

*Eugene Alper*

A Traveling Salesman's Lamentation  
at the Poison Control Center  
*An exercise on a single rhyme*

Oh, devious and tricky pill,  
I thought you were Benadryl!  
But now I feel a piercing drill  
Through my intestine boring still.  
Unless I drink some chamomile  
I may be really, really ill.

And then? Oh, more depressing still,  
The thought of sliding downhill  
Towards the Stygian standstill,  
That of becoming just a fill  
In some eternal grassy hill;  
A speck of dust in a landfill.

So could this all be just for nil?

But wait, my fate, oh wait until  
I could develop all my skill  
And go bravely through the mill  
Of life experience—then kill!

A wretched mule pulling his thill,  
I've only paid my Visa bill;  
And have been just a lousy shill,  
Selling a drill after a drill.  
I wasted on the window sill,  
Gaping and gazing at the Mil-  
Ky Way but daring not to thrill.  
To go beyond I had no will!  
What thoughts does early death instill!

I haven't even written my will!  
I haven't traveled to Brazil!  
I haven't caught a single brill;  
I haven't pulled it by the gill  
(They say it's good when topped with dill).

Oh, how much I could fulfill!  
I'd drop my couch at Goodwill  
And go to see, say, Bunker Hill;  
Or testify on Capitol Hill;  
Or be a star like Doctor Phil;  
Or I might listen to the Phil;  
Or I myself might sing with trill,  
(And really sing, not simply shrill).  
I'd travel far, maybe Seville  
Where Quixote fought the mill;  
And end my days in the Bastille;  
Or labor at a stamping mill—  
Not to procure but build that drill!  
Or—stranger yet—to sew a frill—  
I'd exercise and fire-drill  
And scribble poems with a quill;  
I'd learn to feed a whale with krill  
And, while at sea, prevent a spill;  
And watch a lion make the kill.  
I'd live and love and walk uphill,  
Not eat and drink, but wolf and swill!

And after I have had my fill  
I still would like someday to chill  
And, with my love, to have some thrill;  
And fire up my own grill;  
And maybe purchase a treadmill;  
And bike to work—someday I will!

Oh, how much I could fulfill  
If not for this obnoxious pill!  
I thought it was just Benadryl...

Oh, Doctor, will I live until...?  
"You're ok and healthy still.  
It was a scare. Here's a pill,  
Take twice a day, then a refill."  
Oh, thank you, thank you Doctor Bill!  
M-m-m-may I suggest you buy a drill?