

Classic Poetry Series

Roald Dahl
- poems -

Publication Date:

2004

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Roald Dahl(13 September 1916 – 23 November 1990)

a British novelist, short story writer, fighter pilot and screenwriter.

His parents were from Norway, but he was born in Wales, 1916. The family used to spend the summer holidays on a little Norwegian island, swimming, fishing and going by boat. When Roald was four years old, his father died, so his mother had to organise the trip alone for herself and her six children.

At school, he was always homesick. At St. Peter's Prep School, all the letters home were controlled by the headmaster, and afterwards at Repton Public School, he had to wear a horrible school uniform [with braces, waist coat, hat and lots of buttons, all black]. The younger boys were often punished by the headmaster and the older boys called prefects. Roald lays much emphasis on describing the school-beatups in his book. You could get beaten for small mistakes like leaving a football sock on the floor, for burning the prefect's toast at teatime or for forgetting to change into house-shoes at six o'clock. The most terrible beatings, however, were given by the headmaster himself, who was also a clergyman. He was so cruel, that he made a pause after each beat to smoke his pipe and talk about sins and wrongdoing, while the boy had to remain kneeling. After ten beats, the victim was told to wash away the blood first, before putting on the trousers. By the way, this headmaster became later the Archbishop of Canterbury. Roald Dahl kept telling himself, that if this was one of God's chosen men, there was something going very wrong about the whole business.

After school, Roald Dahl didn't go to university, but applied for a job at the Shell company, because he was sure they would send him abroad. He was sent to East Africa, where he got the adventure he wanted: great heat, crocodiles, snakes and safaries. He lived in the jungle, learned to speak Swahili and suffered from malaria. When the second World War broke out, he went to Nairobi to join the Royal Air Force. He was a fighter pilot and shot down German planes and got shot down himself. After 6 months in hospital he flew again.

In 1942, he went to Washington as Assistant Air Attaché. There, he started writing short stories. In 1943, he published his first children's book "The Gremlins " with Walt Disney and in 1945 his first book of short stories appeared in the US. His marriage with the actress Patricia Neal was unhappy. None of their kids survived, his wife suffered a stroke. When she regained consciousness, she could hardly read, count and talk. But Roald managed to nurse her back to health, so that she could act again. Nevertheless, he got divorced in 1983 and

married Felicity Crosland. He received several awards, such as the Edgar Allan Poe Award.

His collections of short stories have been translated into many languages and have been best-sellers all over the world. Among them are "Someone Like You ", "Sweet Mystery Of Life ", "Kiss Kiss " and "Roald Dahl's Book of Ghost Stories ". He wrote TV series like "Tales of the Unexpected " and the novel "My Uncle Oswald ".

His books are mostly fantasy, and full of imagination. They are always a little cruel, but never without humour - a thrilling mixture of the grotesque and comic. A frequent motif is, that people are not, what they appear to be. Mary Maloney in "Lamb to the Slaughter ", for example, is not a friendly widow, but a clever murderess. In his stories, the background is perfectly worked out: details are very close to reality.

Roald Dahl didn't only write books for grown-ups, but also for children, such as "James and the Giant Peach ", "Fantastic Mr. Fox " and "The Gremlins ". About his children's stories he said once: "I make my points by exaggerating wildly. That's the only way to get through to children." Roald Dahl is perhaps the most popular and best-selling children's book author. However, these stories are so sarcastic and humorous, that also adults appreciate reading them.

Roald Dahl died in November 1990. The Times called him "one of the most widely read and influential writers of our generation"

"Mike Teavee..."

The most important thing we've learned,
So far as children are concerned,
Is never, NEVER, NEVER let
Them near your television set --
Or better still, just don't install
The idiotic thing at all.
In almost every house we've been,
We've watched them gaping at the screen.
They loll and slop and lounge about,
And stare until their eyes pop out.
(Last week in someone's place we saw
A dozen eyeballs on the floor.)
They sit and stare and stare and sit
Until they're hypnotised by it,
Until they're absolutely drunk
With all that shocking ghastly junk.
Oh yes, we know it keeps them still,
They don't climb out the window sill,
They never fight or kick or punch,
They leave you free to cook the lunch
And wash the dishes in the sink --
But did you ever stop to think,
To wonder just exactly what
This does to your beloved tot?
IT ROTTS THE SENSE IN THE HEAD!
IT KILLS IMAGINATION DEAD!
IT CLOGS AND CLUTTERS UP THE MIND!
IT MAKES A CHILD SO DULL AND BLIND
HE CAN NO LONGER UNDERSTAND
A FANTASY, A FAIRYLAND!
HIS BRAIN BECOMES AS SOFT AS CHEESE!
HIS POWERS OF THINKING RUST AND FREEZE!
HE CANNOT THINK -- HE ONLY SEES!
'All right!' you'll cry. 'All right!' you'll say,
'But if we take the set away,
What shall we do to entertain
Our darling children? Please explain!'
We'll answer this by asking you,
'What used the darling ones to do?

'How used they keep themselves contented
Before this monster was invented?'
Have you forgotten? Don't you know?
We'll say it very loud and slow:
THEY ... USED ... TO ... READ! They'd READ and READ,
AND READ and READ, and then proceed
To READ some more. Great Scott! Gadzooks!
One half their lives was reading books!
The nursery shelves held books galore!
Books cluttered up the nursery floor!
And in the bedroom, by the bed,
More books were waiting to be read!
Such wondrous, fine, fantastic tales
Of dragons, gypsies, queens, and whales
And treasure isles, and distant shores
Where smugglers rowed with muffled oars,
And pirates wearing purple pants,
And sailing ships and elephants,
And cannibals crouching 'round the pot,
Stirring away at something hot.
(It smells so good, what can it be?
Good gracious, it's Penelope.)
The younger ones had Beatrix Potter
With Mr. Tod, the dirty rotter,
And Squirrel Nutkin, Pigling Bland,
And Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle and-
Just How The Camel Got His Hump,
And How the Monkey Lost His Rump,
And Mr. Toad, and bless my soul,
There's Mr. Rat and Mr. Mole-
Oh, books, what books they used to know,
Those children living long ago!
So please, oh please, we beg, we pray,
Go throw your TV set away,
And in its place you can install
A lovely bookshelf on the wall.
Then fill the shelves with lots of books,
Ignoring all the dirty looks,
The screams and yells, the bites and kicks,
And children hitting you with sticks-
Fear not, because we promise you
That, in about a week or two

Of having nothing else to do,
They'll now begin to feel the need
Of having something to read.
And once they start -- oh boy, oh boy!
You watch the slowly growing joy
That fills their hearts. They'll grow so keen
They'll wonder what they'd ever seen
In that ridiculous machine,
That nauseating, foul, unclean,
Repulsive television screen!
And later, each and every kid
Will love you more for what you did.

Roald Dahl

Attention Please! Attention Please!

'Attention please! Attention please!
Don't dare to talk! Don't dare to sneeze!
Don't doze or daydream! Stay awake!
Your health, your very life's at stake!
Ho-ho, you say, they can't mean me.
Ha-ha, we answer, wait and see.

Did any of you ever meet
A child called Goldie Pinklesweet?
Who on her seventh birthday went
To stay with Granny down in Kent.
At lunchtime on the second day
Of dearest little Goldie's stay,
Granny announced, 'I'm going down
To do some shopping in the town.'
(D'you know why Granny didn't tell
The child to come along as well?
She's going to the nearest inn
To buy herself a double gin.)

So out she creeps. She shuts the door.
And Goldie, after making sure
That she is really by herself,
Goes quickly to the medicine shelf,
And there, her little greedy eyes
See pills of every shape and size,
Such fascinating colours too --
Some green, some pink, some brown, some blue.
'All right,' she says, 'let's try the brown,'
She takes one pill and gulps it down.
'Yum-yum!' she cries. 'Hooray! What fun!
They're chocolate-coated, every one!'
She gobbles five, she gobbles ten,
She stops her gobbling only when
The last pill's gone. There are no more.
Slowly she rises from the floor.
She stops. She hiccups. Dear, oh dear,
She starts to feel a trifle queer.

You see, how could young Goldie know,
For nobody had told her so,
That Grandmama, her old relation
Suffered from frightful constipation.
This meant that every night she'd give
Herself a powerful laxative,
And all the medicines that she'd bought
Were naturally of this sort.
The pink and red and blue and green
Were all extremely strong and mean.
But far more fierce and meaner still,
Was Granny's little chocolate pill.
Its blast effect was quite uncanny.
It used to shake up even Granny.
In point of fact she did not dare
To use them more than twice a year.
So can you wonder little Goldie
Began to feel a wee bit moldy?

Inside her tummy, something stirred.
A funny gurgling sound was heard,
And then, oh dear, from deep within,
The ghastly rumbling sounds begin!
They rumbilate and roar and boom!
They bounce and echo round the room!
The floorboards shake and from the wall
Some bits of paint and plaster fall.
Explosions, whistles, awful bangs
Were followed by the loudest clangs.
(A man next door was heard to say,
'A thunderstorm is on the way.')But on and on the rumbling goes.
A window cracks, a lamp-bulb blows.
Young Goldie clutched herself and cried,
'There's something wrong with my inside!'
This was, we very greatly fear,
The understatement of the year.
For wouldn't any child feel crummy,
With loud explosions in her tummy?

Granny, at half past two, came in,
Weaving a little from the gin,

But even so she quickly saw
The empty bottle on the floor.
'My precious laxatives!' she cried.
'I don't feel well,' the girl replied.
Angrily Grandma shook her head.
'I'm really not surprised,' she said.
'Why can't you leave my pills alone?'
With that, she grabbed the telephone
And shouted, 'Listen, send us quick
An ambulance! A child is sick!
It's number fifty, Fontwell Road!
Come fast! I think she might explode!'

We're sure you do not wish to hear
About the hospital and where
They did a lot of horrid things
With stomach-pumps and rubber rings.
Let's answer what you want to know;
Did Goldie live or did she go?
The doctors gathered round her bed,
'There's really not much hope,' they said.
'She's going, going, gone!' they cried.
'She's had her chips! She's dead! She's died!'
'I'm not so sure,' the child replied.
And all at once she opened wide
Her great big bluish eyes and sighed,
And gave the anxious docs a wink,
And said, 'I'll be okay, I think.'

So Goldie lived and back she went
At first to Granny's place in Kent.
Her father came the second day
And fetched her in a Chevrolet,
And drove her to their home in Dover.
But Goldie's troubles were not over.
You see, if someone takes enough
Of any highly dangerous stuff,
One will invariably find
Some traces of it left behind.
It pains us greatly to relate
That Goldie suffered from this fate.
She'd taken such a massive fill

Of this unpleasant kind of pill,
It got into her blood and bones,
It messed up all her chromosomes,
It made her constantly upset,
And she could never really get
The beastly stuff to go away.
And so the girl was forced to stay
For seven hours every day
Within the everlasting gloom
Of what we call The Ladies Room.
And after all, the W.C.
Is not the gayest place to be.
So now, before it is too late.
Take heed of Goldie's dreadful fate.
And seriously, all jokes apart,
Do promise us across your heart
That you will never help yourself
To medicine from the medicine shelf.'

Roald Dahl

Augustus Gloop! Augustus Gloop

'Augustus Gloop! Augustus Gloop!
The great big greedy nincompoop!
How long could we allow this beast
To gorge and guzzle, feed and feast
On everything he wanted to?
Great Scott! It simply wouldn't do!
However long this pig might live,
We're positive he'd never give
Even the smallest bit of fun
Or happiness to anyone.
So what we do in cases such
As this, we use the gentle touch,
And carefully we take the brat
And turn him into something that
Will give great pleasure to us all—
A doll, for instance, or a ball,
Or marbles or a rocking horse.
But this revolting boy, of course,
Was so unutterably vile,
So greedy, foul, and infantile
He left a most disgusting taste
Inside our mouths, and so in haste
We chose a thing that, come what may,
Would take the nasty taste away.
'Come on!' we cried, 'The time is ripe
To send him shooting up the pipe!
He has to go! It has to be!'
And very soon, he's going to see
Inside the room to which he's gone
Some funny things are going on.
But don't, dear children, be alarmed;
Augustus Gloop will not be harmed,
Although, of course, we must admit
He will be altered quite a bit.
He'll be quite changed from what he's been,
When he goes through the fudge machine:
Slowly, the wheels go round and round,
The cogs begin to grind and pound;
A hundred knives go slice, slice, slice;

We add some sugar, cream, and spice;
We boil him for a minute more,
Until we're absolutely sure
That all the greed and all the gall
Is boiled away for once and all.
Then out he comes! And now! By grace!
A miracle has taken place!
This boy, who only just before
Was loathed by men from shore to shore,
This greedy brute, this louse's ear,
Is loved by people everywhere!
For who could hate or bear a grudge
Against a luscious bit of fudge?'

Roald Dahl

Candy Man

Who can take a sunrise, sprinkle it with dew
Cover it in chocolate and a miracle or two
The candy man, the candy man can
The candy man can 'cause he mixes it with love
And makes the world taste good

Who can take a rainbow, wrap it in a sigh
Soak it in the sun and make a strawberry-lemon pie
The candy man?
The candy man, the candy man can
The candy man can 'cause he mixes it with love
And makes the world taste good

Willy Wonka makes everything he bakes
Satisfying and delicious
Talk about your childhood wishes
You can even eat the dishes

Who can take tomorrow, dip it in a dream
Separate the sorrow and collect up all the cream
The candy man, Willy Wonka can, the candy man can
The candy man can 'cause he mixes it with love
And makes the world taste good

And the world tastes good'
Cause the candy man thinks it should

Roald Dahl

Cinderella

I guess you think you know this story.
You don't. The real one's much more gory.
The phoney one, the one you know,
Was cooked up years and years ago,
And made to sound all soft and sappy
just to keep the children happy.
Mind you, they got the first bit right,
The bit where, in the dead of night,
The Ugly Sisters, jewels and all,
Departed for the Palace Ball,
While darling little Cinderella
Was locked up in a slimy cellar,
Where rats who wanted things to eat,
Began to nibble at her feet.

She bellowed 'Help!' and 'Let me out!
The Magic Fairy heard her shout.
Appearing in a blaze of light,
She said: 'My dear, are you all right?'
'All right?' cried Cindy . 'Can't you see
'I feel as rotten as can be!'
She beat her fist against the wall,
And shouted, 'Get me to the Ball!
'There is a Disco at the Palace!
'The rest have gone and I am jealous!
'I want a dress! I want a coach!
'And earrings and a diamond brooch!
'And silver slippers, two of those!
'And lovely nylon panty hose!
'Done up like that I'll guarantee
'The handsome Prince will fall for me!'
The Fairy said, 'Hang on a tick.'
She gave her wand a mighty flick
And quickly, in no time at all,
Cindy was at the Palace Ball!

It made the Ugly Sisters wince
To see her dancing with the Prince.
She held him very tight and pressed

herself against his manly chest.
The Prince himself was turned to pulp,
All he could do was gasp and gulp.
Then midnight struck. She shouted, 'Heck!
I've got to run to save my neck!'
The Prince cried, 'No! Alas! Alack!'
He grabbed her dress to hold her back.
As Cindy shouted, 'Let me go!'
The dress was ripped from head to toe.

She ran out in her underwear,
And lost one slipper on the stair.
The Prince was on it like a dart,
He pressed it to his pounding heart,
'The girl this slipper fits,' he cried,
'Tomorrow morn shall be my bride!
I'll visit every house in town
'Until I've tracked the maiden down!'
Then rather carelessly, I fear,
He placed it on a crate of beer.

At once, one of the Ugly Sisters,
(The one whose face was blotched with blisters)
Sneaked up and grabbed the dainty shoe,
And quickly flushed it down the loo.
Then in its place she calmly put
The slipper from her own left foot.
Ah ha, you see, the plot grows thicker,
And Cindy's luck starts looking sicker.

Next day, the Prince went charging down
To knock on all the doors in town.
In every house, the tension grew.
Who was the owner of the shoe?
The shoe was long and very wide.
(A normal foot got lost inside.)
Also it smelled a wee bit icky.
(The owner's feet were hot and sticky.)
Thousands of eager people came
To try it on, but all in vain.
Now came the Ugly Sisters' go.
One tried it on. The Prince screamed, 'No!'

But she screamed, 'Yes! It fits! Whoopee!
'So now you've got to marry me!'
The Prince went white from ear to ear.
He muttered, 'Let me out of here.'
'Oh no you don't! You made a vow!
'There's no way you can back out now!'
'Off with her head!'The Prince roared back.
They chopped it off with one big whack.
This pleased the Prince. He smiled and said,
'She's prettier without her head.'
Then up came Sister Number Two,
Who yelled, 'Now I will try the shoe!'
'Try this instead!' the Prince yelled back.
He swung his trusty sword and smack
Her head went crashing to the ground.
It bounced a bit and rolled around.
In the kitchen, peeling spuds,
Cinderella heard the thuds
Of bouncing heads upon the floor,
And poked her own head round the door.
'What's all the racket? 'Cindy cried.
'Mind your own bizz,' the Prince replied.
Poor Cindy's heart was torn to shreds.
My Prince! she thought. He chops off heads!
How could I marry anyone
Who does that sort of thing for fun?

The Prince cried, 'Who's this dirty slut?
'Off with her nut! Off with her nut!'
Just then, all in a blaze of light,
The Magic Fairy hove in sight,
Her Magic Wand went swoosh and swish!
'Cindy! 'she cried, 'come make a wish!
'Wish anything and have no doubt
'That I will make it come about!'
Cindy answered, 'Oh kind Fairy,
'This time I shall be more wary.
'No more Princes, no more money.
'I have had my taste of honey.
I'm wishing for a decent man.
'They're hard to find. D'you think you can?'
Within a minute, Cinderella

Was married to a lovely feller,
A simple jam maker by trade,
Who sold good home-made marmalade.
Their house was filled with smiles and laughter
And they were happy ever after.

Roald Dahl

Dear Friends, We Surely All Agree

'Dear friends, we surely all agree
There's almost nothing worse to see
Than some repulsive little bum
Who's always chewing chewing gum.
(It's very near as bad as those
Who sit around and pick the nose).
So please believe us when we say
That chewing gum will never pay;
This sticky habit's bound to send
The chewer to a sticky end.
Did any of you ever know
A person called Miss Bigelow?
This dreadful woman saw no wrong
In chewing, chewing all day long.
She chewed while bathing in the tub,
She chewed while dancing at her club,
She chewed in church and on the bus;
It really was quite ludicrous!
And when she couldn't find her gum,
She'd chew up the linoleum,
Or anything that happened near—
A pair of boots, the postman's ear,
Or other people's underclothes,
And once she chewed her boy friend's nose.
She went on chewing till, at last,
Her chewing muscles grew so vast
That from her face her giant chin
Stuck out just like a violin.
For years and years she chewed away,
Consuming fifty packs a day,
Until one summer's eve, alas,
A horrid business came to pass.
Miss Bigelow went late to bed,
For half an hour she lay and read,
Chewing and chewing all the while
Like some great clockwork crocodile.
At last, she put her gum away
Upon a special little tray,
And settled back and went to sleep—

(She managed this by counting sheep).
But now, how strange! Although she slept,
Those massive jaws of hers still kept
On chewing, chewing through the night,
Even with nothing there to bite.
They were, you see, in such a groove
They positively had to move.
And very grim it was to hear
In pitchy darkness, loud and clear,
This sleeping woman's great big trap
Opening and shutting, snap-snap-snap!
Faster and faster, chop-chop-chop,
The noise went on, it wouldn't stop.
Until at last her jaws decide
To pause and open extra wide,
And with the most tremendous chew
They bit the lady's tongue in two.
Thereafter, just from chewing gum,
Miss Bigelow was always dumb,
And spent her life shut up in some
Disgusting sanatorium.
And that is why we'll try so hard
To save Miss Violet Beauregard
From suffering an equal fate.
She's still quite young. It's not too late,
Provided she survives the cure.
We hope she does. We can't be sure.'

Roald Dahl

Down They Go...

Down they go!
Hail and snow!
Freezes and sneezes and noses will blow!

Roald Dahl

Excerpt –

'This famous wicked little tale
Should never have been put on sale
It is a mystery to me
Why loving parents cannot see
That this is actually a book
About a brazen little crook...'

'...Now just imagine how you'd feel
If you had cooked a lovely meal,
Delicious porridge, steaming hot,
Fresh coffee in the coffee pot,
With maybe toast and marmalade,
The table beautifully laid,
One place for you and one for dad,
Another for your little lad.
Then dad cries, 'Golly-gosh! Gee whizz!
'Oh cripes! How hot this porridge is!
'Let's take a walk along the street
'Until it's cool enough to eat.'
He adds, 'An early morning stroll
'Is good for people on the whole.
'It makes your appetite improve
'It also helps your bowels move.'
No proper wife would dare to question
Such a sensible suggestion,
Above all not at breakfast-time
When men are seldom at their prime.
No sooner are you down the road
Than Goldilocks, that little toad
That nosey thieving little louse,
Comes sneaking in your empty house....'

'...(Here comes the next catastrophe.)
Most educated people choose
To rid themselves of socks and shoes
Before they clamber into bed.
But Goldie didn't give a shred.
Her filthy shoes were thick with grime,
And mud and mush and slush and slime.

Worse still, upon the heel of one
Was something that a dog had done.
I say once more, what would you think
If all this horrid dirt and stink
Was smeared upon your eiderdown
By this revolting little clown?
(The famous story has no clues
To show the girl removed her shoes.)

Oh, what a tale of crime on crime!
Let's check it for a second time.

Crime One, the prosecution's case:
She breaks and enters someone's place.

Crime Two, the prosecutor notes:
She steals a bowl of porridge oats.

Crime Three: She breaks a precious chair
Belonging to the Baby Bear.

Crime Four: She smears each spotless sheet
With filthy messes from her feet.

A judge would say without a blink,
'Ten years hard labour in the clink!'
But in the book, as you will see,
The little beast gets off scot-free,
While tiny children near and far
Shout 'Goody-good! Hooray! Hurrah!'
'Poor darling Goldilocks!' they say,
'Thank goodness that she got away!'
Myself, I think I'd rather send
Young Goldie to a sticky end.
'Oh daddy!' cried the Baby Bear,
'My porridge gone! It isn't fair!'
'Then go upstairs,' the Big Bear said,
'Your porridge is upon the bed.
'But as it's inside mademoiselle,
'You'll have to eat her up as well.'

Hey Diddle Diddle

Hey diddle diddle
We're all on the fiddle
And never get up until noon.
We only take cash
Which we carefully stash
And we work by the light of the moon.

Roald Dahl

Hot And Cold

A woman who my mother knows
Came in and took off all her clothes.

Said I, not being very old,
'By golly gosh, you must be cold!'

'No, no!' she cried. 'Indeed I'm not!
I'm feeling devilishly hot!'

Roald Dahl

I Had A Little Nut-Tree,

I had a little nut-tree,
Nothing would it bear.
I searched in all its branches,
But not a nut was there.

'Oh, little tree,' I begged,
'Give me just a few.'
The little tree looked down at me
And whispered, 'Nuts to you.'

Roald Dahl

I Want It Now

Gooses, geeses

I want my geese to lay gold eggs for easter

At least a hundred a day

And by the way

I want a feast

I want a bean feast

Cream buns and doughnuts

And fruitcake with no nuts

So good you could go nuts

No, now

I want a ball

I want a party

Pink macaroons

And a million balloons

And performing baboons and

Give it to me now

I want the world

I want the whole world

I want to lock it

All up in my pocket

It's my bar of chocolate

Give it to me now

I want today

I want tomorrow

I want to wear 'em

Like braids in my hair and

I don't want to share 'em

I want a party with roomfuls of laughter

Ten thousand tons of ice cream

And if I don't get the things I am after

I'm going to scream

I want the works

I want the whole works
Presents and prizes
And sweets and surprises
Of all shapes and sizes

And now

Don't care how, I want it now
Don't care how, I want it now

Roald Dahl

If You Are Old And Have The Shakes

'If you are old and have the shakes,
If all your bones are full of aches,
If you can hardly walk at all,
If living drives you up the wall,
If you're a grump and full of spite,
If you're a human parasite,
THEN WHAT YOU NEED IS WONKA-VITE!
Your eyes will shine, your hair will grow,
Your face and skin will start to glow,
Your rotten teeth will all drop out
And in their place new teeth will sprout.
Those rolls of fat around your hips
Will vanish, and your wrinkled lips
Will get so soft and rosy-pink
That all the boys will smile and wink
And whisper secretly that this
Is just the girl they want to kiss!
But wait! For that is not the most
Important thing of which to boast.
Good looks you'll have, we've told you so,
But looks aren't everything, you know.
Each pill, as well, to you will give
AN EXTRA TWENTY YEARS TO LIVE!
So come, old friends, and do what's right!
Let's make your lives as bright as bright!
Let's take a dose of this delight!
This heavenly magic dynamite!
You can't go wrong, you must go right!
IT'S WILLY WONKA'S WONKA-VITE!'

Roald Dahl

I've Got A Golden Ticket

I never thought my life could be
Anything but catastrophe
But suddenly I begin to see
A bit of good luck for me

'Cause I've got a golden ticket
I've got a golden twinkle in my eye

I never had a chance to shine
Never a happy song to sing
But suddenly half the world is mine
What an amazing thing

'Cause I've got a golden ticket
It's ours, Charlie
I've got a golden sun up in the sky

I never thought I'd see the day
When I would face the world and say
Good morning, look at the sun
I never thought that I would be
Slap in the lap of luxury'
Cause I'd have said it couldn't be done
But it can be done

I never dreamed that I would climb
Over the moon in ecstasy
But nevertheless, it's there that I'm
Shortly about to be

'Cause I've got a golden ticket
I've got a golden chance to make my way
And with a golden ticket, it's a golden day

Good morning, look at the sun'
Cause I'd have said it couldn't be done
But it can be done

I never dreamed that I would climb

Over the moon in ecstasy
But nevertheless, it's there that I'm
Shortly about to be

'Cause I've got a golden ticket'
Cause I've got a golden ticket
I've got a golden chance to make my way
And with a golden ticket, it's a golden day

Roald Dahl

Little Red Riding Hood And The Wolf

As soon as Wolf began to feel
That he would like a decent meal,
He went and knocked on Grandma's door.
When Grandma opened it, she saw
The sharp white teeth, the horrid grin,
And Wolfie said, 'May I come in?'
Poor Grandmamma was terrified,
'He's going to eat me up!' she cried.
And she was absolutely right.
He ate her up in one big bite.
But Grandmamma was small and tough,
And Wolfie wailed, 'That's not enough!
I haven't yet begun to feel
That I have had a decent meal!'
He ran around the kitchen yelping,
'I've got to have a second helping!'

Then added with a frightful leer,
'I'm therefore going to wait right here
Till Little Miss Red Riding Hood
Comes home from walking in the wood.'

He quickly put on Grandma's clothes,
(Of course he hadn't eaten those).
He dressed himself in coat and hat.
He put on shoes, and after that,
He even brushed and curled his hair,
Then sat himself in Grandma's chair.

In came the little girl in red.
She stopped. She stared. And then she said,
'What great big ears you have, Grandma.'
'All the better to hear you with,'
the Wolf replied.
'What great big eyes you have, Grandma.'
said Little Red Riding Hood.
'All the better to see you with,'
the Wolf replied.
He sat there watching her and smiled.

He thought, I'm going to eat this child.
Compared with her old Grandmamma,
She's going to taste like caviar.

Then Little Red Riding Hood said, '
But Grandma, what a lovely great big
furry coat you have on.'

'That's wrong!' cried Wolf.
'Have you forgot
To tell me what BIG TEETH I've got?
Ah well, no matter what you say,
I'm going to eat you anyway.'

The small girl smiles. One eyelid flickers.
She whips a pistol from her knickers.
She aims it at the creature's head,
And bang bang bang, she shoots him dead.

A few weeks later, in the wood,
I came across Miss Riding Hood.
But what a change! No cloak of red,
No silly hood upon her head.
She said, 'Hello, and do please note
My lovely furry wolfskin coat.'

Roald Dahl

Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary

Mary, Mary, quite contrary
How does your garden grow?
'I live with my brat in a high-rise flat,
So how in the world would I know.'

Roald Dahl

My Teacher Wasn'T Half As Nice As Yours Seems To Be

'My teacher wasn't half as nice as yours seems to be.
His name was Mister Unsworth and he taught us history.
And when you didn't know a date he'd get you by the ear
And start to twist while you sat there quite paralysed with fear.
He'd twist and twist and twist your ear and twist it more and more.
Until at last the ear came off and landed on the floor.
Our class was full of one-eared boys. I'm certain there were eight.
Who'd had them twisted off because they didn't know a date.
So let us now praise teachers who today are all so fine
And yours in particular is totally divine.'

Roald Dahl

Oh You Knid, You Are Vile And Vermicious....

Oh you Knid, you are vile and vermicious!
You are slimy and soggy and squishous!
But what do we care
'Cause you can't get in here,
So hop it and don't get ambitious!

Roald Dahl

Pure Imagination

Come with me and you'll be
In a world of pure imagination
Take a look and you'll see
Into your imagination

We'll begin with a spin
Trav'ling in the world of my creation
What we'll see will defy
Explanation

{Refrain}

If you want to view paradise
Simply look around and view it
Anything you want to, do it
Want to change the world, there's nothing to it

There is no life I know
To compare with pure imagination
Living there, you'll be free
If you truly wish to be

{Refrain}

There is no life I know
To compare with pure imagination
Living there, you'll be free
If you truly wish to be

Roald Dahl

St Ives

As I was going to St Ives
I met a man with seven wives
Said he, 'I think it's much more fun
Than getting stuck with only one.'

Roald Dahl

Television

The most important thing we've learned,
So far as children are concerned,
Is never, NEVER, NEVER let
Them near your television set --
Or better still, just don't install
The idiotic thing at all.
In almost every house we've been,
We've watched them gaping at the screen.
They loll and slop and lounge about,
And stare until their eyes pop out.
(Last week in someone's place we saw
A dozen eyeballs on the floor.)
They sit and stare and stare and sit
Until they're hypnotised by it,
Until they're absolutely drunk
With all that shocking ghastly junk.
Oh yes, we know it keeps them still,
They don't climb out the window sill,
They never fight or kick or punch,
They leave you free to cook the lunch
And wash the dishes in the sink --
But did you ever stop to think,
To wonder just exactly what
This does to your beloved tot?
IT ROTTS THE SENSE IN THE HEAD!
IT KILLS IMAGINATION DEAD!
IT CLOGS AND CLUTTERS UP THE MIND!
IT MAKES A CHILD SO DULL AND BLIND
HE CAN NO LONGER UNDERSTAND
A FANTASY, A FAIRYLAND!
HIS BRAIN BECOMES AS SOFT AS CHEESE!
HIS POWERS OF THINKING RUST AND FREEZE!
HE CANNOT THINK -- HE ONLY SEES!
'All right!' you'll cry. 'All right!' you'll say,
'But if we take the set away,
What shall we do to entertain
Our darling children? Please explain!'
We'll answer this by asking you,
'What used the darling ones to do?

'How used they keep themselves contented
Before this monster was invented?'
Have you forgotten? Don't you know?
We'll say it very loud and slow:
THEY ... USED ... TO ... READ! They'd READ and READ,
AND READ and READ, and then proceed
To READ some more. Great Scott! Gadzooks!
One half their lives was reading books!
The nursery shelves held books galore!
Books cluttered up the nursery floor!
And in the bedroom, by the bed,
More books were waiting to be read!
Such wondrous, fine, fantastic tales
Of dragons, gypsies, queens, and whales
And treasure isles, and distant shores
Where smugglers rowed with muffled oars,
And pirates wearing purple pants,
And sailing ships and elephants,
And cannibals crouching 'round the pot,
Stirring away at something hot.
(It smells so good, what can it be?
Good gracious, it's Penelope.)
The younger ones had Beatrix Potter
With Mr. Tod, the dirty rotter,
And Squirrel Nutkin, Pigling Bland,
And Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle and-
Just How The Camel Got His Hump,
And How the Monkey Lost His Rump,
And Mr. Toad, and bless my soul,
There's Mr. Rat and Mr. Mole-
Oh, books, what books they used to know,
Those children living long ago!
So please, oh please, we beg, we pray,
Go throw your TV set away,
And in its place you can install
A lovely bookshelf on the wall.
Then fill the shelves with lots of books,
Ignoring all the dirty looks,
The screams and yells, the bites and kicks,
And children hitting you with sticks-
Fear not, because we promise you
That, in about a week or two

Of having nothing else to do,
They'll now begin to feel the need
Of having something to read.
And once they start -- oh boy, oh boy!
You watch the slowly growing joy
That fills their hearts. They'll grow so keen
They'll wonder what they'd ever seen
In that ridiculous machine,
That nauseating, foul, unclean,
Repulsive television screen!
And later, each and every kid
Will love you more for what you did.

Roald Dahl

The Crocodile

'No animal is half as vile
As Crocky-Wock, the crocodile.
On Saturdays he likes to crunch
Six juicy children for his lunch
And he especially enjoys
Just three of each, three girls, three boys.
He smears the boys (to make them hot)
With mustard from the mustard pot.
But mustard doesn't go with girls,
It tastes all wrong with plaits and curls.
With them, what goes extremely well
Is butterscotch and caramel.
It's such a super marvelous treat
When boys are hot and girls are sweet.
At least that's Crocky's point of view
He ought to know. He's had a few.
That's all for now. It's time for bed.
Lie down and rest your sleepy head.
Ssh. Listen. What is that I hear,
Galumphing softly up the stair?

Go lock the door and fetch my gun!
Go on child, hurry! Quickly run!
No stop! Stand back! He's coming in!
Oh, look, that greasy greenish skin!
The shining teeth, the greedy smile!
It's Crocky-Wock, the Crocodile!

Roald Dahl

The Pig

In England once there lived a big
And wonderfully clever pig.
To everybody it was plain
That Piggy had a massive brain.
He worked out sums inside his head,
There was no book he hadn't read.
He knew what made an airplane fly,
He knew how engines worked and why.
He knew all this, but in the end
One question drove him round the bend:
He simply couldn't puzzle out
What LIFE was really all about.
What was the reason for his birth?
Why was he placed upon this earth?
His giant brain went round and round.
Alas, no answer could be found.
Till suddenly one wondrous night.
All in a flash he saw the light.
He jumped up like a ballet dancer
And yelled, 'By gum, I've got the answer! '
'They want my bacon slice by slice
'To sell at a tremendous price!
'They want my tender juicy chops
'To put in all the butcher's shops!
'They want my pork to make a roast
'And that's the part'll cost the most!
'They want my sausages in strings!
'They even want my chitterlings!
'The butcher's shop! The carving knife!
'That is the reason for my life! '
Such thoughts as these are not designed
To give a pig great peace of mind.
Next morning, in comes Farmer Bland,
A pail of pigswill in his hand,
And piggy with a mighty roar,
Bashes the farmer to the floor...
Now comes the rather grisly bit
So let's not make too much of it,
Except that you must understand

That Piggy did eat Farmer Bland,
He ate him up from head to toe,
Chewing the pieces nice and slow.
It took an hour to reach the feet,
Because there was so much to eat,
And when he finished, Pig, of course,
Felt absolutely no remorse.
Slowly he scratched his brainy head
And with a little smile he said,
'I had a fairly powerful hunch
'That he might have me for his lunch.
'And so, because I feared the worst,
'I thought I'd better eat him first.'

Roald Dahl

The Rowing Song

Round the world and home again
That's the sailor's way
Faster faster, faster faster

There's no earthly way of knowing
Which direction we are going
There's no knowing where we're rowing
Or which way the river's flowing

Is it raining, is it snowing
Is a hurricane a-blowing

Not a speck of light is showing
So the danger must be growing
Are the fires of Hell a-glowing
Is the grisly reaper mowing

Yes, the danger must be growing
For the rowers keep on rowing
And they're certainly not showing
Any signs that they are slowing.

Roald Dahl

The Three Little Pigs

The animal I really dig,
Above all others is the pig.
Pigs are noble. Pigs are clever,
Pigs are courteous. However,
Now and then, to break this rule,
One meets a pig who is a fool.
What, for example, would you say,
If strolling through the woods one day,
Right there in front of you you saw
A pig who'd built his house of STRAW?
The Wolf who saw it licked his lips,
And said, 'That pig has had his chips.'
'Little pig, little pig, let me come in!'
'No, no, by the hairs on my chinny-chin-chin!'
'Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!'

The little pig began to pray,
But Wolfie blew his house away.
He shouted, 'Bacon, pork and ham!
Oh, what a lucky Wolf I am!'
And though he ate the pig quite fast,
He carefully kept the tail till last.
Wolf wandered on, a trifle bloated.
Surprise, surprise, for soon he noted
Another little house for pigs,
And this one had been built of TWIGS!

'Little pig, little pig, let me come in!'
'No, no, by the hairs on my chinny-chin-chin!'
'Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!'

The Wolf said, 'Okay, here we go!'
He then began to blow and blow.
The little pig began to squeal.
He cried, 'Oh Wolf, you've had one meal!
Why can't we talk and make a deal?
The Wolf replied, 'Not on your nelly!'
And soon the pig was in his belly.

'Two juicy little pigs!' Wolf cried,
'But still I'm not quite satisfied!
I know how full my tummy's bulging,
But oh, how I adore indulging.'
So creeping quietly as a mouse,
The Wolf approached another house,
A house which also had inside
A little piggy trying to hide.
'You'll not get me!' the Piggy cried.
'I'll blow you down!' the Wolf replied.
'You'll need,' Pig said, 'a lot of puff,
And I don't think you've got enough.'
Wolf huffed and puffed and blew and blew.
The house stayed up as good as new.
'If I can't blow it down,' Wolf said,
I'll have to blow it up instead.
I'll come back in the dead of night
And blow it up with dynamite!
Pig cried, 'You brute! I might have known!'
Then, picking up the telephone,
He dialed as quickly as he could
The number of red Riding Hood.

'Hello,' she said. 'Who's speaking? Who?
Oh, hello, Piggy, how d'you do?'
Pig cried, 'I need your help, Miss Hood!
Oh help me, please! D'you think you could?'
'I'll try of course,' Miss Hood replied.
'What's on your mind...?' 'A Wolf!' Pig cried.
'I know you've dealt with wolves before,
And now I've got one at my door!'

'My darling Pig,' she said, 'my sweet,
That's something really up my street.
I've just begun to wash my hair.
But when it's dry, I'll be right there.'

A short while later, through the wood,
Came striding brave Miss Riding Hood.
The Wolf stood there, his eyes ablaze,
And yellowish, like mayonnaise.
His teeth were sharp, his gums were raw,

And spit was dripping from his jaw.
Once more the maiden's eyelid flickers.
She draws the pistol from her knickers.
Once more she hits the vital spot,
And kills him with a single shot.
Pig, peeping through the window, stood
And yelled, 'Well done, Miss Riding Hood!'

Ah, Piglet, you must never trust
Young ladies from the upper crust.
For now, Miss Riding Hood, one notes,
Not only has two wolfskin coats,
But when she goes from place to place,
She has a PIGSKIN TRAVELING CASE.

Roald Dahl

There's No Earthly Way Of Knowing

There's no earthly way of knowing
Which direction they are going!
There's no knowing where they're rowing,
Or which way they river's flowing!
Not a speck of light is showing,
So the danger must be growing,
For the rowers keep on rowing,
And they're certainly not showing
Any signs that they are slowing...

Roald Dahl

Veruca Salt, The Little Brute

'Veruca Salt, the little brute,
Has just gone down the garbage chute,
(And as we very rightly thought
That in a case like this we ought
To see the thing completely through,
We've polished off her parents, too.)
Down goes Veruca! Down the drain!
And here, perhaps, we should explain
That she will meet, as she descends,
A rather different set of friends
To those that she has left behind—
These won't be nearly so refined.
A fish head, for example, cut
This morning from a halibut.
'Hello! Good morning! How d'you do?
How nice to meet you! How are you?'
And then a little further down
A mass of others gather round:
A bacon rind, some rancid lard,
A loaf of bread gone stale and hard,
A steak that nobody could chew,
An oyster from an oyster stew,
Some liverwurst so old and gray
One smelled it from a mile away,
A rotten nut, a reeky pear,
A thing the cat left on the stair,
And lots of other things as well,
Each with a rather horrid smell.
These are Veruca's new found friends
That she will meet as she descends,
And this is the price she has to pay
For going so very far astray.
But now, my dears, we think you might
Be wondering—is it really right
That every single bit of blame
And all the scolding and the shame
Should fall upon Veruca Salt?
Is she the only one at fault?
For though she's spoiled, and dreadfully so,

A girl can't spoil herself, you know.
Who spoiled her, then? Ah, who indeed?
Who pandered to her every need?
Who turned her into such a brat?
Who are the culprits? Who did that?
Alas! You needn't look so far
To find out who these sinners are.
They are (and this is very sad)
Her loving parents, MUM and DAD.
And that is why we're glad they fell
Into the garbage chute as well.'

Roald Dahl