

“Doublets” is the name Lewis Carroll coined for this playful species of word ladder puzzle which he invented on Christmas Day in 1877. One given word is transformed into another by a series of incremental changes according to the following rule: Letters may be altered one at a time, with each intermediary rung also being an existing word. As with the previous two installments of this series, “Three Doublets” (2014) and “Three More Doublets” (2015), the word ladder examples used in this piece were double-checked using a program based on the Official Scrabble Dictionary (meaning that not all of the links are necessarily commonplace terms). Also as with the previous installments, the starting and finishing words for each doublet are here embedded in the three stanzas of a painfully purple poem on an irrelevant topic, in this case, the village G.P. And, of course, stay tuned for the next thrilling installment, “Yet Another Three Doublets,” coming 2017.

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## ANOTHER THREE DOUBLETS

Our Doctor is less kin than kind,  
But sees us through our strife;  
His tools: a forehead-mirror shined,  
A stethoscope, a sharpened mind,  
A better-sharpened knife  
With which he gives the closest shave  
To snatch us from the grisly grave,  
Whatever he can do to SAVE  
a LIFE (3).

It’s not all G.P.s’ ideal day  
To stare at spotted tongues:  
Some dream of business cards that say  
“X Specialist” (and better pay)  
And climb the ladder’s rungs  
To specialize upon some part—  
*‘Examine Patient Forty’s chart!’—*  
And focus on the throb of HEART  
or LUNGS (6).

The Doc’s the smartest in the land,  
The highest-tier achiever  
Who, inside-out, knows insides, and  
Can amputate a hopeless hand  
With just a rusty cleaver,  
Who tells the ‘subs’ their shorts to doff,  
And proffers inkum draughts to quaff,  
And deftly quells the pesky COUGH  
and FEVER (8).