

**My Shadow – by Robert Louis Stevenson**

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,  
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.

He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;  
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—  
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;  
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india-rubber ball,  
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,  
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.  
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;  
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,  
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;  
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,  
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

**The Sound Collector - by Roger McGough**

A stranger called this morning  
Dressed all in black and grey  
Put every sound into a bag  
And carried them away

The whistling of the kettle  
The turning of the lock  
The purring of the kitten  
The ticking of the clock

The popping of the toaster  
The crunching of the flakes  
When you spread the marmalade  
The scraping noise it makes

The hissing of the frying pan  
The ticking of the grill  
The bubbling of the bathtub  
As it starts to fill

The drumming of the raindrops  
On the windowpane  
When you do the washing up  
The gurgle of the drain

The crying of the baby  
The squeaking of the chair  
The swishing of the curtain  
The creaking of the stair

A stranger called this morning  
He didn't leave his name  
Left us only silence  
Life will never be the same.

**Dear Mum- by Brian Pattern**

Dear Mum,  
While you were out  
A cup went and broke itself,  
A crack appeared in the blue vase  
Your great-great grandad  
Brought back from Mr Ming in China.  
Somehow, without me even turning on the tap,  
The sink mysteriously overflowed.  
A strange jam-stain,  
About the size of a boy's hand,  
Appeared on the kitchen wall.  
I don't think we will ever discover  
Exactly how the cat  
Managed to turn on the washing-machine  
(especially from the inside),  
or how Sis's pet rabbit went and mistook  
the waste-disposal unit for a burrow.  
I can tell you I was scared when,  
As if by magic,  
A series of muddy footprints  
Appeared on the new white carpet.  
I was being good  
(honest)  
but I think the house is haunted so,  
knowing you're going to have a fit,  
I've gone over to Gran's for a bit.

**I Had A Hippopotamus - by Patrick Barrington**

I had a Hippopotamus, I kept him in a shed  
 And fed him upon vitamins and vegetable bread  
 I made him my companion on many cheery walks  
 And had his portrait done by a celebrity in chalk

His charming eccentricities were known on every side  
 The creatures' popularity was wonderfully wide  
 He frolocked with the Rector in a dozen friendly tussles  
 Who could not but remark on his hippopotamuscles

If he should be affected by depression or the dumps  
 By hippopotameasles or the hippopotamumps  
 I never knew a particle of peace 'till it was plain  
 He was hippopotamasticating properly again

I had a Hippopotamus, I loved him as a friend  
 But beautiful relationships are bound to have an end  
 Time takes alas! our joys from us and rids us of our blisses  
 My hippopotamus turned out to be a hippopotamisses

My house keeper regarded him with jaundice in her eye  
 She did not want a colony of hippotami  
 She borrowed a machine gun from from her soldier nephew, Percy  
 And showed my hippopotamus no hippopotamercy

My house now lacks that glamour that the charming creature gave  
 The garage where I kept him is now as silent as the grave  
 No longer he displays among the motor tyres and spanners  
 His hippopomastery of hippopotamanners

No longer now he gambols in the orchards in the spring  
 No longer do I lead him through the village on a string  
 No longer in the morning does the neighbourhood rejoice  
 To his hippopotamusically-modulated voice.

I had a hippopotamus but nothing upon earth  
 Is constant in its happines or lasting in its mirth  
 No joy that life can give me can be strong enough to smother  
 My sorrow for that might-have-been-a-hippopota-mother

**Adventures of Isabel - by Ogden Nash**

Isabel met an enormous bear,  
 Isabel, Isabel, didn't care;  
 The bear was hungry, the bear was ravenous,  
 The bear's big mouth was cruel and cavernous.  
 The bear said, Isabel, glad to meet you,  
 How do, Isabel, now I'll eat you!  
 Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry. Isabel didn't scream or scurry.  
 She washed her hands and she straightened her hair up,  
 Then Isabel quietly ate the bear up.

Once in a night as black as pitch  
 Isabel met a wicked old witch.  
 The witch's face was cross and wrinkled,  
 The witch's gums with teeth were sprinkled.  
 Ho, ho, Isabel! the old witch crowed,  
 I'll turn you into an ugly toad!  
 Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry, Isabel didn't scream or scurry,  
 She showed no rage and she showed no rancor,  
 But she turned the witch into milk and drank her.

Isabel met a hideous giant,  
 Isabel continued self reliant.  
 The giant was hairy, the giant was horrid,  
 He had one eye in the middle of his forehead.  
 Good morning, Isabel, the giant said,  
 I'll grind your bones to make my bread.  
 Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry, Isabel didn't scream or scurry.  
 She nibbled the zwieback that she always fed off,  
 And when it was gone, she cut the giant's head off.

Isabel met a troublesome doctor,  
 He punched and he poked till he really shocked her.  
 The doctor's talk was of coughs and chills  
 And the doctor's satchel bulged with pills.  
 The doctor said unto Isabel,  
 Swallow this, it will make you well.  
 Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry, Isabel didn't scream or scurry.  
 She took those pills from the pill concocter,  
 And Isabel calmly cured the doctor.