

GRASS

1

It's a funny thing you know
But grass is not what it seems:
Knotgrass is not grass; *nit grass*
And *nut grass*—one is grass, one
Is not; *sea grass* is a grass,
But which grass can *witch grass* be?

Bamboos'll bamboozle you:
Bamboo grass is not bamboo.
And *onion grass* is neither
Grass nor onion. Don't forget
Forget-me-not grass is good
Forget-me-not. Look *blue grass*
In the eye, and *grass blue-eyed*:
Tell me which is what, and why.

Do you like the feel of *eel*
Grass—*wrack* your brains! Is that grass?
Try your hand at *spear grass*; don't
Exclaim, just explain. Or *hook grass*
(*Sedge, hooked*, renamed in Green Book—
He a lyin' book). Grimmer
Still is *grimmer grass*. So pass
To *dog'stail*, and other tails
(*Rescue grasses* from the nest!):
Cat's, rat's; hare's, mare's, and squirrel's;
Fox too (but *quake's* after cow!).

Then *kauri grass, arrow grass,*
Scurvy grass and old *grass tree*—
Topsy-turvy mountain mop
Or, if you like, the "yacca"
Aussie kind. Try *cutty grass*:
Now a sharp edge will cut grass

And a sharp sedge is *cutty grass*
But cut grass *cut grass* never
Will be. Now what is your score?
If less than four, I'm afraid
Your grassrootseducation
Needs attention. Some parting
Advice: Beware a *carpet*
Of the grassy mountain kind—
You'll slide, come to pretty pass,
Maybe prickles in behind.

2

Love grass lyme by your side
On a *couch* of *cowgrass*, tell
Me *sweet reed*, *redtop* fingered
By *wind*, is your *summer hair*
English or *colonial*?
With a *sickle* I will *lop*
Your *plume*; then tied with *cotton*
Your *tufted hair* a *winter*
Mat will make, to wrap me up
And keep at *bay*, *water*, *fog*,
Needle ice, and *avalanche*.

Then *sweet vernal* when it's time
For *hedgehog* to *twitch* again
(With *stink* and *yellow bristle*)
Your *short hair plume* will *long hair*
Once more become. *Shivering*,
Creeping bent, will be over.
Come to the clover *deer grass*!

Postscript

The ABC of the GRS

A man must sit amongst the grass,
Be himself, live without a rush,
See life unspoilt: fear not life's edge.

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