

THE PORTMANTEAU NOT TAKEN

EDWARD R. WOLPOW
Brookline, Massachusetts

Lewis Carroll discussed portmanteau words in his exposition on the poem Jabberwocky. The two words MISERABLE and FLIMSY produced a hybrid MIMSY, incorporating some of the letters and some of the meanings of both. But why not FLISERABLE? The portmanteau word, also known as the blend, has many examples in English. We have arbitrarily chosen one of the resultant offspring and discarded the other. When GLOBE + BLOB = GLOB or BLOBE, a long illustrious career followed for the first, but nonexistence for the seemingly-worthy second. Note also, GALLOP + TRIUMPH = GALUMPH or the unheralded TRILOP, and FRANCAIS + ANGLAIS = FRANGLAIS or who-ever-heard-of ANCAIS.

In the following story, the forgotten sibling of some well-known matings is presented. Solutions to these 28 problems are given in Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue.

When his car broke down on a lonely road, he realized he would have to DREAD all the way to town. He'd love to MAT that auto repairman, and MACK his windows! What a LUNK he'd been, to be taken in like that! The unhealthy POKE gave way to pouring rain which SPASHed on the ground, turning the dirt road to MOO, and forcing him to SLUP slowly through it. The rain was so heavy, barely a SHEAM of light from town could be seen.

When he finally reached the HOTOR, he found the owner to be a SIM old lady who would just CHAG along, never getting to the point. He would have to SASH and get an expensive room to dry out. The rain on his sleeve caused a SPACK on the register and sprayed the WRIRMS on the page, so the old lady, in a HUTTER of action, face all BLASHed, with a confused SPASH of words, had to rush over to dry it, though her running was hardly more than a WATTER. In the process, there was a CRAP of noise, as she upset the wastebasket and fell against the desk where all the papers got TOLled.

"This price entitles you to LEAKFAST tomorrow," she managed, but then her temper GLAMED, and she added some expletives.

In his room, his RESMITTER radio began to HALL with static, even after WHISTing the knob, so he turned on the tube, which featured only a MARAVISION that was BROADTANEOUS to six states.

I am indebted to Robert Devereux's article in the November 1984 issue of *Word Ways* for a number of the portmanteau words I used.