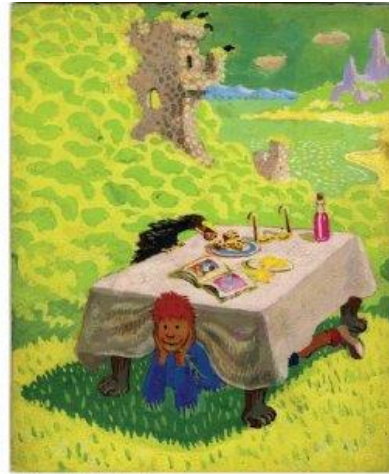


*'All Over the Lilac Brine'*



*'The Sunlight Falls Upon the Grass'*

### UPON MY GOLDEN BACKBONE

Upon my golden backbone  
I float like any cork,  
That hasn't yet been washed ashore  
Or swallowed by a shark.

I never seem to want to snarl  
In jungles all day long—  
I've been so much upon my back  
My legs aren't very strong.

It's all because a Pelican  
I *didn't* eat one day,  
Decided to look after me  
That I behave this way.

And so, while Other Tigers slink  
From tree... to tree... to tree,  
I lie upon my back and blink,  
In Aqueous Ecstasy.

### **ALL OVER THE LILAC BRINE!**

Around the shores of the Arrogant Isle  
Where the Cat-fish bask and purr,  
And lick their paws with adhesive smiles,  
And wriggle their fins of fur,

With my wife in a dress of mustard-and-cress,  
On a table of rare design,  
We skim and we fly, 'neath a fourpenny sky,  
All over the lilac brine.

### **THE SUNLIGHT FALLS UPON THE GRASS**

The sunlight falls upon the grass,  
It falls upon the tower,  
Upon my spectacles of brass,  
It falls with all its power.

It falls on everything it can,  
For that is how it's made,  
And it would fall on me, except,  
That I am in the shade.

### **THE CROCODILE**

A crocodile in ecstasy  
Sat on the sofa next to me  
As I poured out the Indian tea.

I stared at him with startled eyes,  
And wondered at his bird-like cries –  
Such *little* sounds, from *such* a size.

### **MY UNCLE PAUL OF PIMLICO**

*My Uncle Paul of Pimlico  
Has seven cats as white as snow,  
Who sit at his enormous feet  
And watch him, as a special treat,  
Play the piano up side-down,  
In his delightful dressing-gown;  
The firelight leaps, the parlour glows,  
And while the music ebbs and flows  
They smile (while purring the refrains)  
At little thoughts that cross their brains.*

### **IT MAKES A CHANGE**

There's nothing makes a Greenland whale  
Feel half so high and mighty  
As sitting on a mantelpiece  
In Aunty Mabel's nighty.

It makes a change from Freezing Seas,  
(Of which a whale can tire),  
To warm his weary tail at ease  
Before an English fire.

For this delight he leaves the seas  
(Unknown to Aunty Mabel),

Returning only when the dawn  
Lights up the Breakfast Table.

**WHAT A DAY IT'S BEEN!**

Dear children, what a day it's been!  
The kind of day when days  
Are not what they are meant to be  
In several kinds of ways.

My eyes are dim for I have sobbed  
Twelve tears of Platform Brine,  
There'll never be another Niece  
As innocent as mine!

Mine was the One! Mine was the Two,  
Mine was the Three and Four,  
And I have heard her parents say  
She rose to Seven or more!

So be it. She is gone, and I  
Am left at Waterloo  
Half magical, half tragical,  
And half an hour... or two.

**THE CAMEL**

I saw a camel sit astride  
A rainbow in the spring,  
His arms were crossed, his yellow hide  
Was the finest string.

The rainbow light upon his twine  
Had set it all aglow  
With love and tinctures as divine  
As one could wish to know.

He edged along the slender arc,  
And then rolled his eyes.  
Below him the sepulchral dark  
Surged past his hairy thighs...

And then, he sang! but as his voice  
Was very far removed,  
I first mistook it for the noise  
*Of those whom I once loved.*

**I WISH I COULD REMEMBER**

Along my weary whiskers  
The tears flow fast and free,  
They twinkle in the Arctic  
And plop into the sea.

Alas! My weary whiskers!  
Alas! My tearfulness!  
I wish I could remember  
The cause of my distress.

**I WAXES, AND I WANES, SIR**

I waxes, and I wanes, Sir,  
I ebbs's and I flows,  
Some say it be my Brains, sir,  
some says it be my Nose.

It isn't as I'm slow, sir,  
(To cut a story long),  
It's just I'd love to know, sir,  
Which one of them is wrong.

**THE HIPPOPOTAMUS**

The very nastiest grimace  
You make upon the sly,  
Is *choice* beside the Hippo's face  
*Who doesn't even try.*

**A LANGUOROUS LIFE**

A languorous life I lead, I do  
Lead such a languorous life.  
I lead it Here, I lead it There,  
Together with my wife.

Sometimes we lead it Round-and roud,  
And sometimes Through-and-through,  
It is a life we recommend  
To anyone like You.

***SENSITIVE, SELDOM AND SAD BY MERVYN PEAKE***

Sensitive, Seldom and Sad are we,  
As we wend our way to the sneezing sea,  
With our hampers full of thistles and fronds  
To plant round the edge of the dab-fish ponds;  
Oh, so Sensitive, Seldom and Sad  
Oh, so Seldom and Sad.

In the shambling shades of the shelving shore,  
We will sing us a song of the Long Before,  
And light a red fire and warm our paws  
For it's chilly, it is, on the Desolate shores,  
For those who are Sensitive, Seldom and Sad,  
For those who are Seldom and Sad.

Sensitive, Seldom and Sad we are,  
As we wander along through Lands Afar,  
To the sneezing sea, where the sea-weeds be,  
And the dab-fish ponds that are waiting for we  
Who are, Oh, so Sensitive, Seldom and Sad,  
Oh, so Seldom and Sad.