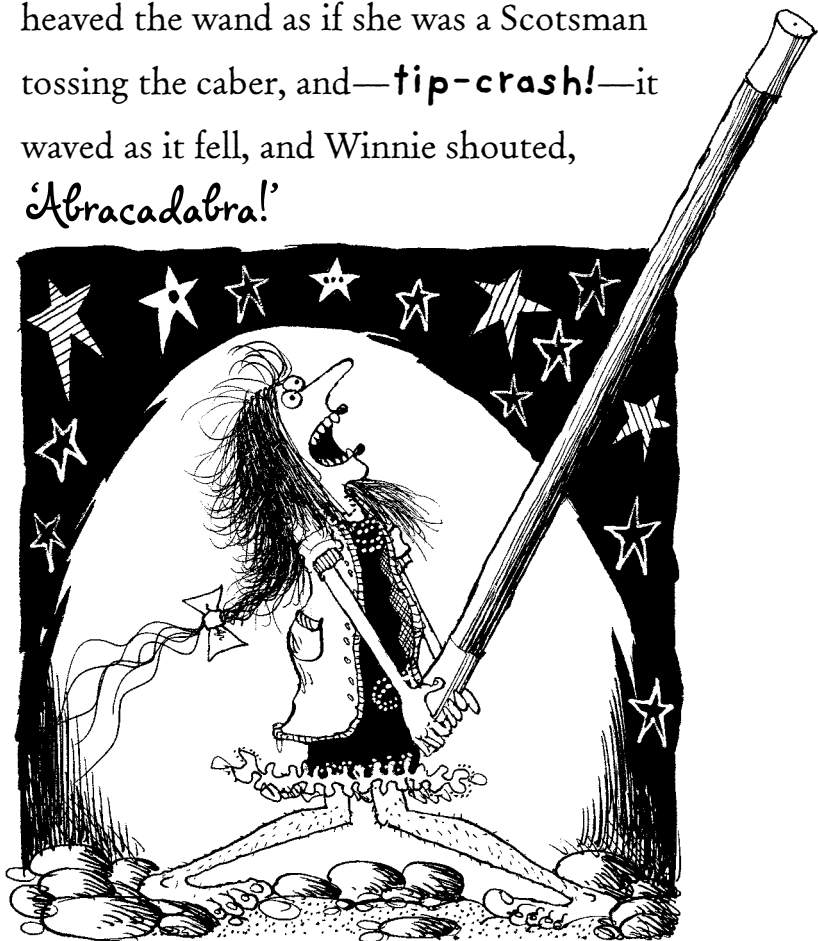
And she heaved herself up onto it in a very un-princesslike way. Suddenly—**slurp!**—a wave splashed the raft and Winnie out to sea.



‘Wilburrrrr!’ shouted Winnie as the raft bucked like a bronco under her. Wilbur pounced. He batted the raft with his paw and sent it—**plop!**—to land on the sand.



Up jumped Winnie. She grabbed her wand. It was huge for her now. But Winnie heaved the wand as if she was a Scotsman tossing the caber, and—**tip-crash!**—it waved as it fell, and Winnie shouted, 'Abracadabra!'

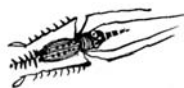




And there she was, full-sized, again.

‘Thank knitted noodles for that!’ said Winnie. The sandcastle was just a sad little hump in the sand under the water now. ‘Let’s go home. At least there are no tides at home,’ said Winnie.





They flew home to see Winnie's house looking beautiful. The dark clouds and rain had cleared. The sun had come out. There was a rainbow in the sky.

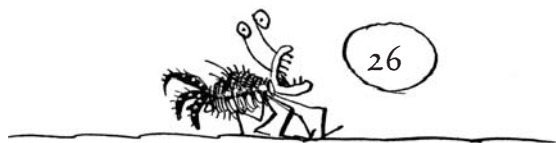
'Just like when Noah's flood was at an end,' said Winnie. 'Oh, I do hope that our flood has gone too.'



The house was still damp. It had squelch-soggy carpets and murky marks on the walls. But the water had gone. Winnie yawned. ‘You know, Wilbur, I don’t fancy a bath tonight somehow.’ She went to clean her teeth . . . and there was the same frog, sitting and looking at Winnie lovingly and pouting his lips.

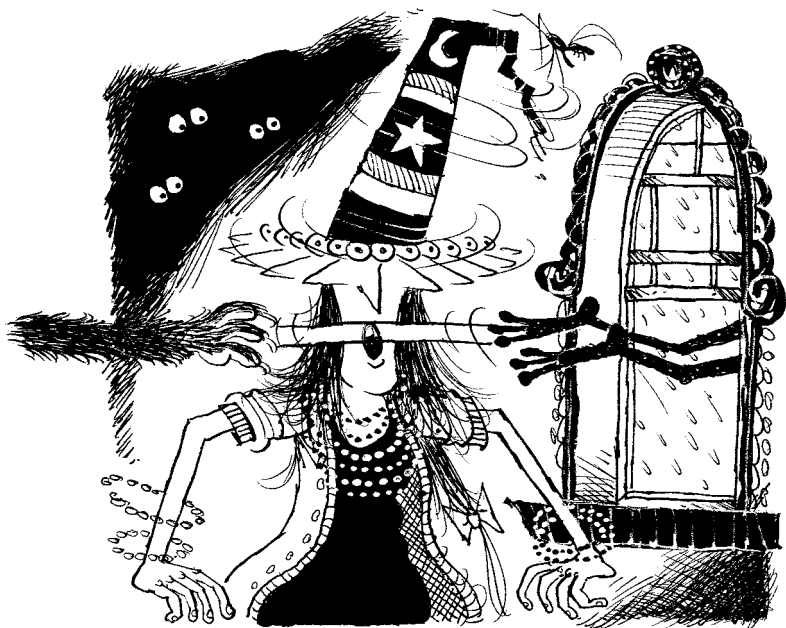


‘Hmm,’ pondered Winnie. ‘You know what, Wilbur? When princesses kiss frogs they turn into handsome princes. D’you suppose that since I was a princess today it might work for me?’





She was just reaching out a hand to let the frog step onto it when—**pow!**— Wilbur's paw batted the frog right out of the window.



'Oh, Wilbur! Now I'll never know!'

'Meeow,' agreed Wilbur, and he settled himself onto Winnie's bed.



