

During his lifetime, Idries Shah published many hundreds of stories, drawn from the rich cultural heritage of Eastern lands. A great many of Shah's tales have their roots in his own homeland, Afghanistan. As with all great stories, they work on many levels — entertaining the listener, while imparting a teaching message, an element that is in itself of profound value.

Shah used to say that a well-crafted tale is like a peach. Refreshing and tantalising to the senses, the delicious flesh is why we regard peaches so highly. But it is the stone that lies within the fruit that is the thing of real value — like the message of the story passed on by appreciating a piece of fruit's succulent flesh.

Beautifully illustrated, *Speak First and Lose* has been presented by The Idries Shah Foundation as a cornerstone in an important charitable and cultural project. This series of illustrated children's books has been made available in the West, with all proceeds from the sales going to provide free editions of the same books for children in Afghanistan.

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SPEAK FIRST AND LOSE  
IDRIES SHAH

# SPEAK FIRST AND LOSE

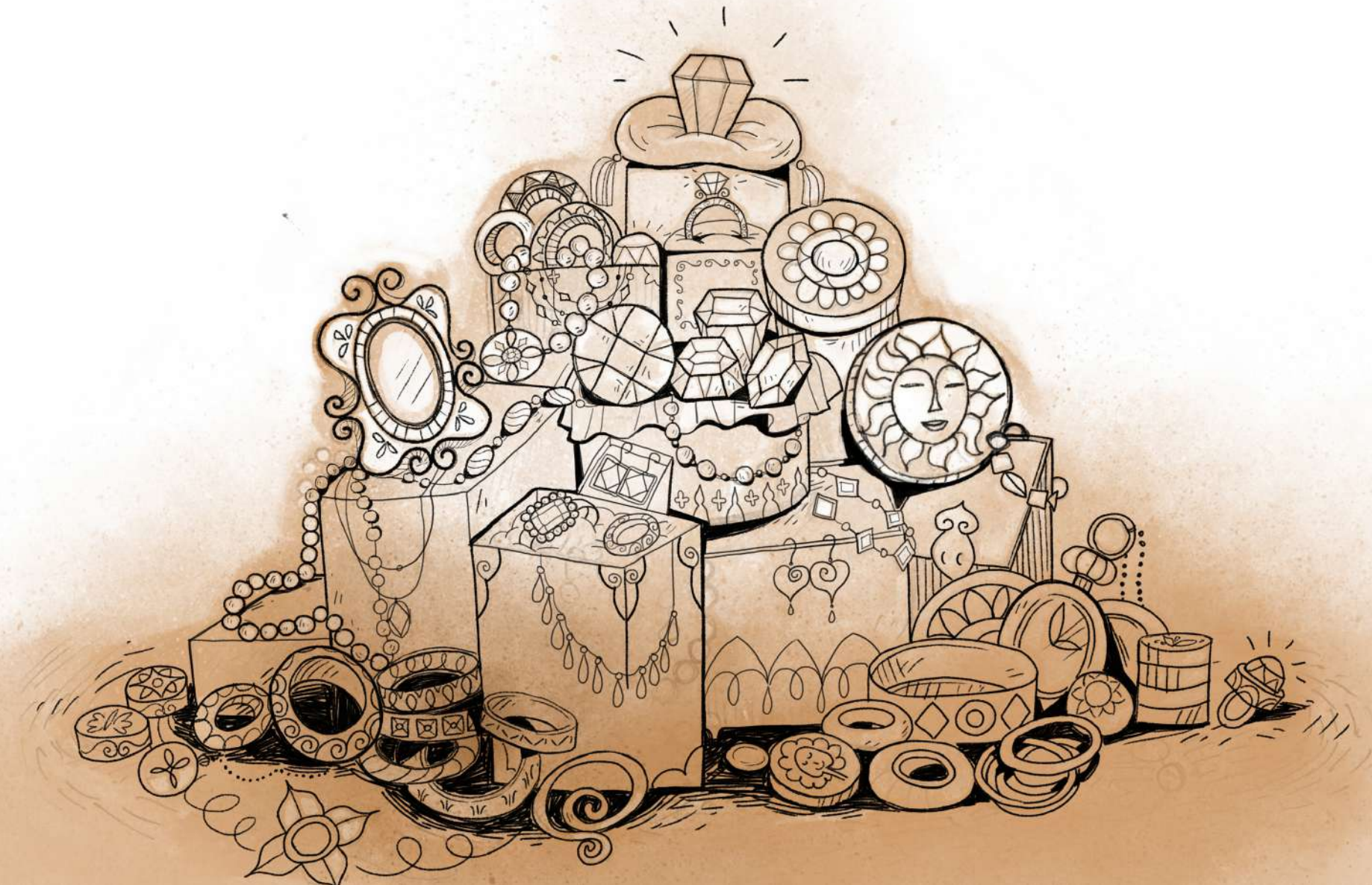
BY IDRIES SHAH



ILLUSTRATED BY DABY ZAINAB FAIDHI



# Speak First And Lose





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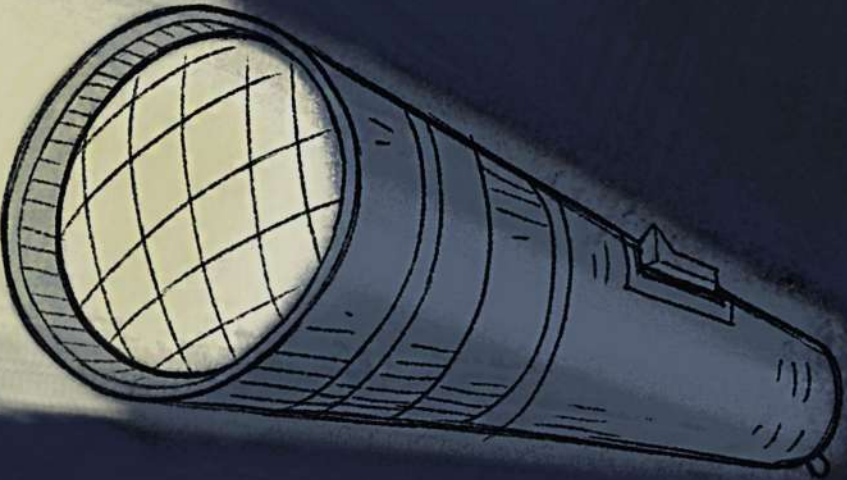
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THE IDRIES SHAH FOUNDATION



# Speak First And Lose

BY IDRIES SHAH



CHILDREN’S BOOKS BY IDRIES SHAH

- The Onion
- The Ants and the Pen
- The Tale of the Sands
- After a Swim
- The Man, the Tree and the Wolf
- The Horrible Dib Dib
- The Fisherman’s Neighbour
- The Magic Potion of Oinkink
- The Rich Man and the Monkey
- The Boy With No Voice and the Men Who Couldn’t Hear
- The Tale of Melon City

Dedicated to the sense of imagination which lives within us all.



One day, a newly married couple  
moved into their new home.





At first, they were the happiest newly-weds imaginable.





But once the presents were opened...





...they started to quarrel.





'Shut the door, there is a draught,' said the husband.  
'I am not a slave,' answered the wife. 'Shut it yourself!'







'Tell you what,' said the husband, 'let's see who can keep silent the longest. The first person to speak closes the door.'

His wife nodded her agreement and they sat down, with the draught whistling around them.





The night wore on.





Neither one of them moved.



Some thieves, passing by, saw the open door and walked in.







They closely examined everything in the house.



Including the man and his wife.





Whom they took to be statues.





They stripped the house.  
And even took the wife's jewellery.





Still neither the man nor his wife had moved or said a word.



Finding the couple's door open,  
the night watchman came into  
the room.







'Shut your door!' said the captain of the watch. But neither the man nor his wife moved.



'You must obey the orders of the watch!' yelled the captain of the watch.





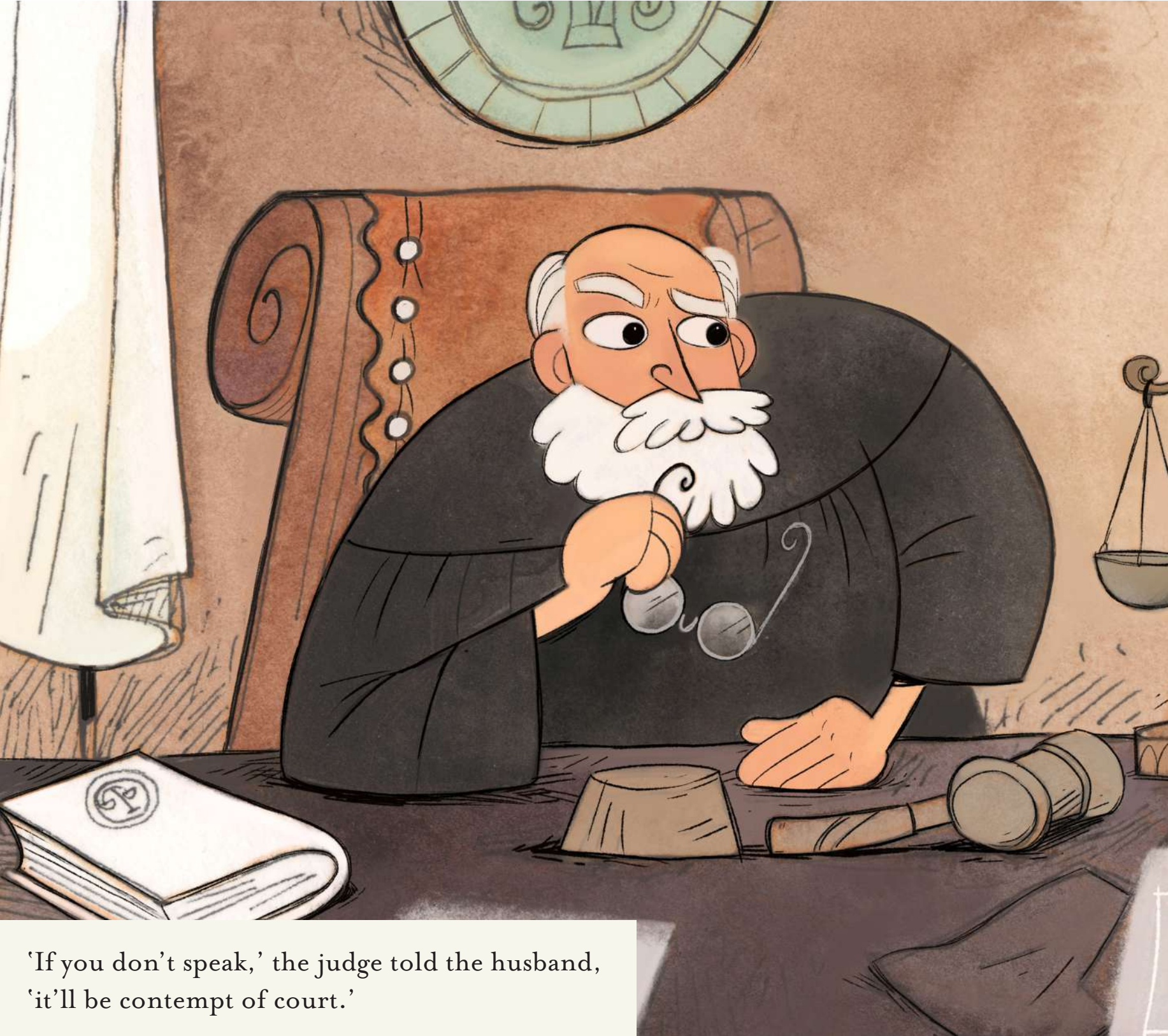
Unable to elicit any response,  
the men of the watch dragged the couple to jail.



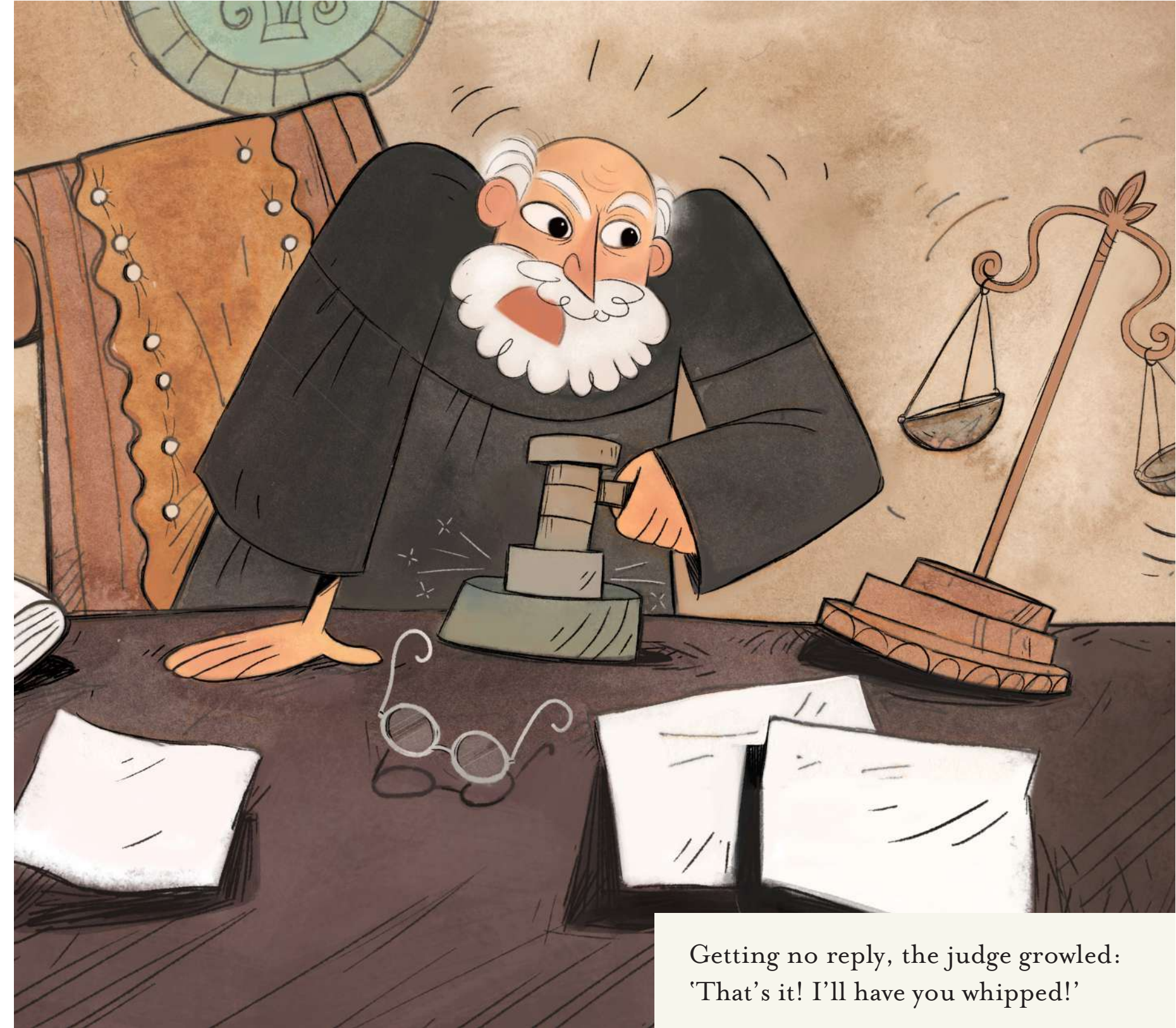


In the morning, they were taken before the judge, charged with having defied the watch.





'If you don't speak,' the judge told the husband,  
'it'll be contempt of court.'



Getting no reply, the judge growled:  
'That's it! I'll have you whipped!'



Suddenly  
the woman  
cried out!



‘Don’t hurt my husband!’





'Ha!' shouted her spouse.  
'You have lost the bet!'







'Now you have to close the door.'





And I wish that I could  
tell you that the man  
and his wife lived happily  
ever after.





The End