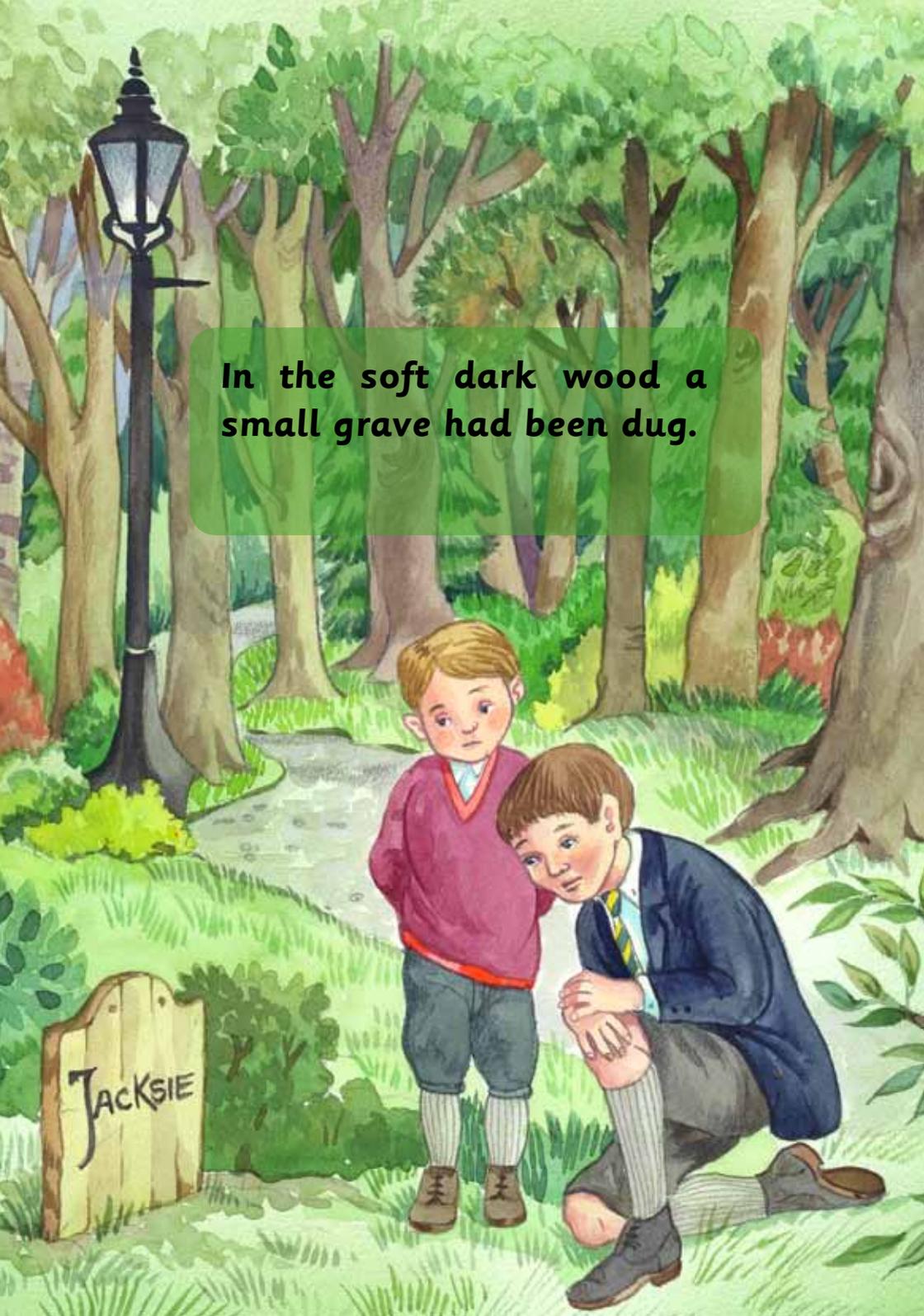


In the soft dark wood a small grave had been dug. The broken body of a much-loved dog was gently placed in the earth. Two young boys looked on solemnly as someone took a knife and carved the dog's name into a plank of wood – 'Jacksie'. The youngest boy brushed his hand across the well-known name and there and then made a decision.

Later that week he pointed at himself and told his mother, 'My name is Jacksie'. In honour of his favourite dog, Clive Staples Lewis changed his name. He wouldn't answer to anything else. Eventually his family persuaded him to try the name Jack instead – and it stuck.



An illustration of a forest scene. In the foreground, a wooden grave marker with the name 'JACKSIE' is visible. Two young boys are standing near the grave; one is kneeling and looking at the marker, while the other stands beside him. A black lamppost stands to the left. The background is filled with tall trees and green foliage.

**In the soft dark wood a
small grave had been dug.**

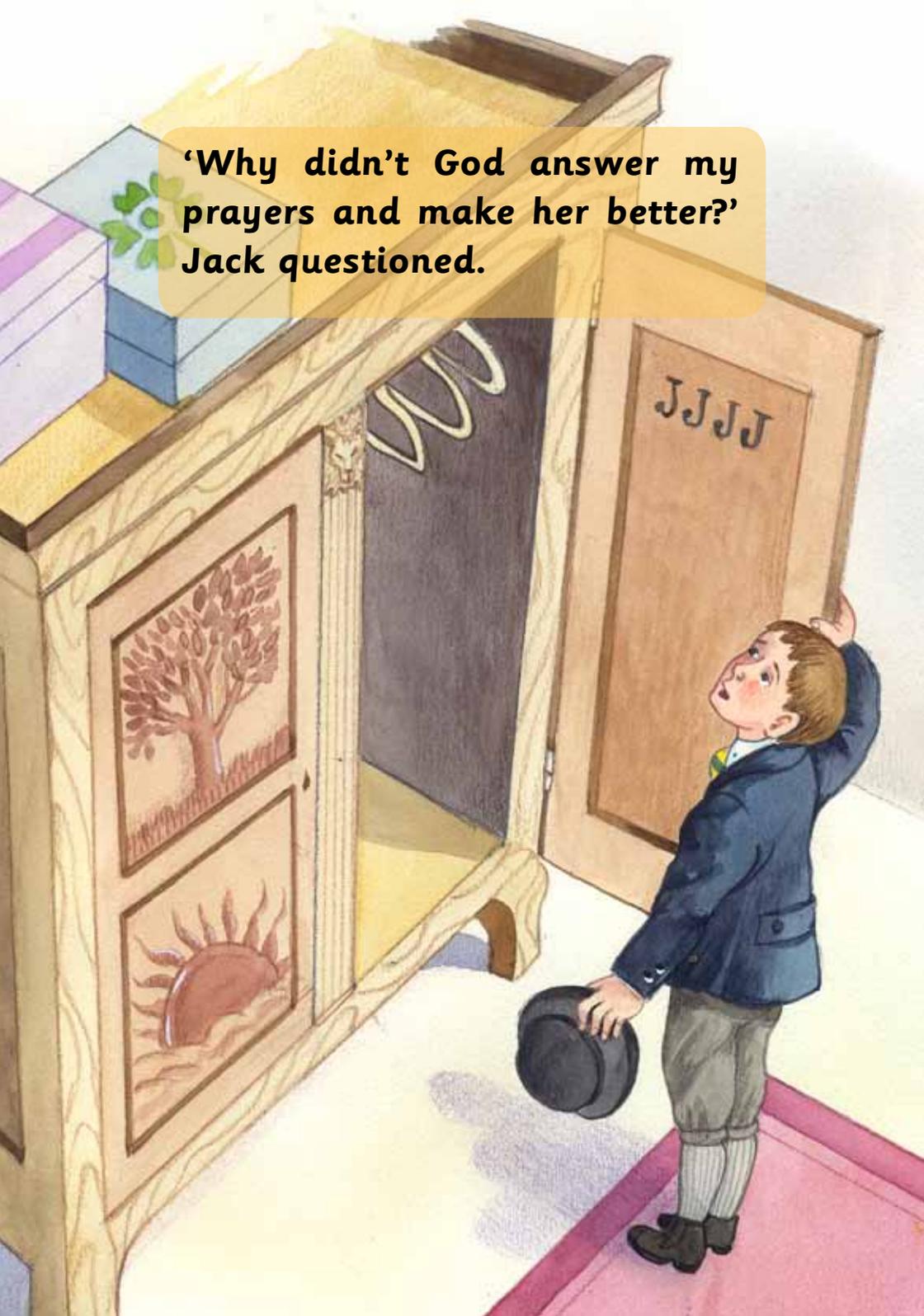
Picking up one book after another, Jack tried to decide what to take to boarding school. Leaving home in Northern Ireland would be hard. There was so much to leave behind.

Walking down the long corridor towards his mother's room, feeling hot and uncomfortable in his new school uniform, he opened the door and sighed. It was empty and had been for months. Jack's mother was dead.

'I want to remember her room the way it is,' Jack said, as he walked towards the wardrobe. Reaching out to touch the felt hats and fur coats his mother had worn, he tried to imagine her voice, but couldn't. 'Will I ever feel joy again? Why didn't God answer my prayers and make her better?' Jack questioned.



**‘Why didn’t God answer my prayers and make her better?’
Jack questioned.**



Jack didn't like England at first. 'There are no green hills and the weather is very cold and damp,' he sighed. But he grew to like England and eventually settled down to his studies. However, after a while Jack no longer wanted to pray. 'I try and try to pray, but it's never good enough,' he complained. 'I try again and again to get it right, but it doesn't work. Prayer is too exhausting. I don't think I'll do it anymore,' Jack decided.

Jack didn't realise that it was only Jesus, God's Son, who was good enough to pray perfectly. Jack stopped believing in God, but sometimes found himself wishing that God was real. It would be a few years before Jack would realise that his wish had always been true.

