

The Night
Before

by Annie Roi Harmon



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text and illustration
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To Nikki, Aaron and Stephen - with LOVE.

But also with thanks to my big and little Hawks
for their endless BELIEF,

and to Cheryl Donatto
for what must have felt like her endless guidance.

- A.H.



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The Night Before

by annie harmon





**It was One night ago
(just the night before)
I heard someone outside
knocking on my door .
I looked through the window
and what did I see ... ?**



A green scaly dragon looking back at me !







**He had found me again ,
but how I can't say .
He always does even though I run away .**



**But I couldn't let him touch me ,
not One hair from my head ,
so like any boy would ...**



... I hid under my bed!

Trembling I crouched
resembling live bait,
tortured with fear
regretting the wait.
Then **suddenly** I heard it--
the sound rang out true ...





...Of the door **crashing** down
and the **dragon** coming through !

He checked several rooms .
He **could** have checked more ,



but **instead** he stopped
outside my bedroom door .





I could **hear** his scales rubbing
as the dragon passed through
and **smelled** his breath **stinking**
like a **burnt** rubber shoe .
He was **close** and I knew it ,
but **where** could I go?



**...With the bed up above
and the floor down below ?**

I kept
really still
and I held my breath **tight** ,
wondering what
horror
my fate held that night .
He **knew** that he had me ,
I just **know** that he did ,
as he checked all the places he
thought I had hid .



**He looked in the closet
behind my old coats .**

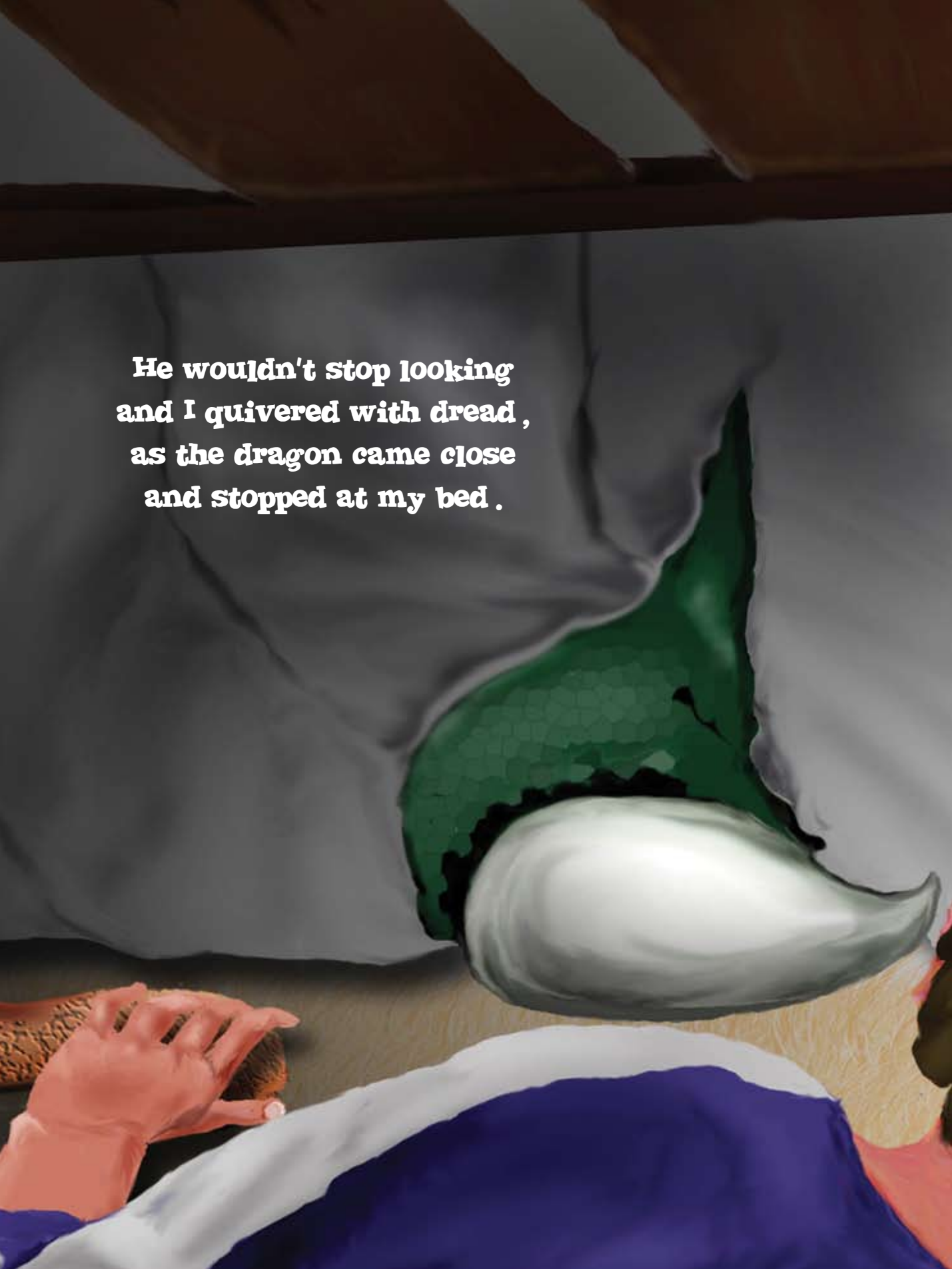




**He checked all my shelves
and underneath my toy boats .**



**He wouldn't stop looking
and I quivered with dread ,
as the dragon came close
and stopped at my bed .**



What could I do

**with the dragon so near?
Anticipating the moment
his head would appear .**

**Then something peeked under ,
but it was only his toe
and the dragon sat down
knowing I was below .**





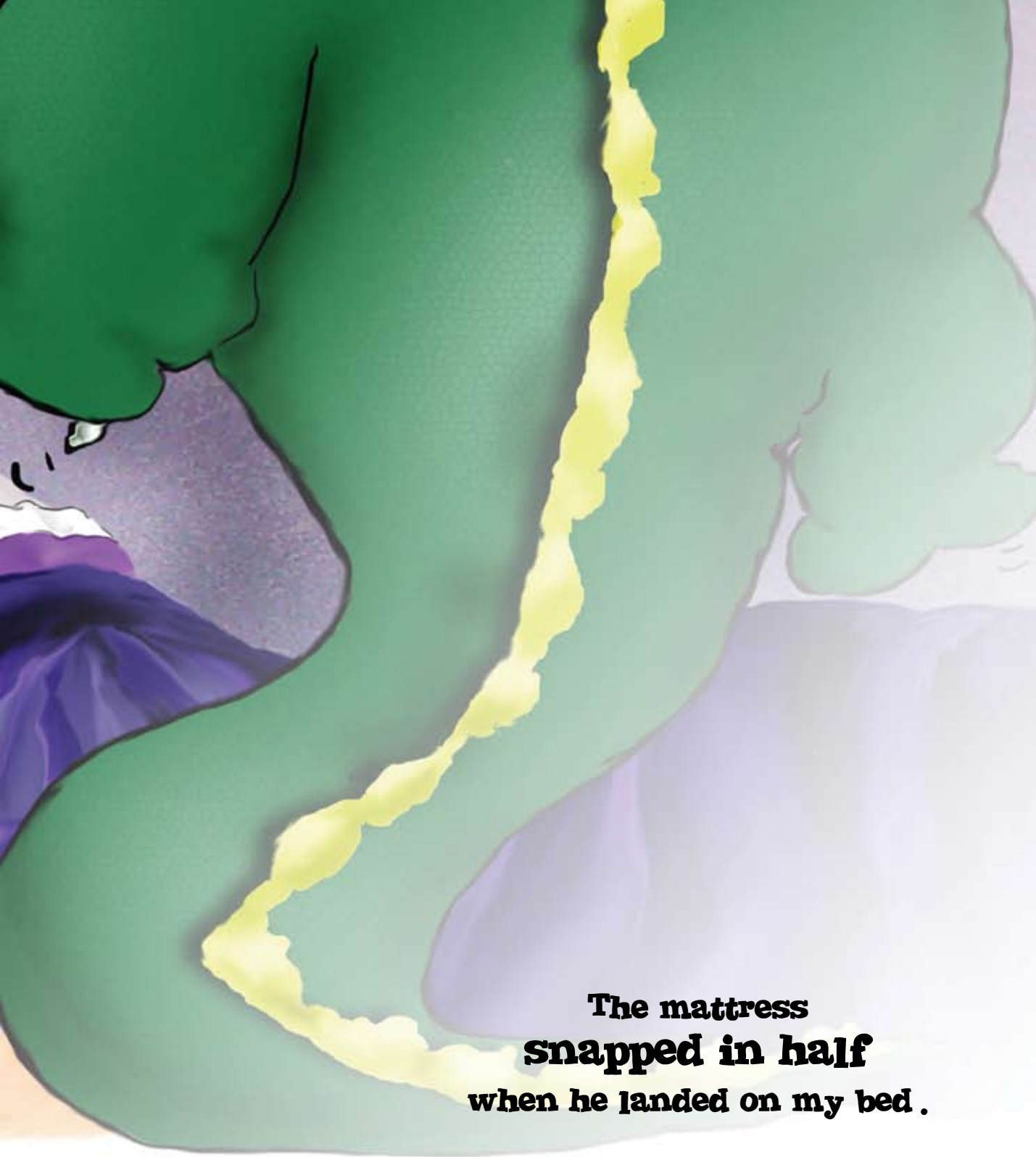
It was quiet for a moment ,
but that didn't last ,
my bed started **Squeaking**
and **Shaking** really fast .



**I wondered what was happening ,
so I stuck out my head
and was surprised to see the dragon
jumping on my bed .**




He jumped up and down
'till it started to break .
Then sure enough ,
he jumped
with one final
hard take .



**The mattress
snapped in half
when he landed on my bed .**

**And he giggled with delight
as it landed on my head .**

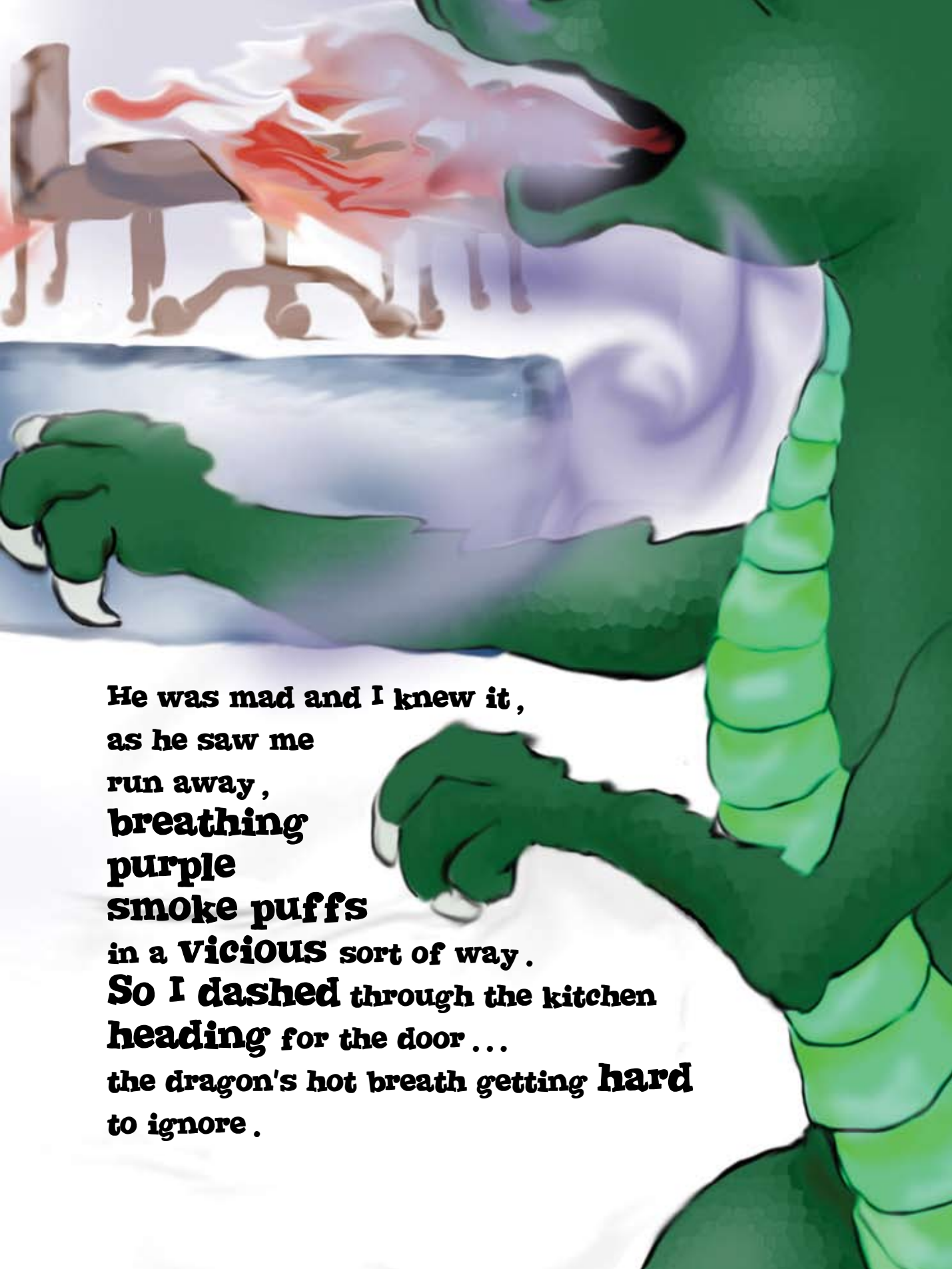


**I felt sure I was trapped
when I first looked around ,
crushed beneath my mattress
and dust bunnies on the ground .
But no crying just yet , though I had no place to go .**

**Instead of lying still , I wiggled to and fro .
I was finding more room
and soon able to crawl ,
the dragon never noticed
'till he felt the mattress fall .**







**He was mad and I knew it ,
as he saw me
run away ,
breathing
purple
smoke puffs
in a Vicious sort of way .
So I dashed through the kitchen
heading for the door ...
the dragon's hot breath getting hard
to ignore .**



**Just then I made it .
I opened the door wide ,
heading out doors
leaving the dragon inside .**

**But since he thought
he could make it ,
he let out a roar .**

**Then the dragon
charged forward
crushing his nose
in the door .**







**I know I should have ran
and found a new place to hide ,
though the dragon started wailing
loudly as he cried .
But how could I run while holding my ears ...**



**or leave the
poor dragon
drowning
in tears ?**



That's why I stopped , just to help the dragon out .

**I thought I could help
and wrap his wounded snout .**



But did I get a **"Thank-you!"**
or did he say **"How sweet!"**
Or did he just stare at me
like something good to eat ?



**Oh , he smiled at me
as best as he could :
Like no respectable dragon
ever should .**



**With one hand , he reached out
and touched me on my side .
With the other , he wiped the fake tears
that he cried .**



**The moment it happened ,
I threw the **biggest** fit!
I **screamed** myself hoarse
when the dragon yelled ...**





**"TAG!
NOW YOU'RE IT!"**



THE END.

(CLOSE THE BOOK TO PLAY AGAIN!)





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