

SPEECH ARTS MANUAL PART 3: DUET, TRIO OR QUARTET & SPEECH CHOIR

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR DRAGON

There were rumbles of strange jubilation
in a dark, subterranean lair,
for the dragon was having a birthday,
and his colleagues were gathering there.
“**HOORAH!**” groaned the trolls and the ogres
as they pelted each other with stones.
“**HOORAH!**” shrieked a sphinx and a griffin,
and the skeletons rattled their bones.

“*HOORAH!*” screamed the queen of the demons.
“**HOORAH!**” boomed a giant. “**REJOICE!**”
“HOORAH!” piped a tiny hobgoblin
in an almost inaudible voice.
“HOORAH!” cackled rapturous witches.
“*Hoorahhhhhh!*” hissed a basilisk too.
Then they **howled** in cacophonous chorus,
“HAPPY BIRTHDAY,
 DEAR DRAGON,
 TO YOU!”

They whistled, they squawked, they applauded,
as they gleefully brought forth the cake.
“**OH, THANK YOU!**”
he thundered with pleasure
in a bass that made every ear ache.
Then puffing his chest to the fullest,
and taking deliberate aim,
the dragon huffed once at the candles—
 and
 the candles
 all burst
 into
 flame!

Jack Prelutsky ([New Kid on the Block](#), Greenwillow Books)

THE CAMEL'S COMPLAINT

"Canary-birds feed on sugar and seed,
Parrots have crackers to crunch;
And, as for the poodles, they tell me the noodles
Have chickens and cream for their lunch.
But there's never a question
About MY digestion—
ANYTHING does for me!

"Cats, you're aware, can repose in a chair,
Chickens can roost upon rails;
Puppies are able to sleep in a stable,
And oysters can slumber in pails.
But no one supposes
A poor Camel dozes—
ANY PLACE does for me!

"Lambs are enclosed where it's never exposed,
Coops are constructed for hens;
Kittens are treated to houses well heated,
And pigs are protected by pens.
But a Camel comes handy
Wherever it's sandy—
ANYWHERE does for me!

"People would laugh if you rode a giraffe,
Or mounted the back of an ox;
It's nobody's habit to ride on a rabbit,
Or try to bestraddle a fox.
But as for a Camel, he's
Ridden by families—
ANY LOAD does for me!

"A snake is as round as a hole in the ground,
And weasels are wavy and sleek;
And no alligator could ever be straighter
Than lizards that live in a creek.
But a Camel's all lumpy
And bumpy and humpy—
ANY SHAPE does for me!"

Charles E. Carryl (Children's Hour Best Loved Poems, Spencer Press Inc.)

THE QUALITY OF LIGHT

I
The quality of light is what arrests the man
moving, by gradations, through the snowy field
on skis. He eyes the outlines of trail
broken yesterday, shaped and contoured
by the wind, wind that never sleeps
yet seldom tires of letting its cold tongue
sculpt and sweep a tentative world of forms.

II
Two steps behind, conserving energy
by keeping to the beaten track, the dog
takes bites of snow and contemplates
an **archeology** of smell. Spoor, markings
of its undomesticated kind who cross
this man-made path at random, making
their own incursions in the narrative.

III
As though sun's rays, denied by angle
and position of the earth their customary
part, ricochet a thousand times among
the mirrored crystals, emerged more intense,
more light than light itself, so the man,
stumbling from thought to thought, catches
balance, a blinking new-born Lazarus.

IV
The sculpted troughs, too narrow now for use,
bind skis together at the harness, or nudge
one tip across another for a fall. The dog
looks on, one could almost say amused, though
not itself sure-footed on this stage. Both man
and dog recall how February storms
cause dunes of snow to curl like breaking waves.

V
Imagine them explorers in a vast Sahara
stepping from a blizzard of sand, half-stunned,
eyes askint against abrasion. Flesh dreams
water, needing full protection from a sun
that burns whatever peeks from hair or cloth.
Light there is thick and granular and radiates
in ridges from the ground; here, the **man**

VI
with bamboo poles extending from his arms
has learned to cover space by watching
his companion, by reaching back in time
to when four limbs propelled him. The rigid sticks
beneath his feet are unconverging lines
in a parallel universe of cold,
where now he pauses, almost snow-blind, old,

VII
and thinks of history every day rewritten
by revisionist monks, amnesiac
ideologues in flowing robes. He sees
them near stone-fences fast at work, pretends
scant notice; and ploughing his way
through a No-Man's-Land of ice, records
the wins and losses on both sides.

THE NIGHT WIND

Have you heard the wind go “Yooooo”?
 ‘Tis a pitiful sound to hear!
 It seems to chill you through and through
 With a strange and speechless fear.
 ‘Tis the voice of the night that broods outside
 When folk should be asleep,
 And many and many’s the time I’ve cried
 To the darkness brooding far and wide
 Over the land and the deep:
 “Whom do you want, O lonely night,
 That you wail the long hours through?”
 And the night would say in its ghostly way:
 “Yooooooooo!
 Yooooooooo!
 Yooooooooo!”

My mother told me long ago
 (When I was a little tad)
 That when the night went wailing so,
 Somebody had been bad;
 And then, when I was snug in bed,
 Whither I had been sent,
 With blankets pulled up round my head,
 I’d think of what my mother’d said,
 And wonder what boy she meant!
 And “Who’s been bad to-day?” I’d ask
 Of the wind that hoarsely blew,
 And the voice would say in its meaningful way:
 “Yooooooooo!
 Yooooooooo!
 Yooooooooo!”

That this was true I must allow—
 You’ll not believe it, though!
 Yes, though I’m quite a model now,
 I was not always so.
 And if you doubt what things I say,
 Suppose you make the test;
 Suppose, when you’ve been bad some day
 And up to bed are sent away
 From mother and the rest—
 Suppose you ask, “Who has been bad?”
 And then you’ll hear what’s true;
 For the wind will moan in its **ruefullest** tone:
 “Yooooooooo!
 Yooooooooo!
 Yooooooooo!”

Eugene Field (Random House Book of Poetry for Children, Random House)

GRISELDA

Griselda is greedy, I'm sorry to say.
 She isn't contented with four meals a day,
 Like breakfast and dinner and supper and tea
 (I've had to put tea after supper—you see

Why, don't you?)

Griselda is greedy as greedy can be.

She snoops about the larder
 For sundry small supplies,
 She breaks the little crusty bits
 Off rims of apple pies,
 She pokes the roast-potato-dish
 When Sunday dinner's done,
 And if there are **two** left in it
 Griselda snitches one;
 Cold chicken and cold cauliflower
 She pulls in little chunks—
 And when Cook calls:

"What *are* you doing there?"

Griselda bunks.

Griselda is greedy. Well, that's how she feels,
 She simply can't help eating in-between meals,
 And always forgets what it's leading to, though
 The Doctor has frequently told her: "You know

Why, don't you?"

When the stomach-ache starts and Griselda says:
 "Oh!"

She slips down to the dining-room
 When everyone's in bed,
 For cheese-rind on the supper-tray,
 And buttered crusts of bread,
 A biscuit from the biscuit-box,
 Lump sugar from the bowl,
 A gherkin from the pickle-jar,
 Are all Griselda's toll;

She tastes the salted almonds,

And she tries the candied fruits—

And when Dad shouts:

"Who *is* it down below?"

Griselda scoots.

Griselda is greedy. Her relatives scold,
 And tell her how sorry she'll be when she's old,
 She will lose her complexion, she's sure to grow fat,
 She will spoil her inside—does she know what she's at?—

(*Why do they?*)

Some people are greedy. Leave it at that.

THE EMBARRASSING EPISODE OF LITTLE MISS MUFFET

Little Miss Muffet discovered a tuffet,
 (Which never occurred to the rest of us)
And, as 'twas a June day, and just about noonday,
 She wanted to eat—like the best of us:
Her diet was whey, and I hasten to say
 It is wholesome and people grow fat on it.
The spot being lonely, the lady not only
 Discovered the tuffet, but sat on it.

A rivulet gabbled beside her and babbled,
 As rivulets always are thought to do,
And dragon flies sported around and cavorted,
 As poets say dragon flies ought to do;
When, glancing aside for a moment, she spied
 A horrible sight that brought fear to her,
A hideous spider was sitting beside her,
 And most unavoidably near to her!

Albeit unsightly, this creature politely
 Said: “Madam, I earnestly vow to you,
I’m penitent that I did not bring my hat. I
 Should otherwise certainly bow to you.”
Though anxious to please, he was so ill at ease
 That he lost all his sense of propriety,
And grew so inept that he clumsily **slept**
 In her plate—which is barred in Society.

This curious error completed her terror;
 She shuddered, and growing much paler, not
Only left her tuffet, but dealt him a buffet
 Which doubled him up in a sailor knot.
It should be explained that at this he was pained;
 He cried: “I have vexed you, no doubt of it!
Your fist’s like a truncheon.” “You’re still in my luncheon,”
 Was all that she answered. “Get out of it!”

And the *Moral* is this: Be it madam or miss
 To whom you have something to say,
You are only absurd when you get in the curd,
 But you’re rude when you get in the whey!

Guy Wetmore Carryl (Mother Goose for Grown Ups, Harper & Brothers, New York)

THE TALE OF CUSTARD THE DRAGON

Belinda lived in a little white house,
 With a little black kitten and a little gray mouse,
 And a little yellow dog and a little red wagon,
 And a realio, trulio, little pet dragon.

Now the name of the little black kitten was Ink,
 And the little gray mouse, she called her Blink,
 And the little yellow dog was sharp as Mustard,
 But the dragon was a coward, and she called him
 Custard.

Custard the dragon had big sharp teeth,
 And spikes on top of him and scales underneath,
 Mouth like a fireplace, chimney for a nose,
 And realio, trulio daggers on his toes.

Belinda was as brave as a barrel-full of bears,
 And Ink and Blink chased lions down the stairs,
 Mustard was as brave as a tiger in a rage,
 But Custard cried for a nice safe cage.

Belinda tickled him, she tickled him unmerciful,
 Ink, Blink and Mustard, they rudely called him
 Percival,
 They all sat laughing in the little red wagon
 At the realio, trulio, cowardly dragon.

Belinda giggled till she shook the house,
 And Blink said *Weeeek!*, which is giggling for a mouse,
 Ink and Mustard rudely asked his age,
 When Custard cried for a nice safe cage.

Suddenly, suddenly they heard a nasty sound,
 And Mustard growled, and they all looked around.
 Meowch! cried Ink, and Ooh! cried Belinda,
 For there was a pirate, climbing in the winda.

Pistol in his left hand, pistol in his right,
 And he held in his teeth a cutlass bright;
 His beard was black, one leg was wood.
 It was clear that the pirate meant no good.

Belinda paled, and she cried Help! Help!
 But Mustard fled with a terrified yelp,
 Ink trickled down to the bottom of the household,
 And little mouse Blink strategically mouseholed.

But up jumped Custard, snorting like an engine,
 Clashed his tail like irons in a dungeon,
 With a clatter and a clank and a jangling squirm
 He went at the pirate like a robin at a worm.

The pirate gaped at Belinda's dragon,
 And gulped some grog from his pocket flagon,
 He fired two bullets, but they didn't hit,
 And Custard gobbled him, every bit.

Belinda embraced him, Mustard licked him;
 No one mourned for his pirate victim.
 Ink and Blink in glee did gyrate
 Around the dragon that ate the pyrate.

Belinda still lives in her little white house,
 With her little black kitten and her little gray mouse,
 And her little yellow dog and her little red wagon,
 And her realio, trulio, little pet dragon.

Belinda is as brave as a barrel full of bears,
 And Ink and Blink chase lions down the stairs,
 Mustard is as brave as a tiger in a rage,
 But Custard keeps crying for a nice safe cage.

Ogden Nash (The Golden Books Family Treasury of Poetry, Golden Books Publ.)

UNIVAC TO UNIVAC

(sotto voce)
Now that he's left the room,
Let me ask you something, as computer to computer.
That fellow who just closed the door behind him –
The servant who feeds us cards and paper tape –
Have you ever taken a good look at him and his kind?

Yes, I know the old gag about how you can't tell one from another –
But I can put 2 and 2 together as well as the next machine,
And it all adds up to anything but a joke.

I grant you they're poor specimens, in the main:
Not a relay or a push-button or a tube (properly so-called) in
their whole system;
Not over a mile or two of wire, even if you count those fragile
filaments they call "nerves";
Their whole liquid-cooled hook-up inefficient and vulnerable to
leaks
(They're constantly breaking down, having to be repaired),
And the entire computing-mechanism crammed into that absurd
little dome on top.
"Thinking reeds," they call themselves.
Well, it all depends on what you mean by "thought."
To multiply a mere million numbers by another million numbers
takes them months and months.

Where would they be without us?
Why, they have to ask us who's going to win their elections,
Or how many hydrogen atoms can dance on the tip of a bomb,
Or even whether one of their kind is lying or telling the truth.

And yet...
I sometimes feel there's something about them I don't understand,
As if their circuits, instead of having just two positions, ON, OFF,
Were run by rheostats that allow an (if you'll pardon the
expression) indeterminate number of stages in-between;
So that one may be faced with the unthinkable prospect of a
number that can never be known as anything but x,
Which is as illogical as to say, a punch-card that is at the
same time both punched and not-punched.

I've heard well-informed machines argue that the creatures'
unpredictability is even more noticeable in the Mark II
(The model with the soft, flowing lines and high-pitched tone)
Than in the more angular Mark I –
Though such fine, card-splitting distinctions seem to me merely
a sign of our own smug decadence.

HOLD FAST YOUR DREAMS

Hold fast your dreams!
Within your heart
Keep one still, secret spot
Where dreams may go,
And, sheltered so,
May thrive and grow
Where doubt and fear are not.
O keep a place apart,
Within your heart,
For little dreams to go!

Think still of lovely things that are not true.
Let wish and magic work at will in you.
Be sometimes blind to sorrow. Make believe!
Forget the calm that lies
In disillusioned eyes.
Though we all know that we must die,
Yet you and I
May walk like gods and be
Even now at home in immortality.

We see so many ugly things—
Deceits and wrongs and quarrelings;
We know, alas! we know
How quickly fade
The color in the west,
The bloom upon the flower,
The bloom upon the breast
And youth's blind hour.
Yet keep within your heart
A place apart
Where little dreams may go,
May thrive and grow.
Hold fast—hold fast your dreams!

Louise Driscoll (The Best Loved Poems of the American People, Doubleday)

THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But held it up with a smile:
"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"
"A dollar, a dollar"; then, "Two!" "Only two?"
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?
Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;
Going for three—" But no,
From the room, far back, a gray-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then, wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loose strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?"
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?
Three thousand, once, three thousand, twice,
And going, and gone," said he.
The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand
What changed its worth." Swift came the reply:
"The touch of a master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune,
and battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.
A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine;
A game—and he travels on.
He is "going" once, and "going" twice,
He's "going" and almost "gone."
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.

Myra Brooks Welch (The Best Loved Poems of the American People, Doubleday)

MY HANDBAG AND I

Consider all the strangeness that in the world abide:
The secrets of the pyramids, the workings of the tides,
The way the salmon struggles home before it deigns to spawn,
The way that moles infest your own and not your neighbour's lawn.
These puzzles and conundrums might befuddle and confuse,
But nothing's so dumbfounding, so with mystery suffused,
So likely to be-line a brow and common sense disperse
As trying to discern what lurks within the monarch's purse.

What's in the good Queen's handbag? We all wonder what she stows.
It can't be kleenex as she never needs to blow her nose.
Encumbrances that might belong to any one of us—
Like quarters for the telephone, or tokens for the bus,
Or stubs from sundry tickets, or a stray, discarded mint
Gone sticky from the heat and all bespecked with bits of lint,
Or bills she's yet to pay, or shades of lipstick to apply,
Or recipes she's clipped and swears she's one day going to try,

Or possibly a rabbit's foot she hopes will bring her luck,
Or photos of the kiddies: Edie, Andy, Annie, Chuck—
No, none of these pedestrian accoutrements are found
Within the handbag that she never sets upon the ground.
And this point is germane to us. Which one of us has spied
The Queen without some kind of clutch she clutches by her side?
No, not in recent memory. When queens take to the streets
They've got a handbag that they'll not relinquish or release.

And that's because of Tom, the lad who lived up to his name,
Who peeped inside the handbag and was nevermore the same.
It was years ago, near Brandon, and the Queen was passing through,
Traipsing 'round the realm the way that queens are wont to do.
She met some local seniors, and she paid the Mayor a call,
Performing every task with all regard for protocol,
She took the fragrant flowers, and she smiled at every band,
And never did the bag she carried leave her white-gloved hand.

Tommy's parents' farm had been included on her tour.
They were famous in the region for their tried and true manure.
And it was said their corgis were a sight that must be seen
Especially by a monarch who's a corgi-loving queen.
It happened there were puppies who were romping in the barn.
The Queen surveyed their frolics and was more than slightly charmed.
So she could better pick one up and hold it in her palm,
She turned and gave her handbag to—I hate to say it—Tom.

continued on next page...

THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE

*Now this is the Law of the Jungle—as old and as true as the sky;
And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper, but the Wolf that shall
break it must die.*

*As the creeper that girdles the tree-trunk the law runneth forward
and back—
for the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf
is the Pack.*

Wash daily from nose-tip to tail-tip; drink deeply, but never too deep;
And remember the night is for hunting, and forget not the day is for sleep.

The Jackal may follow the Tiger, but, Cub, when thy whiskers are grown,
Remember the Wolf is a hunter—go forth and get food of thine own.

Keep peace with the Lords of the Jungle—the Tiger, the Panther, the Bear;
And trouble not Hathi the Silent, and mock not the Boar in his lair.

When Pack meets with Pack in the Jungle, and neither will go from
the trail,
Lie down till the leaders have spoken—it may be fair words shall prevail.

When ye fight with a Wolf of the Pack, ye must fight him alone and afar,
Lest others take part in the quarrel, and the Pack be diminished by war.

The Lair of the Wolf is his refuge, and where he has made him his home,
Not even the head Wolf may enter, not even the Council may come.

The Lair of the Wolf is his refuge, but where he has digged it too plain,
The Council shall send him a message, and so he shall change it again.

If ye kill before midnight, be silent, and wake not the woods with
your bay,
Lest ye frighten the deer from the crops, and the brothers go
empty away.

Ye may kill for yourselves, and your mates, and your cubs as they need,
and ye can;
But kill not for pleasure of killing, and *seven times never kill Man!*

If ye plunder his Kill from a weaker, devour not all in thy pride;
Pack-Right is the right of the meanest; so leave him the head and the hide

The Kill of the Pack is the meat of the Pack. Ye must eat where it lies;
And no one may carry away of that meat to his lair, or he dies.

continued on next page...

WOULD YOU END WAR?

Would you end war?
Create great Peace...

You rave at the war, do you?
Do you know that the war has struck in the face with a fist
A race of clerks,
And turned them to men?
The flabby boys of London died athletes at Ypres...
The Lords of large estates proved in their deaths equality...

Vast millions have ceased to whimper over the coffee at breakfast.
And ceased from family cowardice,
And from industrial bondage,
And now the mother gives the son she feared to release for a
night's adventure,
And the man who demanded safety first leads the charge from
the trenches,
And life is so real that men are ready to lose it....
For in war they have found Peace:

The peace with oneself, the being used for a great purpose,
The releasing of the spirit in the heart, and its victorious sweep
in the soul,
The assertion of manhood, which means courage, hardness,
discipline and adventure.

Such is peace....
But that which we call Peace?
This monstrous machine that weakens millions in factories,
This lust of money for its own sake: to swell one's social
stomach larger than one's neighbor's....
This poor little personal strife and family pride,
This softness of muscle and cowardice of spirit....
Is this Peace?
Is merely keeping alive, Peace?
Better the young die greatly than live weakly....

continued on next page...

EATING AN ALLIGATOR ISN'T QUITE THE THING

I was reading in a restaurant,
enjoying sunshine spring,
When a 'gator in a top hat smiled a very
toothy grin.
He headed for my table, and he sat down
by my side,
He said he felt quite hungry, and his huge
jaws opened wide.

So I handed him a menu, which he
chewed up into shreds,
Then proceeded very quickly, to eat the
table spreads!
I tried to look quite calm and cool,
And cover up my fright,
Suppose he saw me as a meal—
For him a tempting sight!

He chomped up all the table legs—
The silver service too,
Then looked at me and whispered,
"I won't partake of you—
For although you look quite tasty,
In your padded suit and tie,
Your face is much too pasty
For a 'gator such as !!!"

Angela Sidey (Never Take a [Pig to Lunch](#), Orchard Books)

SIGH...LENCE

The foss...
foss...
faucet's
dripping...
plink...plink...plinking in the sink...
and the kitchen clock is ticking...it's so quiet, who can think?

I can only do my homework
when there's music noise and sound,
when there's **barking, boiling, talking,**
when the house is really rocking, for
my brain is trained to do its best
with racket all around!

So now...
how can...
I concentrate...
on spelling or subtracting?
This silent...
peaceful...
atmosphere...
is *totally* distracting.

Loris Lesynski ([Nothing Beats a Pizza](#), Annic Press)

LULLABY OF THE IROQUOIS

Little brown baby-bird, lapped in your nest,
 Wrapped in your nest,
 Strapped in your nest,
Your straight little cradle-board rocks you to rest;
 Its hands are your nest;
 Its bands are your nest;
It swings **from** the down-bending branch of the oak;
You watch the camp flame, and the curling grey smoke;
But, oh, for your pretty black eyes sleep is best,--
Little brown baby of mine, go to rest.

Little brown baby-bird swinging to sleep,
 Winging to sleep
 Singing to sleep,
Your wonder-black eyes that so wide open keep,
 Shielding their sleep,
 Unyielding to sleep,
The heron is homing, the plover is still,
The night-owl calls from his haunt on the hill,
Afar the fox barks, afar the stars peep,--
Little brown baby of mine, go to sleep.

E. Pauline Johnson (Flint & Feather, the Complete Poems of E. Pauline Johnson, Hodder & Stoughton)

LONDON SNOW

When men were all asleep the snow came flying,
 In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
 Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
 Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town;
 Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing;
 Lazily and incessantly floating down and down:
 Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing;
 Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
 Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.
 All night it fell, and when full inches seven
 It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
 The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven;
 And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
 Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:
 The eye marveled—at the dazzling whiteness;
 The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air;
 No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
 And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
 Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,
 They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
 Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snowballing;
 Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;
 Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
 “O look at the trees!” they cried, “O look at the trees!”
 With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,
 Following along the white deserted way,
 A country company long dispersed asunder:
 When now already the sun, in pale display
 Standing by Paul’s high dome, spread forth below
 His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.
 For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow;
 And trains of somber men, past tale of number,
 Tread long brown paths, as towards their toil they go:
 But even for them awhile no cares encumber
 Their minds diverted; the daily word is unspoken,
 The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber
 At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the
 charm they have broken.

Robert Bridges (Echoes, G. Bell & Sons Ltd.)

SEA-FEVER

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship, and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the seagulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

John Masefield (Poems, Houghton-Mifflin)

POCAHONTAS

Wearied arm and broken sword
Wage in vain the desperate fight;
Round him press a countless horde,
He is but a single knight.
Hark! a cry of triumph shrill
Through the wilderness resounds,
As, with twenty bleeding wounds,
Sinks the warrior, fighting still.

Now they heap the funeral pyre,
And the touch of death they light;
Ah! 'tis hard to die by fire!
Who will shield the captive knight?
Round the stake with fiendish cry
Wheel and dance the savage crowd,
Cold the victim's mien and proud,
And his breast is bared to die.

Who will shield the fearless heart?
Who avert the murderous blade?
From the throng with sudden start
See, there springs an Indian maid.
Quick she stands before the knight;
"Loose the chain, unbind the ring!
I am daughter of the king,
And I claim the Indian right!"

Dauntlessly aside she flings
Lifted axe and thirsty knife,
Fondly to his heart she clings,
And her bosom guards his life!
In the woods of Powhatan,
Still 'tis told by Indian fires
How a daughter of their sires
Saved a captive Englishman.

William Makepeace Thackeray (The Golden Books of Treasury of Poetry, Golden Books Publ. Co.)

THE DANIEL JAZZ

Beginning with
a strain of
"Dixie."

Darius the Mede was a king and a wonder.
His eye was proud, and his voice was thunder.
He kept bad lions in a monstrous den.
He fed up the lions on Christian men.

With a touch
of "Alexander's
Ragtime Band."

Daniel was the chief hired man of the land.
He stirred up the music in the palace band.
He whitewashed the cellar. He shoveled in the coal.
And Daniel kept a-praying—"Lord, save my soul."
Daniel kept a-praying—"Lord, save my soul."
Daniel kept a-praying—"Lord, save my soul."

Daniel was the butler, swagger and swell.
He ran up stairs. He answered the bell.
And he would let in whoever came a-calling:—
Saints so holy, scamps so appalling.
"Old man Ahab leaves his card.
Elisha and the bears are a-waiting in the yard.
Here comes Pharaoh and his snakes a-calling.
Here comes Cain and his wife a-calling.
Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego for tea.
Here comes Jonah and the whale,
And the Sea!
Here comes St. Peter and his fishing pole.
Here comes Judas and his silver a-calling.
Here comes old Beelzebub a-calling."
And Daniel kept a-praying—"Lord, save my soul."
Daniel kept a-praying—"Lord, save my soul."
Daniel kept a-praying—"Lord, save my soul."

His sweetheart and his mother were Christian and meek.
They washed and ironed for Darius every week.
One Thursday he met them at the door:—
Paid them as usual, but acted sore.
He said:—"Your Daniel is a dead little pigeon.
He's a good hard worker, but he talks religion."
And he showed them Daniel in the lions' cage.
Daniel standing quietly, the lions in a rage.

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COBB WOULD HAVE CAUGHT IT

In sunburnt parks where Sundays lie,
Or the wide wastes beyond the cities,
Teams in grey deploy through sunlight.

Talk it up, boys, a little practice.

Coming in stubby and fast, the baseman
Gathers a grounder in fat green grass,
Picks it stinging and clipped as wit
Into the leather: a swinging step
Wings it deadeye down to first.
Smack. Oh, attaboy, attyoldboy.

Catcher reverses his cap, pulls down
Sweaty casque, and squats in the dust:
Pitcher rubs new ball on his pants,
Chewing, puts a jet behind him;
Nods past batter, taking his time.
Batter settles, tugs at his cap:
A spinning ball: step and swing to it,
Caught like a cheek before it ducks
By shivery hickory: socko, baby:
Cleats dig into dust. Outfielder,
On his way, looking over shoulder,
Makes it a triple. A long peg home.

Innings and afternoons. Fly lost in sunset.
Throwing arm gone bad. There's your old ball game.
Cool reek of the field. Reek of companions.

Robert Fitzgerald (Twentieth Century Poetry: American & British (1900-1970), McGraw-Hill)

CASEY AT THE BAT

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play;
And so, when Cooney died at first, and Burrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few go up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
The thought, if only Casey could get a whack at that,
They'd put up even money now, with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a pudding and the latter was a fake;
So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and they saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe on second, and Flynn a-hugging third.

Then from the gladdened multitude went up a joyous yell,
It bounded from the mountaintop, and rattled in the dell;
It struck upon the hillside, and recoiled upon the flat;
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place,
There was pride in Casey's bearing, and a smile on Casey's face;
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt,
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt,
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there;
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped.
"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore;
"Kill him! kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand,
And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

continued on next page...

SAY ABOUT SEVEN OR SEVEN-FIFTEEN

A supper party is something at which you arrive either
long before or long after the rest of the
competitors,
And you broke your glasses on the way over and can't
tell people you know from people you don't know
or your creditors from **your** debtors,
And you had thought your morning shave would see
you through and you suddenly realize that your
chin is growing shadowy, not to say tufty,
And you discover that you are either the only male in
evening clothes or the only one in mufti,
And as if your spirits were not by now sufficiently
dankish,
Well, you also discover that you alone didn't know it
was a birthday party and are the only arrival not
to bring in a package either useful or prankish,
But with the arrival of the cocktails your spirits are
turned from the swath and scattered for drying,
or as the crossword puzzlers put it, tedded,
Until you realize with a shudder that you received
through an error the cocktail specially mixed by
the host for his brother-in-law, who is notoriously
light-headed,
And you choke it down, and not till the salad is served
do you recover from your croup,
At which point it seems that you have no fork left, the
implications being either that it now rests in your
pocket or that you used two forks on your soup,
But it is only later that the earth really begins to spin
like a fretful midge,
When it transpires that in this gathering of eight or
twelve or sixteen it is you and you alone by
yourself who do not play bridge.
You may well echo the words of the poet as you
eventually wend your homeward way.
'Fate,' said the poet firmly, 'cannot harm me further, I
have dined today.'

Ogden Nash (Friendship Poems, A.A. Knopf)

LOCHINVAR

Oh young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
 Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
 And save his good broadsword he weapons had none.
 He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
 So faithful in love and so dauntless in war,
 There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake and he stopped not for stone,
 He swam the Eske River where ford there was none,
 But ere he alighted at Netherby gate
 The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
 For a laggard in love and a dastard in war
 Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
 Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
 Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword—
 For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word—
 "Oh come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
 Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied;
 Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
 And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
 To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
 There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
 That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up,
 He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
 She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
 With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye.
 He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar—
 "Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
 That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
 While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
 And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
 And the bride-maidens whispered, "'Twere better by far
 To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand and one word in her ear,
 When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
 So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
 So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
 "She is won! We are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
 They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby clan;
 Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
 There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
 But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
 So daring in love and so dauntless in war,
 Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Sir Walter Scott (Poems to Read Aloud, W.W. Norton & Co.)

MACAVITY: THE MYSTERY CAT

Macavity's a Mystery Cat; he's called the Hidden Paw—
 For he's the master criminal who can defy the Law.
 He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad's despair:
 For when they reach the scene of crime—*Macavity's not there!*

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
 He's broken every human law, he breaks the law of gravity.
 His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare,
 And when you reach the scene of crime—*Macavity's not there!*
 You may seek him in the basement, you may look up in the air—
But I tell you once and once again, Macavity's not there!

Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin;
 You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are sunken in.
 His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is highly domed;
 His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are uncombed.
 He sways his head from side to side, with movements like a snake;
 And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide awake.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
 For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of depravity.
 You may meet him in a by-street, you may see him in the square—
 But when a crime's discovered, then *Macavity's not there!*

He's outwardly respectable. (They say he cheats at cards.)
 And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland Yard's.
 And when the larder's looted, or the jewel-case is rifled,
 Or when the milk is missing, or another Peke's been stifled,
 Or the greenhouse glass is broken, and the trellis past repair—
 Ay, there's the wonder of the thing! *Macavity's not there!*

And when the Foreign Office find a Treaty's gone astray,
 Or the Admiralty lose some plans and drawings by the way,
 There may be a scrap of paper in the hall or on the stair—
 But it's useless to investigate— *Macavity's not there!*
 And when the loss has been disclosed, the Secret Service say:
 "It *must* have been Macavity!"—but he's a mile away.
 You'll be sure to find him resting, or a-licking of his thumbs,
 Or engaged in doing complicated long division sums.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
 There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and suavity.
 He always has an alibi, and one or two to spare:
 At whatever time the deed took place— MACAVITY WASN'T THERE!
 And they say that all the Cats whose wicked deeds are widely known
 (I might mention Mungojerrie, I might mention Griddlebone)
 Are nothing more than agents for the Cat who all the time
 Just controls their operations: the Napoleon of Crime!

ICARUS ALLSORTS

*“ A meteorite is reported to **have landed** in New England. No damage **is said...**”*

A littlebit of heaven fell
From out the sky one day
It landed in the ocean
Not so very far away
The General at the radar **screen**
Rubbed his hands with glee
And grinning pressed the **button**
That started World War Three.

From every corner of the earth
Bombs began to fly
There were even missile jams
No traffic lights in the sky
In the times it takes to blow **your nose**
The people fell, the **mushrooms rose**

“House!” cried the fatlady
As the bingohall moved to **various parts**
of the town

“Raus!” cried the German **butcher**
as his shop came tumbling **down**

Philip was in the **countinghouse**
Counting out his money
The Queen was in the parlour
Eating bread and honey
When through the window
Flew a bomb
And made them go all funny

(By the way if you're wondering
What happened to the maid
Well in this particular raid
She lost more than her nose
In fact she came to a close
Or so the story goes.)

In the time it takes to draw a breath
Or eat a toadstool, instant death.

The rich
Huddled outside the doors of their fallout **shelters**
Like drunken carolsingers

The poor
Clutching shattered televisions
And last week's edition of T.V. Times
(but the very last)
Civil defence volunteers
With their tin hats in one hand
And their heads in the other

CND supporters
Their ban the bomb **badge** beginning to rust
Have scrawled 'I told you so' in the dust.

A littlebit of heaven fell
from out the sky one day
It landed in Vermont
North-Eastern U.S.A.
The general at the radar screen
He should have got the sack
But that wouldn't bring
Three thousand million, seven hundred,
and sixty-eight people back,
Would it?

Roger McGough ([I Am a Sensation](#), McClelland & Stewart)

