

Ode to a Dodo

by [Susan J. Bryant](#) (March 2024)



Edwards' Dodo, by Roelant Savery, late 1620s

Ode to a Dodo

O tragic fowl of cataclysmic fate,
Your magic thrives beyond your wretched end.
O plumed and portly gem of plodding gait,
Your vexing exit's hard to comprehend.
O bird of tufty tush and yellow foot,
O boon of beady eye and bulbous beak,

O treasure of Mauritius, why oh why
Did reckless hands of Mother Nature put
Her chubby chick (with stubby wings too weak
To flap and fly) upon an isle to die?

O savored avian martyr of the past,
I ponder on the plunder of your kind.
I've heard your flesh could tempt saints from a fast—
That hoggish men and piggish critters dined
Until your scrumptious species petered out.
If only you had tasted like a cabbage
(A heap of leafy grief too gross to eat)
You'd still be here—I have not one rogue doubt.
I rue the drooling fools who took advantage
Of you, ambrosial dodo of sweet meat.

I've heard ambitious whispers on the wind
From gods in coats of white who gad in labs.
Their plans for resurrection have been pinned
To sterile walls. Your genome's up for grabs.
I sense your sizzle on a distant shore—
The ripple of a phoenix, fat and fair.
I smell your piquant spirit reawaken
As niggling notions nibble, nag, then gnaw.
I pray fine Einsteins (wild of mind and hair)
Will oust the gene that makes you taste like bacon.

From a Dutch Sailor's Mauritius Memoirs
a triolet

We reveled in a gastro-glow.
Each eve we relished scoops of stew.
Our dodo bowls would overflow.
We reveled in a gastro-glow
That made our growling bellies grow

And wiped a flightless flock from view.
We reveled in a gastro-glow.
Each eve we relished scoops of stew.

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Susan Jarvis Bryant is originally from the U.K., but now lives on the coastal plains of Texas. Susan has poetry published on *The Society of Classical Poets*, *Lighten Up Online*, *Snakeskin*, *Light*, *Sparks of Calliope*, and *Expansive Poetry Online*. She also has poetry published in *The Lyric*, *Trinacria*, and Beth Houston's *Extreme Formal Poems* and *Extreme Sonnets II* anthologies. Susan is the winner of the 2020 International SCP Poetry Competition and was nominated for the 2022 Pushcart Prize. She has just published her first two books, *Elephants Unleashed* and *Fern Feathered Edges*.

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