"The Sneetches"

by Dr. Seuss

Now, the Star-Belly Sneetches

Had bellies with stars.

The Plain-Belly Sneetches

Had none upon thars.

Those stars weren't so big. They were really so small

You might think such a thing wouldn't matter at all.

But, because they had stars, all the Star-Belly Sneetches

Would brag, "We're the best kind of Sneetch on the Beaches."

With their snoots in the air, they would sniff and they'd snort

"We'll have nothing to do with the Plain-Belly sort!"

And whenever they met some, when they were out walking,

They'd hike right on past them without even talking.

When the Star-Belly children went out to play ball,

Could a Plain Belly get in the game... ? Not at all.

You only could play if your bellies had stars.

And the Plain Belly children had none upon thars.

When the Star-Belly Sneetches had frankfurter roasts

Or picnics or parties or marshmallow toasts,

They never invited the Plain-Belly Sneetches.

They left them out cold, in the dark of the beaches.

They kept them away. Never let them come near.

And that's how they treated them year after year.

Then ONE day, it seems... while the Plain-Belly Sneetches

Were moping and doping alone on the beaches,

Just sitting there wishing their bellies had stars...

A stranger zipped up in the strangest of cars!

"My friends," he announced in a voice clear and keen,

"My name is Sylvester McMonkey McBean.

And I've heard of your troubles. I've heard you're unhappy.

But I can fix that. I'm the Fix-it-Up Chappie.

I've come here to help you. I have what you need.

And my prices are low. And I work at great speed.

And my work is one hundred percent guaranteed!"

Then, quickly Sylvester McMonkey McBean

Put together a very peculiar machine.

And he said, "You want stars like a Star-Belly Sneetch... ?

My friends, you can have them for three dollars each!"

"Just pay me your money and hop right aboard!"

So they clambered inside. Then the big machine roared

And it klonked. And it bonked. And it jerked. And it berked.

And it bopped them about. But the thing really worked!

When the Plain-Belly Sneetches popped out, they had stars!

They actually did. They had stars upon thars!

Then they yelled at the ones who had stars at the start,

"We're exactly like you! You can't tell us apart.

We're all just the same, now, you snooty old smarties!

And now we can go to your frankfurter parties."

"Good grief!" groaned the ones who had stars at the first.

"We're still the best Sneetches and they are the worst.

But, now, how in the world will we know," they all frowned,

"If which kind is what, or the other way round?"

Then up came McBean with a very sly wink

And he said, "Things are not quite as bad as you think.

So you don't know who's who. That is perfectly true.

But come with me, friends. Do you know what I'll do?

I'll make you, again, the best Sneetches on the beaches

And all it will cost you is ten dollars eaches."

"Belly stars are no longer in style," said McBean.

"What you need is a trip through my Star-Off Machine.

This wondrous contraption will take off your stars

So you won't look like Sneetches who have them on thars."

And that handy machine, Working very precisely

Removed all the stars from their tummies quite nicely.

Then, with snoots in the air, they paraded about

And they opened their beaks and they let out a shout,

"We know who is who! Now there isn't a doubt.

The best kind of Sneetches are Sneetches without!"

Then, of course, those with stars got frightfully mad.

To be wearing a star now was frightfully bad.

Then, of course, old Sylvester McMonkey McBean

Invited them into his Star-Off Machine.

Then, of course from THEN on, as you probably guess,

Things really got into a horrible mess.

All the rest of that day, on those wild screaming beaches,

The Fix-it-Up Chappie kept fixing up Sneetches.

Off again! On again!

In again! Out again!

Through the machines they raced round and about again,

Changing their stars every minute or two.

They kept paying money. They kept running through

Until neither the Plain nor the Star-Bellies knew

Whether this one was that one... or that one was this one

Or which one was what one... of what one was who.

Then, when every last cent

Of their money was spent,

The Fix-it-Up Chappie packed up

And he went.

And he laughed as he drove

In his car up the beach,

"They never will learn.

No. You can't teach a Sneetch!"

But McBean was quite wrong. I'm quite happy to say

That the Sneetches got really quite smart on that day,

The day they decided that Sneetches are Sneetches

And no kind of Sneetch is the best on the beaches.

That day, all the Sneetches forgot about stars

And whether they had one, or not, upon thars.

Notes:

*The Cremation of Sam McGee by Robert Frost*

*There are strange things done in the midnight sun*  
*By the men who moil for gold;*  
*The Arctic trails have their secret tales*  
*That would make your blood run cold;*  
*The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,*  
*But the queerest they ever did see*  
*Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge*  
*I cremated Sam McGee.*

Now Sam McGee was from Tennessee, where the cotton blooms and blows.  
Why he left his home in the South to roam 'round the Pole, God only knows.  
He was always cold, but the land of gold seemed to hold him like a spell;  
Though he'd often say in his homely way that "he'd sooner live in hell."

On a Christmas Day we were mushing our way over the Dawson trail.  
Talk of your cold! through the parka's fold it stabbed like a driven nail.  
If our eyes we'd close, then the lashes froze till sometimes we couldn't see;  
It wasn't much fun, but the only one to whimper was Sam MCGee.

And that very night, as we lay packed tight in our robes beneath the snow,  
And the dogs were fed, and the stars o'erhead were dancing heel and toe,  
He turned to me, and "Cap," says he, "I'll cash in this trip, I guess;  
And if I do, I'm asking you that you won't refuse my last request."

Well, he seemed so low that I couldn't say no; then he says with a sort of moan:  
"It's the cursed cold, and it's got right hold till I'm chilled clean through to the bone.  
Yet 'tain't being dead--it's my awful dread of the icy grave that pains;  
So I want you to swear that, foul or fair, you'll cremate my last remains."

A pal's last need is a thing to heed, so I swore I would not fail;  
And we started on at the streak of dawn; but God! he looked ghastly pale.  
He crouched on the sleigh, and he raved all day of his home in Tennessee;  
And before nightfall a corpse was all that was left of Sam McGee.

There wasn't a breath in that land of death, and I hurried, horror-driven  
With a corpse half hid that I couldn't get rid, because of a promise given'  
It was lashed to the sleigh, and it seemed to say: "You may tax your brawn and brains,  
But you promised true, and it's up to you to cremate these last remains."

Now a promise made is a debt unpaid, and the trail has its own stern code.  
In the days to come, though my lips were dumb, in my heart how I cursed that load.  
In the long, long night, by the lone firelight, while the huskies, round in a ring,  
Howled out their woes to the homeless snows-- O God! how I loathed the thing.

And every day that quiet clay seemed to heavy and heavier grow;  
And on I went, though the dogs were spent and the grub was getting low;  
The trail was bad, and I felt half mad, but I swore I would not give in;  
And I'd often sing to the hateful thing, and it harkened with a grin.

Till I came to the marge of Lake Lebarge, and a derelict there lay;  
It was jammed in the ice, but I saw in a trice it was called the "Alice May."  
And I looked at it, and I thought a bit, and I looked at my frozen chum;  
Then "Here," said I, with a sudden cry, "is my cre-ma-tor-eum."

Some planks I tore from the cabin floor, and I lit the boiler fire;  
Some coal I found that was lying around, and I heaped the fuel higher;  
The flames just soared, and the furnace roared--such a blaze you seldom see;  
And I burrowed a hole in the glowing coal, and I stuffed in Sam McGee.

Then I made a hike, for I didn't like to hear him sizzle so;  
And the heavens scowled, and the huskies howled, and the wind began to blow  
It was icy cold, but the hot sweat rolled down my cheeks, and I don't know why;  
And the greasy smoke in an inky cloak went streaking down the sky.

I do not know how long in the snow I wrestled with grisly fear;  
But the stars came out and they danced about ere again I ventured near;  
I was sick with dread, but I bravely said: "I'll just take peep inside.  
I guess he's cooked, and it's time I looked";. . . then the door I opened wide.

And there sat Sam, looking cool and calm, in the heart of the furnace roar;  
And he wore a smile you could see a mile, and he said: "Please close that door.  
It's fine in here, but I greatly fear you'll let in the cold and storm--  
Since I left Plumtree, down in Tennessee, it's the first time I've been warm."

*There are strange things done in the midnight sun*  
*By the men who moil for gold;*  
*The Arctic trails have their secret tales*  
*That would make your blood run cold;*  
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Notes:

The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,

And sorry I could not travel both

And be one traveler, long I stood

And looked down one as far as I could

To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,

And having perhaps the better claim,

Because it was grassy and wanted wear;

Though as for that the passing there

Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay

In leaves no step had trodden black.

Oh, I kept the first for another day!

Yet knowing how way leads on to way,

I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh

Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—

I took the one less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference.

Notes:

For Whom the Bell Tolls – by John Donne

No man is an island,

Entire of itself.

Each is a piece of the continent,

A part of the main.

If a clod be washed away by the sea,

Europe is the less.

As well as if a promontory were.

As well as if a manor of thine own

Or of thine friend's were.

Each man's death diminishes me,

For I am involved in mankind.

Therefore, send not to know

For whom the bell tolls,

It tolls for thee.

Notes:

**The Naming of Cats – by T. S. Elliott**

The Naming of Cats is a difficult matter,

It isn’t just one of your holiday games;

You may think at first I’m as mad as a hatter

When I tell you, a cat must have THREE DIFFERENT NAMES.

First of all, there’s the name that the family use daily,

Such as Peter, Augustus, Alonzo, or James,

Such as Victor or Jonathan, George or Bill Bailey —

All of them sensible everyday names.

There are fancier names if you think they sound sweeter,

Some for the gentlemen, some for the dames:

Such as Plato, Admetus, Electra, Demeter —

But all of them sensible everyday names.

But I tell you, a cat needs a name that’s particular,

A name that’s peculiar, and more dignified,

Else how can he keep up his tail perpendicular,

Or spread out his whiskers, or cherish his pride?

Of names of this kind, I can give you a quorum,

Such as Munkstrap, Quaxo, or Coricopat,

Such as Bombalurina, or else Jellylorum —

Names that never belong to more than one cat.

But above and beyond there’s still one name left over,

And that is the name that you never will guess;

The name that no human research can discover —

But THE CAT HIMSELF KNOWS, and will never confess.

When you notice a cat in profound meditation,

The reason, I tell you, is always the same:

His mind is engaged in a rapt contemplation

Of the thought, of the thought, of the thought of his name:

His ineffable effable

Effanineffable

Deep and inscrutable singular Name.

Notes:

Sick – by Shel Silverstein - 1930-1999

"I cannot go to school today,"

Said little Peggy Ann McKay.

"I have the measles and the mumps,

A gash, a rash and purple bumps.

My mouth is wet, my throat is dry,

I'm going blind in my right eye.

My tonsils are as big as rocks,

I've counted sixteen chicken pox

And there's one more—that's seventeen,

And don't you think my face looks green?

My leg is cut—my eyes are blue—

It might be instamatic flu.

I cough and sneeze and gasp and choke,

I'm sure that my left leg is broke—

My hip hurts when I move my chin,

My belly button's caving in,

My back is wrenched, my ankle's sprained,

My 'pendix pains each time it rains.

My nose is cold, my toes are numb.

I have a sliver in my thumb.

My neck is stiff, my voice is weak,

I hardly whisper when I speak.

My tongue is filling up my mouth,

I think my hair is falling out.

My elbow's bent, my spine ain't straight,

My temperature is one-o-eight.

My brain is shrunk, I cannot hear,

There is a hole inside my ear.

I have a hangnail, and my heart is—what?

What's that? What's that you say?

You say today is. . .Saturday?

G'bye, I'm going out to play!"

Notes:

**SARAH CYNTHIA SYLVIA STOUT**  
**WOULD NOT TAKE THE GARBAGE OUT**  


Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout  
Would not take the garbage out!  
She'd scour the pots and scrape the pans,  
Candy the yams and spice the hams,  
And though her daddy would scream and shout,  
She simply would not take the garbage out.  
And so it piled up to the ceilings:  
Coffee grounds, potato peelings,  
Brown bananas, rotten peas,  
Chunks of sour cottage cheese.  
It filled the can, it covered the floor,  
It cracked the window and blocked the door  
With bacon rinds and chicken bones,  
Drippy ends of ice cream cones,  
Prune pits, peach pits, orange peel,  
Gloppy glumps of cold oatmeal,  
Pizza crusts and withered greens,  
Soggy beans and tangerines,  
Crusts of black burned buttered toast,  
Gristly bits of beefy roasts. . .  
The garbage rolled on down the hall,  
It raised the roof, it broke the wall. . .  
Greasy napkins, cookie crumbs,  
Globs of gooey bubble gum,  
Cellophane from green baloney,  
Rubbery blubbery macaroni,  
Peanut butter, caked and dry,  
Curdled milk and crusts of pie,  
Moldy melons, dried-up mustard,  
Eggshells mixed with lemon custard,  
Cold french fried and rancid meat,  
Yellow lumps of Cream of Wheat.  
At last the garbage reached so high  
That it finally touched the sky.  
And all the neighbors moved away,  
And none of her friends would come to play.  
And finally Sarah Cynthia Stout said,  
"OK, I'll take the garbage out!"  
But then, of course, it was too late. . .  
The garbage reached across the state,  
From New York to the Golden Gate.  
And there, in the garbage she did hate,  
Poor Sarah met an awful fate,  
That I cannot now relate  
Because the hour is much too late.  
But children, remember Sarah Stout  
And always take the garbage out!

*Shel Silverstein, 1974*

Notes:

Barbara Allen

Lyrics by [Joan Baez](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GGRV_enUS753US753&q=Joan+Baez&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAONgVuLSz9U3MCyvMk6uWMTK6ZWfmKfglJhaBQBCBzOiGgAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjartHxyK_oAhVEnp4KHQmXCVUQMTAAegQIDBAF) and based on an old Scottish poem

Twas in the merry month of May  
When green buds all were swelling,  
Sweet William on his death bed lay  
For love of Barbara Allen.

He sent his servant to the town  
To the place where she was dwelling,  
Saying you must come, to my master dear  
If your name be Barbara Allen.  
So slowly, slowly she got up  
And slowly she drew nigh him,  
And the only words to him did say  
Young man I think you're dying.

He turned his face unto the wall  
And death was in him welling,  
Good-bye, good-bye, to my friends all  
Be good to Barbara Allen.

When he was dead and laid in grave  
She heard the death bells knelling  
And every stroke to her did say  
Hard hearted Barbara Allen.

Oh mother, oh mother go dig my grave  
Make it both long and narrow,  
Sweet William died of love for me  
And I will die of sorrow.

And father, oh father, go dig my grave  
Make it both long and narrow,  
Sweet William died on yesterday  
And I will die tomorrow.

Barbara Allen was buried in the old churchyard  
Sweet William was buried beside her,  
Out of sweet William's heart, there grew a rose  
Out of Barbara Allen's a briar.

They grew and grew in the old churchyard  
Till they could grow no higher  
At the end they formed, a true lover's knot  
And the rose grew round the briar.

Notes (Down the side too):

**Wynken, Blynken, and Nod by Eugene Field - 1850-1895**

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night

Sailed off in a wooden shoe,—

Sailed on a river of crystal light

Into a sea of dew.

"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"

The old moon asked the three.

"We have come to fish for the herring-fish

That live in this beautiful sea;

Nets of silver and gold have we,"

Said Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,

As they rocked in the wooden shoe;

And the wind that sped them all night long

Ruffled the waves of dew;

The little stars were the herring-fish

That lived in the beautiful sea.

"Now cast your nets wherever you wish,—

Never afraid are we!"

So cried the stars to the fishermen three,

Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw

To the stars in the twinkling foam,—

Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe,

Bringing the fishermen home:

'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed

As if it could not be;

And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed

Of sailing that beautiful sea;

But I shall name you the fishermen three:

Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,

And Nod is a little head,

And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies

Is a wee one's trundle-bed;

So shut your eyes while Mother sings

Of wonderful sights that be,

And you shall see the beautiful things

As you rock in the misty sea

Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three:—

Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

Notes: