

Winner of the Caldecott Medal

FABLES



ARNOLD LOBEL

THE CROCODILE IN THE BEDROOM

A Crocodile became increasingly fond of the wallpaper in his bedroom. He stared at it for hours and hours.

"Just look at all those neat and tidy rows of flowers and leaves," said the Crocodile. "They are like soldiers. There is not a single one that is out of place."

"My dear," said the Crocodile's wife, "you are spending too much time in bed. Come out into my garden where the air is fresh and the sun is bright and warm."

"Well, if you insist, for just a few minutes," said the Crocodile. He put on a pair of dark glasses to protect his eyes from the glare and went outside.

Mrs. Crocodile was proud of her garden.

"Look at the hollyhocks and the marigolds," she said. "Smell the roses and the lilies of the valley."

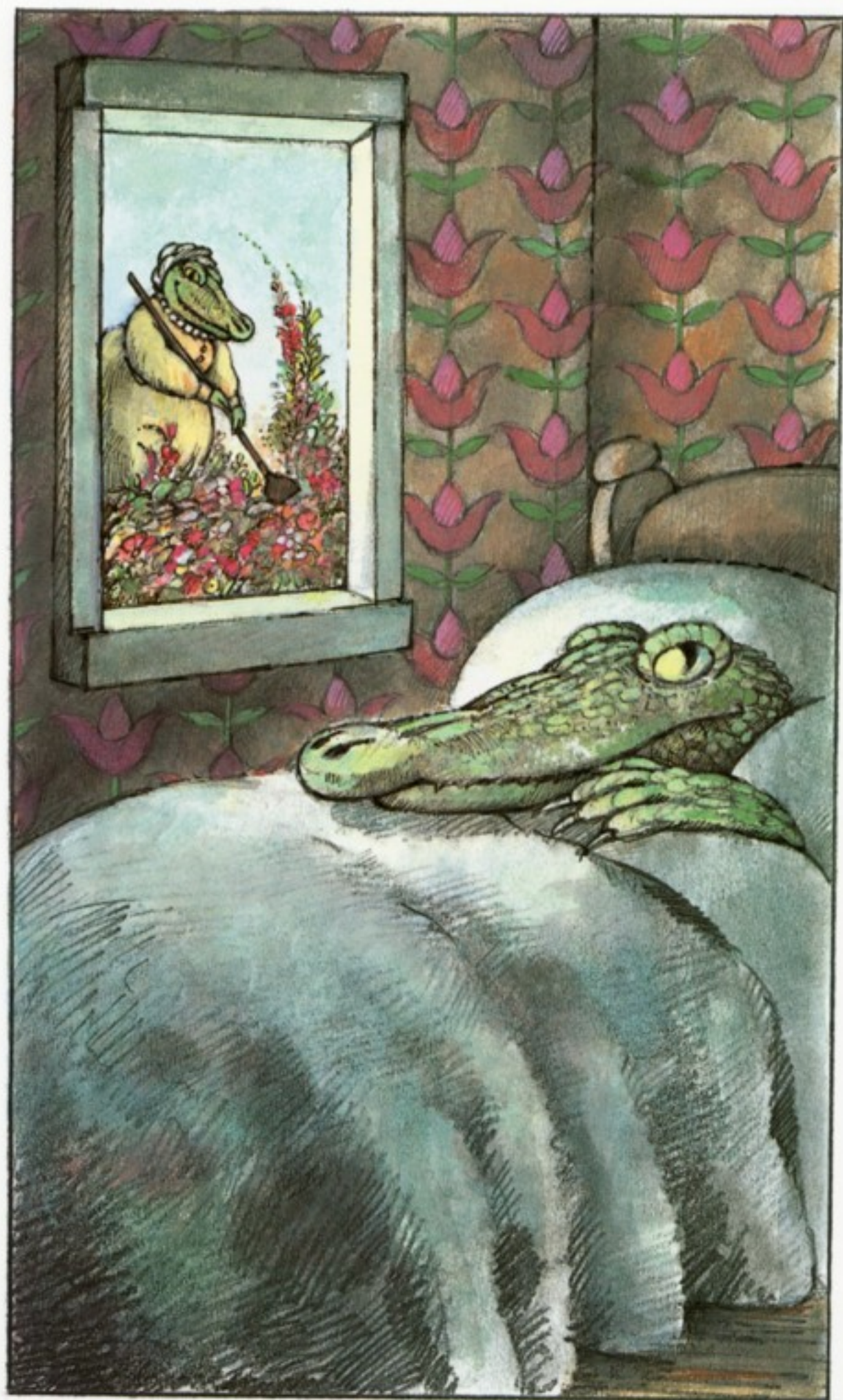
"Great heavens!" cried the Crocodile. "The flowers and leaves in this garden are growing in a terrible tangle! They are all scattered! They are messy and entwined!"

The Crocodile rushed back to his bedroom in a state of great distress. He was at once comforted by the sight of his wallpaper.

"Ah," said the Crocodile. "Here is a garden that is ever so much better. How happy and secure these flowers make me feel!"

After that the Crocodile seldom left his bed. He lay there, smiling at the walls. He turned a very pale and sickly shade of green.

Without a doubt, there is such a thing as too much order.



THE DUCKS AND THE FOX

Two Duck sisters were waddling down the road to the pond for their morning swim.

"This is a good road," said the first sister, "but I think, just for a change, we should find another route. There are many other roads that lead to the pond."

"No," said the second sister, "I do not agree. I really do not want to try a new way. This road makes me feel comfortable. I am accustomed to it."

One morning the Ducks met a Fox sitting on a fence along the road.

"Good morning, ladies," said the Fox. "On your way to the pond, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes," said the sisters, "we come along here every day."

"Interesting," said the Fox with a toothy smile.

When the sun came up the next morning, the first sister said, "We are sure to meet that Fox again if we go our usual way. I did not like his looks. Today is the day that we must find another road!"

"You are being just plain silly," said the second sister. "That Fox smiled at us. He seemed most gentlemanly."

The two Ducks waddled down the same road to the pond. There was the Fox, sitting on the fence. This time he carried a sack.

"Lovely ladies," said the Fox, "I was expecting you. I am glad that you have not disappointed me."

Opening his sack, he jumped upon them.

The sisters quacked and screamed. They flapped and flopped their wings. They flew home and bolted their door.

The next morning, the two Ducks did not go out. They rested at home to quiet their nerves. On the following day they carefully searched for a new and different road. They found one, and it took them safely to the pond.

At times, a change of routine can be most healthful.

FABLES

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