

## YET ANOTHER THREE DOUBLETS

Daniel W. Galef

“Doublets” is the name Lewis Carroll coined for this playful species of word ladder puzzle which he invented on Christmas Day in 1877. This fourth delightful installment of our annual poem series falls exactly one gross of years after that original Victorian parlor game in that original Victorian parlor. The author, mathematician, and logologist Carroll first published his Doublets in *Vanity Fair* in 1879, but Graydon Carter won’t answer my letters and I’m semi-certain he’s a *Hunger Games* character based on his hair, so I’ve sent them to you instead. As in previous installments of this poem series, the start- and end-words are here presented in the stanzas of a painfully purple doggerel on an irrelevant subject: this year, on how wonderful in every way it is to be a bird (article submission fee provided by the Board to Immediately Reduce Deforestation and Sheetglass). Solutions for the word ladders have been worked out by hand and then double-checked and adjusted using software developed by Ceptimus, just as was the case with previous installments “Three Doublets” (2014), “Three More Doublets” (2015), and “Another Three Doublets” (2016). Now:

---

### HALCYON DAYS

A bird’s the best of beasts to be—  
We fly! We *soar*! We sing!  
I swoop from sea to shining sea,  
And all I see belongs to me!  
Each kingfisher’s a king!  
The experts all have quite concurred:  
All other views are quite absurd:  
No lovelier life than of a BIRD  
on WING. (3)

Shells as hats have had their day,  
Accepts that slob, the snail.  
Furry coats are quite passé,  
And snakeskin wear beyond outré  
Unless you tread the trail.  
But birds are always dressed *tres chic*:  
A coat of feathers smooth and sleek  
Cloaking me in style from BEAK  
to TAIL. (5)

The grub is grand—a dainty dish  
Of haddock, clams, or krill,  
Or any other fish I wish,  
And fresh as fresh can be—delish!,  
No need to light the grill.  
No tastier treasure than to chew my  
Tender, flaky flounder *shumai*:  
My credit’s solid—add this TO MY  
BILL. (6)