

THE AUTHOR

Though a barrister-at-law (Lincoln's Inn, London) by profession and in active law practice, Cecil Rajendra is nevertheless one of Asia's leading and most influential poets.

To date he has 11 titles to his credit, and his poems, which have been translated into several major languages, have been published and broadcast in no less than 36 countries.

Such is the wide range and relevance of Rajendra's poetry, that in addition to his collections, his poems have appeared on records, cassettes, greeting cards, posters, in environmental kits, hymnals, tourist handbooks, human rights dossiers, consumer newsletters, cantata, lieder, Geography and English-language textbooks.

But Rajendra's poems, though widely acknowledged as some of the finest and most powerful verse being written anywhere today, are not without controversy. His poetry is not only neglected and ignored in his own country, Malaysia, but has also been the subject of hysterical attacks from local academics and establishment critics.

Ironically, however, the very poems that were once reviled and ridiculed (as being tainted with too much political and polemical content) by home-grown manqué critics, are today taught alongside the works of Dylan Thomas, D.H. Lawrence, Tagore, Betjeman, Brecht, MacNiece, Auden, Frost, Pound and Hopkins in schools, colleges and universities throughout the English-speaking world.

Rajendra has often been referred to as 'the poet of the Third World', and parallels have frequently been drawn between his poetry and that of the great Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda.

The Other India Press is presently in the process of bringing out Indian selections of Cecil Rajendra's poetry. *Papa Moose's Nursery Rhymes For Our Times* is the first volume in the series. It concentrates almost wholly on environmental issues. Other selections will deal with political themes including human rights.



The Other India Press

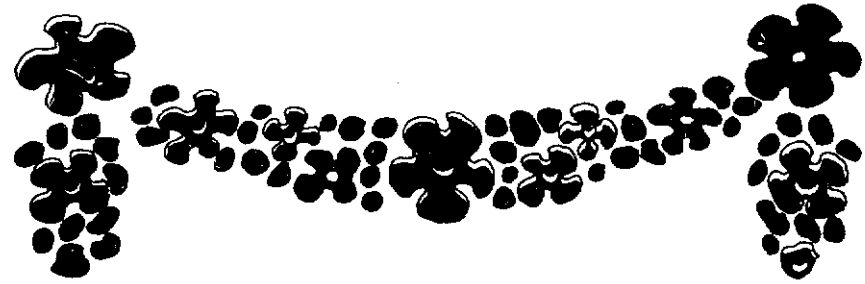
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Papa Moose's Nursery Rhymes



For Our Times

Cecil Rajendra



PAPA MOOSE'S

NURSERY RHYMES

FOR OUR TIMES

Cecil Rajendra

Illustrated by Catherine Worthington



The Other India Press

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For Yasunari & Shakila
Siva & Rama
& all their little friends.



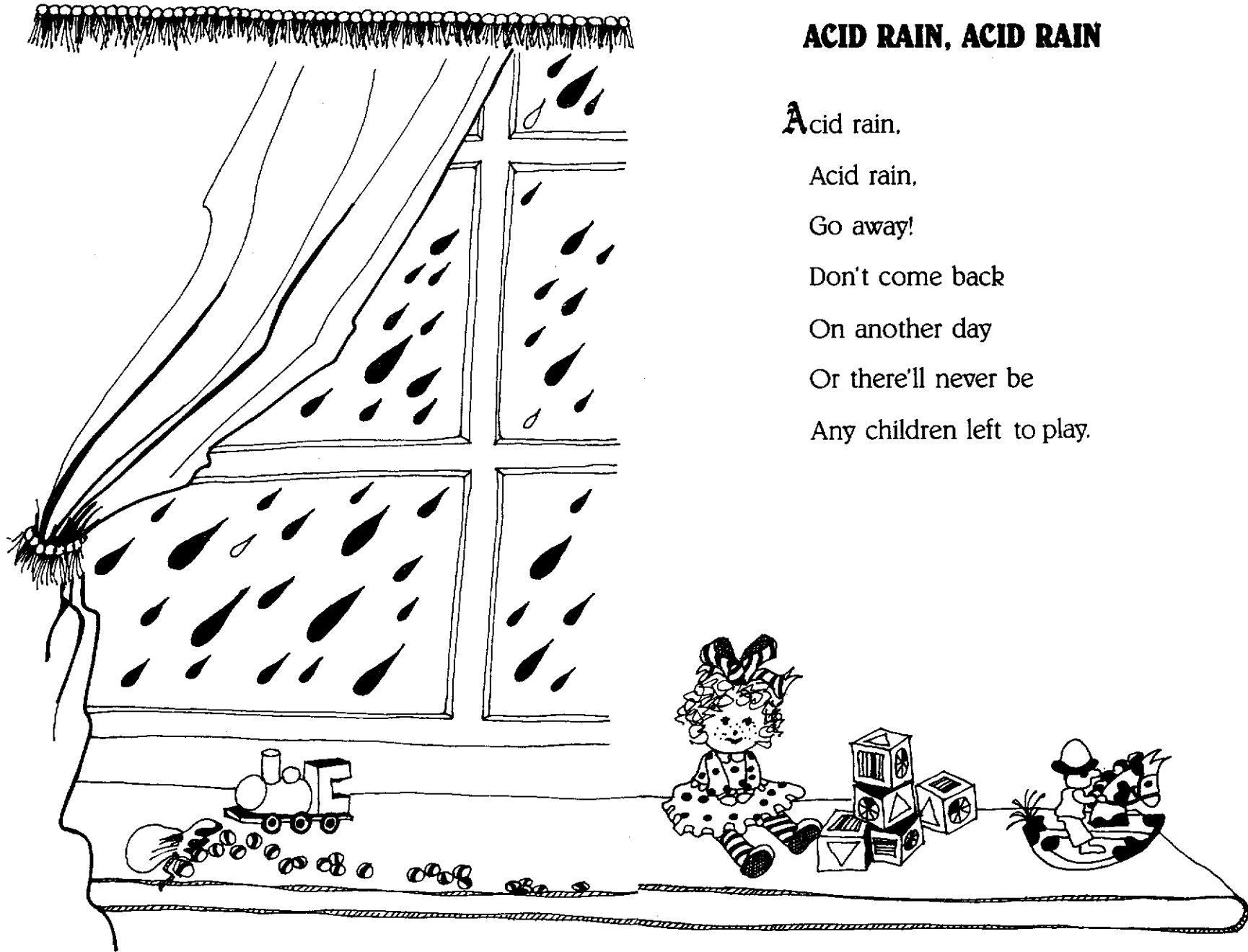
Other titles by the author:

Embryo
Eros & Ashes
Bones & Feathers
Refugees & Other Despairs
Hour of Assassins
Postscripts
Songs of the Unsung
Child of the Sun
Dove on Fire
Lovers, Lunatics & Lallang

A selection from **Nursery Rhymes for Our Times** was first previewed in Environmental Directions, the Los Angeles based award-winning series on the state of our environment, which is aired in over 25 million homes in four countries.

The programme, hosted by Nancy Pearlman, was taped in Hawaii at the international consultation Tourism: Cultural Adversity and Diversity.

Some nursery rhymes were also presented by the author and Rama May at an International Workshop on Consumer Health, Drug Information and Education organised by the International Organisation of Consumers Unions.



ACID RAIN, ACID RAIN

Acid rain,

Acid rain,

Go away!

Don't come back

On another day

Or there'll never be

Any children left to play.

ALI, ALI, FARMER EXTRAORDINARY

Ali, Ali farmer extraordinary
How does your garden grow?
 With herbicides
 And pesticides
And poisoned broccoli all in a row.

ALL THE TREES ARE FALLING DOWN

All the trees are falling down,
 Falling down, falling down,
All the trees are falling down,
 Not fair, lady!

Stop the logging with civil laws
 Civil laws, civil laws.
Stop the logging with civil laws
 You cry baby!

Civil laws they bend and break
Bend and break, bend and break
Civil laws they bend and break
 With hush money.

Stop the loggers with barricades
 Barricades, barricades.
Stop the loggers with barricades
 Nice and easy.

Just what the natives did,
 Natives did, natives did.
Just what the natives did
 In our country.

Now the natives are behind bars,
 Behind bars, behind bars.
Now the natives are behind bars
 End of story!

BOYS AND GIRLS OF TODAY

What are little boys now made of?

MacDonalds and Coca Cola

Lucky Strike and a Honda

That's what little boys now are made of!

What are little girls now made of?

Cartier, Ricci and Coco Chanel

Heavy eye-shadow and lots of gel

That's what little girls now are made of!



BAA, BAA, BLACK SHEEP

Baa, baa, black sheep
What's happened to your wool?
I don't know, sir
But it sure looks awful.

Once it was cleaner
Once it was great
But not after that factory
They put up in our estate.

DIDDLE DIDDLE DUMPING

Diddle, diddle dumping....
How many million
Tons of toxic waste
Most pour into our ocean
Before industrialists
Call a halt to pollution?
Don't diddle with dumping,
Demand immediate action!

DING, DONG, HELL!

Ding, dong, bell!
We're all in hell!

What put us in?
Loss of our Green.

What will get us out?
A deforestation shut out.

What sort of earth pests
Are we, to destroy rainforests
That do us no harm
But we need like a right arm.

DOWRY LAKHS

Dowry lakhs, dowry lakhs
soon will be mine
Once she's washed the dishes
after I dine.
Right here in the kitchen
I have a scheme
How to set her on fire
with a tin of kerosene!

DUMPTY DEMOCRACY

The forces of democracy
sat on the wall;
Under the pressure
it began to fall.

And now all
the powers of repression
And all the agents
of fear and pain

Will never be able
to put that wall up again.

FILE MY CASE! FILE MY CASE!

File my case, file my case
Lawyer man!
Win me my case
As fast as you can.

Inflate it and pad it
And mark it up forty
Per cent for that commission
You're squeezing from me!

FIVE SILLY CONTINENTS

Five silly continents soiled their oceans

And they began to cry:

“Oh, Mother Earth dear, we fear
Our oceans we may have lost!”

“What! Lost your oceans, your filthy continents!
Then you will surely die!”

“Die! Die! Die!”

The continents began to clean up the oceans

But they started to sigh:

“Mother Earth dear, its such hard work
Our oceans now to detoxify.”

“What! Complain again, you stupid continents!
Unless the seas are alive
You will not survive.”

“Survive! Survive! Survive!”

HEY! SIZZLE, GRIDDLE!

Hey! Sizzle, griddle!

With that rainforest fiddle
Earth feels like an overheated cocoon.

But no one will laugh
On that day when
Our planet becomes barren as the moon.

HIGH & MIGHTY CENSOR

High & Mighty Censor

Is in a dilemma

As what to put

In the official newspaper.

Having banned everything

Poems, plays, films et cetera

He has nothing left to print

Except Government propaganda.

HIV GEORGIE

Georgie, HIV-posi

Was condom-shy

He kissed the girls

And made them die.

So when you boys

Go out to play

Do not forget

Its AIDS doomsday!

HOT NUCLEAR BOMBS

Hot nuclear bombs!
Hot nuclear bombs!
One for Bobby, two for Spassky,
Hot nuclear bombs!

Hot nuclear bombs!
Hot nuclear bombs!
Put them in your bombers,
Annihilate your sons!
One for Spassky, two for Bobby,
Hot nuclear bombs!

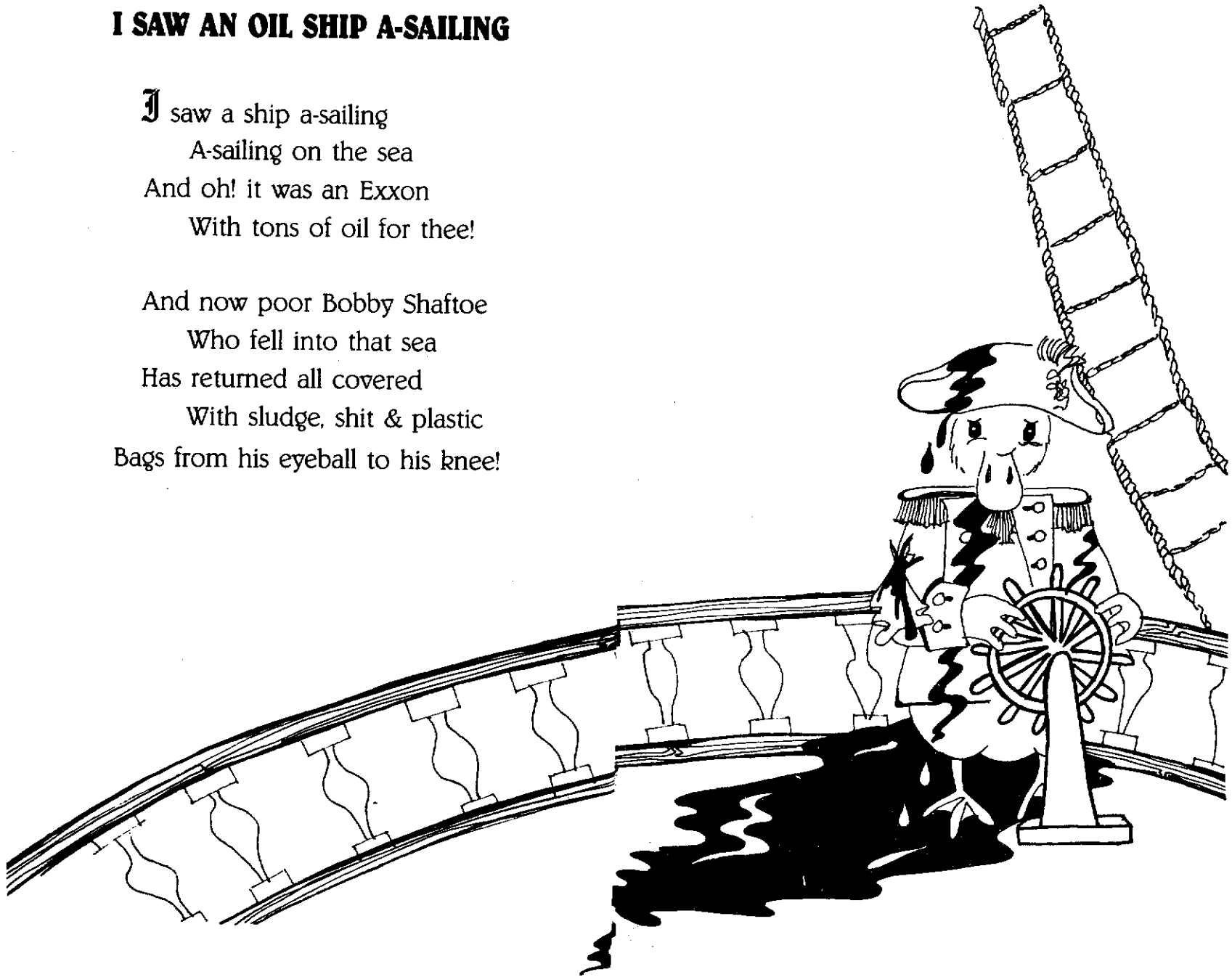
IF ALL THE WORLD.....

If all the world were a garbage pile
And all our sea was slime
And all our trees in paper mills
Where would we live in ten years' time?

I SAW AN OIL SHIP A-SAILING

I saw a ship a-sailing
A-sailing on the sea
And oh! it was an Exxon
With tons of oil for thee!

And now poor Bobby Shaftoe
Who fell into that sea
Has returned all covered
With sludge, shit & plastic
Bags from his eyeball to his knee!



JACK AND JILL

Jack and Jill
went up the hill.
When they got there
they found it bare.
Stripped of all vegetation.

With no protection
From the sun's radiation
Jack contracted skin cancer
Jill followed soon thereafter.

LITTLE BOY BLUE

Little Boy Blue
Better blow your horn!
There's a reactor in the meadow
And you've got radioactive corn.

Those supposed to look after us,
Have warned us not to make a fuss.

Will you shake them up?
No, not I;
For even if I do
They will just turn a blind eye.

LITTLE JACK HORNER

Little Jack Horner
Contracted leukaemia
Working close by
To a nuclear plant,
"As much as I want
to live," he said
"I'm sure I'm going to die."

LITTLE YUKI FLINDERS

Little Yuki Flinders
Poked among the cinders
Looking for her little toe.....

It happened in Hiroshima
After a bomber named Enola
Reduced the city to an inferno.

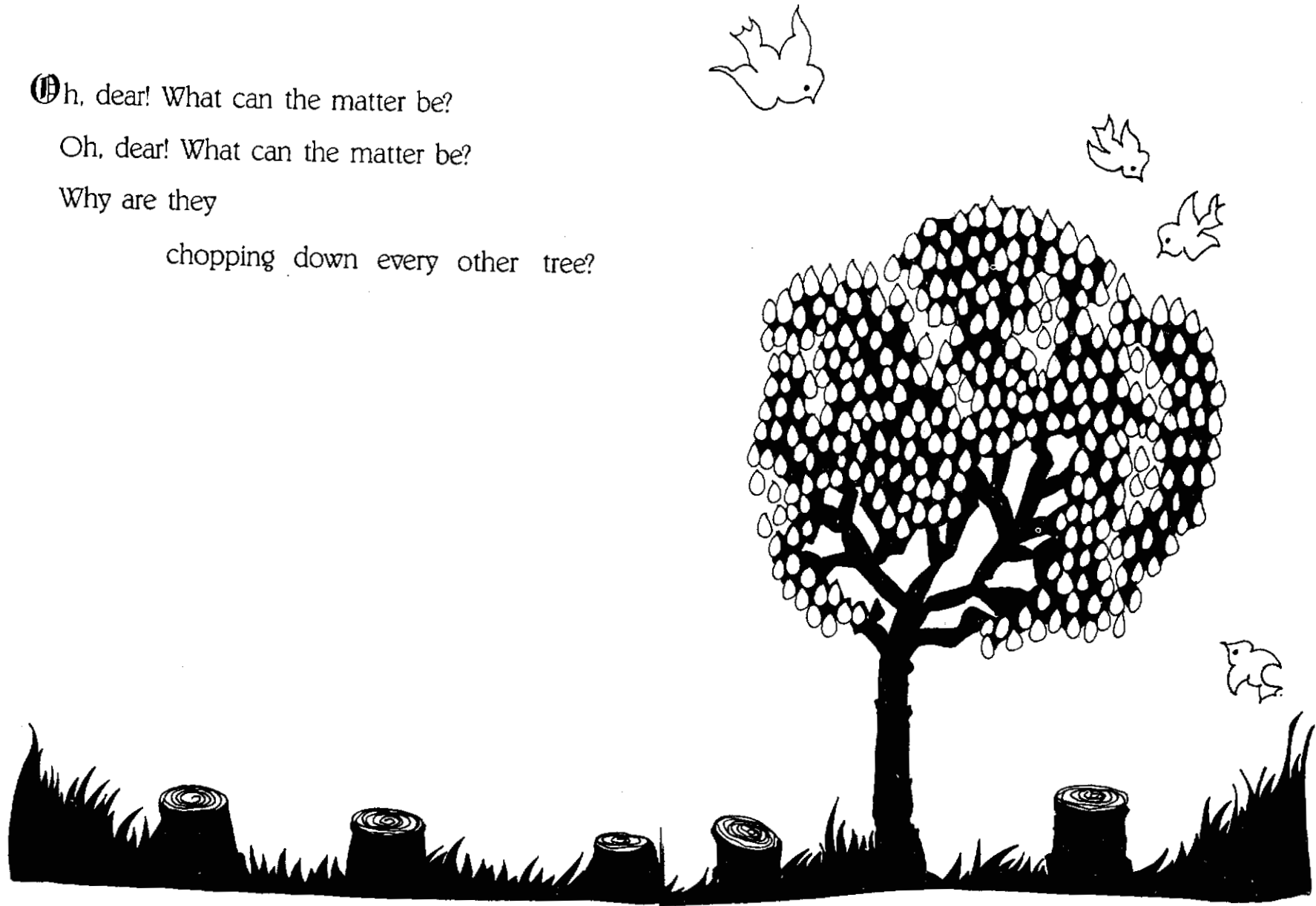
NAUGHTY AYATOLLAH

Khomeini's little fatwa
Put Salman in a corner
 There to wonder why
An old man in Iran
Defender of the Holy Koran
 Had condemned him to die!

NOT SO LITTLE ABDULLAH

Not so little Abdullah
Hid in a corner
 Pumping himself with heroin!
The cops got wind,
And pulled him in,
 Saying, "What a bad boy you are!"

Oh, dear! What can the matter be?
Oh, dear! What can the matter be?
Why are they
chopping down every other tree?



OH DEAR! WHAT CAN THE MATTER BE

Oh, dear! What can the matter be?
Oh, dear! What can the matter be?
Why are they felling every other tree?
Hectare upon hectare.

They promised a programme
of reforestation
They promised a programme
of reforestation
They promised a programme
of reforestation
But it's all a bunch of hot air!

OLD KING COKE

Old King Coke was a bad old bloke
For a cocaine baron was he
He pushed to kids and womenfolk
Through his drug-dealing Company.

On every deal he made a bundle
And he was rich as rich can be
"Twee, Twiddle-dee" crowed King Coke
"I'm above the law, you can't catch me."

Yes, King Coke and his traffickers
Were sitting pretty high and mighty
Till the police and army joined forces
To bust Old King Coke and his Company!

OLD MISTER MILLIARD

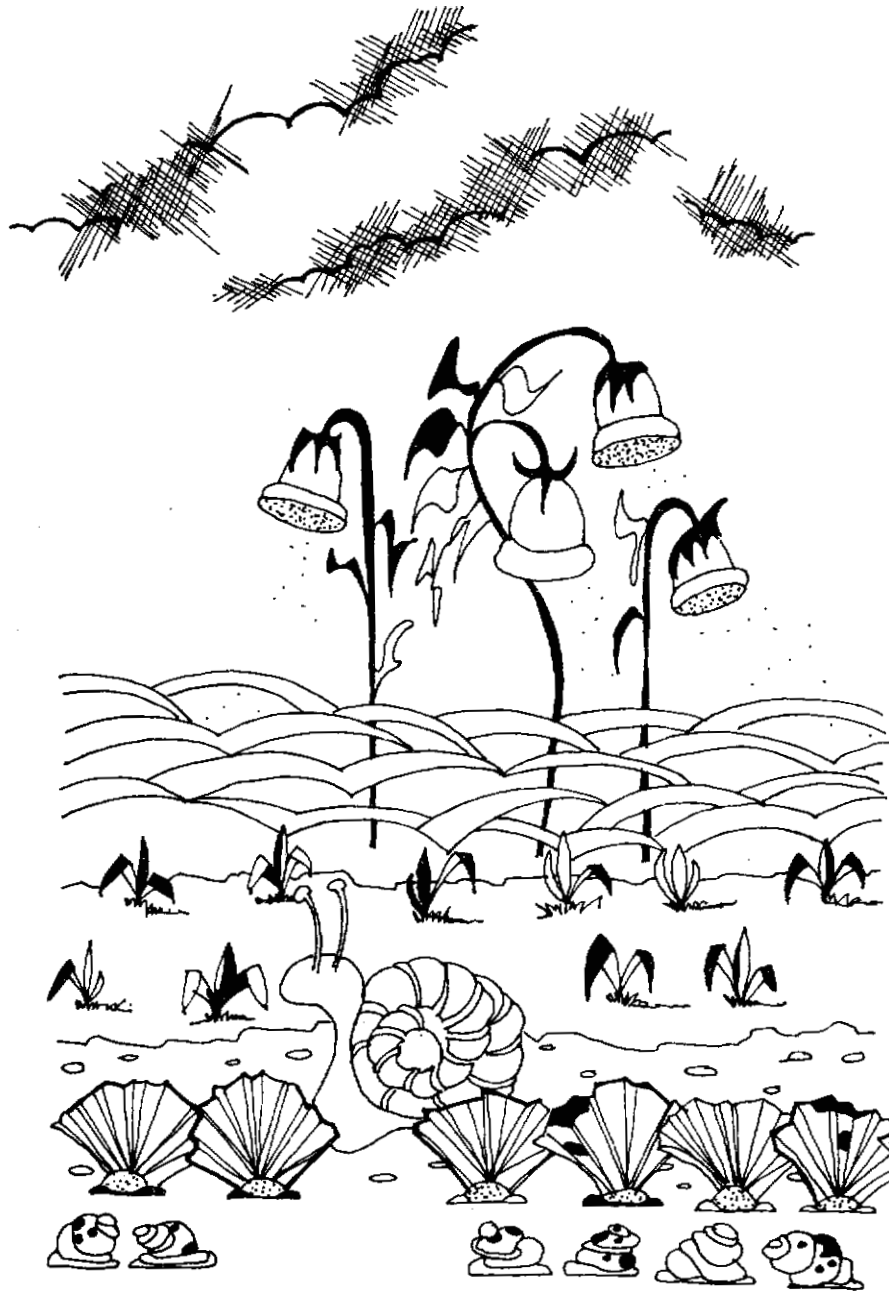
Old Mister Milliard
Went to his stockyard
To get the hungry some food.
But he could not do so
It was a diplomatic no-no
His actions would be misunderstood.

So he went to Parliament
To get their approval for aid
By the time the House said "YES"
The poor children of famine were dead!

OLD MOTHER GOOSE

Because of that hole
In our ozone layer
Old Mother Goose can
No longer wander
Or ride through the air
On her very fine gander.

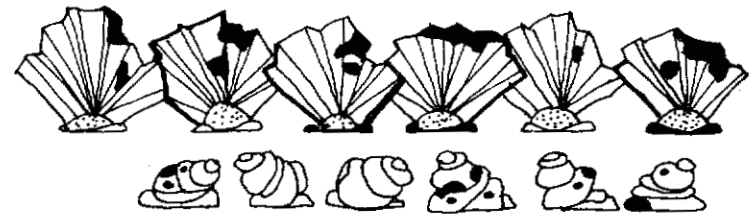
If she did so today
Poor Mother Goose
Would be burnt to a cinder!



ONCE OUR SKY WAS PAINTED BLUE

Once our sky was painted blue
And the earth was painted green
With such a lot of nice, fresh air
All sandwiched in between.

Now our sky is painted grey
And our earth has been stripped brown
With a cloud of carbon monoxide
Hovering over every town.



PETER, WIFE-BEATER

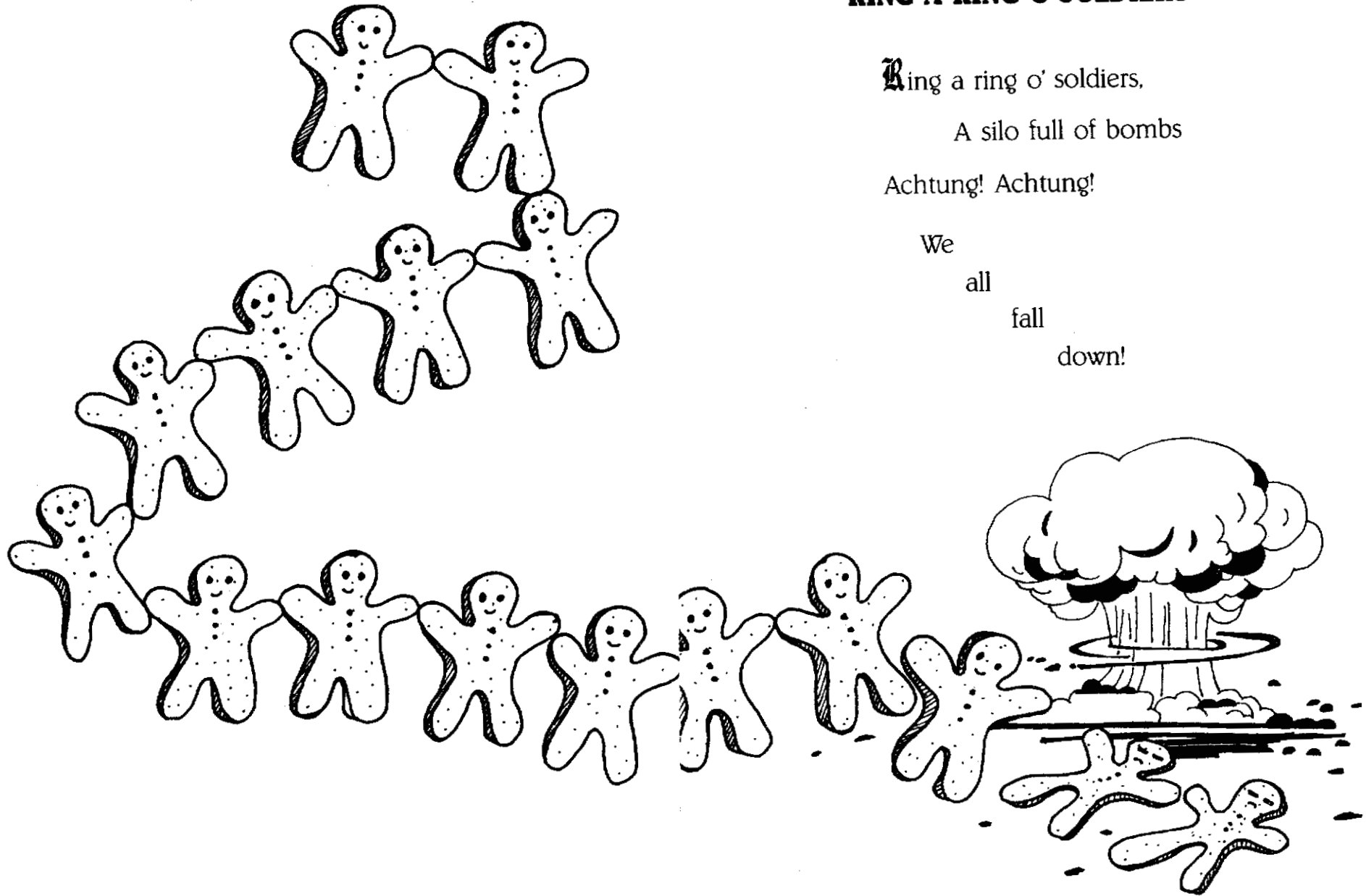
Peter, Peter, the wife-beater
Was served with a Court Order

From the Women's Crisis Centre
To keep well away from her.

He disobeyed that as well
And now sits in a prison cell!

RON, RON – A LONDONER'S SON

Ron, Ron – a Londoner's son
Robbed a mail train and away he ran
He took his fill
Now Interpol's ill
For Ronnie's chuckling away in Brazil.



RING A RING O'SOLDIERS

Ring a ring o' soldiers,
A silo full of bombs
Achtung! Achtung!
We
all
fall
down!

RUB-A-DUB-DUB

Rub-a-dub-dub,

Three men in the Club;

And who do you think they be?

The lawyer, the developer,

The foreign investor;

Turn 'em out, crooks all three!

SA-SADDAM AND BO-BUSHIE

Sa-Saddam and Bo-Bushie

Wanted to do battle

For Saddam, said Bushie

Had taken his oil barrel.

Into the fray came the UNO

With some sort of a resolution

That gave both our heroes the go-

Ahead for Global Devastation!

SEE-SAW, ASININE LAW!

See-Saw,

Asinine Law!

Everytime we have a new censor.

There's less

and less

Freedom in any of our media.

SIMPLE SHI MUN

Simple Shi Mun was in Tiananmen

Walking around the square

Asked a guardsman of Simple Shi Mun

"What's this noisy affair?"

Said Simple Shi Mun to the guardsman,

"We're singing for democracy."

Said the guardsman while shooting Shi Mun

"Indeed! You won't get any!"

SING A SONG FOR INDEPENDENCE

Sing a song for Independence?
Nothing but a lie!
When the National Debt is
Soaring to the sky.

When the FTZ was opened
Investors began to sing;
What a lovely people
To set about exploiting.

The President was in the counting-house
Counting out his money;
The First Lady was in America
Buying shoes and property.

The critic was in prison
Recalling his woes
When along came the warden
Who punched him on his nose.

SOLDIERS OF YASSER

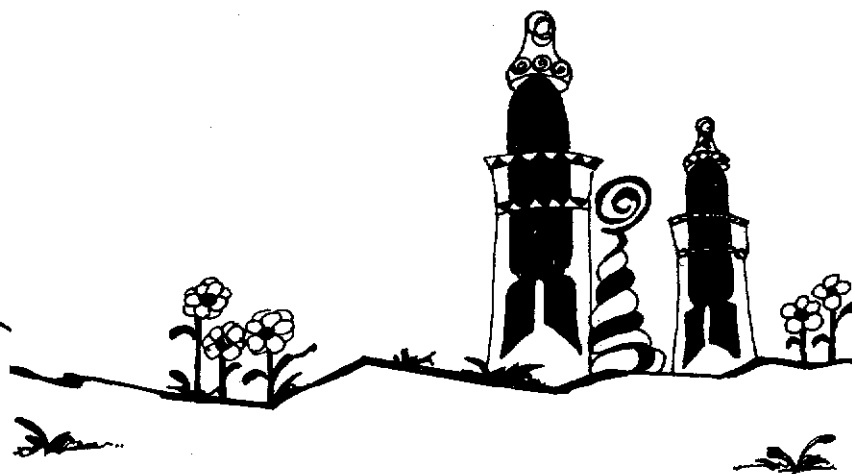
My fighters, said Yasser
Will free Palestine
If Israelis can take Gaza
So can mine.



STOCK-A-PILE NUKES

Stock a pile of nukes
In a silo shop.
When the siren blows,
The atoms will pop.

When the cloud breaks,
Black rain will fall.
Death will come surely,
To mankind and all.



THE LAMA IN TIBET

A Lama in Tibet
Sat in his turret
Quietly meditating away.

Along came a soldier
Sent down from China
And now the Lama's an emigre.

THE LION AND THE ROTARIAN

The Lion and the Rotarian
Were fighting for the town.

Self-promoting their schemes
Putting each other down.

Some gave with a smile
Others with a frown.....

While everyone agreed
Both should get the hell
Out of their town!

THE LITTLE CFC NUT TREE

I had a little nut tree;
Nothing would it bear
What with all those CFCs
Nibbling ozone from the air.

Our earth is getting hotter
And the level of the sea
Is rising ever higher all because of
Our stupid environmental policy.

THE MAD MAN OF KAMPUCHEA

There was a mad General in Kampuchea
Who when he took over as ruler
Made killing his trade
Filling fields with the dead
Bodies of all his people in Kampuchea.

THE MAN IN THE MOON

The Man in the Moon looked out of the moon
And this is what he said,
"It's time I got out of here now that these earthlings
Are shooting so much hardware
Into my poor aching head!"

THE OLD WOMAN IN THE SOUTH

There was an old woman
Who lived in the South;
She had so many problems
She turned to the North.

They sent her a missile
Together with warhead
And a technical adviser
But not any bread.

THE QUEEN OF TARTS

The Queen of Tarts

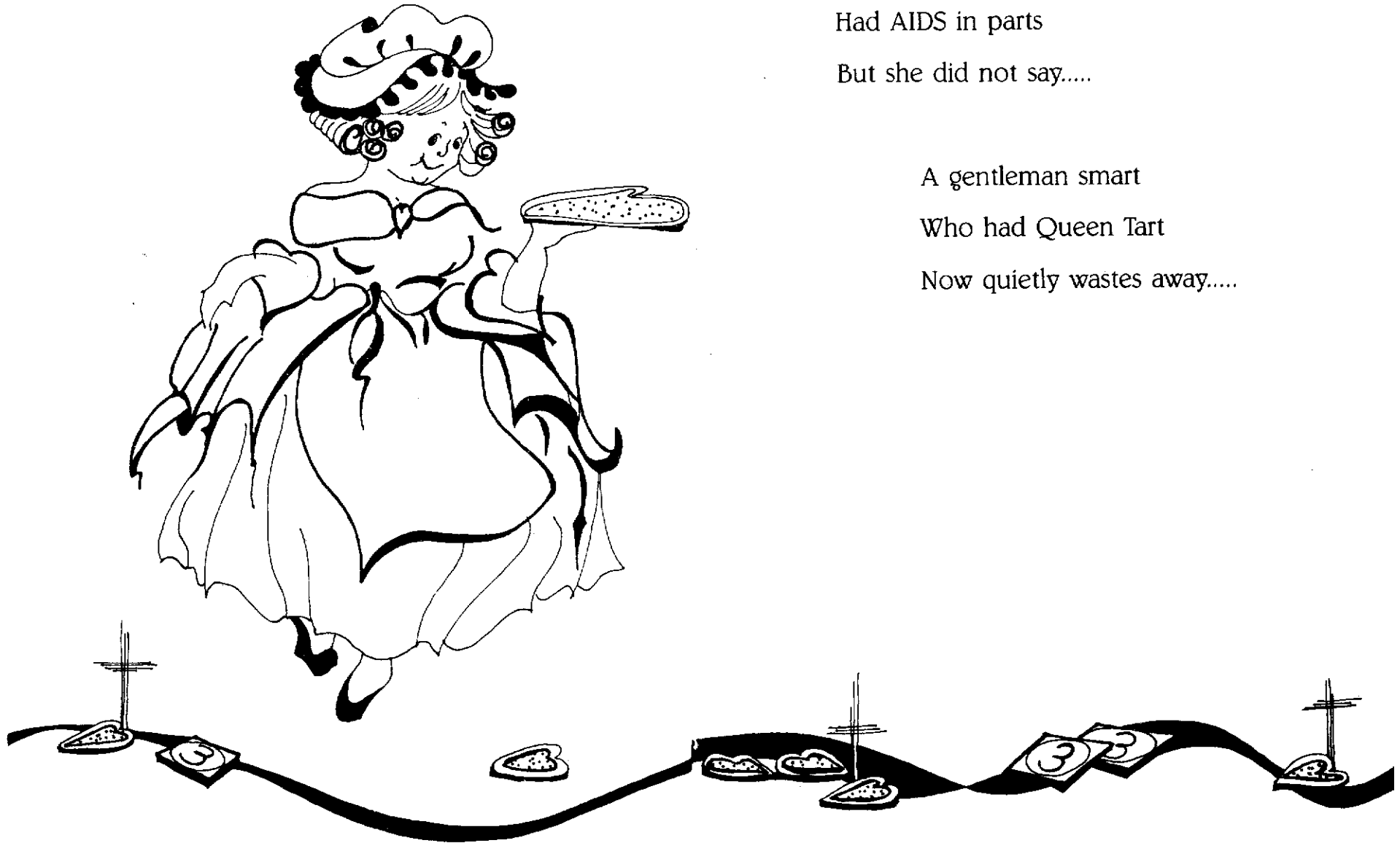
Had AIDS in parts

But she did not say....

A gentleman smart

Who had Queen Tart

Now quietly wastes away....



THERE WAS A YOUNG INDIAN MAN

There was a young man
I believe, a Hindu
He had so many children
Obviously, he did not know what to do.

Till along came Sanjay Gandhi
Who fixed him up with a vasectomy.

TO KUWAIT, TO KUWAIT

To Kuwait, to Kuwait
Just for an oil-rig
Both Bush and Hussain
Are doing a jig.

So Baghdad and Kuwait
The bombers pound
Over and over again
Round after round.

TOM, TOM, THE SOLDIER'S SON

Tom, Tom, the soldier's son
His first toy was a gun.
To Tom it was a treat
His parents thought it neat
Till Tom ran shooting down his street.

Tom, Tom, the soldier's son
He learned to kill when he was young:
Now all the playmates
That Tom did slay
Lie six feet under cold, cold clay.

TWINKLE STAR WARS

Twinkle, twinkle little star
Now I know what you are
Another satellite sent to spy
And spray death from the sky!

WE BLIND MICE

We blind mice!

We blind mice!

See what we've done!

See what we've done!

We all ran after Progress's wife;

She put out our eyes with Development's knife.

Did you ever see much fools in your life

As we blind mice?

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, MR. CRUSADE?

"Where are you going to, Mr. Crusade?"

"I'm going to get Milken, sir," he said.

"Why, what has he done, Mr. Crusade?"

"He defrauded stockholders, sir," he said.

"But he's a junk bond hero, Mr. Crusade."

"A felon and a racketeer too, sir," he said.

"What is his fortune, Mr. Crusade?"

"It runs into billions, sir," he said.

"Then, you can't put him away, Mr. Crusade?"

"Only for a couple of months, sir," he said.

OH WHERE, OH WHERE

Oh where, oh where

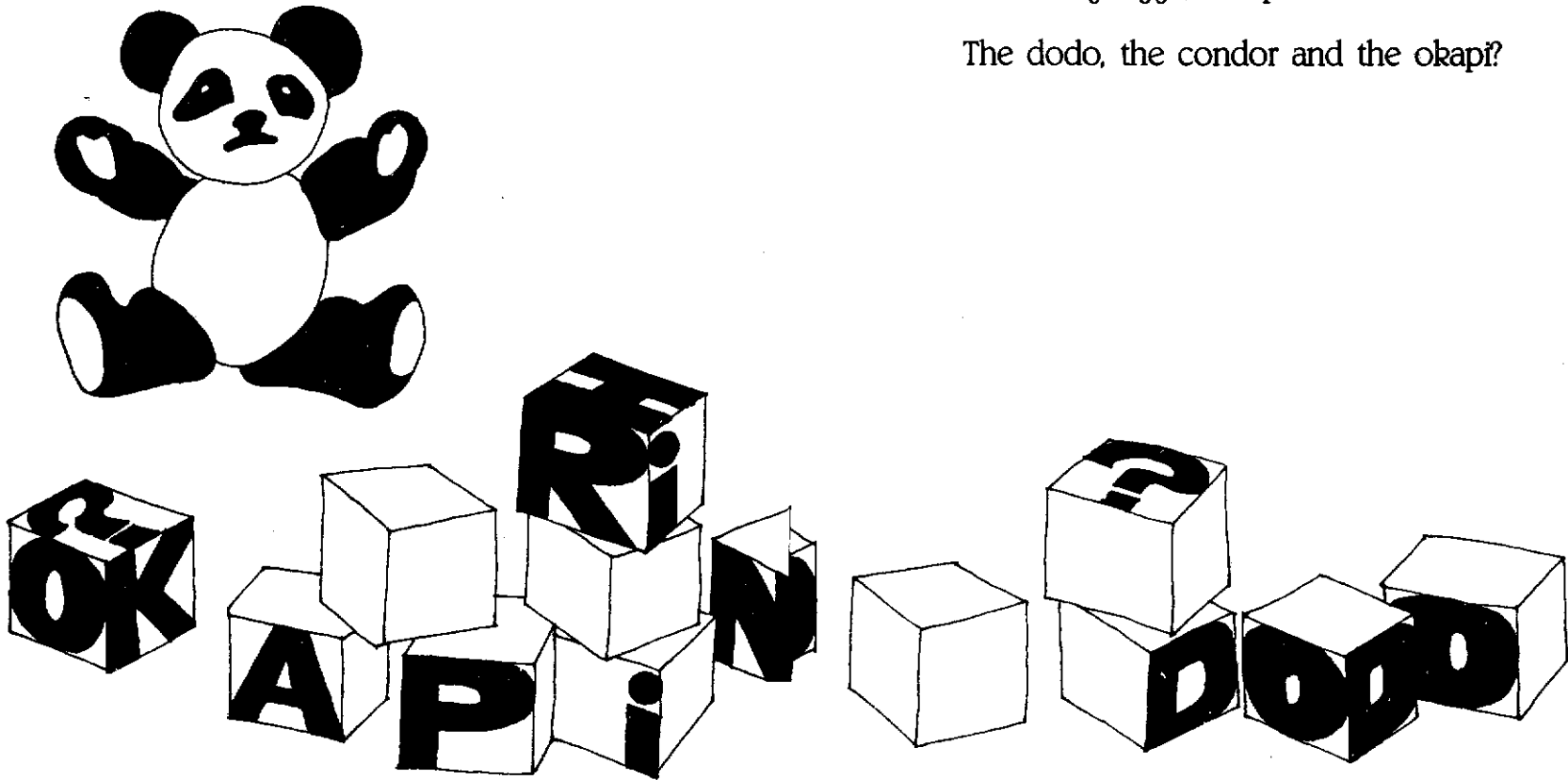
Has the rhino gone?

Oh where, oh where can he be?

And the snow leopard

The guagga, the panda

The dodo, the condor and the okapi?



OH WHERE, OH WHERE (2)

Oh where, oh where
Has our commonsense gone?
Oh where, oh where is our sanity?
With our education
And health budget cut short
While doubling expenditure on the military.

WHO KILLED OUR ISLAND

Who killed our Island?
"I" said the hotelier
"With the tourist dollar
I killed the Island."
Who bled it dry?
"I" said the foreigner
"With my calculator
I bled it dry."
Who sucked its blood?
"I" said the politician
"With the aid of Parliament
I sucked its blood."
Who'll dig its grave?
"I" said the developer
"With my bulldozer
I'll dig its grave."
Who'll be chief mourner?
"We" said the people
"We losers perennial
We'll be chief mourner."

WINNIE HAD A LITTLE LAMB

Winnie had a little lamb
Its fleece was white as snow
But everywhere that Winnie went
The lamb could not go.

It followed her to school one day
Which was against the rule
For white and black can still
Not attend the same school.

WONG KIM FATT COULD EAT NO FAT

Wong Kim Fatt could eat no fat
His wife would not eat a thing
For his cholesterol level was high
And his anorexic wife was slimming.

WORLD WAR 3, WILLY NILLY

World War Two
Was very silly
But World War Three?
If it comes
Willy-nilly
We'd all be history!

YANKEE, YANKEE BOMBER

Yankee, yankee bomber
Equipped with a laser
What is your target
Down in Mesopotamia?

Did you train your weapon
To unleash death and terror
On women and children
In an air-raid shelter?

YASSER ARAFAT

Yasser Arafat was in a flap
The Zionists were so mean
With occupied lands in their lap
They now refused to come clean.

So, Yasser the engineer
Bought himself a rifle
Became Arafat the soldier
Fighting for the legal
Return of West Bank and Gaza
To his dispossessed people.

And that is the story
Of Yasser Arafat
And the Palestinian
Cause and all that.

