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Opening extract from

An Imaginary Menagerie

Written by

Roger McGough

Published by

Frances Lincoln Children's Books

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For Matthew Joseph

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An Imaginary Menagerie

Poems and Drawings by
ROGER McGOUGH

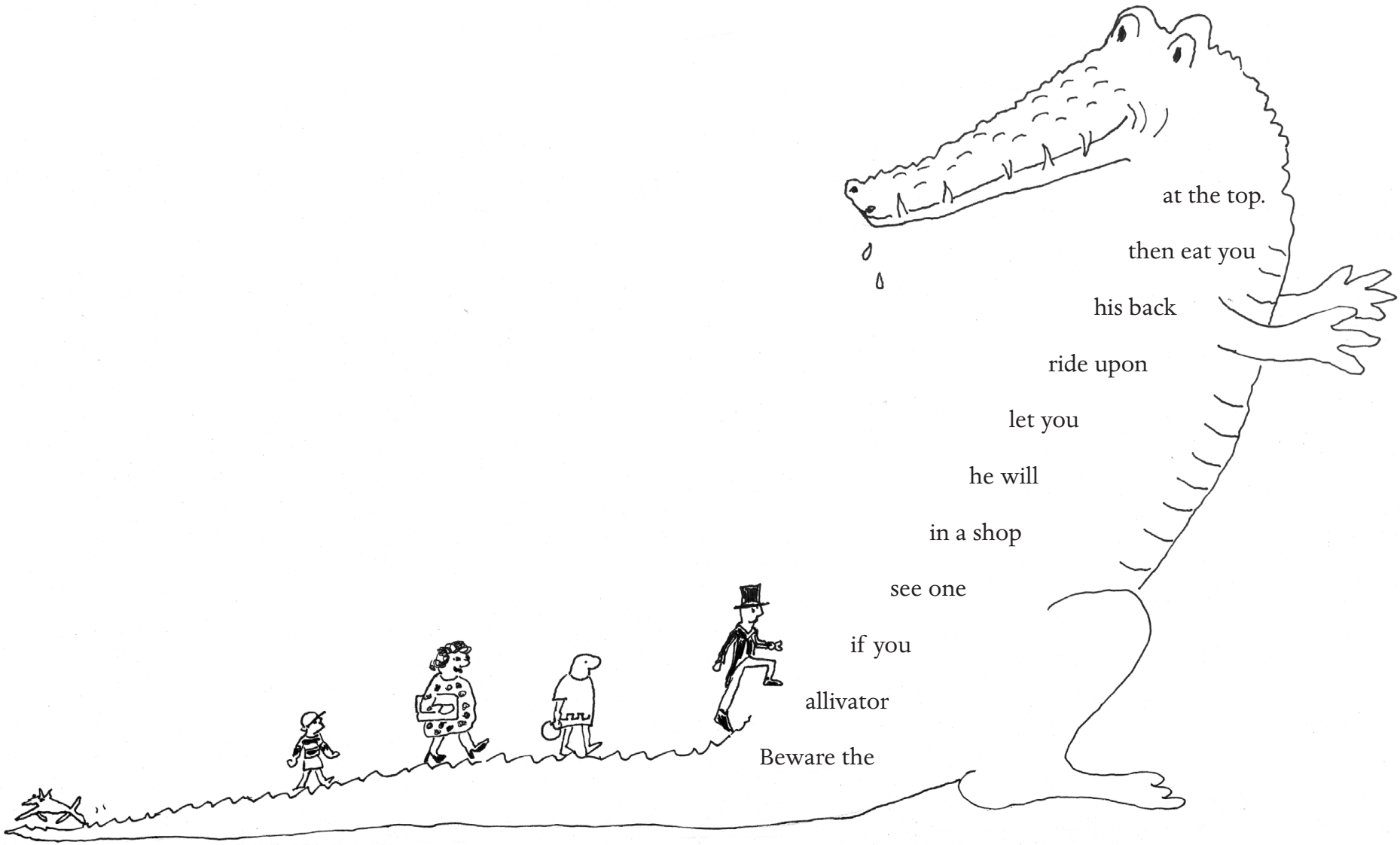
FRANCES LINCOLN
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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Allivator


Beware the
allivator
if you
see one
in a shop
he will
let you
ride upon
his back
then eat you
at the top.



Beetle

What's that t-i-c-k-i-n-g
you hear in the closet?

It's the stopwatch beetle
that does it

It's timing
the dry rotting

In the old
wainscoting

And admiring
the eerie deposit.







Blue Macaw

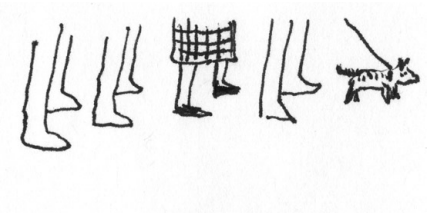
I used to keep a blue macaw
in my bedside bottom drawer

But he was never happy there
among my socks and underwear

He pined for sunshine, trees galore
as in Brazil and Ecuador

Knowing then what I must do
I journeyed south as far as Kew

In the Gardens set him free
(Wasn't that macawful of me?)







Catapillow

A catapillow
is a useful pet

To keep
upon your bed

Each night you simply
fluff him up

Then rest
your weary head.

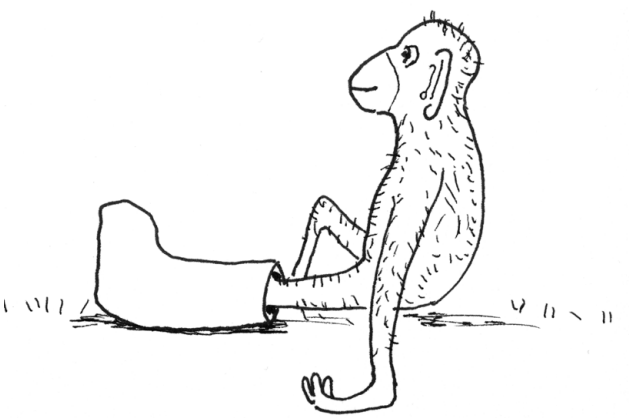
Chimp

Ever see
a chimp
with a limp?

That's because
they keep to trees

Twisted ankles
and scraped knees

In Monkeydom
are rarities.



Hamsters

Hamsters
built the dams
on the banks
of the Zuyder Zee

Beside which,
on Bank Hollandaise,
the whole dam nation
likes to be

Dads and their old dutches
(even kiddies in their prams)
give three hearty cheers
for the good old hamsterdams.



Handfish

Handfish
are grand fish

they swim
about in pairs

hold each other
when they fall in love

and when
they say their prayers.

⋆ ⋆ ⋆

They tickle
the sea's bare bottom

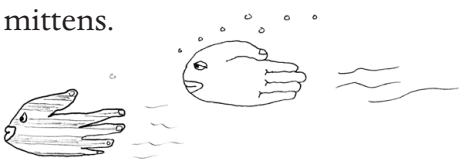
playful
as little kittens



and when
there's a nip in the ocean



wear brightly
coloured mittens.



Shark

Ever see
a shark
picnic
in the park?

If he offers
you a bun

Run!

