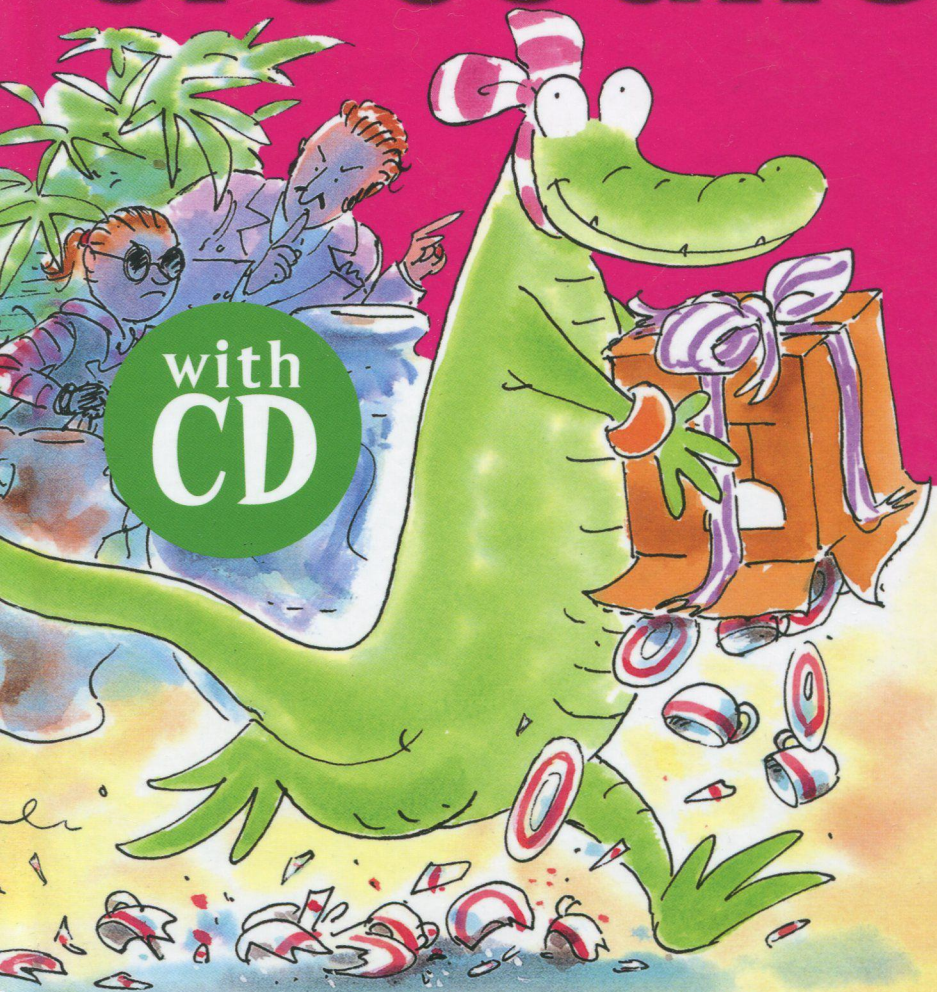


USBORNE YOUNG READING



# The clumsy Crocodile

with  
CD



Felicity Everett  
Illustrated by Alex de Wolf

# The **clumsy** **Crocodile**



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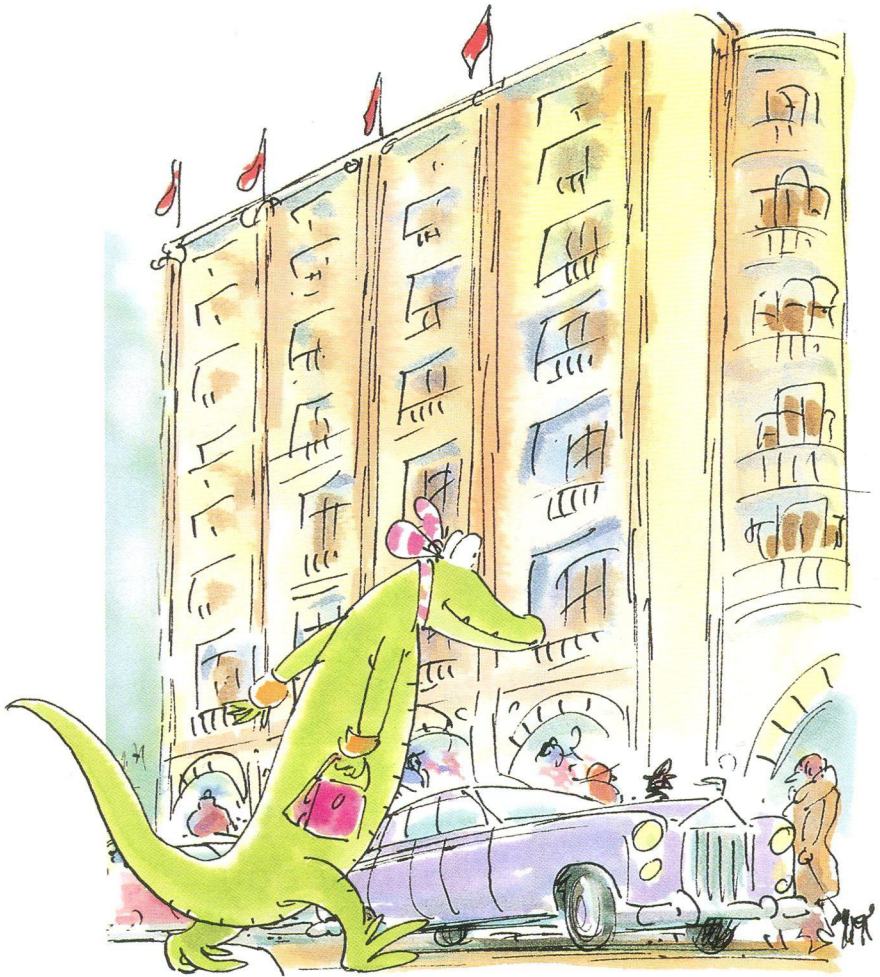
## Chapter 1

# Everglades

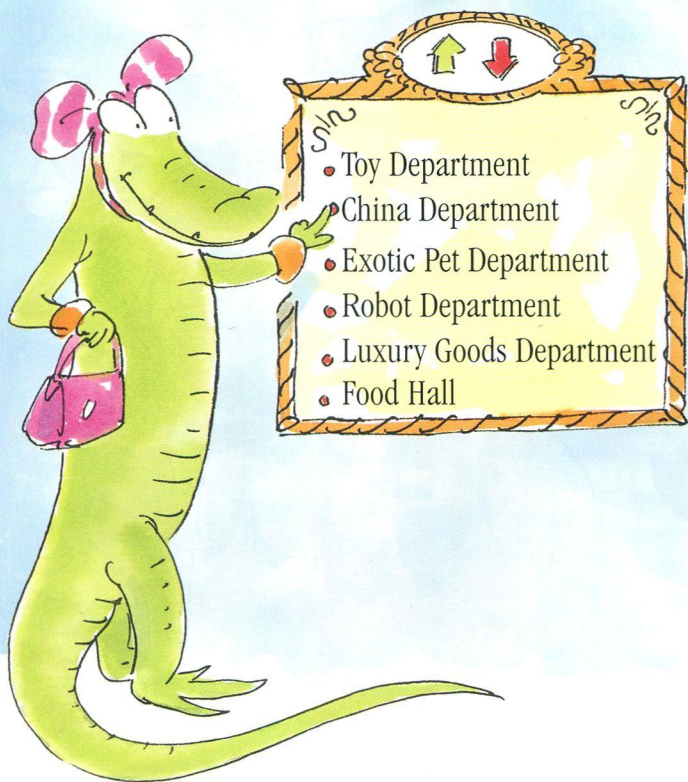


Cassy Green was on her way to work. It was the very first day of her new job.

She was going to work at  
Everglades, the biggest and  
best store in town.



It sold things you just couldn't buy anywhere else. So, when Cassy got a job there, she was as pleased as punch.



First, Cassy was sent to work in the China Department. After only ten minutes, she had sold sixty cups and saucers to a very rich lady. She was doing well.



Cassy packed the china carefully into a box. She was as gentle as a crocodile can be, but maybe just a little slow. The lady began to get impatient.





Cassy quickly tied a big bow on the box. She didn't want the lady to be cross, not her very first customer. But as Cassy picked up the box, disaster struck!



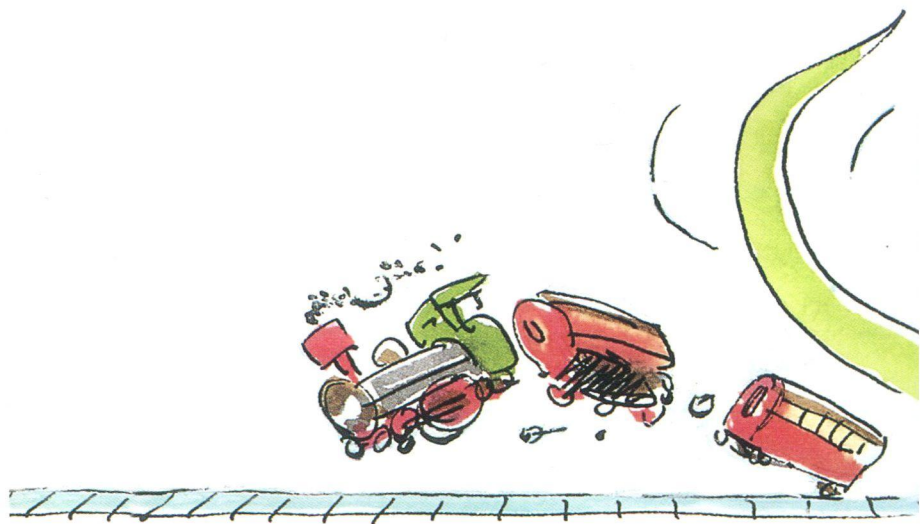
She'd packed it upside down.  
Sixty cups and saucers smashed  
onto the floor.

The customer stamped her foot  
angrily and left.

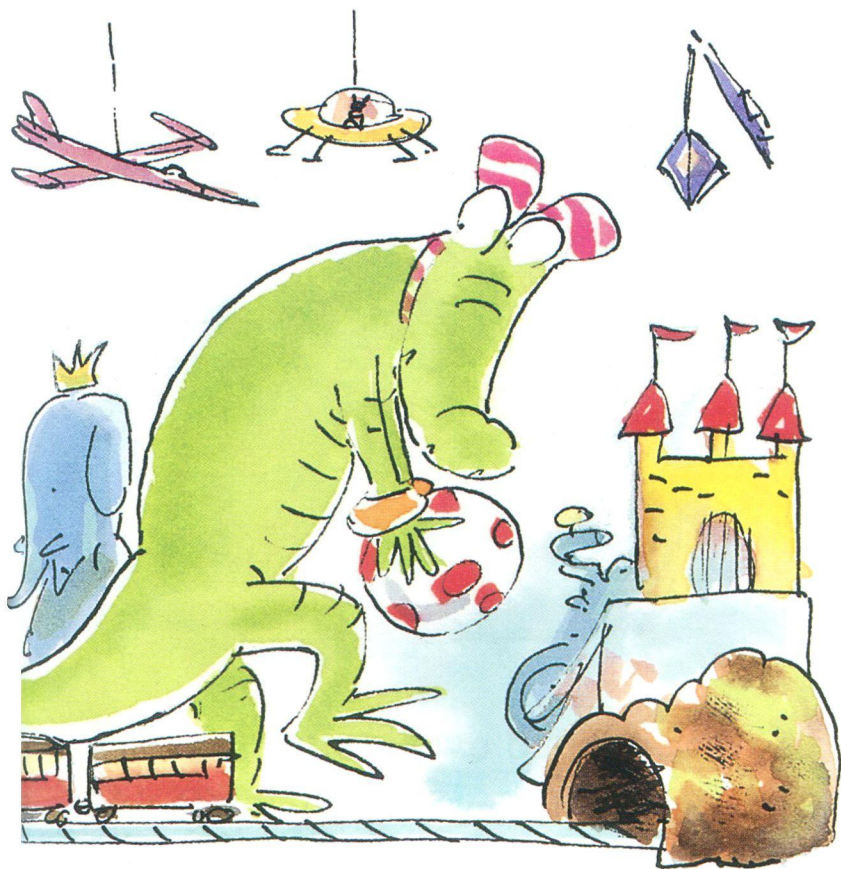


Next Cassy was sent to the Toy Department. She hoped there was less to break. She didn't want any more accidents.

“I must put this ball away,” she thought. “Someone could trip over it and have a bad fall.”



But as she bent down, her tail swung out behind her. The Toytown Express was knocked right off its rails.



So she was sent to the Food Hall.  
But there, things went from bad  
to worse.



Cassy tripped over a stool. A  
bowl of salad flew into the air  
and landed...

...on Ernest Everglade's head.  
Ernest Everglade owned the  
department store. He was Cassy's  
boss and he was not a happy man.



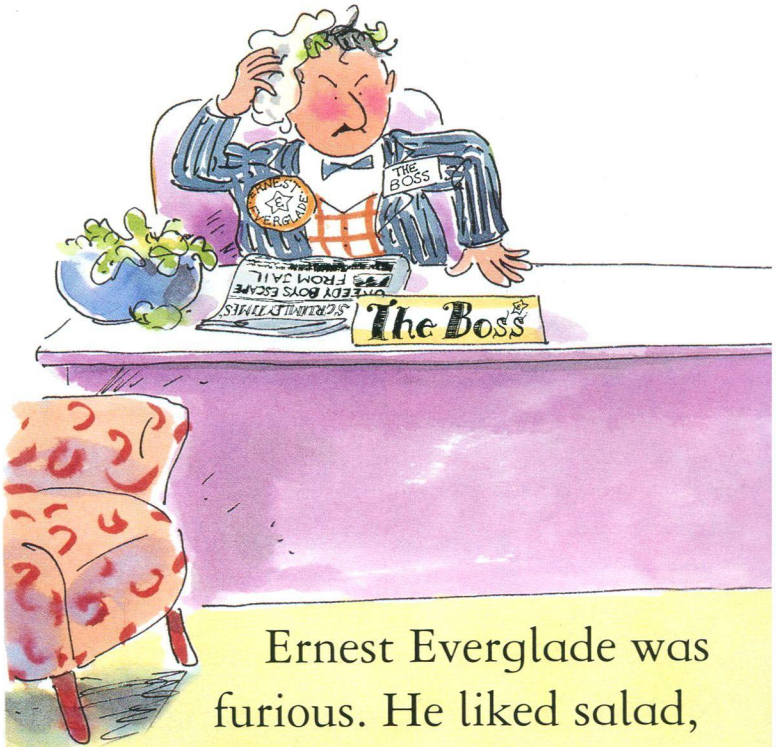
“Go to my office,” he yelled.  
“NOW!”

Trembling, Cassy obeyed.



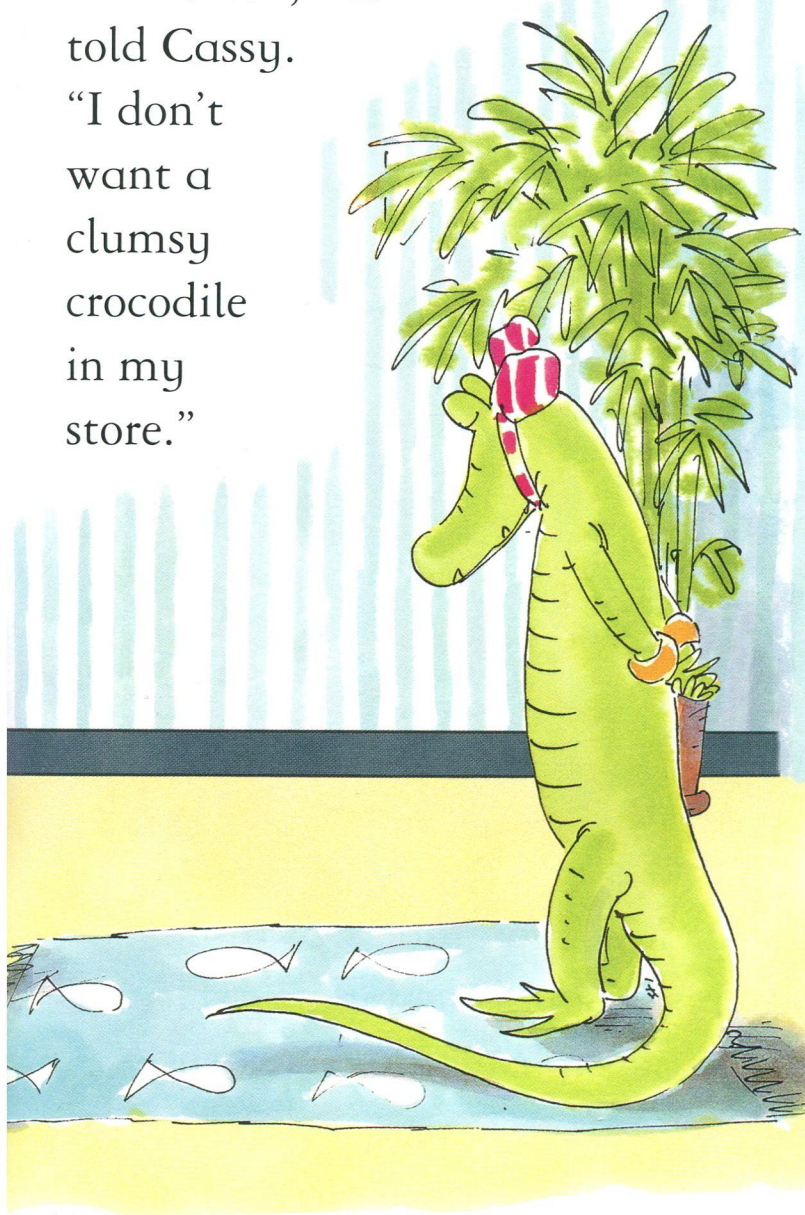
## Chapter 2

# A cross boss



Ernest Everglade was furious. He liked salad, but not on his head.

“Go and don’t ever  
come back,” he  
told Cassy.  
“I don’t  
want a  
clumsy  
crocodile  
in my  
store.”





Cassy begged and pleaded.  
She pleaded and begged.

“Just give me one more  
chance. I’ll be very careful,”  
she promised.

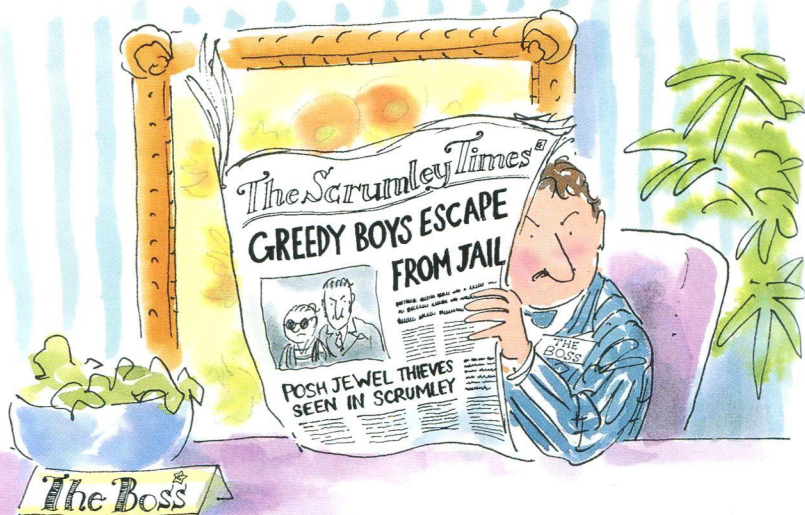


But Mr. Everglade was more  
interested in his newspaper. He  
wasn’t even listening to Cassy.

I'll pay  
for anything  
I break.



At last, he looked up. "I don't have time for you," he sighed. "Some jewel thieves are in town, the famous Greedy Boys."

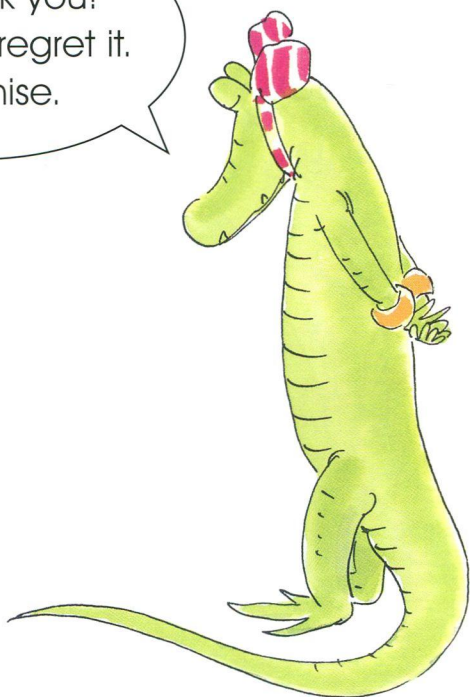


Cassy gasped. Everyone had heard of the Greedy Boys. But she still wanted her job back. She began to cry.

Now, Mr. Everglade couldn't stand crying. He would do anything to stop it.

"OK, OK," he said. "Go to the Luxury Goods Department first thing Monday morning."

Oh thank you!  
You won't regret it.  
I promise.

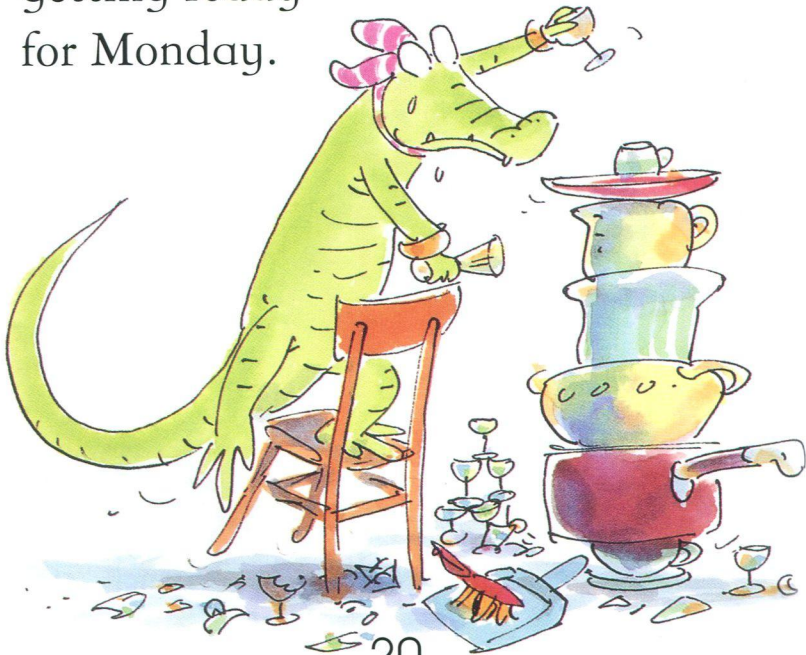




## Chapter 3

# Getting it right

The next day was Sunday.  
Cassy worked hard at home,  
getting ready  
for Monday.



She emptied her cupboards and stacked everything inside them. She stacked every pot, plate, cup, and saucer in the house.

The stacks got wobblier and wobblier...

and higher...

and higher...



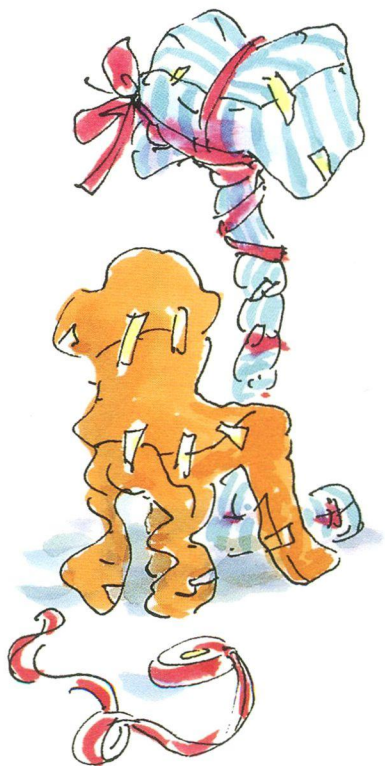
Next she found paper, scissors, ribbon and tape. She wrapped everything she could get her hands on.

Why are balls so round?



When she'd finished wrapping, Cassy was exhausted. All she wanted to do was sit down.

But when she looked for her comfiest chair, there was just one small problem...





So she set up her mirror and served imaginary customers.

“A flying pig? Try the pet department sir... I’m sorry, madam, we don’t sell crocodile-skin handbags.”



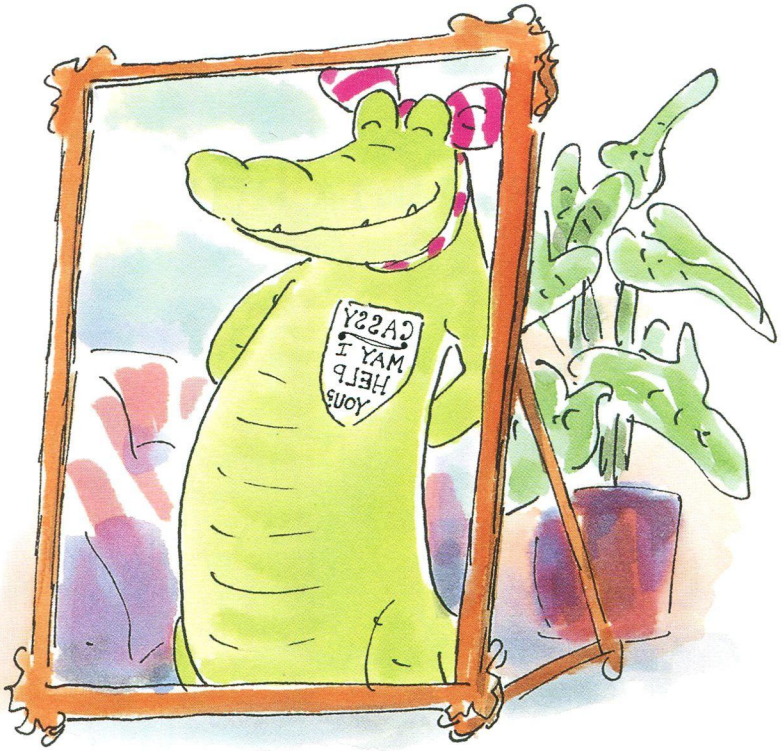
“You don’t like your spotted socks, sir? I’ll change them at once.”

And she smiled her toothy crocodile smile until her whole face ached.



Mr. Everglade  
will be proud  
of me.



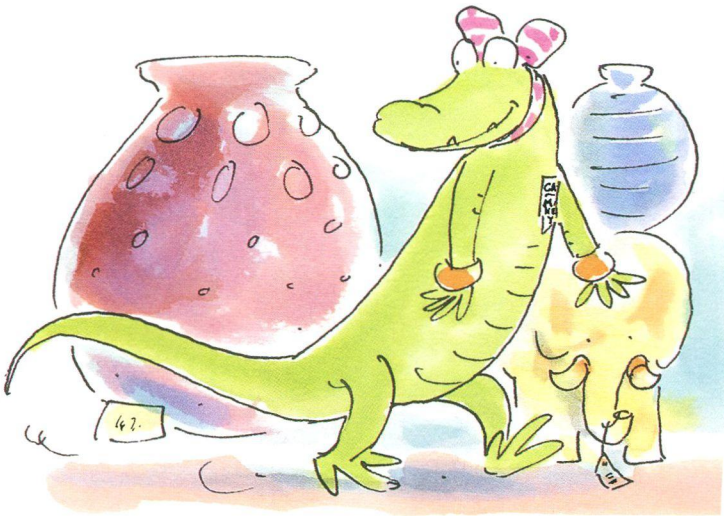


Finally, Cassy put on her Everglades badge and admired herself in the mirror. She looked perfect!



## Chapter 4

# Cassy in charge

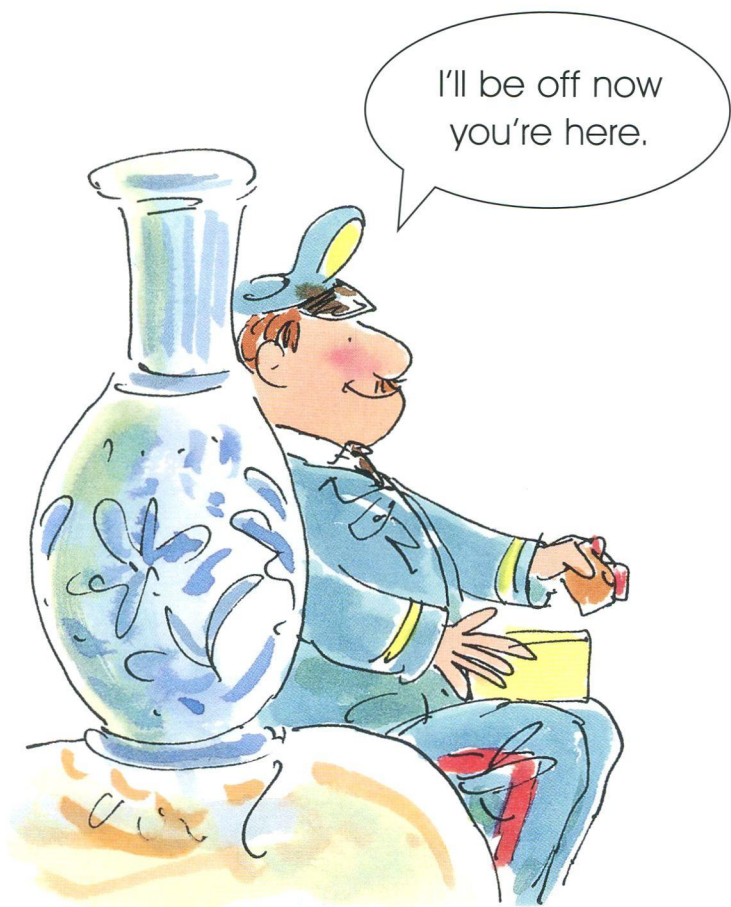


On Monday morning, Cassy was the first to arrive in the Luxury Goods Department.

Only the security guard was there. He had been guarding the store during the night.

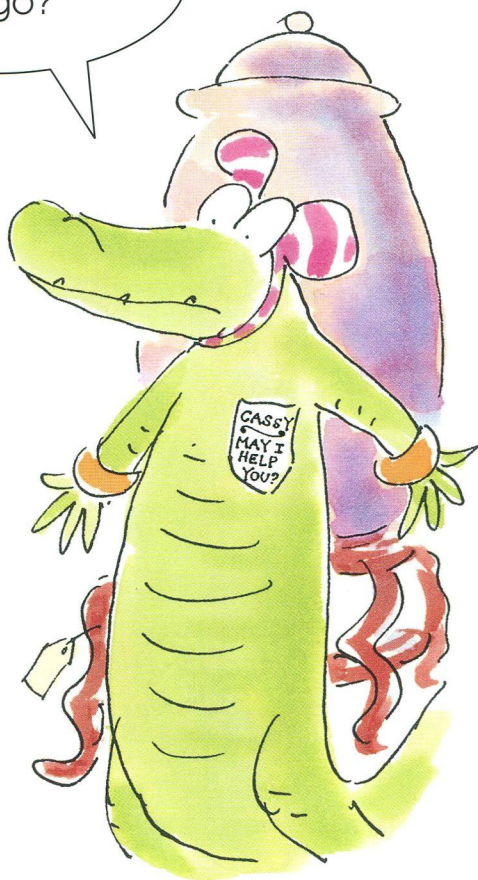


The guard was finishing his breakfast. He was very pleased to see Cassy. Now he could go home to bed.



Cassy was nervous. She didn't want to be left alone in the store.

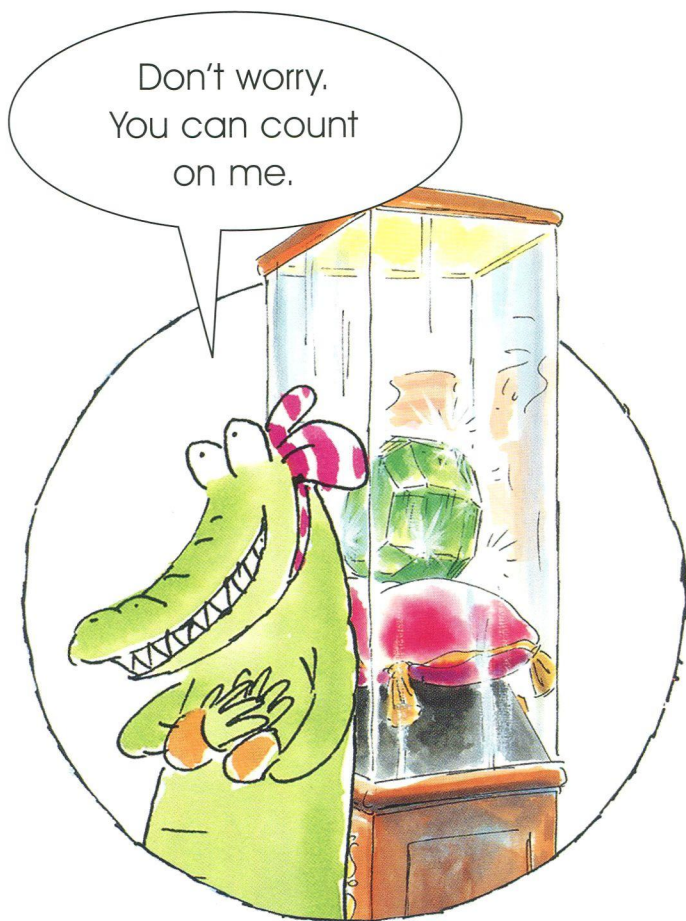
Do you have to go?





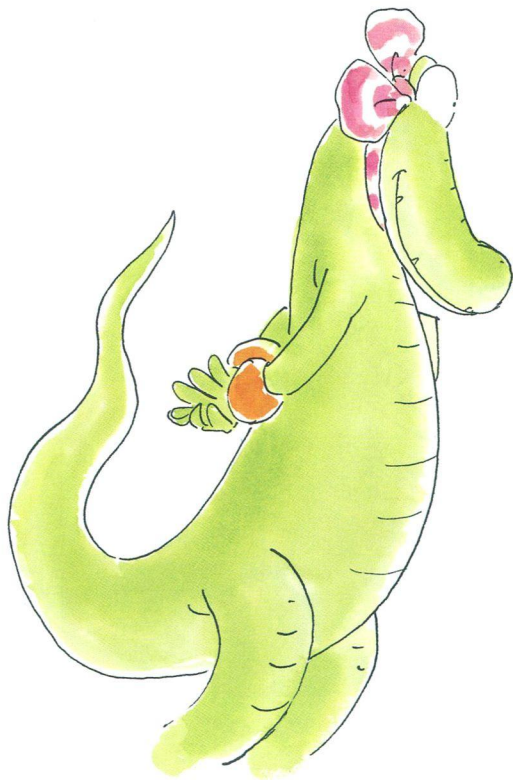
“You’ll be fine,” said the guard. “Just keep an eye on the Everglades Emerald.”





The guard left. Cassy wasn't nervous any more. She felt important. She was in charge.

The Everglades Emerald was the most expensive thing in the store. It was kept in a case of extra strong glass.



Cassy thought it was the most beautiful jewel she had ever seen.

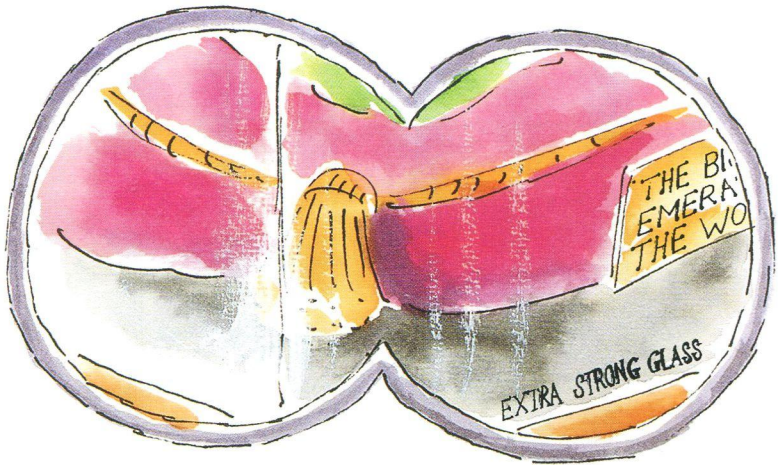


But Cassy wasn't the only one admiring the emerald. Hiding behind a pot were Nigel and Rupert – the Greedy Boys!

“What a beauty,” sighed Nigel.



“But look at that case,” said Rupert. “How will we ever break the glass?”

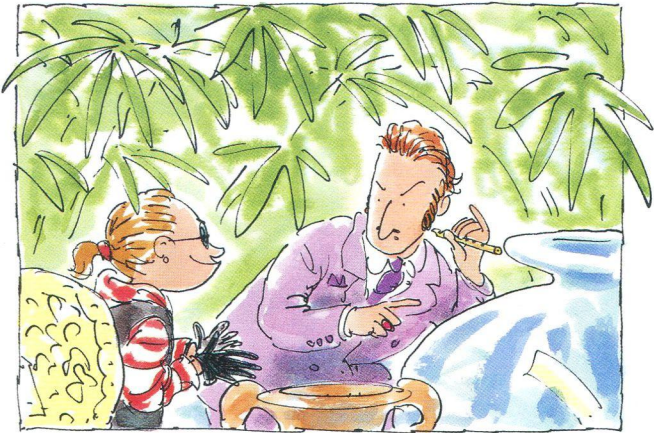


“Never fear,” Nigel whispered. And as Cassy wandered away from the emerald, Nigel took something from his pocket.



## Chapter 5

# Disaster!



Nigel held up a small whistle.

“My secret weapon,” he said.  
“It can’t be heard by humans,  
but it can...”

He put the whistle to his lips and blew. The case exploded.

“...shatter glass!” he finished.

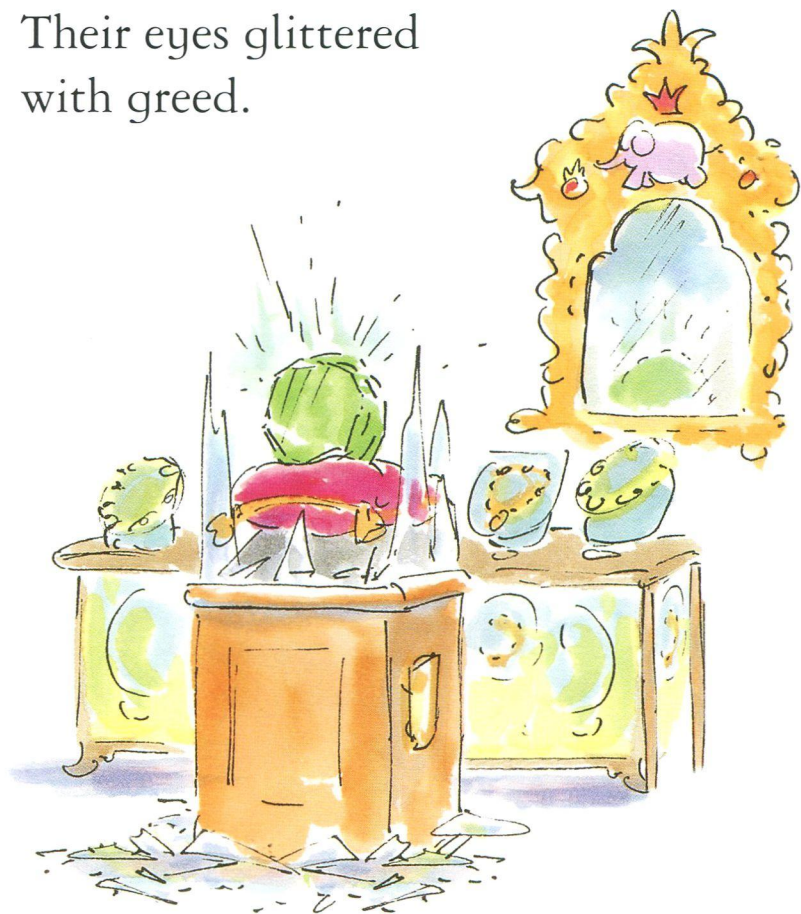
He grinned. The Everglades Emerald was theirs for the taking.



“At last,” gasped Rupert. “I can’t wait to get my hands on it!”



Nigel and Rupert sneaked out from their hiding place. Their eyes glittered with greed.



“Now to collect our prize,”  
said Nigel.

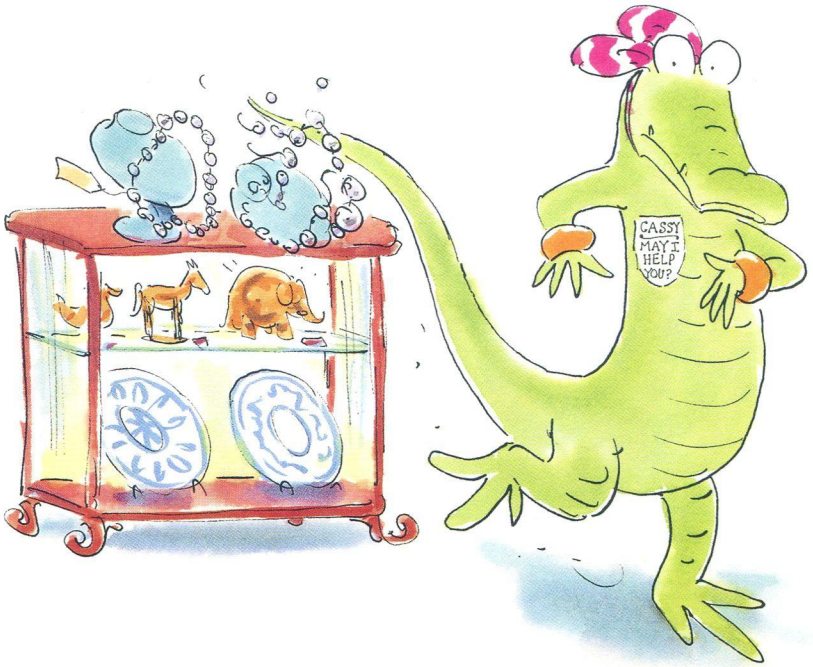
We'll be the  
richest men in  
the world!



The thieves crept closer to the emerald. But Nigel had made a big mistake.

He was right about humans not being able to hear his whistle. What he didn't know was that animals could hear it...





“Hey!” thought Cassy. “The Toytown Express!” She spun around, ready to race to the Toy Department... forgetting her tail, which swung around too.

This time it hooked a priceless  
pearl necklace.

Cassy tugged her tail.



The necklace snapped, pearls  
went everywhere and Cassy  
went flying.

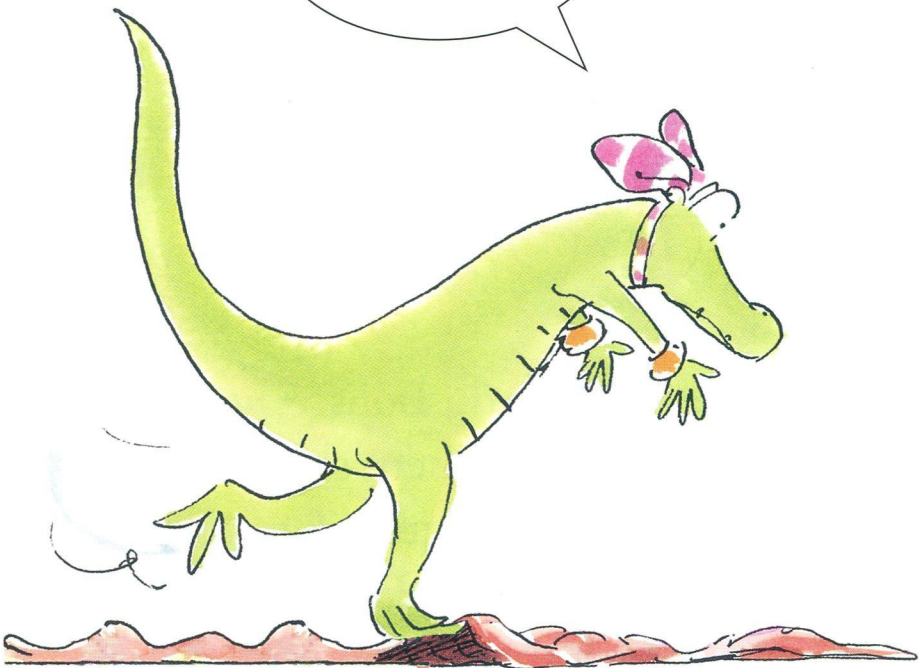


So did the Greedy Boys. The rolling pearls sent them skidding to the floor. They tumbled to the ground, bringing the Everglades Emerald with them.

Cassy turned to see the Greedy Boys lying in a heap.

“Oh no! Customers!” she cried and rushed over to help them up.

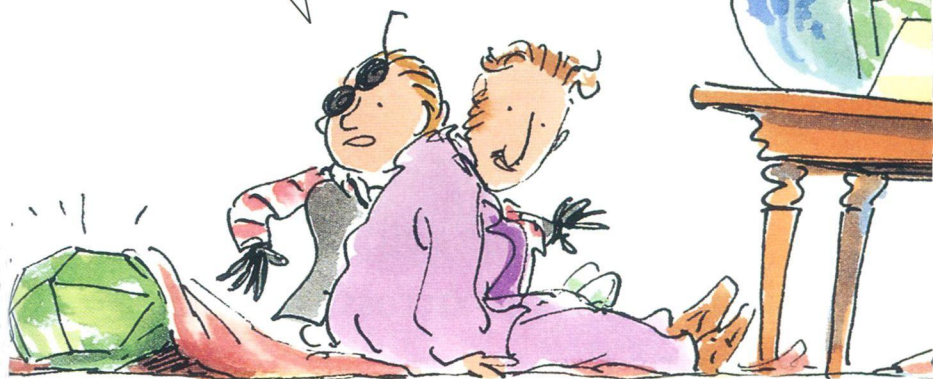
Please let  
me help. I am  
so sorry.



Rupert was groaning in agony. Nigel still had his eye on the emerald. He wouldn't let a clumsy crocodile ruin his plans. He'd waited years to steal this giant gem.

I'm black and blue all over.

It can still be mine. It has to be!







In her hurry to help, Cassy tripped. She slid across the floor, her arms thrust out...

and collided nose first with  
a table, a table which held  
Everglades' Ancient Treasures.

The table wobbled... the  
treasures wobbled...

Then they crashed to the floor.



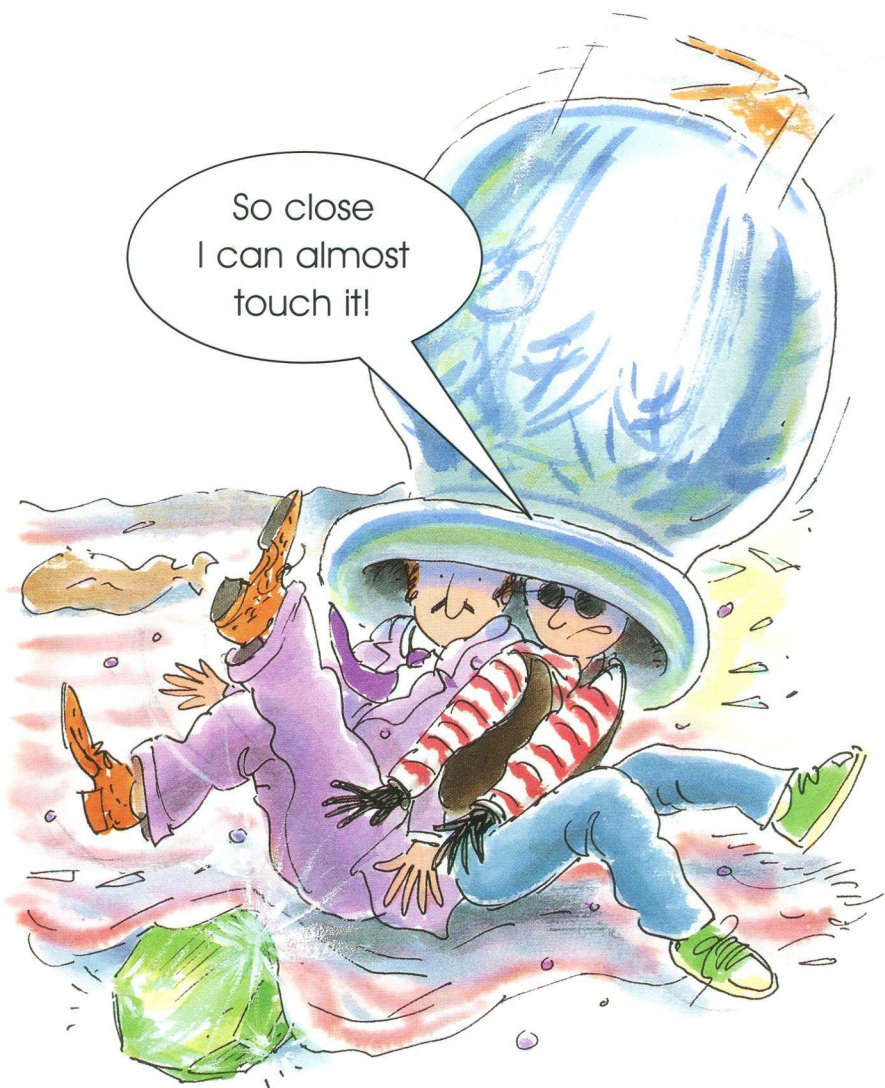
Cassy got up. She was horrified.  
What had she done?

One of the ancient pots had  
toppled off the table...



...straight onto her  
customers' heads.

So close  
I can almost  
touch it!

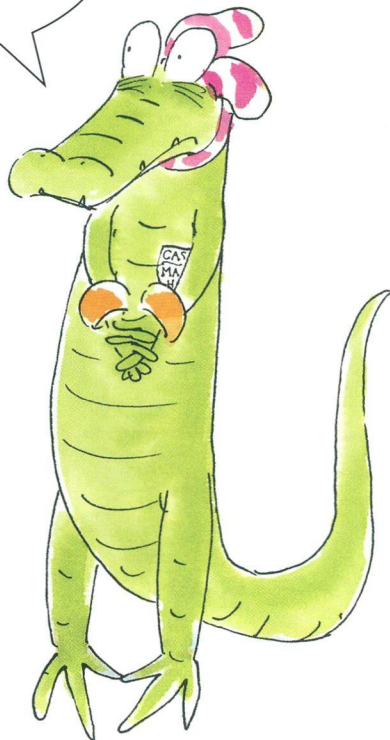


What is going on in here?



At that moment, the boss walked in. Cassy started to explain. But Mr. Everglade wasn't listening.

M-m-my  
t-t-tail... It g-got  
c-c... I slid...



He had just seen the Everglades Emerald lying on the floor.

What's that  
doing there?



Then he saw the pot. And the legs. And the bag lying next to them. And he quickly put two and two together.



He was no longer a cross boss. He was a very pleased and excited boss.



He picked up the emerald and beamed at Cassy.

“Well done! You’ve saved the Everglades Emerald.”



Cassy was puzzled. Mr. Everglade pointed to the pot.

“And you’ve caught the Greedy Boys,” he added.

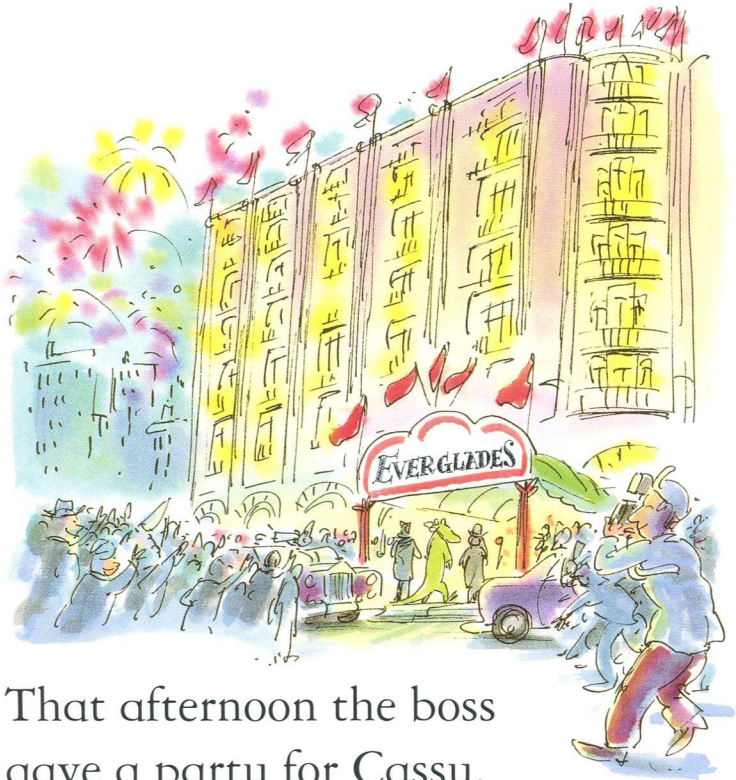
“Oh? So I have!” said Cassy.





## Chapter 6

# Cassy the hero



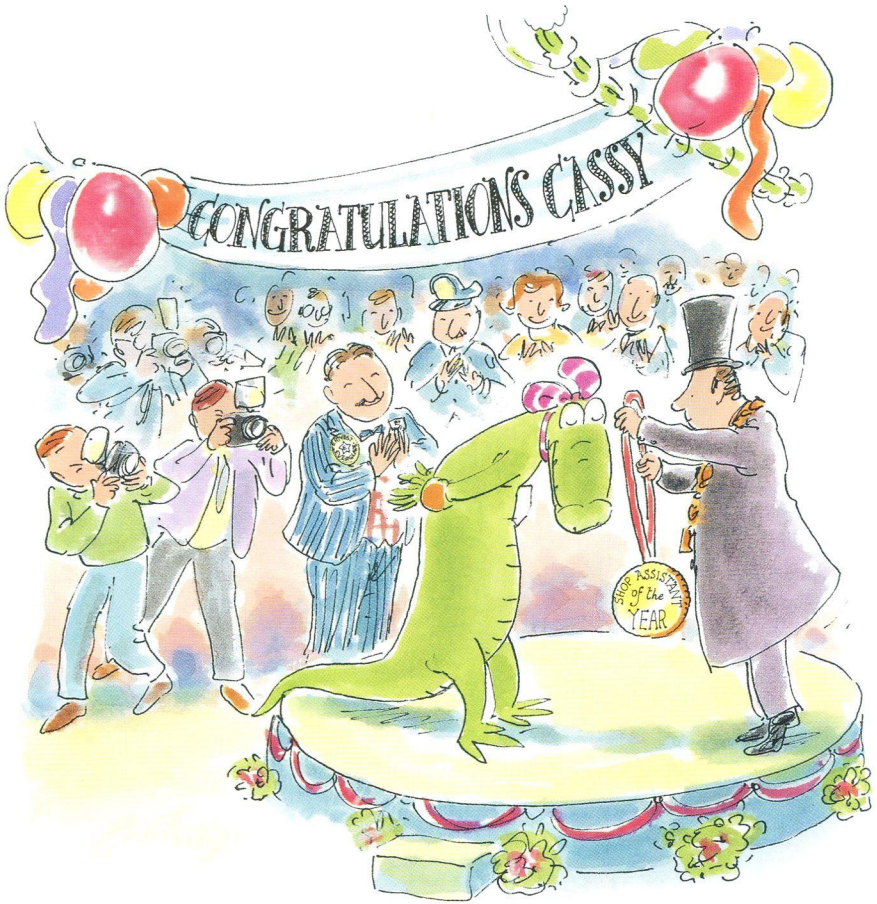
That afternoon the boss  
gave a party for Cassy.

The whole town was invited,  
except for the Greedy Boys.  
Nigel and Rupert were both  
safely behind bars.



It was the best party ever.  
There was singing and dancing,  
cake and ice cream – and fantastic  
fizzing fireworks.

Then Cassy was given a medal.  
It was the proudest moment of  
her life. She was a hero.



After the party, Mr. Everglade smiled at Cassy.

“I’ve got a new job for you,” he said. He didn’t want Cassy to be an assistant anymore.



Instead, she became Everglades' Chief Taster and Tester – with her tail tucked firmly beneath her.

