



Suddenly there was a muffled ruffle
and skerfuffle, and What? snuffled,
and Maybe came scuffling from the curtains
stage right, with Bizzie hustling behind.

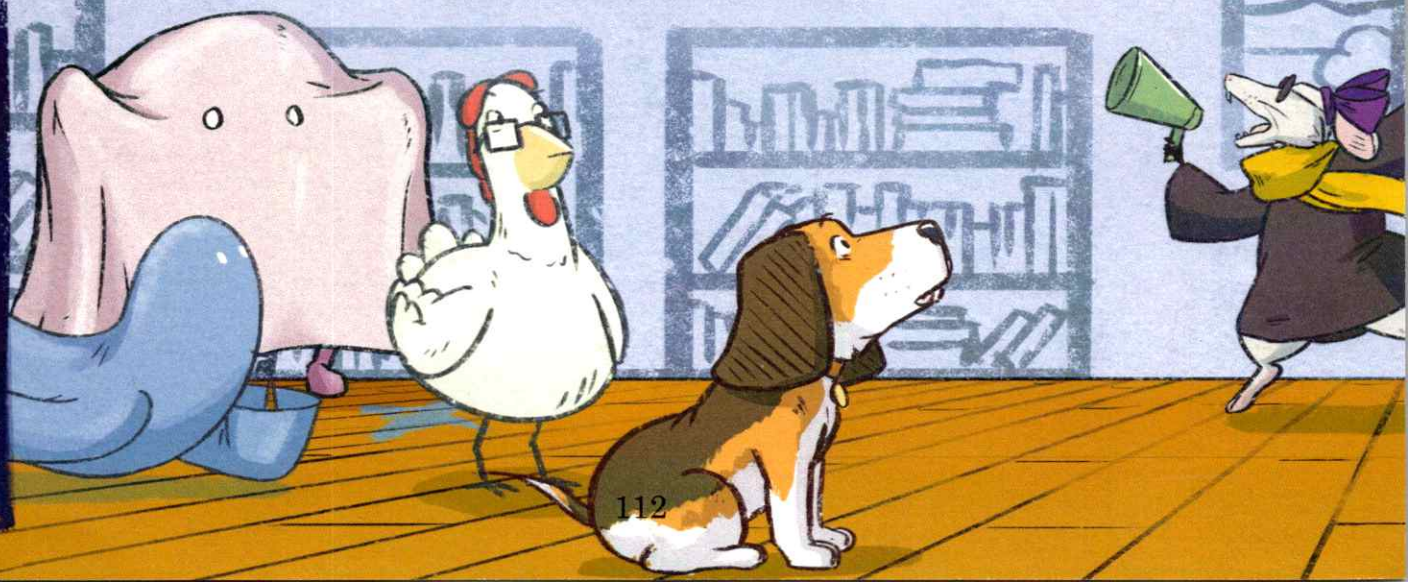
“CUT!” Maybe cried. “LIGHTS!”

Not again.

Joe cranked on those crackly lights,
and everyone gathered on the wooden stage,
which now looked like a blue room.
One wall had painted books on painted shelves.
A painted window looked out on a painted firth.

“Clauses!” Maybe cried. “Clauses!
Remember, this whole poem
that we stand in is made of clauses!”

Once more she projected an image
of the words of Robert’s poem.
It looked like this:



Block City

What **are you** able to build with your blocks?
Castles and palaces, temples and docks.
Rain may keep raining, and **others go roam**,
But **I can be** happy and building at home.

Let the **sofa be** mountains, the **carpet be** sea,
There **I'll establish** a city for me:
A kirk and a mill and a palace beside,
And a harbor as well where my **vessels may ride**.

Great **is** the **palace** with pillar and wall,
A sort of a tower on top of it all,
And steps coming down in an orderly way
To where my toy **vessels lie** safe in the bay.

This **one is sailing** and that **one is** moored:
Hark to the song of the sailors on board!
And **see** on the steps of my palace, the kings
Coming and going with presents and things!

– Robert Louis Stevenson





As Poodle studied those clauses,
he saw new things.

Sometimes the verb came before the subject!

No, seriously. Sometimes.

Sometimes the subject was silent, understood,
if the clause was imperative (a command).

Some clauses had compound verbs.

Sometimes there was more than one clause
in a sentence! What? It was dazzling.

And Poodle noticed the beautiful meter of the poem:

What are you / **a** ble to / **build** with your / **blocks**?

Ca stles and / **pa** la ces / **tem** ples and / **docks**.

Rain may keep / **rain** / ing and / **oth** ers go / **roam**,

But **I** can be / **ha** ppy and / **build** ing at / **home**.

boom ta ta / **boom** ta ta / **boom** ta ta / **boom**

It was different from any poem Poodle had heard.

He looked at the rhymes and
the assonance and the consonance.

