

Fizzard the Lizard and his Quest for a Gizzard

A rhyming tale about a determined reptile—someday to be properly illustrated

Long, long ago lived a wizard named Drizzard.
He had a resourceful, green lizard named Fizzard.
Our reptile friend led a comfortable life
In a house in the woods far away from all strife.

One day the old wizard had a potion to brew.
It required some onions and rabbits' feet too.
But the strangest ingredient sought by our dear Drizzard
Was the boiled down stock of a crocodile gizzard!

"I need this gizzard at once, but where could I find it?
Dash it all, Fizzard! Confound, mute, and blind it!"
Fizzard stared at him calmly the way lizards do,
As if to say, "All this for such a bad-tasting stew?"

"The queen will fire me if I cannot supply!"
And the hysterical wizard then started to cry.
Fizzard looked at his friend from his window-sill seat
And knew he must help make this potion complete.

Out the round window he quietly fled
And left the old wizard, his face turning red.
Fizzard's quest took him deeper into the old forest,
Past the house of the woodsman and his wife, the florist.

He scampered through underbrush in quite a hurry.
For the loss of this job he was starting to worry.
"I'll ask my friend Jake if he's seen such a beast,"
Thought the lizard to himself as he moved t'ward the east.

He came to a pond that was covered in green.
Then out spoke a voice: "Fizzard, how have you been?"
Fizzard turned right around to see his friend Jake
Slithering towards him, for he was a snake.

"I've been just grand," said Fizz with a smile,
"But my master at home's been out of work for a while."
"I need a nice crock to lend me his throat."
Said Jake, "That's like asking a bear for his coat."
"And they don't exist in this part of the globe."
Then into the icky green water Jake dove.

Fizz thought for a moment then turned in despair.
He walked slowly back until caught in a snare.
Around his sleek body, a string held him tight,
While the springing green trap drew Fizz up in flight.

He hung in the air, spinning slowly around.
Fizz could do nothing but stare at the ground.
Then up strode a witch with an old-lady hobble
And took our poor lizard right back to her hovel.

With lizard in hand, she opened the door.
Poor Fizzard had seen nothing like it before.
Unlike the wizard's house, kept ever clean,
This witch's abode was rather obscene.

Bottles and bones were strewn all about,
And on the stone hearth lay an ugly pig snout.
She went to a shelf and pulled out some scrolls
And grabbed a glass jar without any holes.
She stuffed him inside and clamped down the lid
And put him away with the crayfish and squid.

She scanned an old scroll with her beady, old eyes.
Till she stopped on the page and cried out in surprise.
"The hoof of a mule, ground into powder."
She told her black cat, "I'll be back in an hour."

With the slam of a door, she blew out of sight.
Fizzard looked at the lid which was fastened down tight.
He examined the room full of rubbish and ick
And things that would make any pig-farmer sick.

Then near on a cupboard he espied something great.
He was thankful for such a nice turn of his fate.
For in a big jar near the newt-eyes and skin
Was a crocodile gizzard. Fizz started to grin.

But Fizz wasn't the only one sporting a smile.
Behind him the cat watched her tasty arrival.
In vile delight, she sat licking her lips,
For a lizard was better than the choicest catnips.

Fizzard heard purring and turned slowly round.
The sight that he saw turned his grin to a frown.
But as the cat put her paw up to the glass,
Fizz knew his departure might well come to pass.

He began making faces, provoking the beast,
Till she knocked the jar over to get at her feast.
Down to the ground the jar fell with a crash,
And out from the shards Fizzard made a quick dash.

Behind a wardrobe Fizzard ran with great haste.
"Not fair," thought the kitty, "I just wanted a taste."
The lizard in safety then climbed to the top,
For it was much higher than this cat could hop.

When he arrived, Fizzard found a pink vial.
Soon his face changed to show cunning and guile.
For clear on its front it read "Potion of Sleep:
Will set a troll snoring without any sheep."

"One drop of this drink should take care of that fluff,"
Remarked Fizzard while dipping his tail in the stuff.
He scampered back down to the old wooden floor,
And rushed passed the cat toward the peeling red door.

Caught up by the tail in a whirlwind of fur,
Fizz heard upside-down the cat's satisfied purr.
But the lizard did find his position quite comic,
For now I must note that our pal's autotomic.

It's a trait shared by geckos and a kind of sea snail
And means that this lizard can drop his own tail.
So leaving his tail in the startled cat's jaws,
Fizzard dropped to the floor and evaded her claws.

Soon the pink potion was doing its job,
For the cat's brutish head was beginning to bob.
She slumped to the floor with a soft, fuzzy thud,
And dreamt she was inside a rosemary bud.

Fizz found an old pillow, surrounded by flies,
And dragged it until it was under his prize.
He climbed onto the cupboard, to that sought-after jar,
Sent it down to the pillow—not a crack, not a mar.

He rolled the jar up to the base of the door,
Climbed up to the latch that stood high off the floor.
Pulling it down, the door swung open wide.
And out strode a lizard, glowing with pride.

He pushed it forever over tree-root and thorn,
Until he was dirty and weary and worn.
By the time he had rolled it all the way to the road,
He realized he could not for long bear its load.

But just as the lizard began to lie down,
He felt a low rumbling close to the ground.
He looked down the path and jumped up in delight,
For the cart of a merchant had rolled into sight.

It clattered with cookware, with kettle and lid,
While Fizzard quietly ran off and hid.
When the cart neared the jar, the man yelled out, "Whoa!"
What the jar was he wanted to know.

His single horse stopped at his single command,
And he looked at the gizzard piece, carefully canned.
The merchant got down, put the jar in his cart,
And with a loud whistle, he made a fresh start.

As the cart rolled away, Fizzard ran out in chase
But found his small legs couldn't win such a race.
Then just as our friend was about to despair,
A paper detached and flew up in the air.

When it had floated back down to the earth,
Fizzard read what it said and was thus filled with mirth.
He rolled up the paper and took it back home,
Where Drizzard was arguing with a tree gnome.

And as Fizzard placed his note on the doormat,
The gnome and the wizard were ending their chat.
Out stomped the gnome, blowing smoke out his nose.
Drizzard stood in the door, still red as a rose.

But then he looked down and spotted the note,
And started to read after clearing his throat.
“Come one, come all to the Friday Bazaar!”
“Merchants and traders from lands near and far!”

He stepped back inside, looked down and around,
Called out, “Fizzard, my boy, let’s go into town.”
He put on his hat and shrugged on his cloak,
Grabbed his tall staff made of twisted, old oak.

Fizz climbed on his shoulder as they left the old hut
And made off for the market to find you-know-what.
The wizard, still nervous, felt hopeful inside.
The lizard, more savvy, just savored the ride.

They stood in the midst of the Friday bazaar.
Fizzard scanned the dense crowd for the man with the jar.
People of all shapes and colors and sizes
Walked about wearing all sorts of strange guises.

But where was the man Fizz had seen in the woods?
He remembered the cart carried mean kitchen goods.
Then Fizz saw a kettle walk away from a stall
Which was under the care of the merchant Jamal.

“Jamal’s Kitchen Wares” read the painted-wood sign.
He sold all that was needed for a person to dine.
But who would want to buy a crock’s throat in a jar?
‘Twas the most bizarre thing he was selling by far.

Fizzard saw it at once, but his wizard did not;
He just kept on walking away from the spot.
So Fizz had to do something daring and brave,
An act that could lead to a small reptile grave.

Into the throng Fizzard made a bold jump,
Dodging their footfalls that went *thump, thump, thump!*
Drizzard turned right around with short, panicked yelp
And scanned the footpath to see how he could help.

He spotted his friend among sandals and boots,
Evading their stomping through haphazard routes.
The wizard went pushing back into the crowd.
He called out his name but the mob was too loud.

He stumbled on through till he came to a table
And found his green lizard still healthy and able.
“Don’t scare me like that!” said the man to his pet.
This fretting had caused the poor wizard to sweat.

But right then he saw that one thing he desired,
Completely lost track of why he had perspired.
“How much for the gizzard in that jar over there?”
Asked he to the merchant of cast kitchenware.

“You can have it for free if you buy this here pan.”
To the wizard it seemed like a fair enough plan.
So he gave him some coins and picked up his new buys,
And he ran home with joy for this lovely surprise.

In a cast-iron cauldron he boiled the throat.
And tossed in some hair that was plucked off a goat.
With strange, smelly things he continued to fill it
And added the onions he fried in his skillet.

And when it was done, Drizzard took a small whiff.
It made all his head hairs stand up tall and stiff.
But he nevertheless poured some into a flask
And ran to the castle to finish his task.

The queen was relieved when she saw Drizzard's face.
The wizard approached her and bowed to Her Grace.
He poured out the flask into one of her cups.
She drank it all gone, and it cured her hiccups.