

# Curse of Cain and other alphabet poems

by [Paul Martin Freeman](#) (June 2022)



*Einst dem grau der nacht enttaucht*, Paul Klee, 1918

**The q: Curse of Cain**

The q was punished by a visitation

And torment other letters never knew.  
Alone among the alphabetic nation  
Behind him always stood a watching **u**.

No matter where he went the **u** would follow—  
This curse would haunt him everywhere he'd go!  
The **u** was there, a cause of constant sorrow,  
That only he, the **q**, would ever know.

### **The c and d: A Chat over the Garden Fence**

The **d** peered down upon the **c**, his neighbour:  
"Old chap," he said, "you've lost your vertical."  
"Although the point I wouldn't wish to labour,"  
"My own I've found is indispensable."

The **c** replied he'd never really liked his:  
"It got," he muttered crossly, "in the way."  
"And so, although it's really not your business,"  
"I tossed it in the rubbish yesterday!"

### **How the b became the h**

The **p** awoke and found himself the **b**,  
But that was not the end of all this woe.  
For no one can escape their destiny,  
And fate was poised to strike a further blow.

The order of the letters quickly changed  
And into outer darkness **b** was hurled.  
And from the **q** eternally estranged,  
The bottom fell forever from his world.

### **The a and the o: Disappointing Conversationalists**

The **a**, the others know, is hard of hearing:  
Addressing her, she always answers “Eh?”  
They try a little more but end up swearing,  
Then can’t remember what they had to say.

The **o**, alas, is hardly an improvement:  
No matter what they say, he answers “Oh!”  
And as this neither long provides amusement,  
They shake their heads and find they have to go!

## [Table of Contents](#)

**Paul Freeman** is an art dealer in London. The poems are from a series about letters of the alphabet.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)