



The Hunting of the Snark (Classic Lewis Carroll)

Lewis Carroll

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The Hunting of the Snark - By Lewis Carroll - The Hunting of the Snark (An Agony in 8 Fits) is typically categorized as a nonsense poem written by Lewis Carroll, the pen name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. Written from 1874 to 1876, the poem borrows the setting, some creatures, and eight portmanteau words from Carroll's earlier poem "Jabberwocky" in his children's novel *Through the Looking Glass* (1871). The plot follows a crew of ten trying to hunt the Snark, an animal which may turn out to be a highly dangerous Boojum; the only one of the crew to find the Snark quickly vanishes, leading the narrator to explain that it was a Boojum after all. Henry Holiday illustrated the poem, and the poem is dedicated to young Gertrude Chataway, whom Carroll met at the English seaside town Sandown in the Isle of Wight in 1875. The *Hunting of the Snark* was published by Macmillan in late March 1876 to mixed reviews from reviewers who found it strange. The first printing of *The Hunting of the Snark* consisted of 10,000 copies, with two reprintings by the conclusion of the year; in total, the poem was reprinted seventeen times between 1876 to 1908. Carroll often denied knowing the meaning behind the poem; however, in an 1896 reply to one letter, he agreed with one interpretation of the poem as an allegory for the search for happiness. Scholars have found various meanings in the poem, among them existential angst, an allegory for tuberculosis, and a mockery of the Tichbourne case. *The Hunting of the Snark* has been alluded to in various works and has been adapted for musicals, opera, plays, and music.

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