

Limericks by Edward Lear (1812-1888)

There was a Young Lady of Tyre,
Who swept the loud chords of a lyre;
At the sound of each sweep
She enraptured the deep,
And enchanted the city of Tyre.

There was an Old Man in a boat,
Who said, 'I'm afloat! I'm afloat!'
When they said, 'No! you aint!'
He was ready to faint,
That unhappy Old Man in a boat.

There was an Old Man in a tree,
Who was horribly bored by a bee.
When they said, 'Does it buzz?'
He replied, 'Yes, it does!
It's a regular brute of a bee!'

There was an Old Man in a Tree,
Whose Whiskers were lovely to see;
But the Birds of the Air
Pluck'd them perfectly bare
To make themselves Nests in that Tree.

There was an Old Man of Thermopylae,
Who never did anything properly;
But they said, 'If you choose
To boil Eggs in your Shoes,
You shall never remain in Thermopylae.'

There was an Old Man of Toulouse
Who purchased a new pair of shoes.
When they asked, 'Are they pleasant?' -
He said, 'Not at present!'
That turbid old man of Toulouse.

There was an Old Man of Hong Kong,
Who never did anything wrong.
He lay on his back,
With his head in a sack,
That innocuous Old Man of Hong Kong.

There was an Old Man on the Border,
Who lived in the utmost disorder;
He danced with the Cat,
And made Tea in his Hat,
Which vexed all the folks on the Border.

There was an Old Man who said, 'Hush!
I perceive a young bird in this bush.!'
When they said, 'Is it small?'
He replied, 'Not at all!
It is four times as big as the bush!'

There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said 'It is just as I feared! -
Two Owls and a Hen,
Four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!'

There was an Old Person of Gretna,
Who rushed down the crater of Etna;
When they said, 'Is it hot?'
He replied, 'No, it's not!'
That mendacious Old Person of Gretna.

There was an Old Person of Putney,
Whose food was roast spiders and chutney,
Which he took with his tea
Within sight of the sea,
That romantic Old Person of Putney.