
 LEWIS CARROLL

Anagrammatic Sonnet

As to the war, try elm. I tried.
 The wig cast in, I went to ride.
 "Ring? Yes." We rang. "Let's rap." We don't.
 "O shew her wit!" As yet she won't.
 5 Saw eel in Rome. Dry one: he's wet.
 I am dry. O forge! Th' rogue! Why a net?

1924

 The Walrus and the Carpenter¹

The sun was shining on the sea,
 Shining with all his might;
 He did his very best to make
 The billows smooth and bright—
 5 And this was odd, because it was
 The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
 Because she thought the sun
 Had got no business to be there
 10 After the day was done—
 "It's very rude of him," she said,
 "To come and spoil the fun!"

The sea was wet as wet could be,
 The sands were dry as dry.
 15 You could not see a cloud, because
 No cloud was in the sky;
 No birds were flying overhead—
 There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
 20 Were walking close at hand;
 They wept like anything to see
 Such quantities of sand.
 "If this were only cleared away,"
 They said, "it *would* be grand!"

25 "If seven maids with seven mops
 Swept it for half a year,

1. Recited by Tweedledee in chap. 4 of *Through the Looking-Glass*.

Do you suppose," the Walrus said,
 "That they could get it clear?"
 "I doubt it," said the Carpenter,
 30 And shed a bitter tear.

"O Oysters, come and walk with us!"
 The Walrus did beseech.
 "A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
 Along the briny beach;
 35 We cannot do with more than four,
 To give a hand to each."

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
 But never a word he said;
 The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
 40 And shook his heavy head—
 Meaning to say he did not choose
 To leave the oyster-bed.

But four young Oysters hurried up,
 All eager for the treat;
 45 Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
 Their shoes were clean and neat—
 And this was odd, because, you know,
 They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
 And yet another four;
 And thick and fast they came at last,
 And more, and more, and more—
 All hopping through the frothy waves,
 And scrambling to the shore.

55 The Walrus and the Carpenter
 Walked on a mile or so,
 And then they rested on a rock
 Conveniently low;
 And all the little Oysters stood
 60 And waited in a row.

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
 "To talk of many things:
 Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
 Of cabbages—and kings—
 65 And why the sea is boiling hot—
 And whether pigs have wings."

"But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
 "Before we have our chat;
 For some of us are out of breath,
 70 And all of us are fat!"
 "No hurry!" said the Carpenter.
 They thanked him much for that.

“A loaf of bread,” the Walrus said,
 “Is what we chiefly need;
 75 Pepper and vinegar besides
 Are very good indeed—
 Now, if you’re ready, Oysters dear,
 We can begin to feed.”

“But not on us!” the Oysters cried,
 80 Turning a little blue.
 “After such kindness, that would be
 A dismal thing to do!”
 “The night is fine,” the Walrus said,
 “Do you admire the view?”

85 “It was so kind of you to come!
 And you are very nice!”
 The Carpenter said nothing but
 “Cut us another slice.
 I wish you were not quite so deaf—
 90 I’ve had to ask you twice!”

“It seems a shame,” the Walrus said,
 “To play them such a trick,
 After we’ve brought them out so far,
 And made them trot so quick!”
 95 The Carpenter said nothing but
 “The butter’s spread too thick!”

“I weep for you,” the Walrus said;
 “I deeply sympathize.”
 With sobs and tears he sorted out
 100 Those of the largest size,
 Holding his pocket-handkerchief
 Before his streaming eyes.

“O Oysters,” said the Carpenter,
 “You’ve had a pleasant run!
 105 Shall we be trotting home again?”
 But answer came there none—
 And this was scarcely odd, because
 They’d eaten every one.

From The Hunting of the Snark

The Baker's Tale

They roused him¹ with muffins—they roused him with ice—
 They roused him with mustard and cress—
 They roused him with jam and judicious advice—
 They set him conundrums to guess.

5 When at length he sat up and was able to speak,
 His sad story he offered to tell;
 And the Bellman cried, "Silence! Not even a shriek!"
 And excitedly tingled his bell.²

10 There was silence supreme! Not a shriek, not a scream,
 Scarcely even a howl or a groan,
 As the man they called "Ho!" told his story of woe
 In an antediluvian tone.

"My father and mother were honest though poor—"
 "Skip all that!" cried the Bellman in haste.
 15 "If it once becomes dark, there's no chance of a Snark—
 We have hardly a minute to waste!"

"I skip forty years," said the Baker, in tears,
 "And proceed without further remark
 To the day when you took me aboard of your ship
 20 To help you in hunting the Snark.

"A dear uncle of mine (after whom I was named)
 Remarked, when I bade him farewell—"
 "Oh, skip your dear uncle!" the Bellman exclaimed,
 As he angrily tingled his bell.

25 "He remarked to me then," said that mildest of men,
 "If your Snark be a Snark, that is right;
 Fetch it home by all means—you may serve it with greens,
 And it's handy for striking a light.

30 "You may seek it with thimbles—and seek it with care;
 You may hunt it with forks and hope;
 You may threaten its life with a railway-share;
 You may charm it with smiles and soap—"

("That's exactly the method," the Bellman bold
 In a hasty parenthesis cried,
 35 "That's exactly the way I have always been told
 That the capture of Snarks should be tried!")

1. I.e., the Baker, a member of the Snark-hunting expedition. He had fainted when the leader of the crew, the Bellman, had mentioned that one species of Snark is called Boojum. The nameless Baker's fear of Boojums turns out later to have been well

founded: at the end of the poem he encounters a Boojum and is never seen again.

2. A Bellman sold muffins (carried on a tray) on city streets. He would announce his wares by "tingling" a bell.

- “But oh, beamish³ nephew, beware of the day,
 If your Snark be a Boojum! For then
 You will softly and suddenly vanish away,
 40 And never be met with again!”
- “It is this, it is this that oppresses my soul,
 When I think of my uncle’s last words;
 And my heart is like nothing so much as a bowl
 Brimming over with quivering curds!
- 45 “It is this, it is this—” “We have had that before!”
 The Bellman indignantly said.
 And the Baker replied, “Let me say it once more.
 It is this, it is this that I dread!
- “I engage with the Snark—every night after dark—
 50 In a dreamy, delirious fight;
 I serve it with greens in those shadowy scenes,
 And I use it for striking a light;
- “But if ever I meet with a Boojum, that day,
 In a moment (of this I am sure),
 55 I shall softly and suddenly vanish away—
 And the notion I cannot endure!”

1874–76

1876

3. See *Jabberwocky*, line 22.