

# Colonel Fazackerley

Colonel Fazackerley Butterworth-Toast  
Bought an old castle complete with a ghost,  
But someone or other forgot to declare  
To Colonel Fazak that the spectre was there.  
On the very first evening, while waiting to dine,  
The Colonel was taking a fine sherry wine,  
When the ghost, with a furious flash and a flare,  
Shot out of the chimney and shivered, 'Beware!'  
Colonel Fazackerley put down his glass  
And said, 'My dear fellow, that's really first class!  
I just can't conceive how you do it at all.  
I imagine you're going to a Fancy Dress Ball?'  
At this, the dread ghost made a withering cry.  
Said the Colonel (his monocle firm in his eye),  
'Now just how you do it I wish I could think.  
Do sit down and tell me, and please have a drink.'  
The ghost in his phosphorous cloak gave a roar  
And floated about between ceiling and floor.  
He walked through a wall and returned through a pane  
And backed up the chimney and came down again.  
Said the Colonel, 'With laughter I'm feeling quite weak!'  
(As trickles of merriment ran down his cheek).  
'My house-warming party I hope you won't spurn.  
You must say you'll come and you'll give us a turn!'  
At this, the poor spectre – quite out of his wits –  
Proceeded to shake himself almost to bits.  
He rattled his chains and he clattered his bones  
And he filled the whole castle with mumbles and moans.  
But Colonel Fazackerley, just as before,  
Was simply delighted and called out, 'Encore!'  
At which the ghost vanished, his efforts in vain,  
And never was seen at the castle again.  
'Oh dear, what a pity!' said Colonel Fazak.  
'I don't know his name, so I can't call him back.'  
And then with a smile that was hard to define,  
Colonel Fazackerley went in to dine.

*Dilini Ranathunga*

# Caged Bird

A free bird leaps  
on the back of the wind  
and floats downstream  
till the current ends  
and dips his wing  
in the orange sun rays  
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks  
down his narrow cage  
can seldom see through  
his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and  
his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze  
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees  
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn  
and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams  
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream  
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

*Stella Fuidge*

# The Magic Box

I will put in the box  
the swish of a silk sari on a summer night  
fire from the nostrils of a Chinese dragon,  
the tip of a tongue touching a tooth.  
I will put in the box  
a snowman with a rumbling belly  
a sip of the bluest water from Lake Lucerene.  
a leaping spark from an electric fish.  
I will put into the box  
three violet wishes spoken in Gujarati,  
the last joke of an ancient uncle,  
and the first smile of a baby.  
I will put into the box  
a fifth season and a black sun,  
a cowboy on a broomstick  
and a wien on a wn  
My box is fashioned from ice and gold and  
steel,  
with stars on the lid and secrets in the  
corners.  
Its hinges are the toe joints of dinosaurs.  
I shall surf in my box  
on the great high-rolling breakers of the wild Atlantic,  
then wash ashore on a yellow beach  
the colour of the sun.

*Bonnie Qu*