

The Jury had each formed a different view
 (Long before the indictment was read),
And they all spoke at once, so that none of them knew
 One word that the others had said.

“You must know ——” said the Judge: but the Snark exclaimed,
 “Fudge! 25
 That statute is obsolete quite!
Let me tell you, my friends, the whole question depends
 On an ancient manorial right.

“In the matter of Treason the pig would appear
 To have aided, but scarcely abetted: 30
While the charge of Insolvency fails, it is clear,
 If you grant the plea ‘never indebted.’

“The fact of Desertion I will not dispute:
 But its guilt, as I trust, is removed
(So far as relates to the costs of this suit) 35
 By the Alibi which has been proved.

“My poor client’s fate now depends on your votes.”
 Here the speaker sat down in his place,
And directed the Judge to refer to his notes
 And briefly to sum up the case. 40

But the Judge said he never had summed up before:
 So the Snark undertook it instead,
And summed it so well that it came to far more
 Than the Witnesses ever had said!

When the verdict was called for, the Jury declined, 45
 As the word was so puzzling to spell;
But they ventured to hope that the Snark wouldn’t mind
 Undertaking that duty as well.

So the Snark found the verdict, although, as it owned,
 It was spent with the toils of the day: 50
When it said the word “GUILTY!” the Jury all groaned,
 And some of them fainted away.

Then the Snark pronounced sentence, the Judge being quite
Too nervous to utter a word:
When it rose to its feet, there was silence like night, 55
And the fall of a pin might be heard.

“Transportation for life” was the sentence it gave,
“And *then* to be fined forty pound.”
The Jury all cheered, though the Judge said he feared
That the phrase was not legally sound. 60

But their wild exultation was suddenly checked
When the jailer informed them, with tears,
Such a sentence would have not the slightest effect,
As the pig had been dead for some years.

The Judge left the Court, looking deeply disgusted: 65
But the Snark, though a little aghast,
As the lawyer to whom the defence was intrusted,
Went bellowing on to the last.

Thus the Barrister dreamed, while the bellowing seemed
To grow every moment more clear: 70
Till he woke to the knell of a furious bell,
Which the Bellman rang close at his ear.

Fit the Seventh
THE BANKER'S FATE

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.

And the Banker, inspired with a courage so new 5
It was matter for general remark,
Rushed madly ahead and was lost to their view
In his zeal to discover the Snark.

But while he was seeking with thimbles and care,

A Bandersnatch swiftly drew nigh 10
And grabbed at the Banker, who shrieked in despair,
For he knew it was useless to fly.

He offered large discount — he offered a cheque
(Drawn “to bearer”) for seven-pounds-ten:
But the Bandersnatch merely extended its neck 15
And grabbed at the Banker again.

Without rest or pause — while those frumious jaws
Went savagely snapping around —
He skipped and he hopped, and he floundered and flopped,
Till fainting he fell to the ground. 20

The Bandersnatch fled as the others appeared:
Led on by that fear-stricken yell:
And the Bellman remarked, “It is just as I feared!”
And solemnly tolled on his bell.

He was black in the face, and they scarcely could trace 25
The least likeness to what he had been:
While so great was his fright that his waistcoat turned white —
A wonderful thing to be seen!

To the horror of all who were present that day,
He uprose in full evening dress, 30
And with senseless grimaces endeavoured to say
What his tongue could no longer express.

Down he sank in a chair — ran his hands through his hair —
And chanted in mimsiest tones
Words whose utter inanity proved his insanity, 35
While he rattled a couple of bones.

“Leave him here to his fate — it is getting so late!”
The Bellman exclaimed in a fright.
“We have lost half the day. Any further delay,
And we shan’t catch a Snark before night!” 40

Fit the Eighth

THE VANISHING

They sought it with thimbles, they sought it with care;
They pursued it with forks and hope;
They threatened its life with a railway-share;
They charmed it with smiles and soap.

They shuddered to think that the chase might fail, 5
And the Beaver, excited at last,
Went bounding along on the tip of its tail,
For the daylight was nearly past.

“There is Thingumbob shouting!” the Bellman said.
“He is shouting like mad, only hark! 10
He is waving his hands, he is wagging his head,
He has certainly found a Snark!”

They gazed in delight, while the Butcher exclaimed,
“He was always a desperate wag!”
They beheld him — their Baker — their hero unnamed — 15
On the top of a neighbouring crag,

Erect and sublime, for one moment of time.
In the next, that wild figure they saw
(As if stung by a spasm) plunge into a chasm,
While they waited and listened in awe. 20

“It’s a Snark!” was the sound that first came to their ears,
And seemed almost too good to be true.
Then followed a torrent of laughter and cheers:
Then the ominous words, “It’s a Boo—”

Then, silence. Some fancied they heard in the air 25
A weary and wandering sigh
That sounded like “—jum!” but the others declare
It was only a breeze that went by.

They hunted till darkness came on, but they found 30
Not a button, or feather, or mark,
By which they could tell that they stood on the ground
Where the Baker had met with the Snark.

In the midst of the word he was trying to say,
In the midst of his laughter and glee,
He had softly and suddenly vanished away —
For the Snark *was* a Boojum, you see.

35

THE END

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