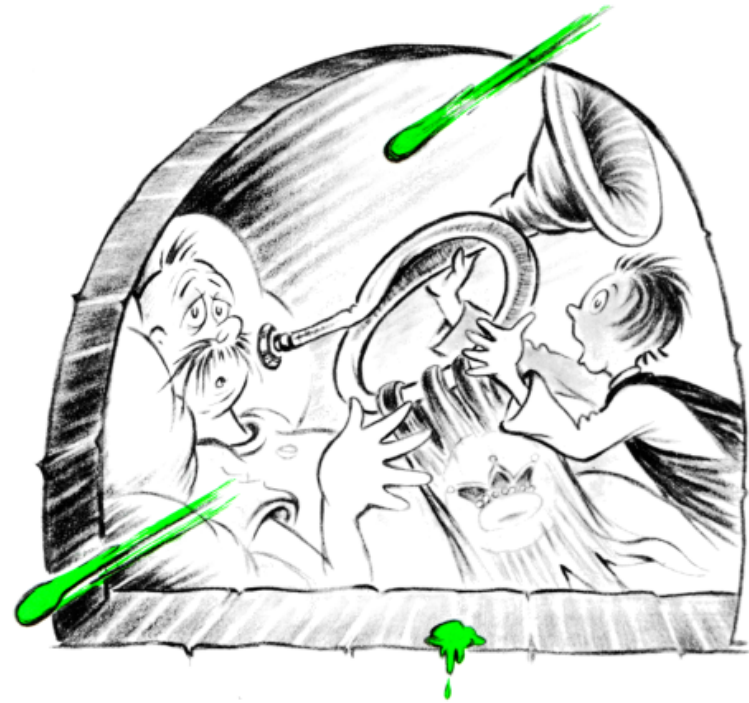


To the trumpeter's tower raced Bartholomew Cubbins, and on up the steps four stairs at a time.

As he ran he could hear the "Plop! Plop!" of the oobleck on the windowpanes. It was pelting against the palace walls as big as greenish cup-cakes now!



He yanked the covers off the snoring trumpeter. He shoved his cold trumpet right into his sleepy hands.

"Get up! Warn the people! Blow the alarm!"

"Alarm . . .?" yawned the trumpeter. Then his eyes saw the oobleck. "Those green things, Bartholomew! Where'd they come from?"

"The King . . ." panted Bartholomew. "His royal magicians made them!"

The royal trumpeter leapt from his bed. "That King of ours should be ashamed!" He jabbed his trumpet out of the window. "I'll blow," he shouted, "the loudest alarm that's ever been heard in the Kingdom of Didd!"



But all the royal trumpeter blew was a "GLUGG!"
"My horn!" he gulped. "One of those green things flew inside it!"

He tried to blow it out. He couldn't blow it out.
He tried to shake it out. He couldn't shake it out.
"I'll get it *somehow!*" he yelled. "I'll *pull* it out!"
"No!" shouted Bartholomew. "Don't you touch it!"

The trumpeter's hand was already in it. His fingers grabbed hold of the lump of ooobleck. He could feel it squiggle around in his fist like a slippery potato dumpling made of rubber.

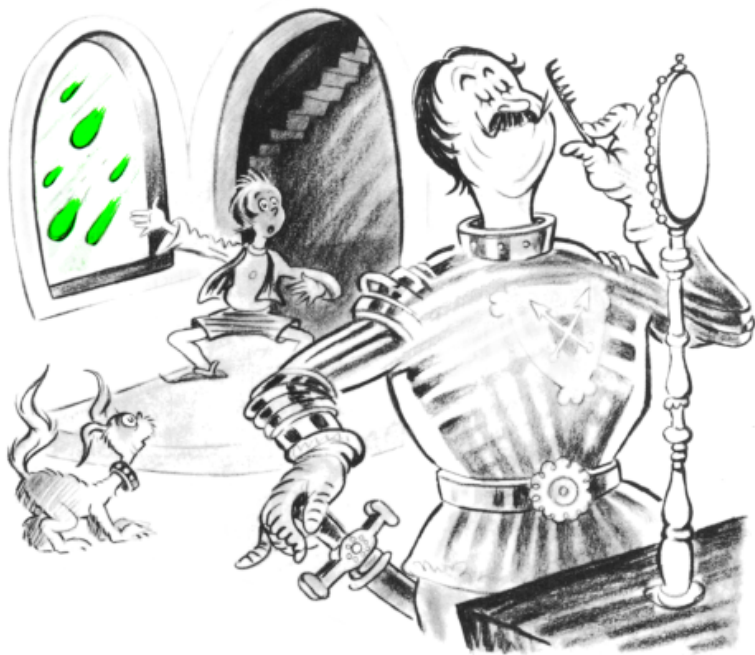
He pulled with all his might. The ooobleck began to stretch. Then, "*Gloing!*" the ooobleck snapped back inside the trumpet. It yanked his arm back with it right up to the elbow.

"I can't wiggle a finger!" the trumpeter wailed. "Oh, Bartholomew, what'll I do?"

"I don't know. And I hate to leave you stuck to your horn. But if *you* can't warn the people of the kingdom, I've got to find someone who can!"

Out of the room and down the stairs raced Bartholomew Cubbins . . .





... down to the chamber of the Captain of the Guards. The Captain was humming in front of his mirror, combing the ends of his handsome moustache.

"Captain! DO something!" shouted Bartholomew.

"Do something? Why?" smiled the Captain. "What's wrong?"

"Captain! Haven't you seen the dreadful oobleck? It's coming down now as big as greenish baseballs!"

"Oh, *that* stuff," laughed the Captain. "What's so dreadful about that, lad? You know, *I* think it's rather pretty."

"Captain!" pleaded Bartholomew. "It's dangerous!"

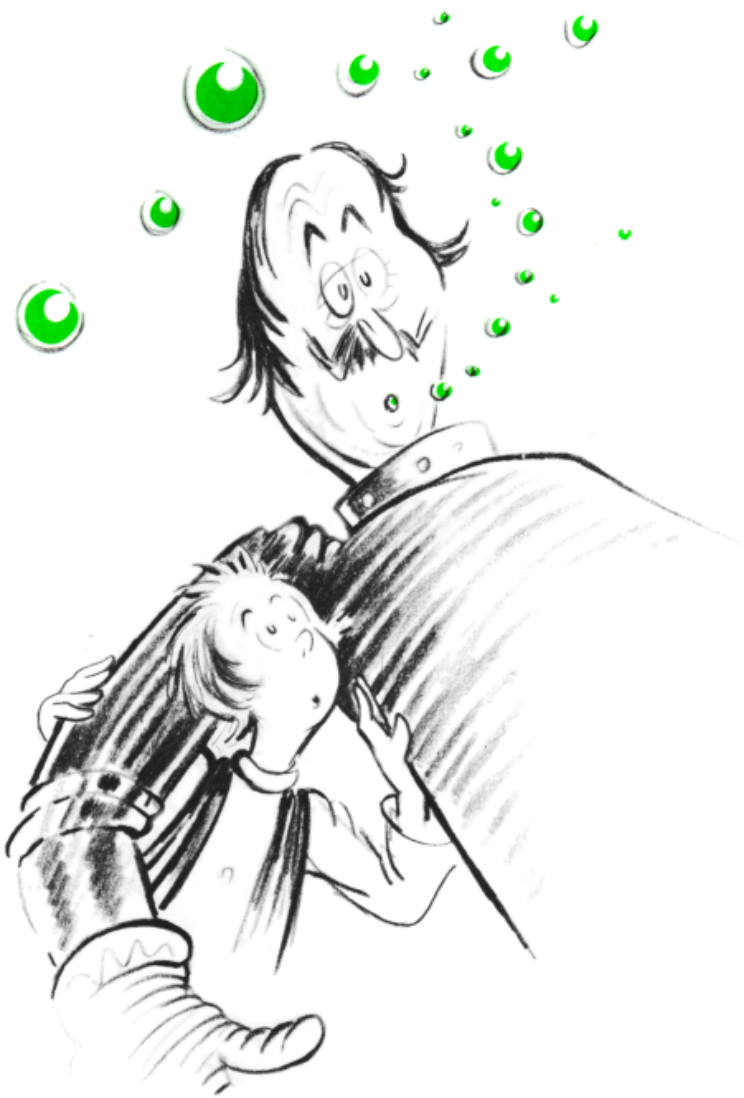
"Nonsense!" snorted the Captain. "Lad, are you trying to frighten *me*? Captains, my boy, are afraid of nothing. That stuff's harmless. I'll show you. I'll eat some."



"Eat some . . . ?" gasped Bartholomew. "Oh, *no!*"

But before Bartholomew could stop him, the Captain was leaning out his window, scooping up some oobleck on the end of his sword.

"Don't, Captain! DON'T!"



The Captain did! By the time Bartholomew dragged him back inside the room, his mouth was glued tight shut with oobleck. He tried to speak, but no words came out. All the noble Captain of the Guards could do was blow a lot of little sticky greenish bubbles.

"Forgive me for leaving you, Captain," said Bartholomew. "But a captain full of bubbles is no help at all." Bartholomew stretched the poor man out. He left him there on his chamber floor.

Bartholomew went tearing through the zigzag palace hallways. "I'll get the King's horse! I'll ride through the country! I'll warn the people of the kingdom myself!"

He pushed open the door that led out to the Royal Stables.





Bartholomew stopped. He could go no farther. The awful oobleck was plumping down as big as greenish footballs now!

Too late to warn the people of the kingdom! There were farmers in the fields, getting stuck to hoes and plows. Goats were getting stuck to ducks. Geese were getting stuck to cows.

Outside the palace it was piling up, great greenish tons of oobleck, deeper and deeper on every roof in the land.

There was nothing Bartholomew Cubbins could do out there. Shaking his head sadly, he stepped back inside.



But inside, a moment later, it was just as bad as out!

With an angry roar, the oobleck was suddenly hitting the palace harder. It was battering and spattering against the walls as big as greenish buckets full of gooey asparagus soup!

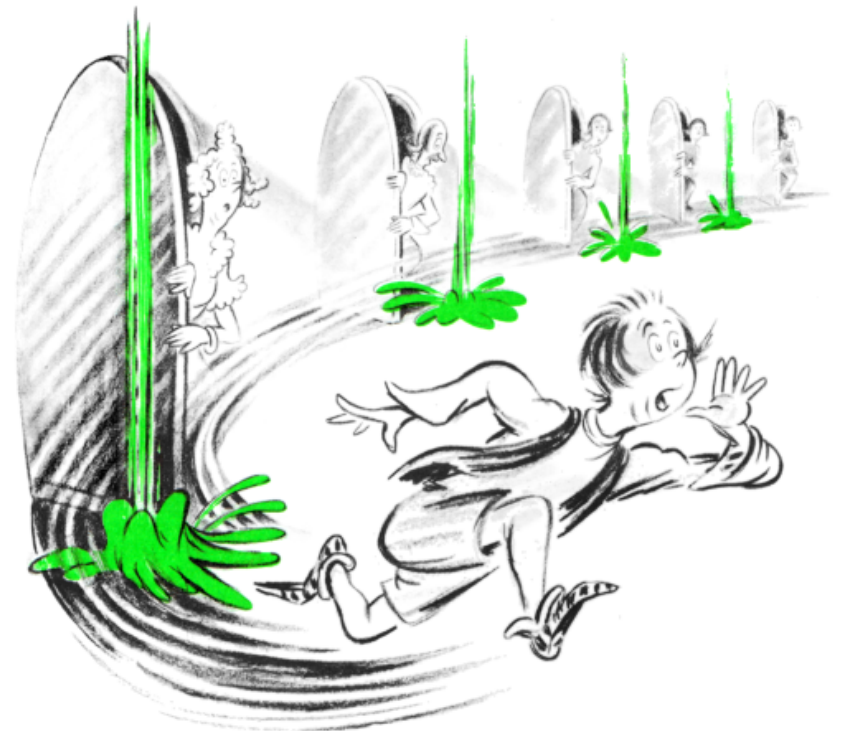
Like a sinking sailboat, the whole palace was springing leaks. The oobleck was ripping the windows right off their hinges.

It was dripping through the ceilings. It was rolling down the chimneys. It was coming in everywhere . . . even through the keyholes!

From every bedroom in the palace came the howls of lords and ladies. Frightened, in their nightgowns, they came jumping to their doors.

"Go back to your beds! Get under your blankets!" Bartholomew Cubbins went crying through the halls.

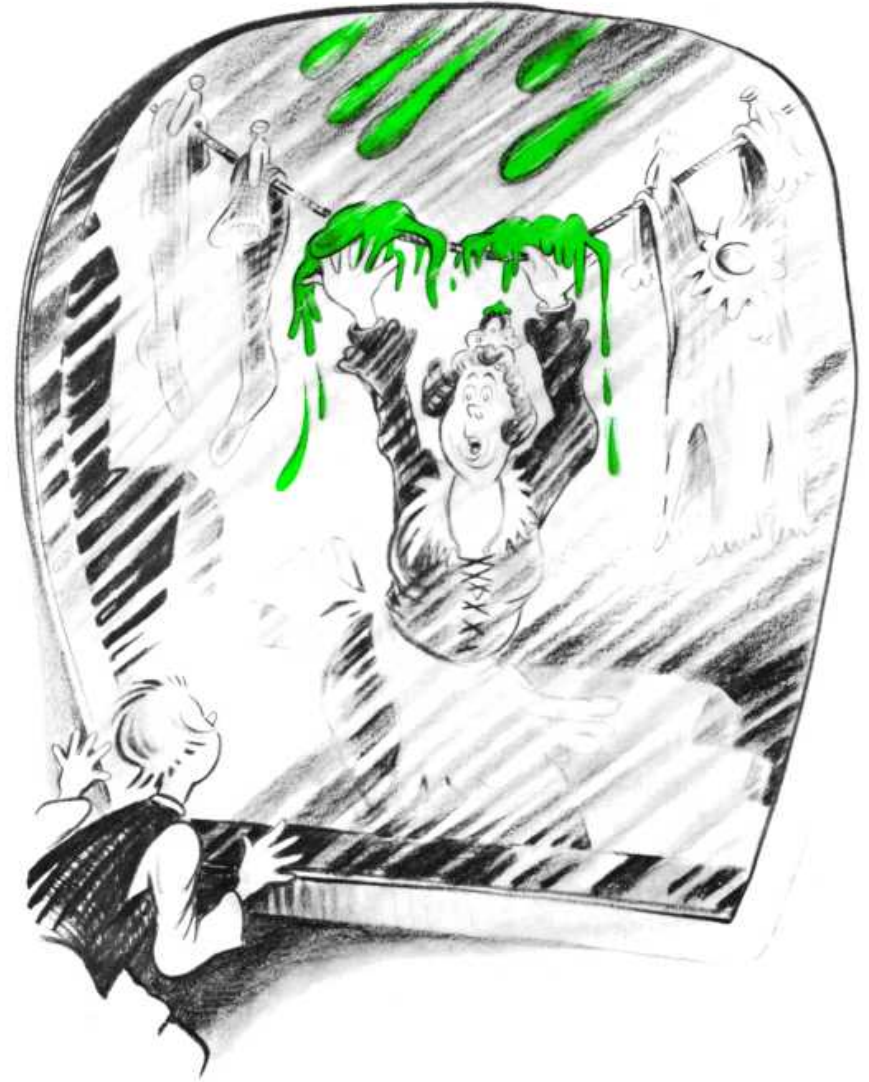
But nobody paid the slightest attention. Everyone in the palace started rushing madly about.

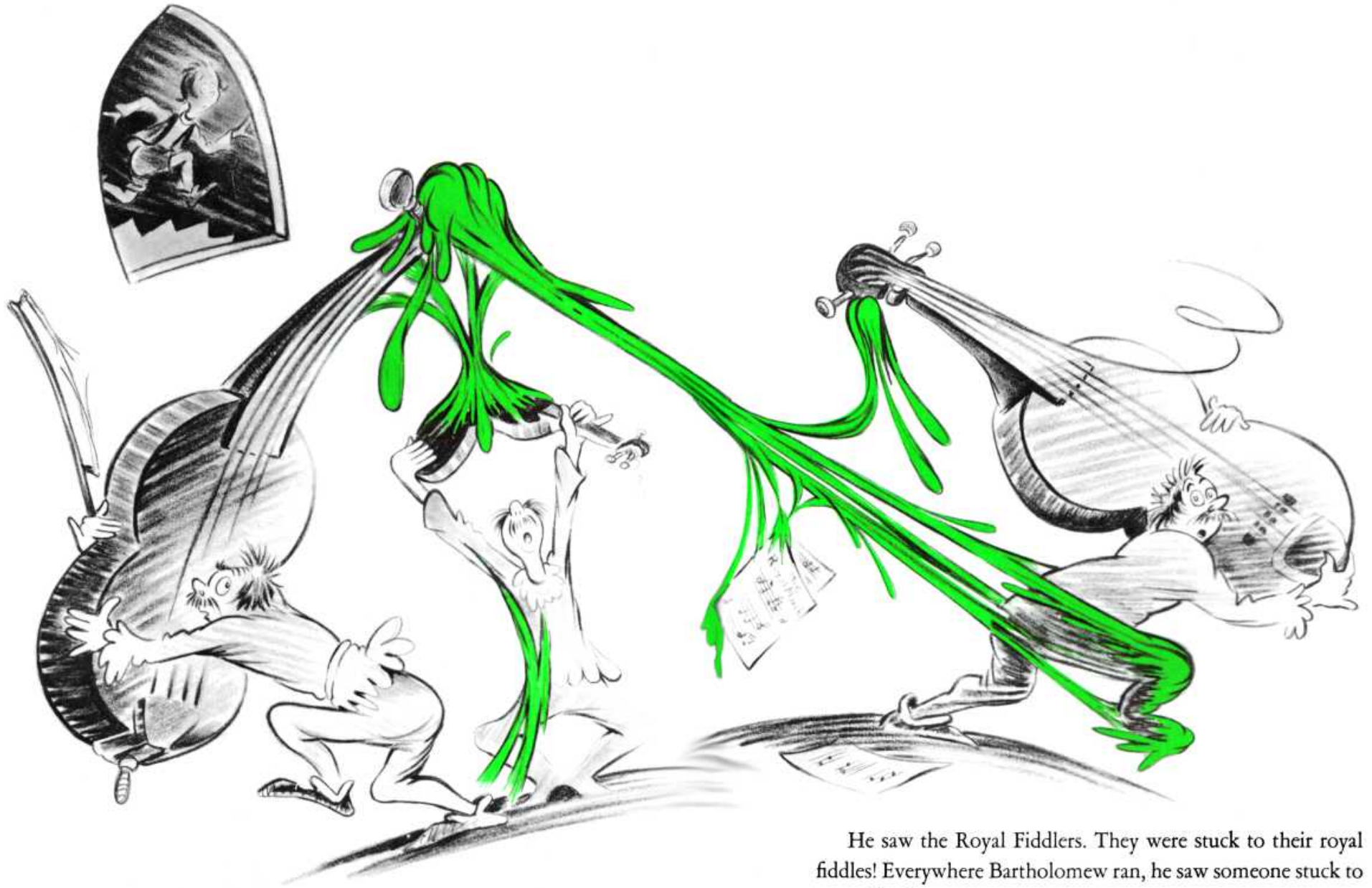




The Royal Cook rushed down to the royal kitchen. Bartholomew Cubbins saw him trapped there, stuck to three stew pots, a tea cup and a cat!

The Royal Laundress rushed outside to save her laundry. Bartholomew saw her, stuck tight to the clothesline, between two woolen stockings and the King's best Sunday blouse!





He saw the Royal Fiddlers. They were stuck to their royal fiddles! Everywhere Bartholomew ran, he saw someone stuck to something!



They were stuck up by the dozens! Every last friend he had in the world was flopping and floundering, all hopelessly caught in the goo.

Then, suddenly midst the hubbub, Bartholomew gasped, "*The King!*" Where *was* the King? He'd forgotten all about him!

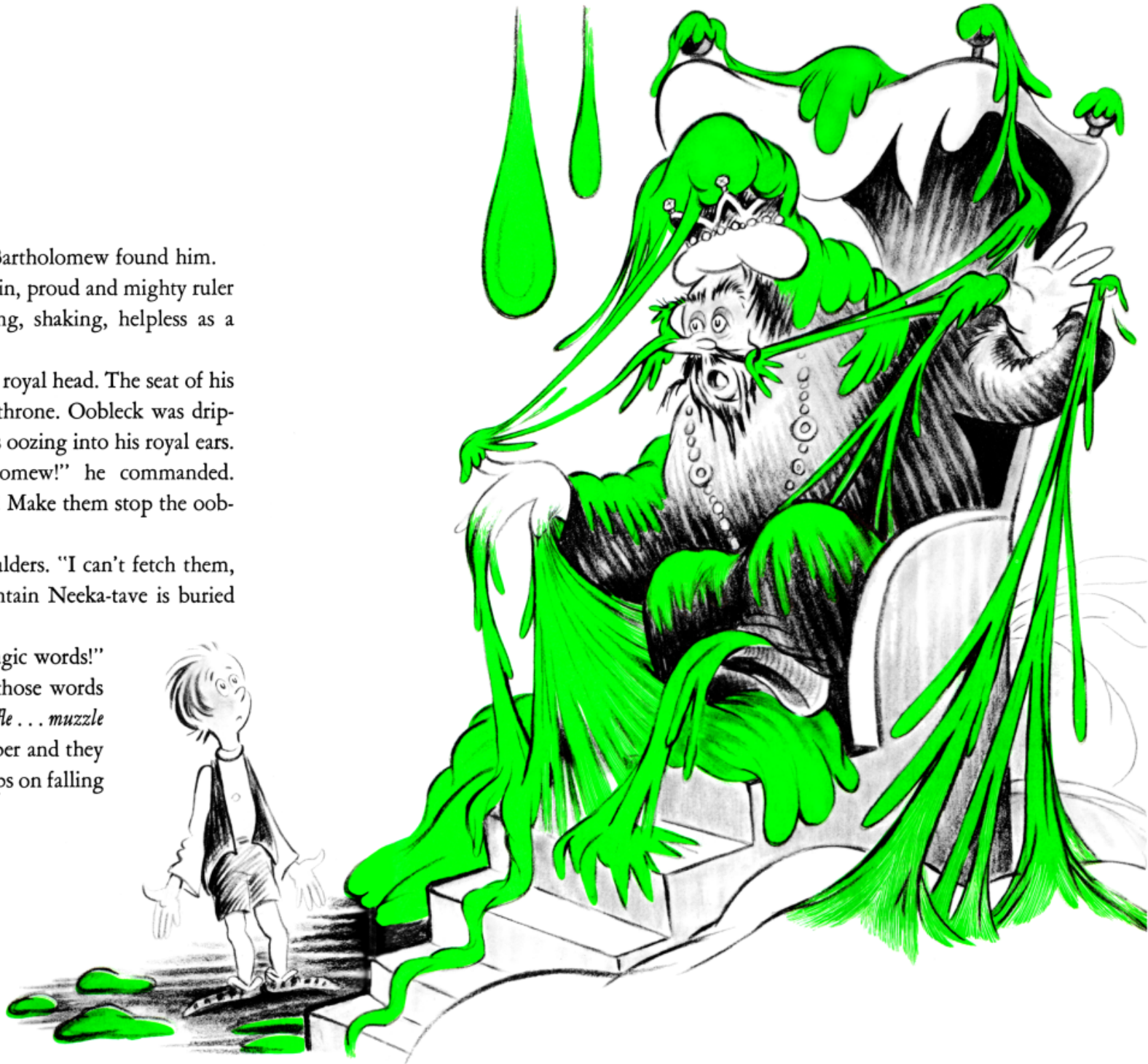
It was in the throne room that Bartholomew found him. There he sat . . . Old King Derwin, proud and mighty ruler of the Kingdom of Didd, trembling, shaking, helpless as a baby.

His royal crown was stuck to his royal head. The seat of his royal pants were stuck to his royal throne. Oobleck was dripping from his royal eyebrows. It was oozing into his royal ears.

"Fetch my magicians, Bartholomew!" he commanded. "Make them say some magic words! Make them stop the oobleck falling!"

Bartholomew shrugged his shoulders. "I can't fetch them, Your Majesty. Their cave on Mountain Neeka-tave is buried deep in oobleck."

"Then *I* must think of some magic words!" groaned the King. "Oh, what are those words my magicians say . . . ? *Shuffle . . . duffle . . . muzzle . . . muff . . .* That's all I can remember and they don't do any good! The oobleck keeps on falling harder!"





Bartholomew Cubbins could hold his tongue no longer.

"And it's going to keep on falling," he shouted, "until your whole great marble palace tumbles down! So don't waste your time saying foolish *magic* words. YOU ought to be saying some plain *simple* words!"

"*Simple* words . . . ? What do you mean, boy?"

"I mean," said Bartholomew, "this is all *your* fault! Now, the least you can do is say the simple words, 'I'm sorry'."

No one had ever talked to the King like this before.

"What!" he bellowed. "ME . . . ME say I'm sorry! Kings *never* say 'I'm sorry!' And I am the mightiest king in all the world!"

Bartholomew looked the King square in the eye.

"You may be a mighty king," he said. "But you're sitting in oobleck up to your chin. And so is everyone else in your land. And if you won't even say you're sorry, *you're no sort of a king at all!*"

Bartholomew Cubbins turned his back. He started for the throne room door.



But then Bartholomew heard a great, deep sob. The old King was crying! "Come back, Bartholomew Cubbins! You're right! It *is* all my fault! And I *am* sorry! Oh, Bartholomew, I'm awfully, *awfully* sorry!"

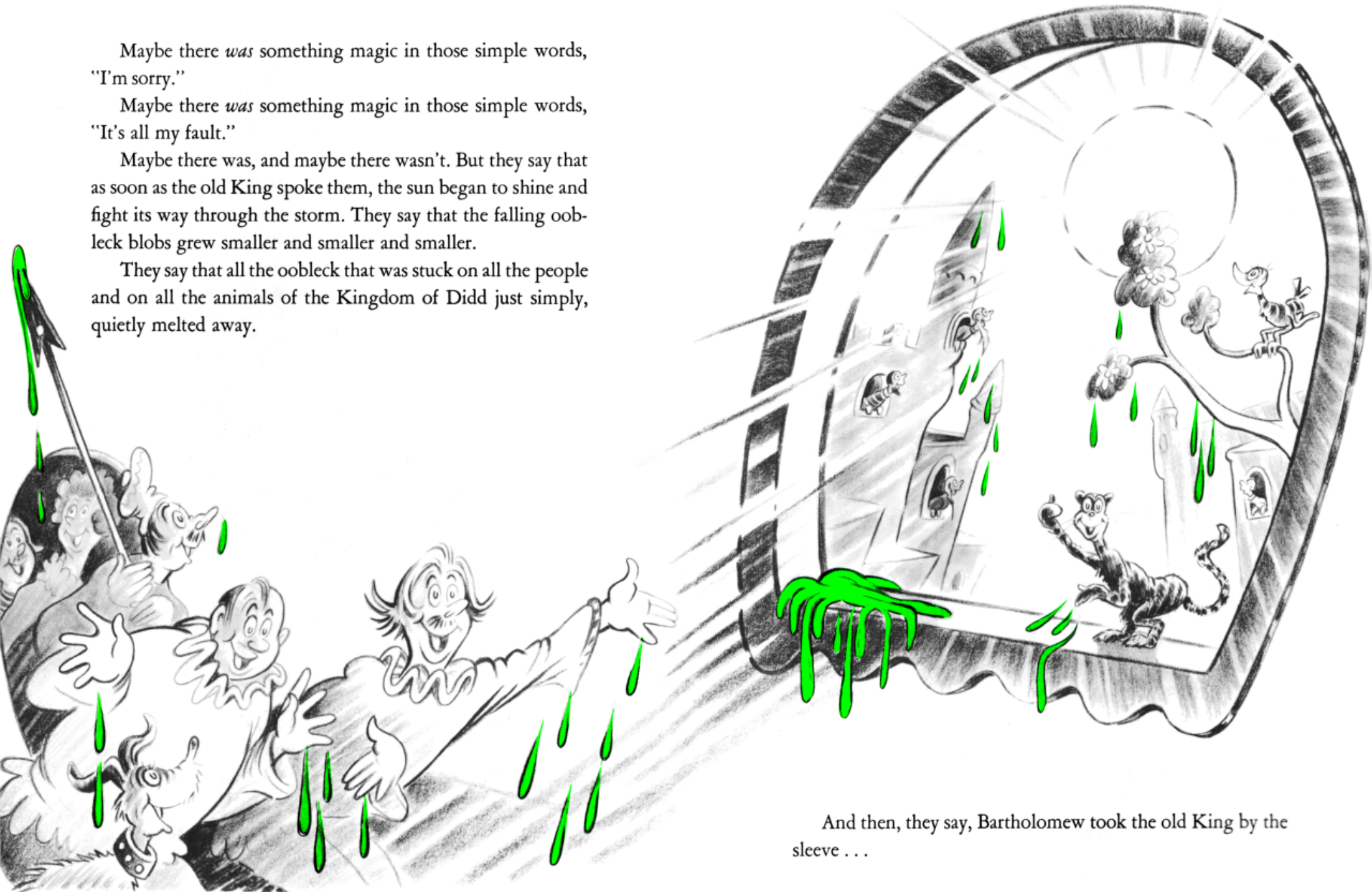
And the moment the King spoke those words, something happened . . .

Maybe there *was* something magic in those simple words, "I'm sorry."

Maybe there *was* something magic in those simple words, "It's all my fault."

Maybe there was, and maybe there wasn't. But they say that as soon as the old King spoke them, the sun began to shine and fight its way through the storm. They say that the falling oobleck blobs grew smaller and smaller and smaller.

They say that all the oobleck that was stuck on all the people and on all the animals of the Kingdom of Didd just simply, quietly melted away.



And then, they say, Bartholomew took the old King by the sleeve . . .



... and led him up the steps of the high bell tower. He put the bell rope into His Majesty's royal hands and the King himself rang the holiday bell.

Then the King proclaimed a brand-new national holiday ... in honor of the four perfect things that come down from the sky.

The King now knew that these four old-fashioned things ... the rain, the sunshine, the fog and the snow ... were good enough for any king in all the world, especially for him, old King Derwin of Didd.

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