

SARAH CYNTHIA SYLVIA STOUT
by Shel Silverstein

Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout
Would not take the garbage out.
She'd wash the dishes and scrub the pans
Cook the yams and spice the hams,
And though her parents would scream and shout,
She simply would not take the garbage out.
And so it piled up to the ceiling:
Coffee grounds, potato peelings,
Brown bananas and rotten peas,
Chunks of sour cottage cheese.
It filled the can, it covered the floor,
It cracked the windows and blocked the door,
With bacon rinds and chicken bones,
Drippy ends of ice cream cones,
Prune pits, peach pits, orange peels,
Gloppy glumps of cold oatmeal,
Pizza crusts and withered greens,
Soggy beans, and tangerines,
Crusts of black-burned buttered toast,
Grisly bits of beefy roast.
The garbage rolled on down the halls,
It raised the roof, it broke the walls,
I mean, greasy napkins, cookie crumbs,
Blobs of gooey bubble gum,
Cellophane from old bologna,
Rubbery, blubbery macaroni,
Peanut butter, caked and dry,
Curdled milk, and crusts of pie,
Rotting melons, dried-up mustard,
Eggshells mixed with lemon custard,
Cold French fries and rancid meat,
Yellow lumps of Cream of Wheat.
At last the garbage reached so high
That finally it touched the sky,
And none of her friends would come to play,
And all of her neighbors moved away;
And finally, Sarah Cynthia Stout
Said, "Okay, I'll take the garbage out!"
But then, of course it was too late,
The garbage reached across the state,
From New York to the Golden Gate;
And there in the garbage she did hate
Poor Sarah met an awful fate
That I cannot right now relate
Because the hour is much too late
But children, remember Sarah Stout,
And always take the garbage out.

