

YERTLE the TURTLE

and

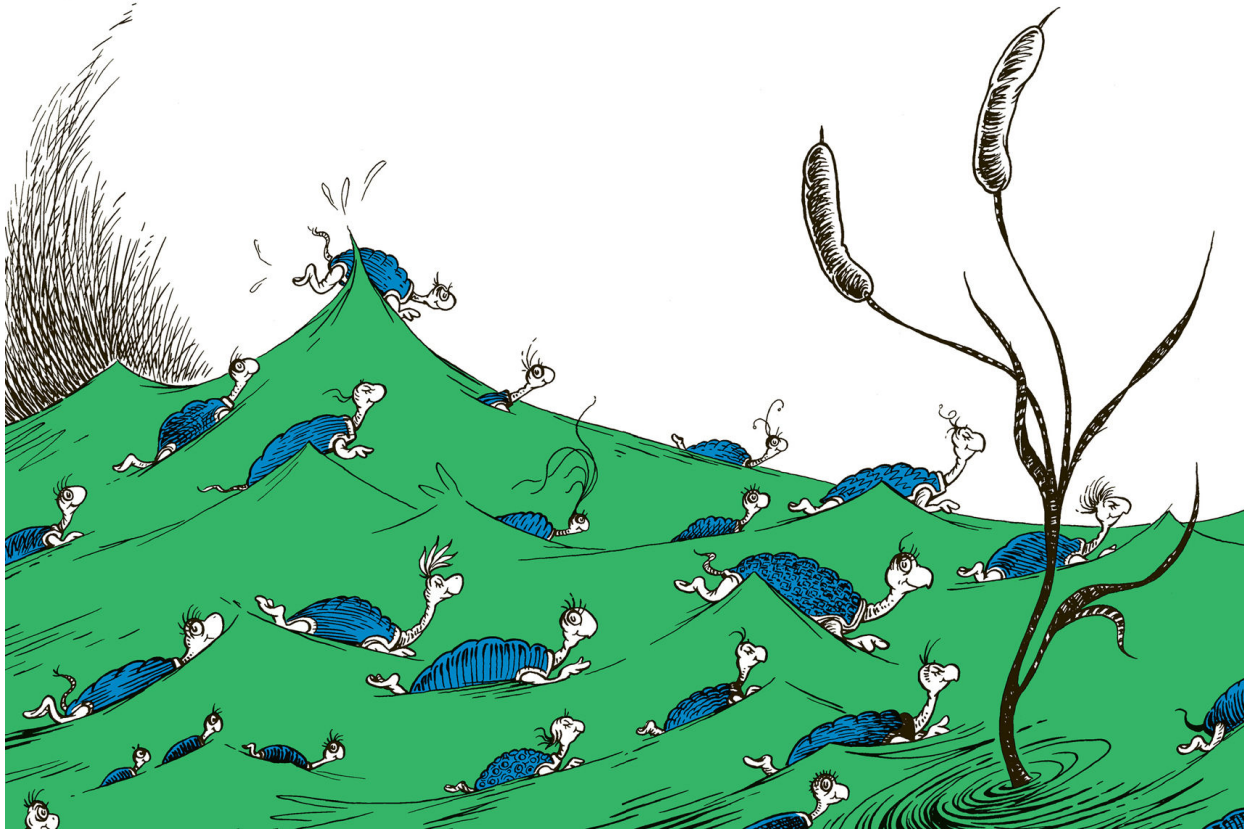
Other Stories

...

By

Dr. Seuss

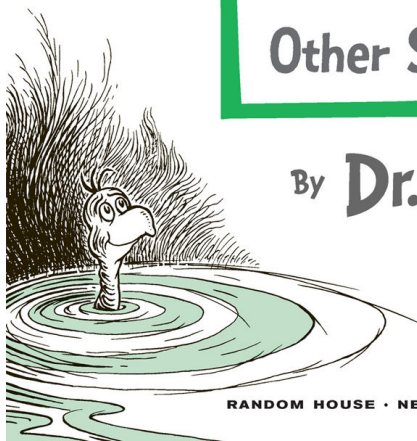




YERTLE
the **TURTLE**
and
Other Stories

YERTLE the **TURTLE** and Other Stories

By **Dr. Seuss**



RANDOM HOUSE • NEW YORK





This Book is for
The Bartletts of Norwich, Vt.
and for
The Sagmasters of Cincinnati, Ohio

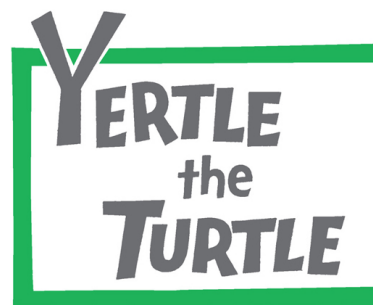
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On the far-away Island of Sala-ma-Sond,
Yertle the Turtle was king of the pond.
A nice little pond. It was clean. It was neat.
The water was warm. There was plenty to eat.
The turtles had everything they needed.

They *were* . . . until Yertle, the king of them
all,
Decided the kingdom he ruled was too
small.
“I’m ruler,” said Yertle, “of all that I see.
But I don’t see *enough*. That’s the trouble
with me.
With this stone for a throne, I look down on
my pond
But I cannot look down on the places
beyond.
This throne that I sit on is too, too low
down.
It ought to be *higher!*” he said with a frown.
“If I could sit high, how much greater I’d
be!





So Yertle, the Turtle King, lifted his hand
And Yertle, the Turtle King, gave a
command.

He ordered nine turtles to swim to his
stone

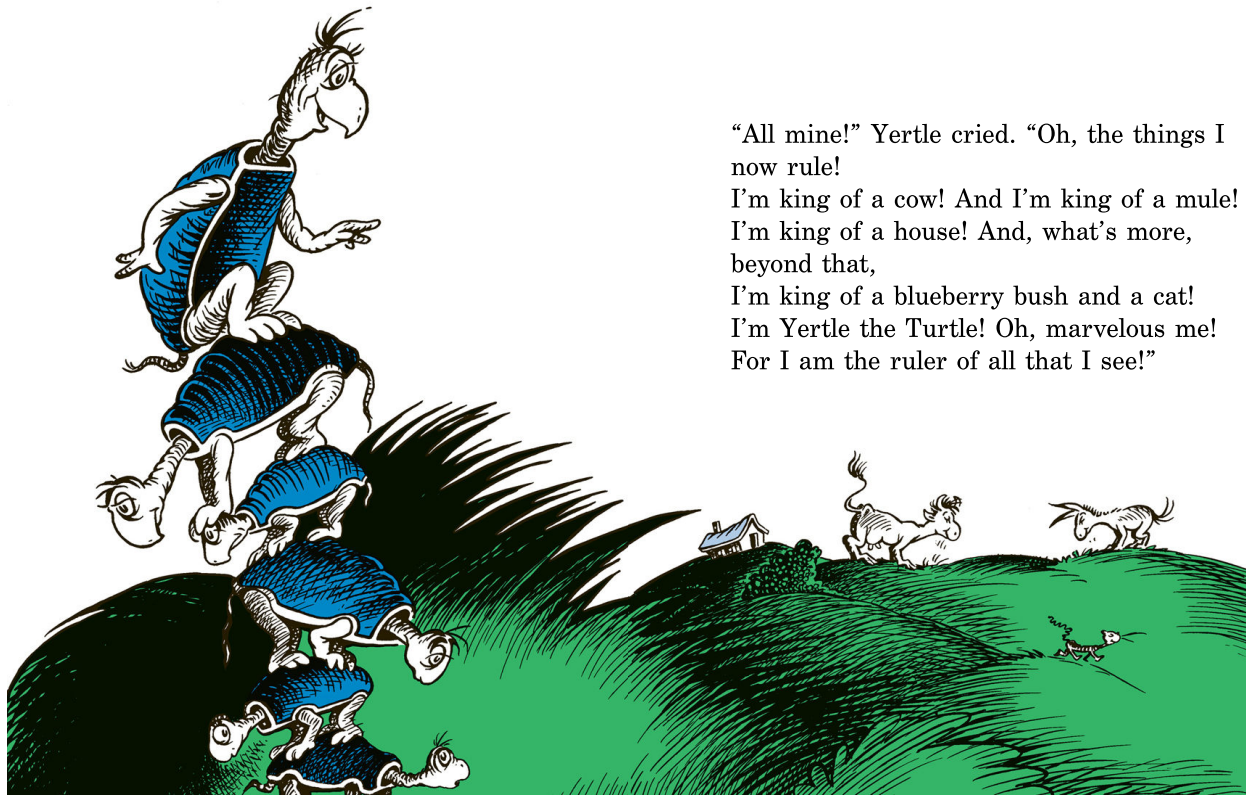
And, using these turtles, he built a *new*
throne.

He made each turtle stand on another
one's back

And he piled them all up in a nine-turtle
stack.

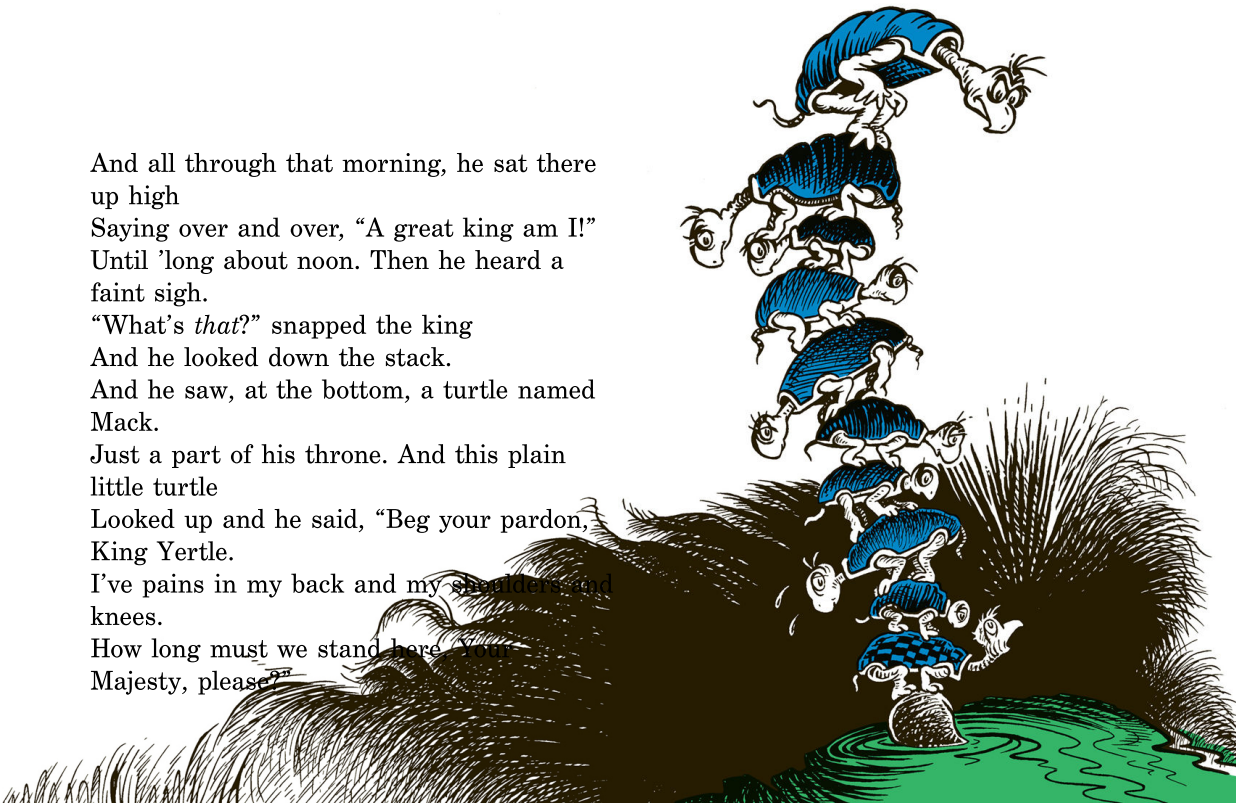
And then Yertle climbed up. He sat down
on the pile.

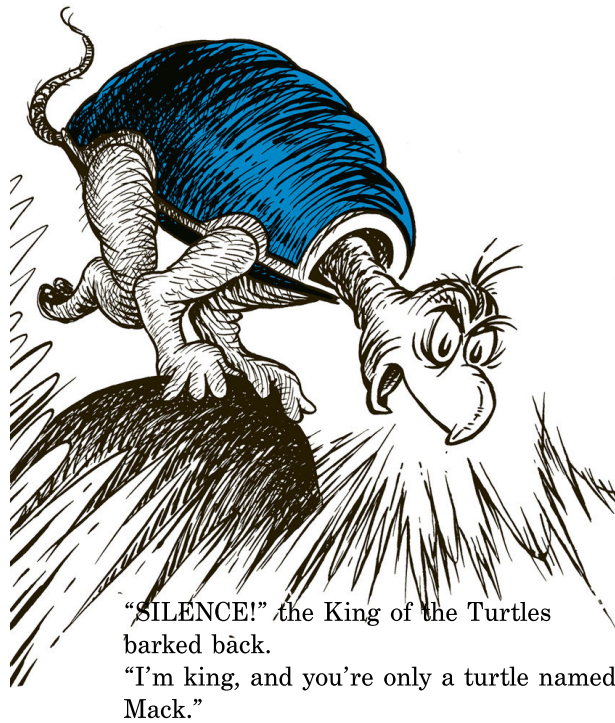
What a wonderful view! He could see 'most
a mile!



“All mine!” Yertle cried. “Oh, the things I
now rule!
I’m king of a cow! And I’m king of a mule!
I’m king of a house! And, what’s more,
beyond that,
I’m king of a blueberry bush and a cat!
I’m Yertle the Turtle! Oh, marvelous me!
For I am the ruler of all that I see!”

And all through that morning, he sat there
up high
Saying over and over, "A great king am I!"
Until 'long about noon. Then he heard a
faint sigh.
"What's *that*?" snapped the king
And he looked down the stack.
And he saw, at the bottom, a turtle named
Mack.
Just a part of his throne. And this plain
little turtle
Looked up and he said, "Beg your pardon,
King Yertle.
I've pains in my back and my shoulders and
knees.
How long must we stand here, your
Majesty, please?"





"SILENCE!" the King of the Turtles
barked back.
"I'm king, and you're only a turtle named
Mack."

"You stay in your place while I sit here and
rule.
I'm king of a cow! And I'm king of a mule!
I'm king of a house! And a bush! And a
cat!
But that isn't all. I'll do better than *that*!
My throne shall be *higher*!" his royal voice
thundered,
"So pile up more turtles! I want 'bout two
hundred!"



"Turtles! More turtles!" he bellowed and
brayed.

And the turtles 'way down in the pond were
afraid.

They trembled. They shook. But they came.
They obeyed.

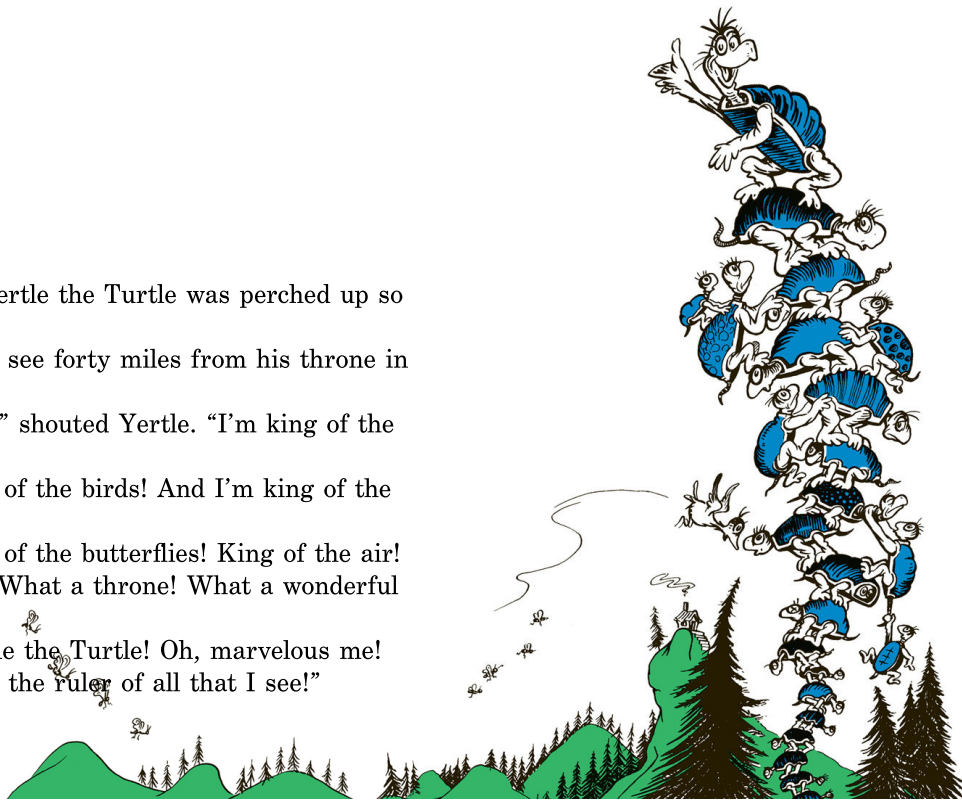
From all over the pond, they came
swimming by dozens.

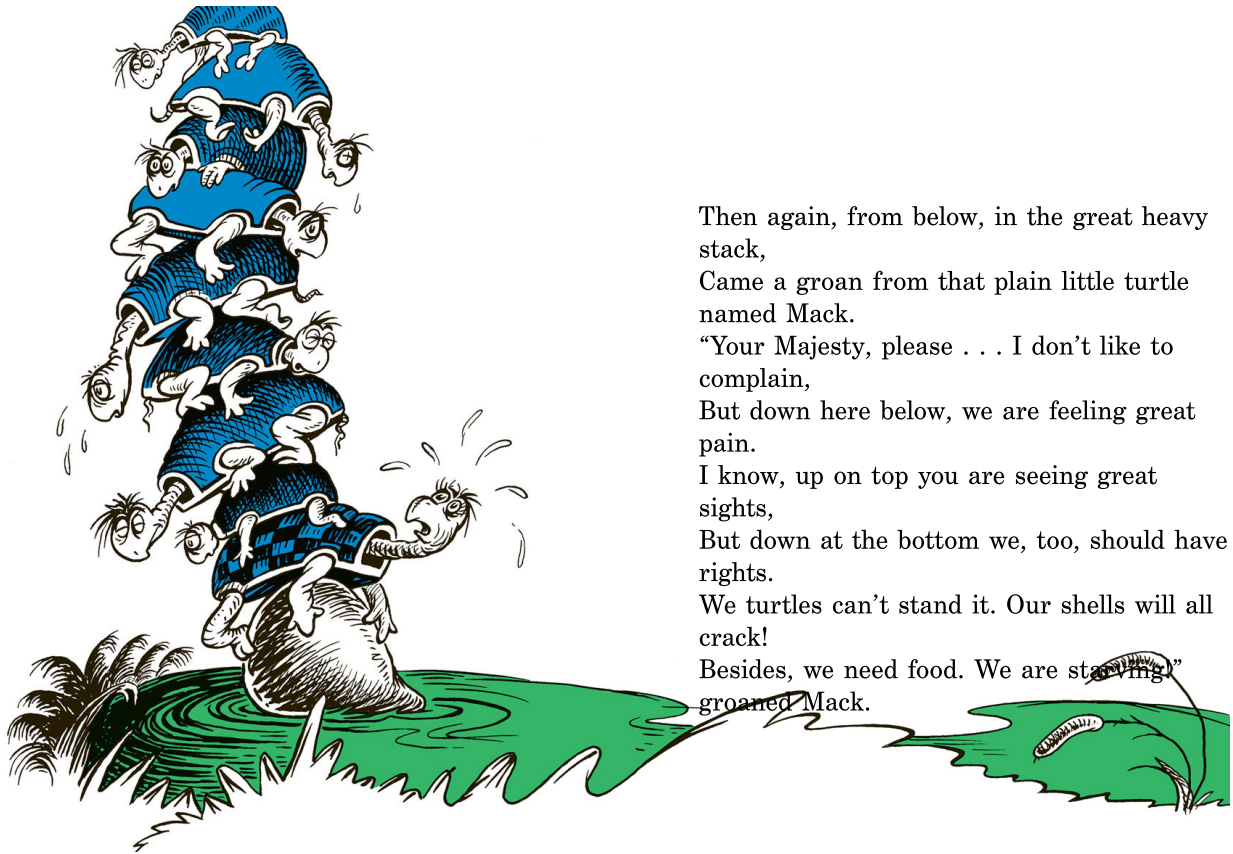
Whole families of turtles, with uncles and
cousins.

And all of them stepped on the head of poor
Mack.

One after another, they climbed up the
stack.

THEN Yertle the Turtle was perched up so
high,
He could see forty miles from his throne in
the sky!
“Hooray!” shouted Yertle. “I’m king of the
trees!
I’m king of the birds! And I’m king of the
bees!
I’m king of the butterflies! King of the air!
Ah, me! What a throne! What a wonderful
chair!
I’m Yertle the Turtle! Oh, marvelous me!
For I am the ruler of all that I see!”





Then again, from below, in the great heavy stack,

Came a groan from that plain little turtle named Mack.

“Your Majesty, please . . . I don’t like to complain,

But down here below, we are feeling great pain.

I know, up on top you are seeing great sights,

But down at the bottom we, too, should have rights.

We turtles can’t stand it. Our shells will all crack!

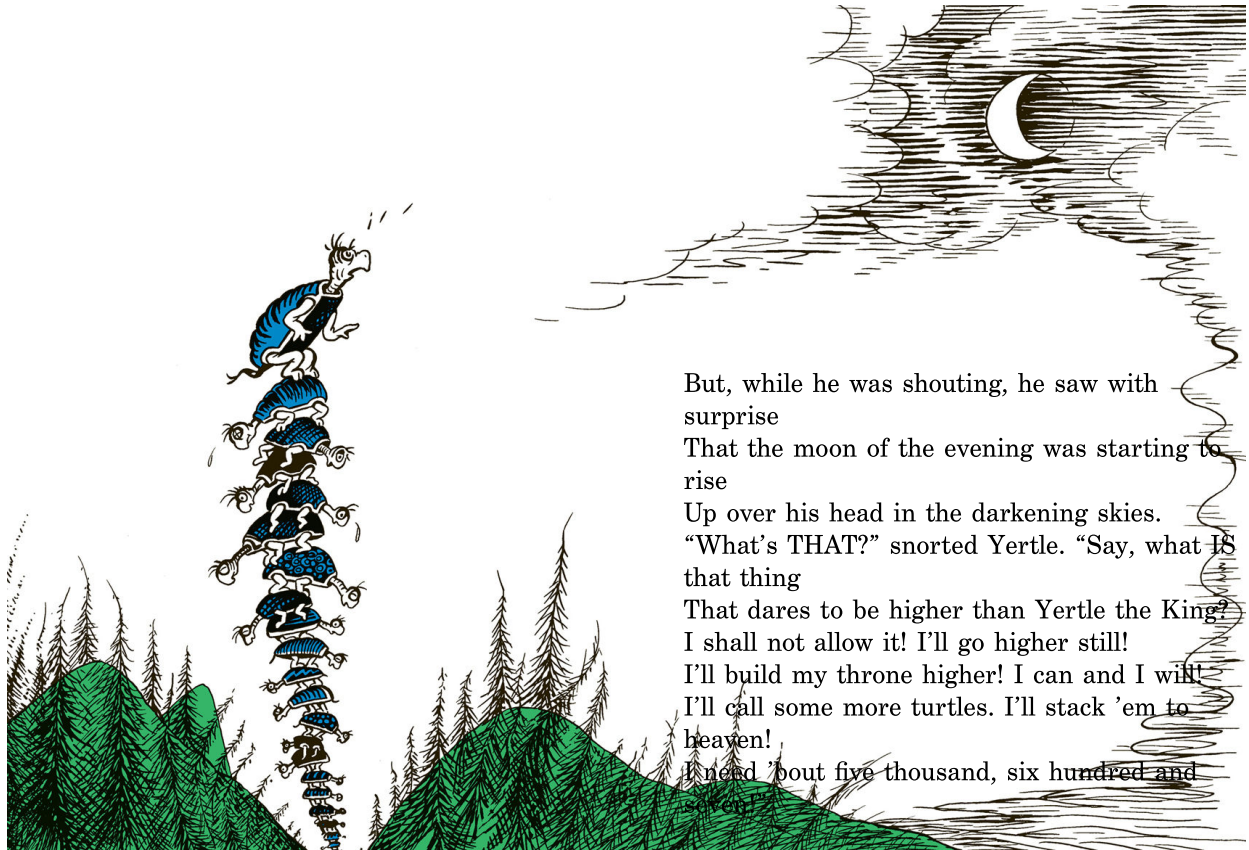
Besides, we need food. We are starving!” groaned Mack.



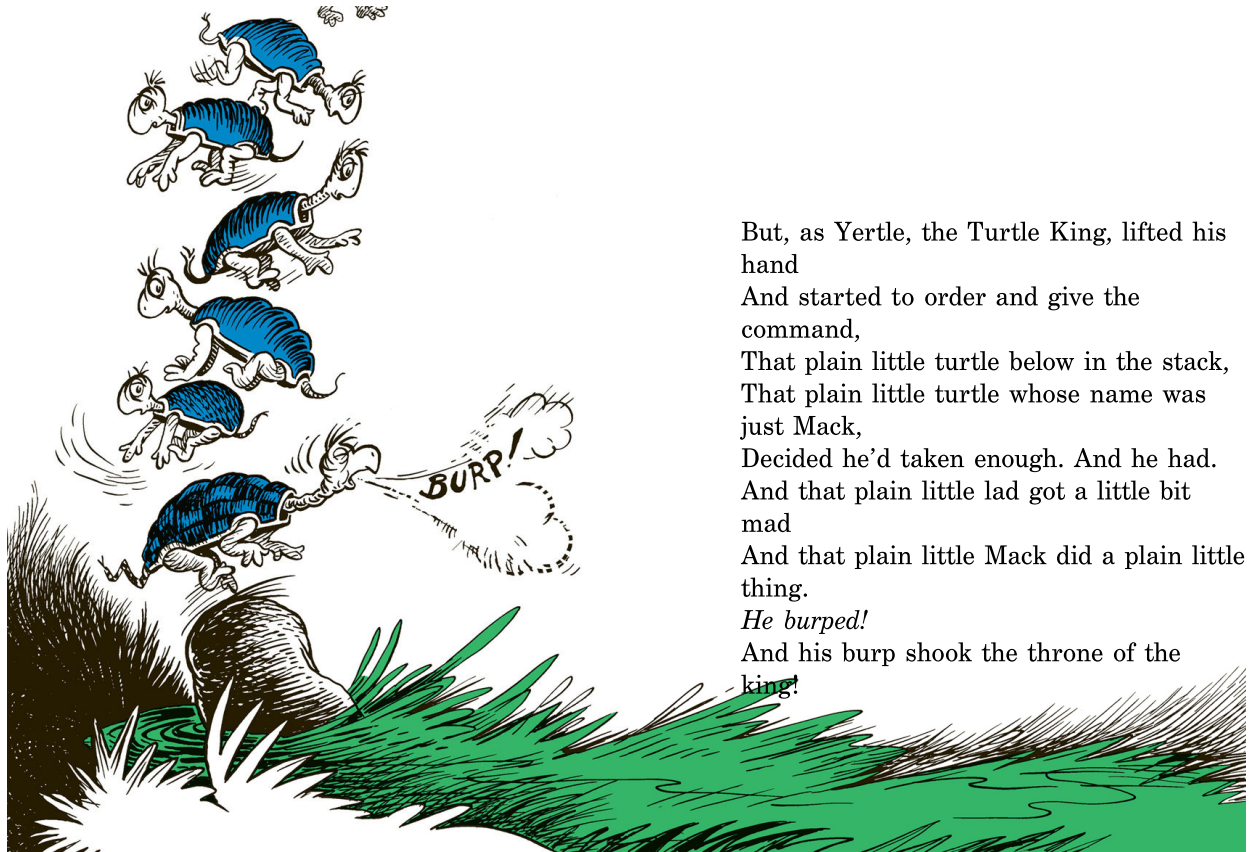
“You hush up your mouth!” howled the mighty King Yertle.

“You’ve no right to talk to the world’s highest turtle.

I rule from the clouds! Over land! Over sea!
There’s nothing, no, NOTHING, that’s higher
than me!”



But, while he was shouting, he saw with
surprise
That the moon of the evening was starting to
rise
Up over his head in the darkening skies.
“What’s THAT?” snorted Yertle. “Say, what IS
that thing
That dares to be higher than Yertle the King?
I shall not allow it! I’ll go higher still!
I’ll build my throne higher! I can and I will!
I’ll call some more turtles. I’ll stack ’em to
heaven!
I need ’bout five thousand, six hundred and



But, as Yertle, the Turtle King, lifted his hand

And started to order and give the command,

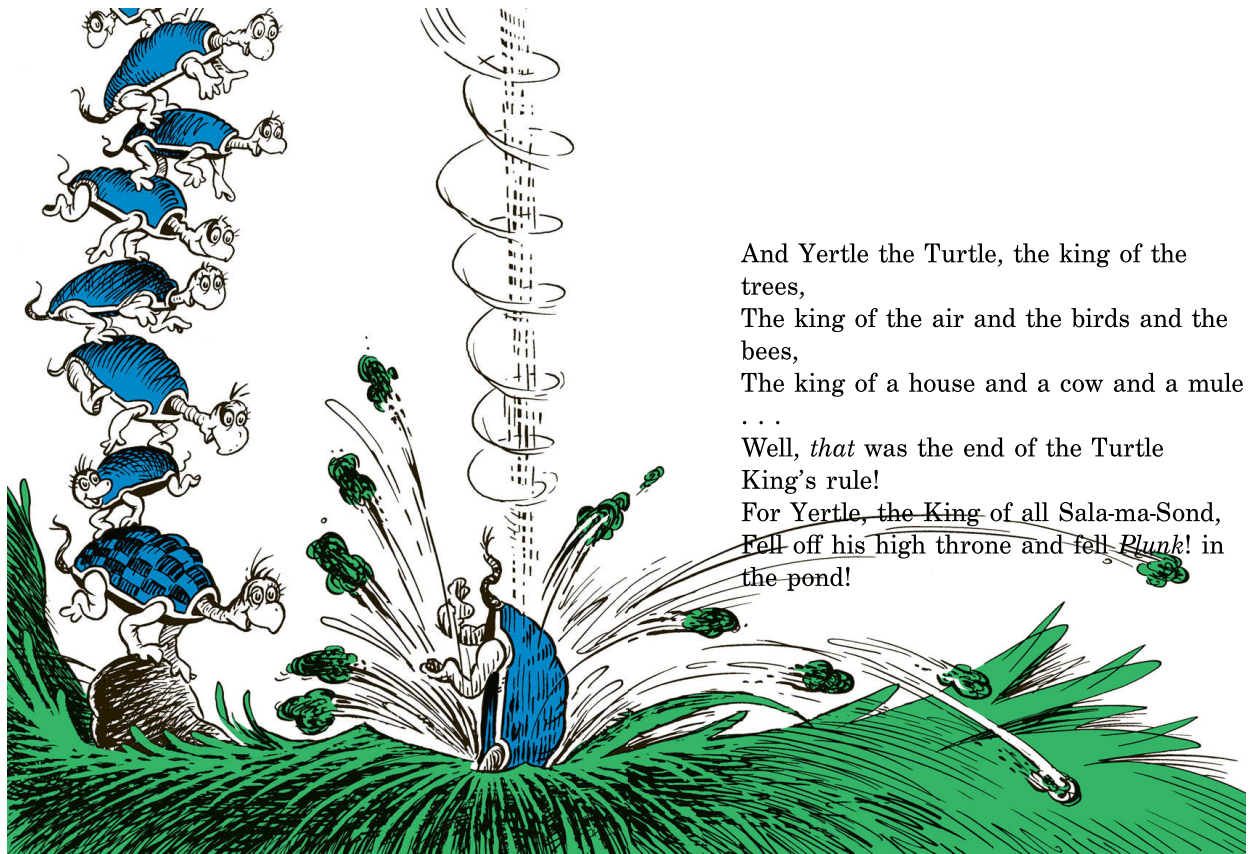
That plain little turtle below in the stack,
That plain little turtle whose name was just Mack,

Decided he'd taken enough. And he had.
And that plain little lad got a little bit mad

And that plain little Mack did a plain little thing.

He burped!

And his burp shook the throne of the king!



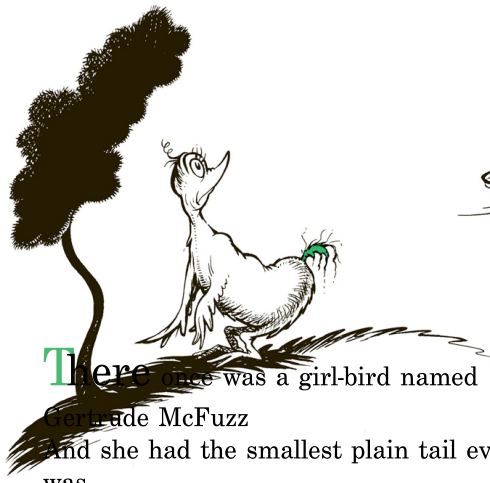
And Yertle the Turtle, the king of the
trees,
The king of the air and the birds and the
bees,
The king of a house and a cow and a mule

...
Well, *that* was the end of the Turtle
King's rule!
For Yertle, the King of all Sala-ma-Sond,
Fell off his high throne and fell *plunk!* in
the pond!

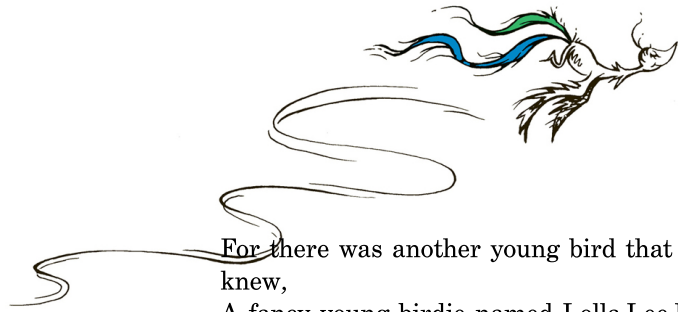


And today the great Yertle, that Marvelous
he,
Is King of the Mud. That is all he can see.
And the turtles, of course . . . all the
turtles are free
As turtles and, maybe, all creatures should
be.

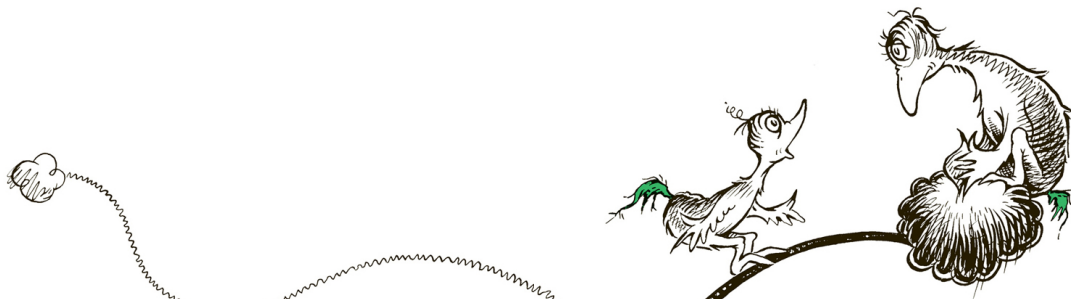




There once was a girl-bird named
Gertrude McFuzz
And she had the smallest plain tail ever
was.
One droopy-droop feather. That's all that
she had.
And, oh! That one feather made Gertrude so
sad.



For there was another young bird that she
knew,
A fancy young birdie named Lolla-Lee-Lou,
And instead of *one* feather behind, she had
two!
Poor Gertrude! Whenever she happened to
spy
Miss Lolla-Lee-Lou flying by in the sky,
She got very jealous. She frowned. And she
pouted.
Then, one day she got awfully mad and she
shouted:
"This just isn't fair! I have *one*! She has
two!
I MUST have a tail just like Lolla-Lee-Lou!"

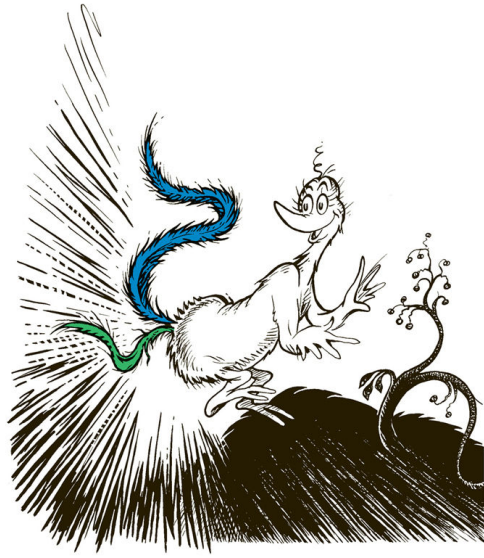


So she flew to her uncle, a doctor named
Dake
Whose office was high in a tree by the lake
And she cried, "Uncle Doctor! Oh, please do
you know
Of some kind of a pill that will make my
tail grow?"
"Tut tut!" said the doctor. "Such talk! How
absurd!
Your tail is just right for your kind of a
bird."

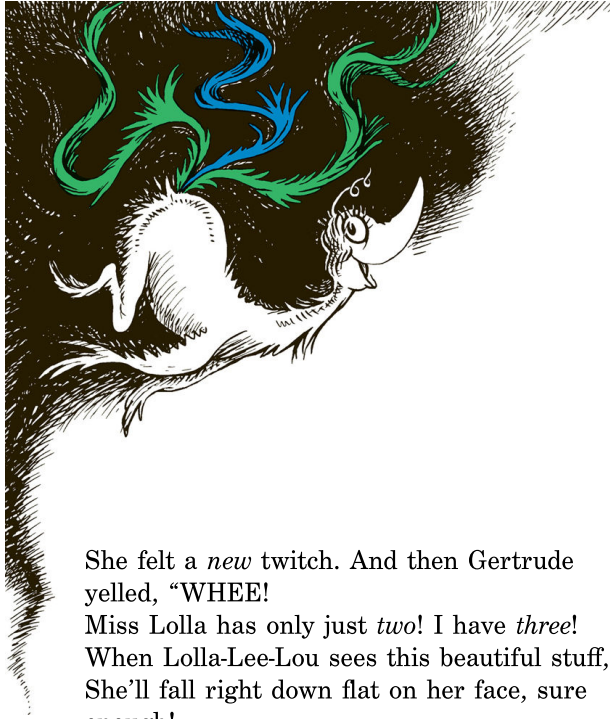
Then Gertrude had tantrums. She raised
such a din
That finally her uncle, the doctor, gave in
And he told her just where she could find
such a pill
On a pill-berry vine on the top of the hill.
"Oh, thank you!" chirped Gertrude McFuzz,
and she flew
Right straight to the hill where the pill-berry
grew.

Yes! There was the vine! And as soon as she
saw it
She plucked off a berry. She started to gnaw
it.
It tasted just awful. Almost made her sick.
But she wanted that tail, so she swallowed it
quick.
Then she felt something happen! She felt a
small twitch
As if she'd been tapped, down behind, by a
switch.
And Gertrude looked 'round. And she
cheered! It was true!
Two feathers! Exactly like Lolla-Lee-Lou!

Then she got an idea! "Now I know what I'll
do . . .

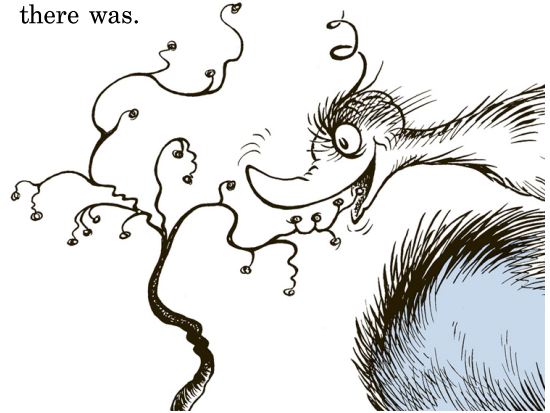


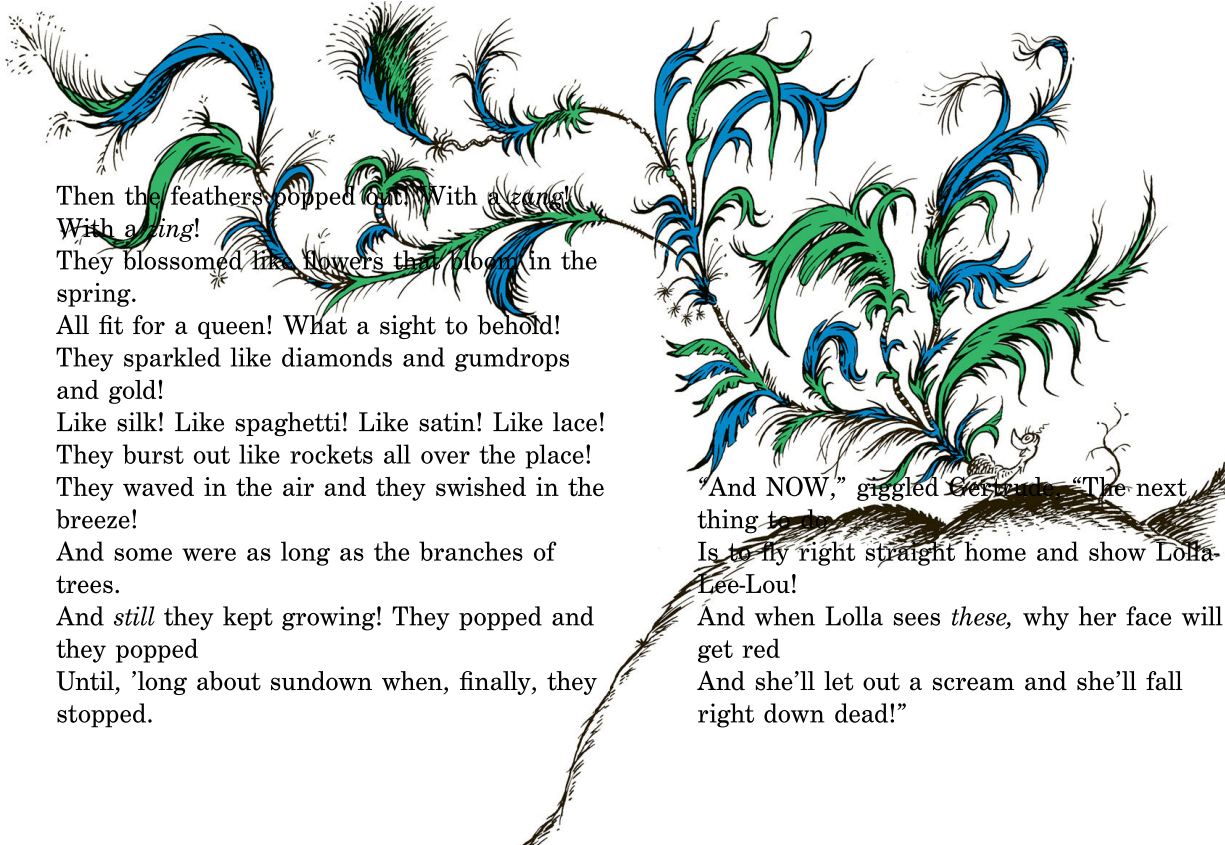
"These pills that grow feathers are working
just fine!"
So she nibbled *another* one off of the vine!



She felt a *new* twitch. And then Gertrude yelled, "WHEE!
Miss Lolla has only just *two*! I have *three*!
When Lolla-Lee-Lou sees this beautiful stuff,
She'll fall right down flat on her face, sure enough!
I'll show HER who's pretty! I certainly will!
Why, I'll make my tail even prettier still!"

She snatched at those berries that grew on that vine.
She gobbled down four, five, six, seven, eight, nine!
And she didn't stop eating, young Gertrude McFuzz,
Till she'd eaten three dozen! That's all that there was.

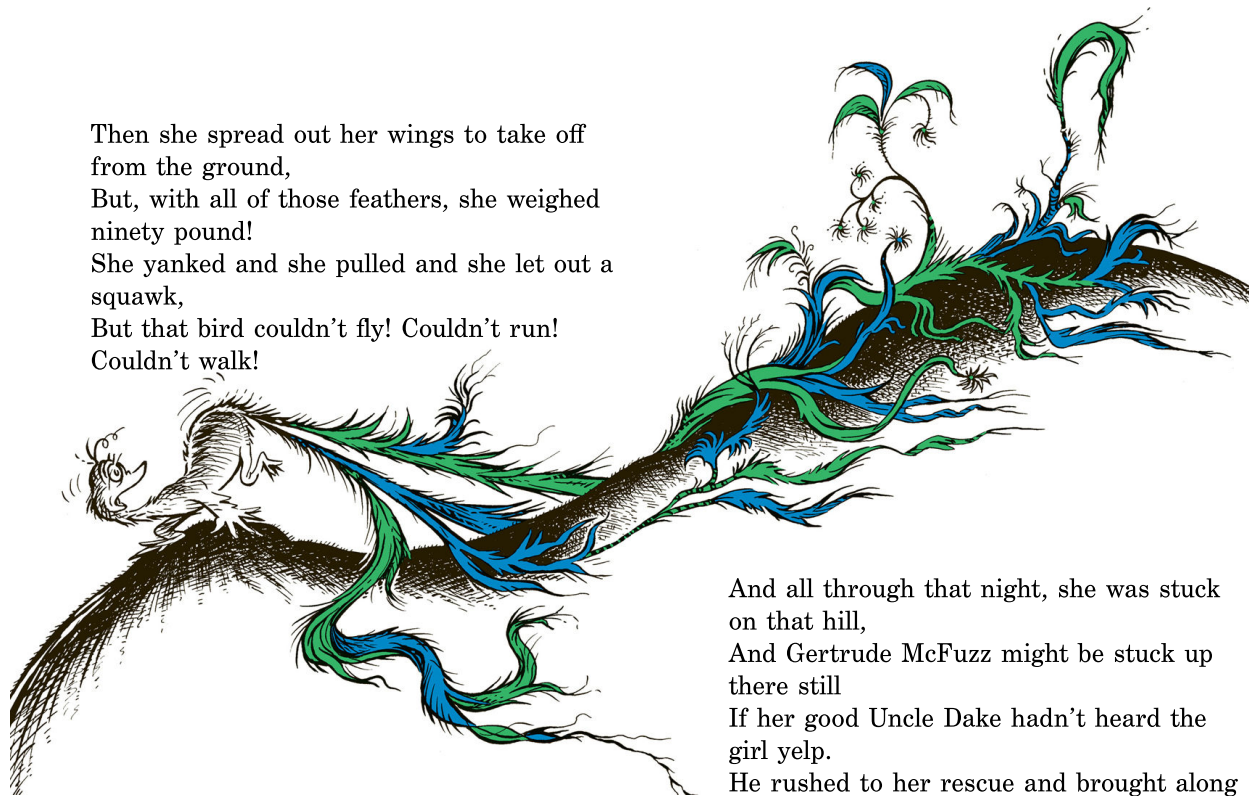




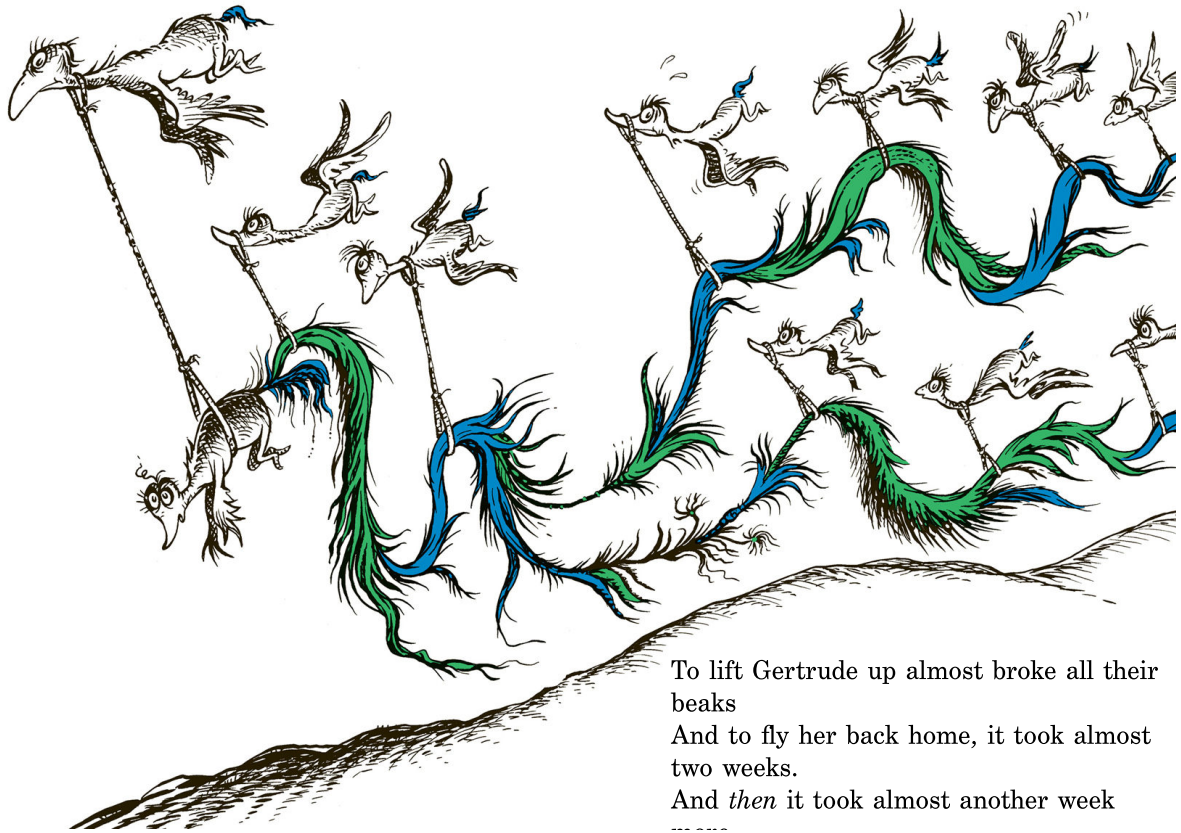
Then the feathers popped out. With a zang!
With a ting!
They blossomed like flowers that bloom in the
spring.
All fit for a queen! What a sight to behold!
They sparkled like diamonds and gumdrops
and gold!
Like silk! Like spaghetti! Like satin! Like lace!
They burst out like rockets all over the place!
They waved in the air and they swished in the
breeze!
And some were as long as the branches of
trees.
And *still* they kept growing! They popped and
they popped
Until, 'long about sundown when, finally, they
stopped.

"And NOW," giggled Gertie. "The next
thing to do
Is to fly right straight home and show Lolla-
Lee-Lou!
And when Lolla sees *these*, why her face will
get red
And she'll let out a scream and she'll fall
right down dead!"

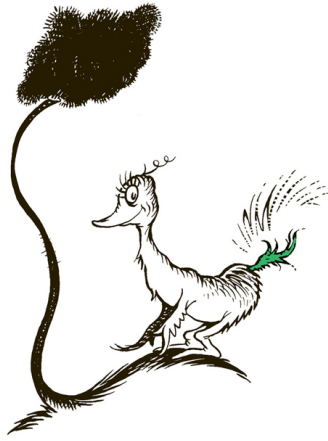
Then she spread out her wings to take off
from the ground,
But, with all of those feathers, she weighed
ninety pound!
She yanked and she pulled and she let out a
squawk,
But that bird couldn't fly! Couldn't run!
Couldn't walk!



And all through that night, she was stuck
on that hill,
And Gertrude McFuzz might be stuck up
there still
If her good Uncle Dake hadn't heard the
girl yelp.
He rushed to her rescue and brought along

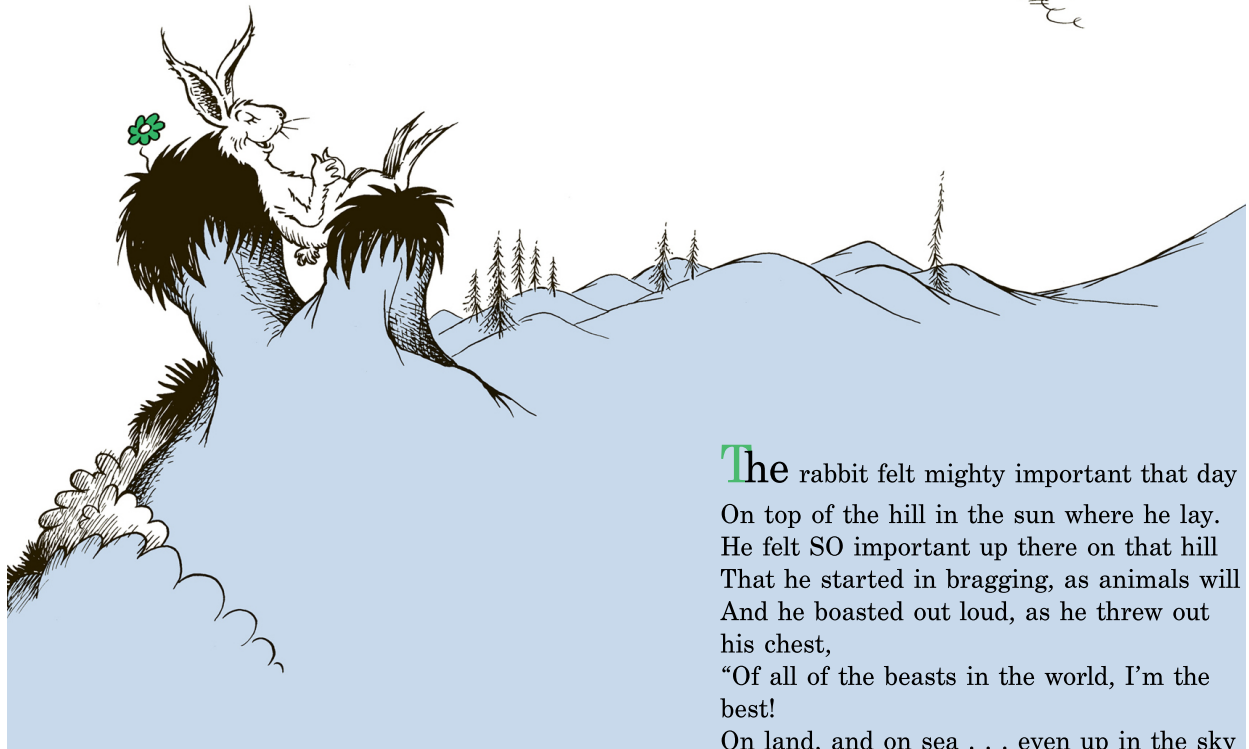


To lift Gertrude up almost broke all their
beaks
And to fly her back home, it took almost
two weeks.
And *then* it took almost another week
.....

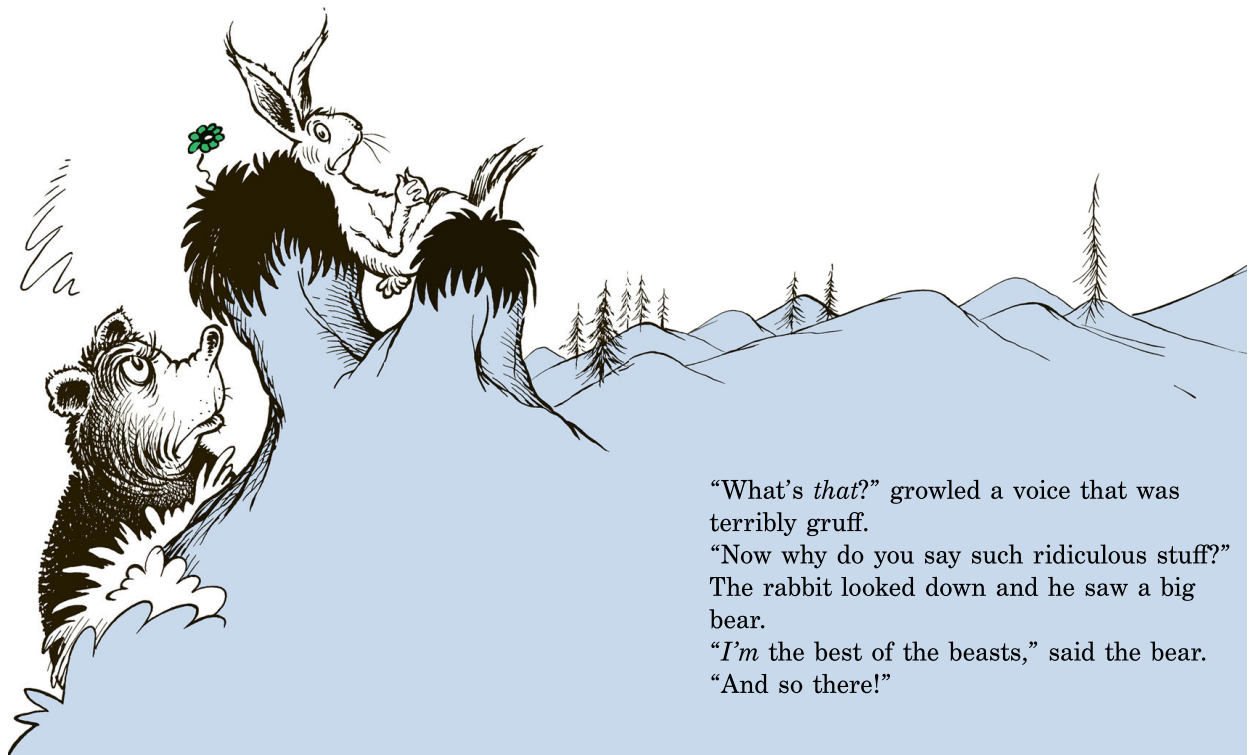


And, finally, when all of the pulling was
done,
Gertrude, behind her, again had just
one . . .
That one little feather she had as a starter.
But now that's enough. because now she is





The rabbit felt mighty important that day
On top of the hill in the sun where he lay.
He felt SO important up there on that hill
That he started in bragging, as animals will
And he boasted out loud, as he threw out
his chest,
“Of all of the beasts in the world, I’m the
best!
On land. and on sea . . . even up in the sky



"What's *that*?" growled a voice that was terribly gruff.
"Now why do you say such ridiculous stuff?"
The rabbit looked down and he saw a big bear.
"*I'm* the best of the beasts," said the bear.
"And so there!"

"You're not!" snapped the rabbit. "I'm better than you!"

"Pooh!" the bear snorted. "Again I say Pooh! You talk mighty big, Mr. Rabbit. That's true. But how can you prove it? **Just what can you DO?**"

"Hmmm . . ." thought the rabbit,

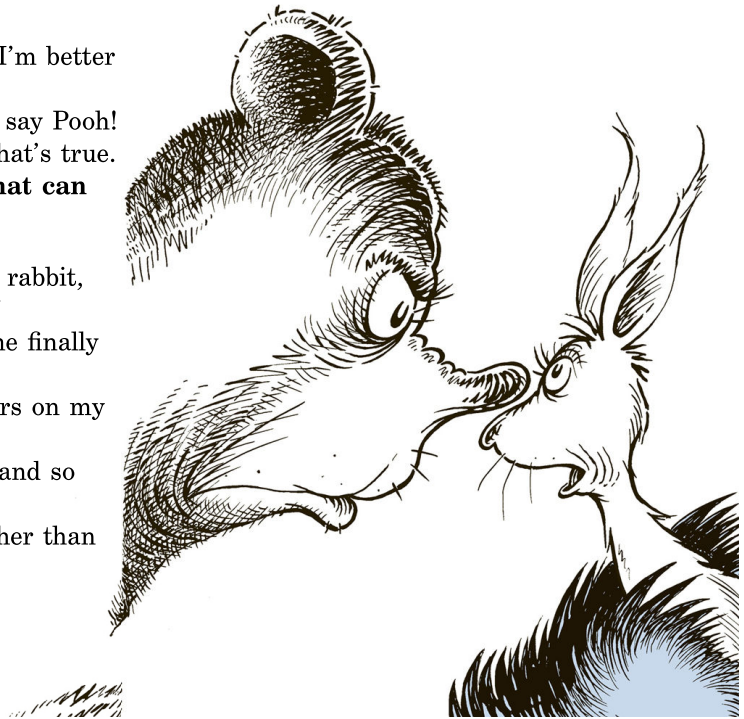
"Now what CAN I do . . . ?"

He thought and he thought. Then he finally said,

"Mr. Bear, do you see these two ears on my head?

My ears are so keen and so sharp and so fine

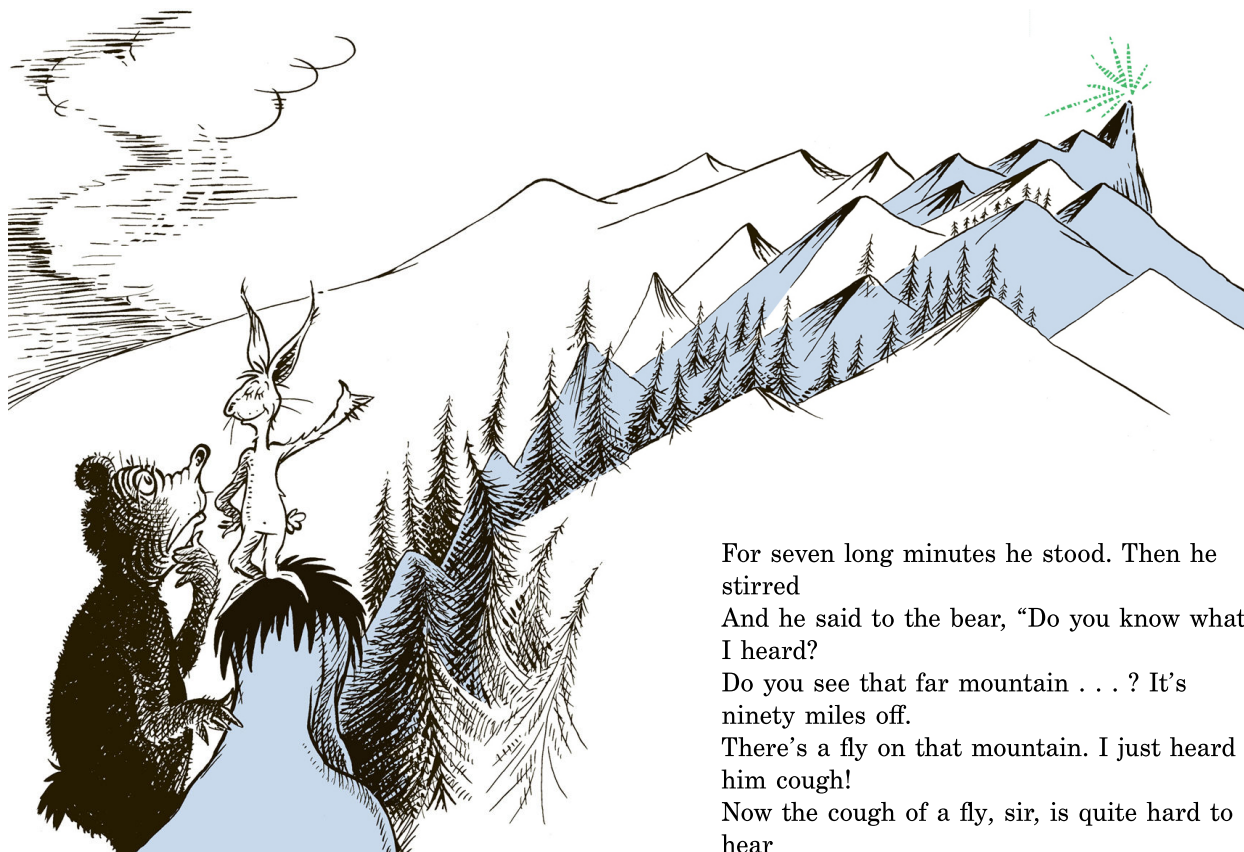
No ears in the world can hear further than mine!"



“Humpf!” the bear grunted. He looked at each ear.
“You *say* they are good,” said the bear with a sneer,
“But how do *I* know just how far they can hear?”

“I’ll prove,” said the rabbit, “my ears are the best.
You sit there and watch me. I’ll prove it by test.”
Then he stiffened his ears till they both stood up high
And pointed straight up at the blue of the sky.
He stretched his ears open as wide as he could.
“*Shhh!* I am listening!” he said as he stood.
He listened so hard that he started to sweat
And the fur on his ears and his forehead got wet.

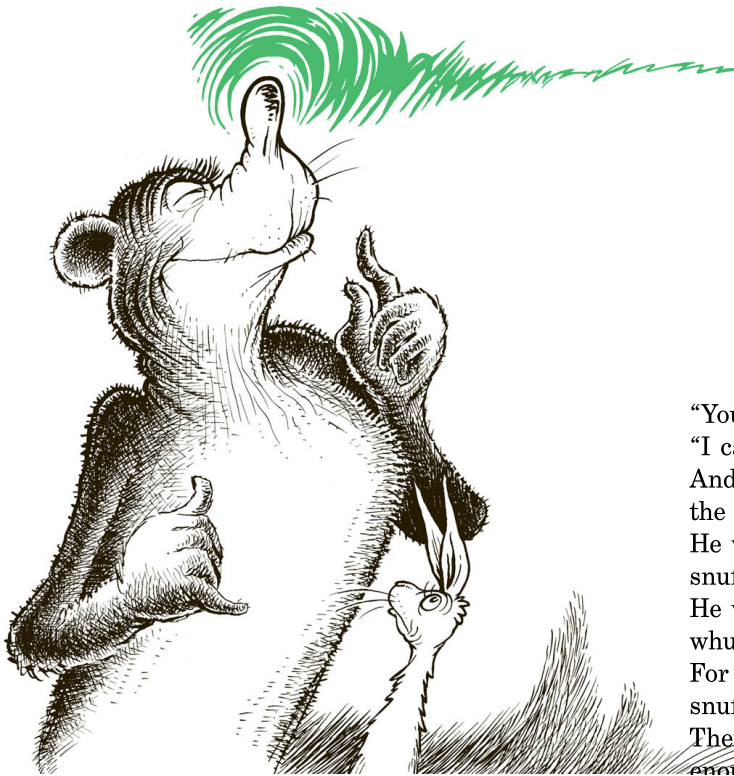




For seven long minutes he stood. Then he stirred
And he said to the bear, "Do you know what I heard?
Do you see that far mountain . . . ? It's ninety miles off.
There's a fly on that mountain. I just heard him cough!
Now the cough of a fly, sir, is quite hard to hear



The bear, for a moment, just sulked as he sat
For he knew that *his* ears couldn't hear
things like *that*.
"This rabbit," he thought, "made a fool out
of me.
Now *I've* got to prove that I'm better than
he."
So he said to the rabbit, "You hear pretty
well.
You can hear ninety miles. *But how far can
you smell?*
I'm the greatest of smellers," he bragged.



"You can't!" snapped the rabbit.

"I can!" growled the bear

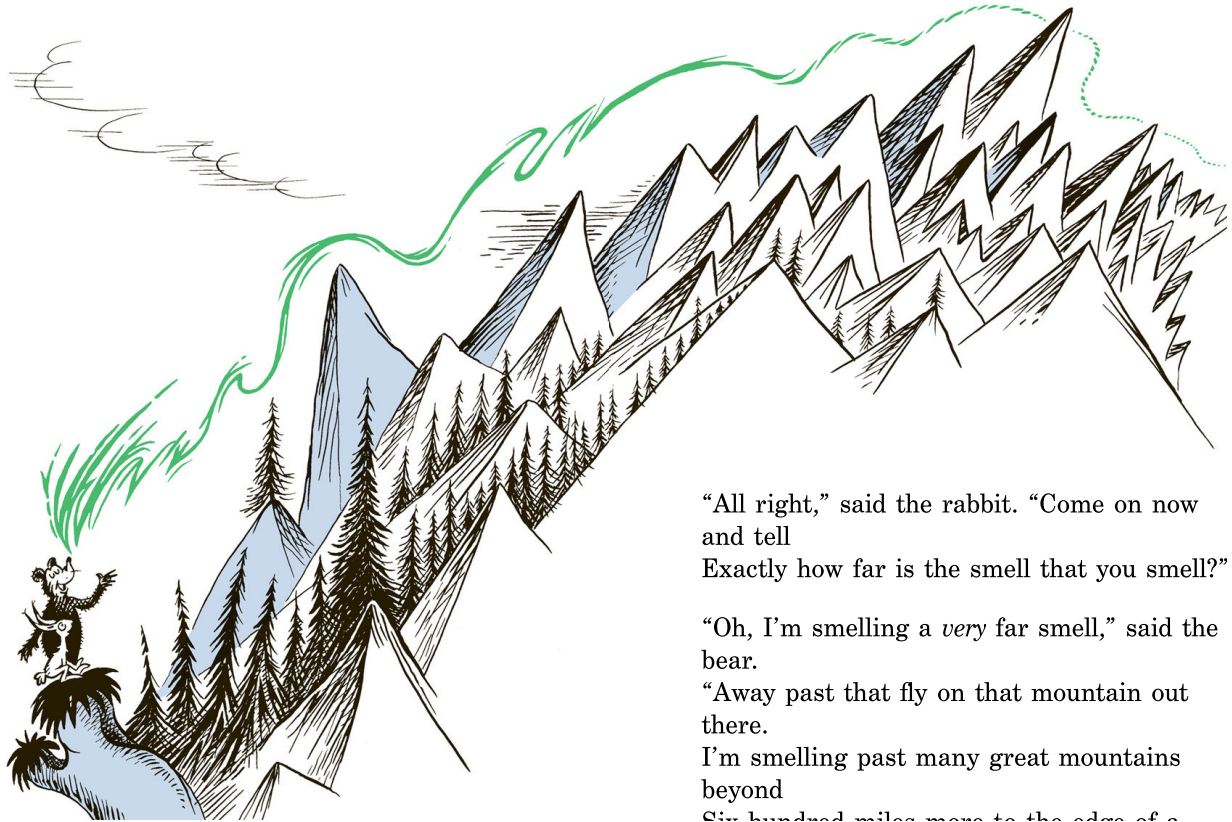
And he stuck his big nose 'way up high in
the air.

He wiggled that nose and he sniffed and he
snuffed.

He waggled that nose and he whiffed and he
whuffed.

For more than ten minutes he snaff and he
snuff.

Then he said to the rabbit, "I've smelled far
enough."



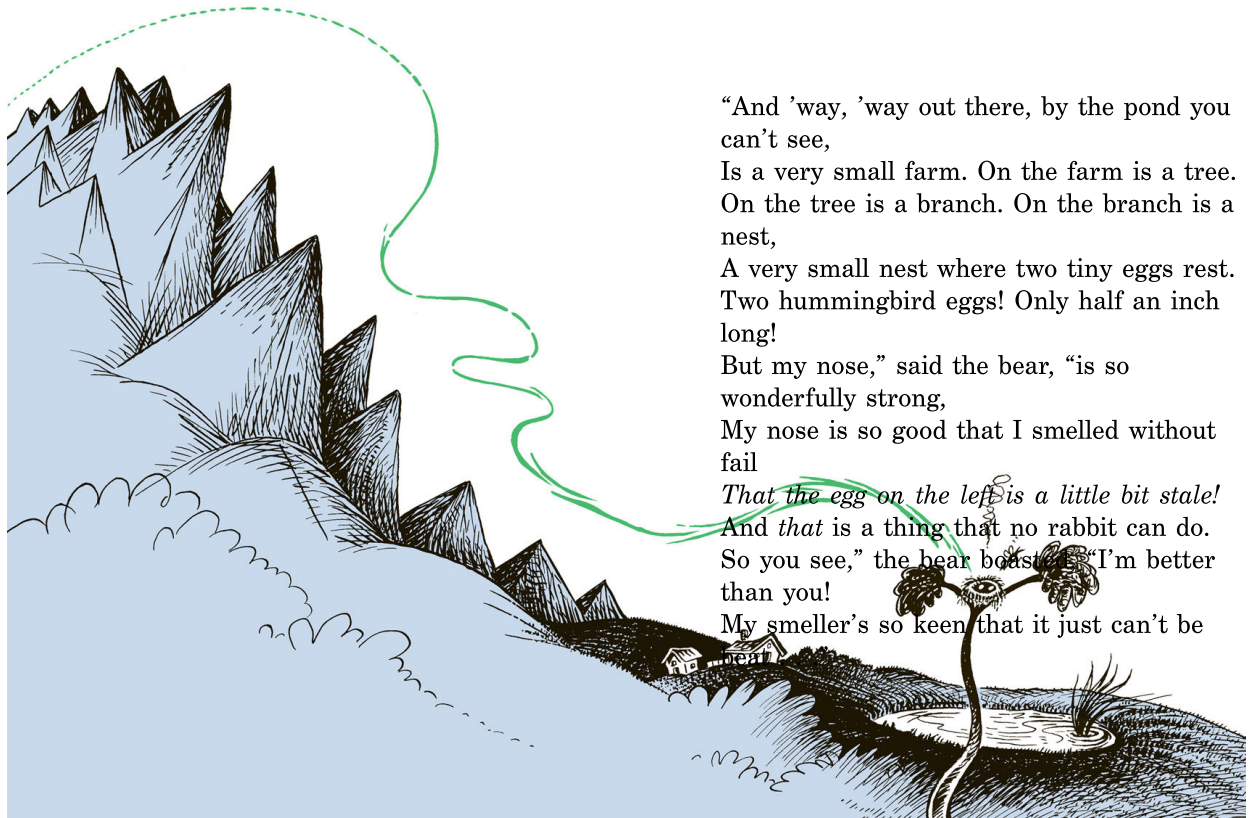
“All right,” said the rabbit. “Come on now
and tell
Exactly how far is the smell that you smell?”

“Oh, I’m smelling a *very* far smell,” said the
bear.

“Away past that fly on that mountain out
there.

I’m smelling past many great mountains
beyond

Six hundred miles more to the edge of a



"And 'way, 'way out there, by the pond you
can't see,

Is a very small farm. On the farm is a tree.
On the tree is a branch. On the branch is a
nest,

A very small nest where two tiny eggs rest.
Two hummingbird eggs! Only half an inch
long!

But my nose," said the bear, "is so
wonderfully strong,

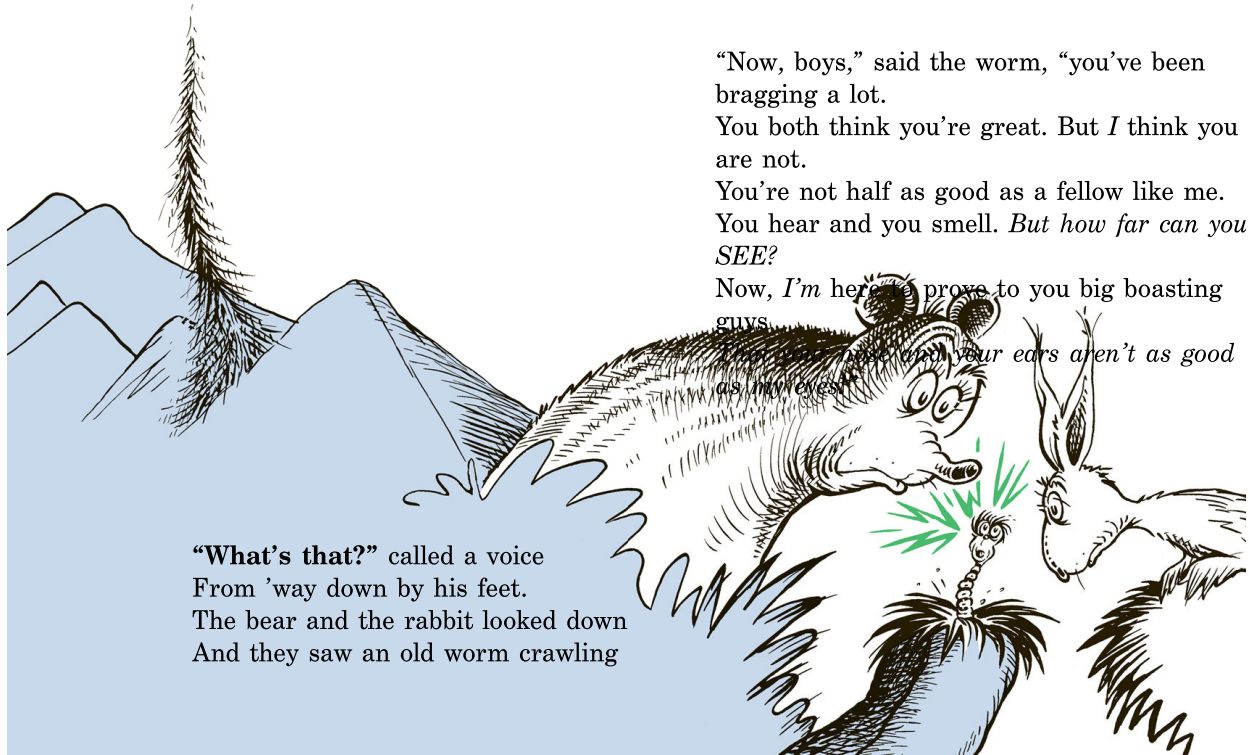
My nose is so good that I smelled without
fail

That the egg on the left is a little bit stale!

And *that* is a thing that no rabbit can do.

So you see," the bear boasted, "I'm better
than you!

My smeller's so keen that it just can't be



“What’s that?” called a voice
From ‘way down by his feet.
The bear and the rabbit looked down
And they saw an old worm crawling

“Now, boys,” said the worm, “you’ve been bragging a lot.

You both think you’re great. But *I* think you are not.

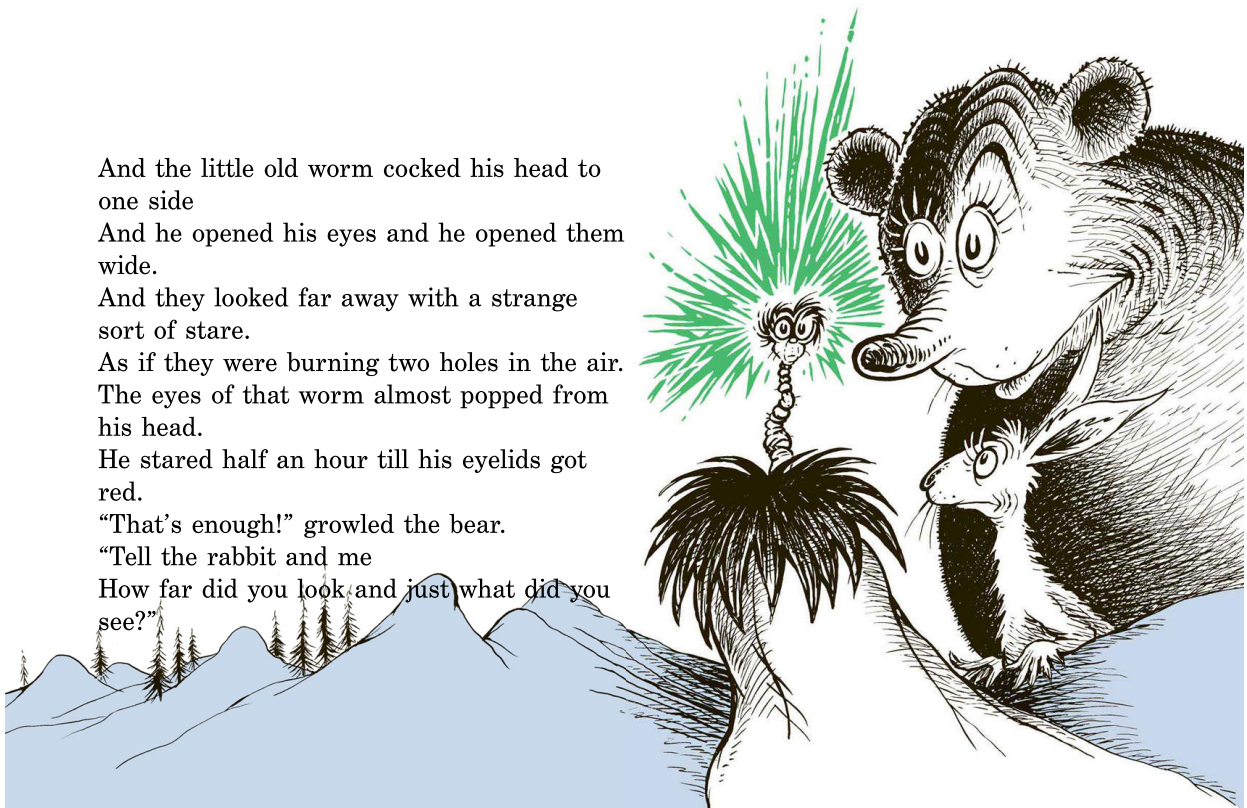
You’re not half as good as a fellow like me.

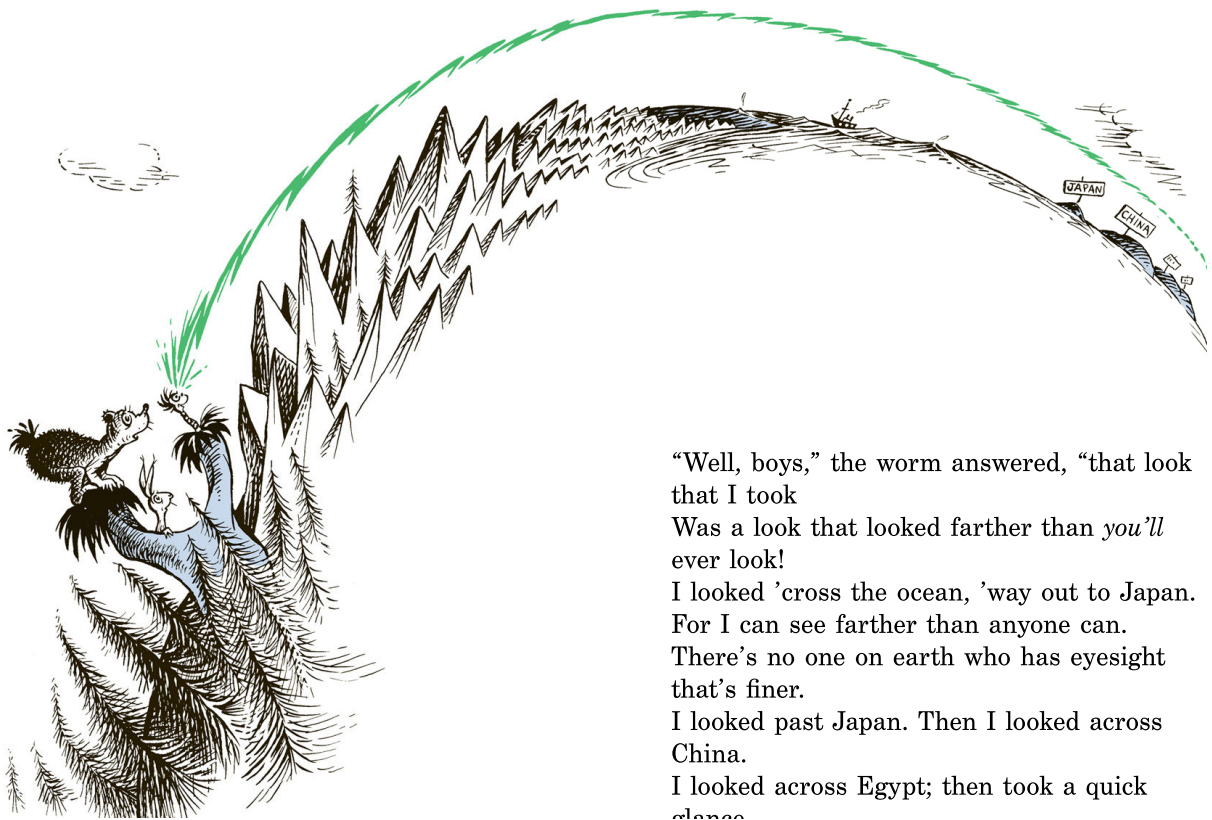
You hear and you smell. *But how far can you SEE?*

Now, *I’m* here to prove to you big boasting guys.

How far can you see? And your ears aren’t as good as mine, either.

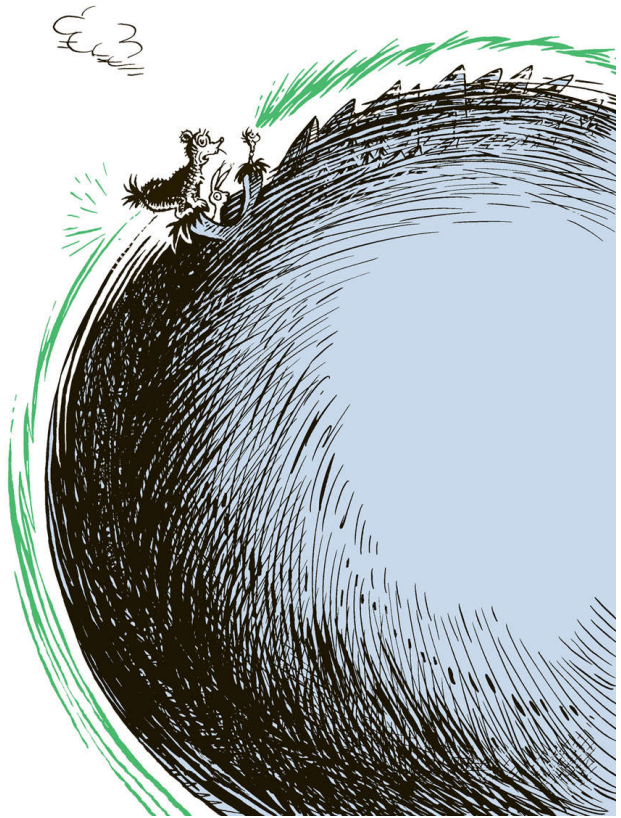
And the little old worm cocked his head to
one side
And he opened his eyes and he opened them
wide.
And they looked far away with a strange
sort of stare.
As if they were burning two holes in the air.
The eyes of that worm almost popped from
his head.
He stared half an hour till his eyelids got
red.
“That’s enough!” growled the bear.
“Tell the rabbit and me
How far did you look and just what did you
see?”





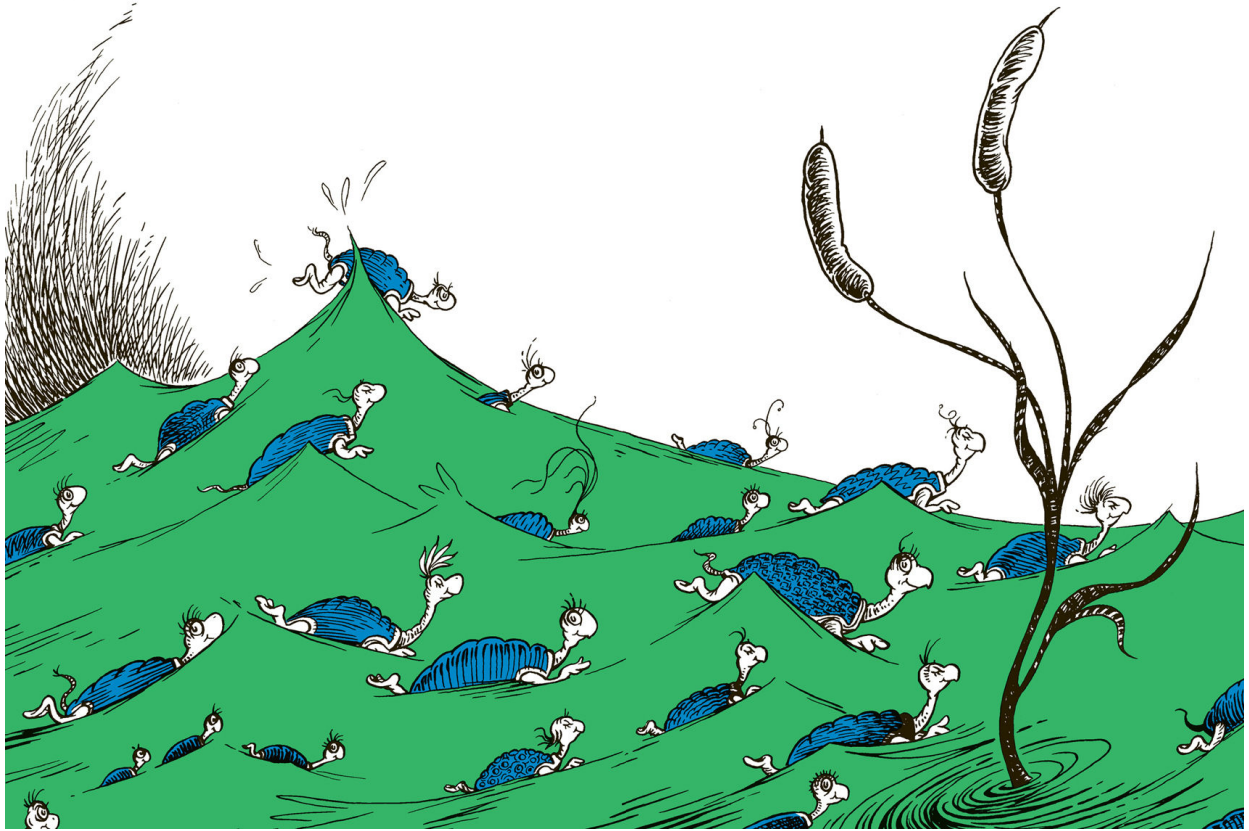
“Well, boys,” the worm answered, “that look
that I took
Was a look that looked farther than *you’ll*
ever look!
I looked ’cross the ocean, ’way out to Japan.
For I can see farther than anyone can.
There’s no one on earth who has eyesight
that’s finer.
I looked past Japan. Then I looked across
China.
I looked across Egypt; then took a quick
glance

“And I kept right on looking and looking
until
*I’d looked ’round the world and right back to
this hill!*
*And I saw on this hill, since my eyesight’s so
keen,*
*The two biggest fools that have ever been
seen!*
*And the fools that I saw were none other
than you,*
*Who seem to have nothing else better to do
Than sit here and argue who’s better than
who!”*



Then the little old worm gave his head a
small jerk
And he dived in his hole and went back to
his work.





Dr. Seuss

wrote and illustrated
forty-four world-famous books
for children and their lucky parents.

Here they are in the order of their publication:



AND TO THINK THAT I SAW IT ON MULBERRY STREET
THE 500 HATS OF BARTHOLOMEW CUBBINS
THE SEVEN LADY GODIVAS
THE KING'S STILTS
HORTON HATCHES THE EGG
McELIGOT'S POOL
THIDWICK THE BIG-HEARTED MOOSE
BARTHOLOMEW AND THE OOBLECK
IF I RAN THE ZOO
SCRAMBLED EGGS SUPER!
HORTON HEARS A WHO!
ON BEYOND ZEBRA!
IF I RAN THE CIRCUS
HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS!
YERTLE THE TURTLE AND OTHER STORIES
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!
THE SNEETCHES AND OTHER STORIES
DR. SEUSS'S SLEEP BOOK
I HAD TROUBLE IN GETTING TO SOLLA SOLLEW
THE CAT IN THE HAT SONGBOOK
I CAN LICK 30 TIGERS TODAY! AND OTHER STORIES
I CAN DRAW IT MYSELF
THE LORAX
DID I EVER TELL YOU HOW LUCKY YOU ARE?
HUNCHES IN BUNCHES
THE BUTTER BATTLE BOOK
YOU'RE ONLY OLD ONCE!
OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

Beginner Books

THE CAT IN THE HAT
THE CAT IN THE HAT COMES BACK
ONE FISH TWO FISH RED FISH BLUE FISH
GREEN EGGS AND HAM
HOP ON POP
DR. SEUSS'S ABC
FOX IN SOCKS
THE FOOT BOOK
MR. BROWN CAN MOO! CAN YOU?
MARVIN K. MOONEY WILL YOU PLEASE GO NOW!
THE SHAPE OF ME AND OTHER STUFF
THERE'S A WOCKET IN MY POCKET!
OH, THE THINKS YOU CAN THINK!
THE CAT'S QUIZZER
I CAN READ WITH MY EYES SHUT!
OH SAY CAN YOU SAY?



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