

Munching Leg

It was six inches too long and four inches too wide!
With raised humps and bumps all over its sides
It lay in the box all shiny and bright
A sinister thing, why it might sting or bite!
I showed it to Harry and I showed it to Jack,
"Tis a terrible thing, you should send it right back."
I glanced at the index and it said veg or meat,
And it opened one eye and looked at my feet!"
So I shut down the lid and secured it tight,
For fear of the thing getting loose in the night.
Says I to the postman, "There's been a mistake,
This package was meant for the zoo's private gate!"
So they carried it off and I'm lucky, thinks me,
To know what it's safe under stout lock and key.

I was told in the morning that things were not quiet
And down at the zoo there had been a small riot.
It seems that an expert who knew what to do
Tried to fix the device to a big kangaroo!

The old kangaroo gave a growl and a grunt
And he lashed at the expert with a great mighty thump.
There is a report from someone who knew
That the guy is in casualty all black and blue.
Now the guy in the zoo had got the right hump
And said the place for the leg was down on the dump.

Now inside the zoo there worked a mixed lot:
English, Irish, Welsh, a few Scots,
And in a dark corner, a place seldom seen,

Was an obscure department called Aquamarine.
It ran very well and was a success,
Run by a Scot called Auld Jock Macbeth.

Old Jock took stock of the meat-eating leg
And he went to his boss and said, "Sir, I beg!
A meat-eating leg has never been seen,
So the place for this monster is Aquamarine."

The boss said to Jock, "You know of queer legs?"
Jock winked his eye and said, "My clan's from Loch Ness!"
"Well Jock," said the boss, "I place the leg in your care,
Just send me the reports, let me know how you fare."
So Jock and the leg went up to Loch Ness
To meet with old Bess, who turned up and said,
"I'm sick of the public and sick of the press.
Won't they leave me alone, for I'm due a rest."
She said to old Leggy, "This might work out a treat,
You in the shallows with the legs and the feet
And I in deep water catching up with my sleep."

After a short while, less than a week,
He had a new menu that he liked to eat:
There were hot dogs and burgers and off cuts of meat
And then half a chicken – almost too much to eat!

Leggy and Jock were not quite a team
And decided to work out a mutual scheme.
Leggy was happy without any feet
And thrived on the foot that the visitors eat,
And old Bessie, the 'Queen of Loch Ness'
Thought the arrangement a splendid success.

Poor old Jock was out on a limb,
So they needed some credit or merit for him.
Said they to old Jock, "Here's what you do:
Send report to the boss both exciting and true,
It might be of interest to him and the zoo
And the press might like copies of all your work too."

When the boss got the reports and the notes
He did a re-read of all Jock had wrote.
He said to himself, "I've been dead slow,
For Jock's quite amazing and literate to know,
So really, as a reward for the notes
Jock's of a calibre I must promote!"
The boss recalled Jock back to the zoo
To pass on his skills of which he now knew.
So eventually when Jock got back
He went for a drink with Harry and Jack
And they talked about this, and they talked about that:

"And was Leggy cured of the legs and the feet?"

"Oh, yes, he eats now what the visitors eat."

"Yes... but stray dogs and stray eats?"

"I don't know about that,

But Leggy's extraordinarily well fed and fat!"

—By Stan, Resident at Hill House