

# Ladle Rat Rotten Hut

by H.L. Chace

**W**ANTS PAWN TERM, dare worsted ladle gull hoe lift  
wetter murder inner ladle cordage, honor itch offer  
lodge, dock, florist. Disk ladle gull orphan worry putty  
ladle rat cluck wetter ladle rat hut, an fur disk raisin pimple colder  
Ladle Rat Rotten Hut.

Wan moaning, Ladle Rat Rotten Hut's murder colder inset.

"Ladle Rat Rotten Hut, heresy ladle basking winsome burden barter  
an shirker cockles. Tick disk ladle basking tutor cordage offer groin-  
murder hoe lifts honor udder site offer florist. Shaker lake! Dun  
stopper laundry wrote! Dun stopper peck floors! Dun daily-doily  
inner florist, an yonder nor sorghum-stenches, dun stopper torque  
wet strainers!"

"Hoe-cake, murder," resplendent Ladle Rat  
Rotten Hut, an tickle ladle basking an  
stuttered oft.

Honor wrote tutor cordage offer groin-  
murder, Ladle Rat Rotten Hut mitten  
anomalous woof.

"Wail, wail, wail!" set disk wicket woof,  
"Evanescent Ladle Rat Rotten Hut! Wares  
are putty ladle gull goring wizard  
ladle basking?"

"Armor goring tumor groin-murder's,"  
reprisal ladle gull. "Grammar's seeking bet.  
Armor ticking arson burden barter an  
shirker cockles."

"O hoe! Heifer gnats woke," setter wicket woof, butter taught tomb  
shelf, "Oil tickle shirt court tutor cordage offer groin-murder. Oil  
ketchup wetter letter, an den - O bore!"

Soda wicket woof tucker shirt court, an whinny retched a cordage offer  
groin-murder, picked inner windrow, an sore debtor pore oil worming  
worse lion inner bet. Inner flesh, disk abdominal woof lipped honor  
bet, paunched honor pore oil worming, an garbled erupt. Den disk  
ratchet ammonol pot honor groin-murder's nut cup an gnat-gun, any  
curdled ope inner bet.

Inner ladle wile, Ladle Rat Rotten Hut a raft attar cordage, an ranker  
dough ball. "Comb ink, sweat hard," setter wicket woof, disgracing  
is verse.

Ladle Rat Rotten Hut entity bet rum, an stud buyer groin-  
murder's bet.

"O Grammar!" crater ladle gull historically, "Water bag icer gut!  
A nervous sausage bag ice!"

"Battered lucky chew whiff, sweat hard," setter bloat-Thursdays woof,  
wetter wicket small honors phase.

"O Grammar, water bag noise! A nervous sore suture  
anomalous prognosis!"

"Battered small your whiff, doling," whiskered dole woof, ants mouse  
worse waddling.

"O Grammar, water bag mouser gut! A nervous sore suture  
bag mouse!"

Daze worry on-forger-nut ladle gull's lest warts. Oil offer sodden,  
caking offer carvers an sprinkling otter bet, disk hoard-hoarded woof  
lipped own pore Ladle Rat Rotten Hut an garbled erupt.

**MURAL:** Yonder nor sorghum stenches shut ladle gulls stopper  
torque wet strainers. ■



## The true story of "Ladle Rat Rotten Hut"

"Ladle Rat Rotten Hut" is often attributed to Anonymous, but it was actually written by H.L. Chace. He was a professor of French at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, retired in 1965 and now is living in Cincinnati. He's in his eighties. I talked to him by phone about the story of the story.

"I wrote it about 1940. It was going to be part of a little article I was writing. It was in the days of rationing during the war and I thought about what would happen if we had to ration language. If our vocabulary were cut in half, we'd have to get along with other words. Consequently, I thought I'd see how you'd get along with the other half. I've never written that article, but I've always thought of doing it.

"I taught French, and I used the story in my class to show the importance of intonation in learning a foreign language. You see, if you take these English words and put them in columns like a spelling book and just read them, they have no meaning. However, if you read them with the proper intonation, the meaning appears for certain people. For other people the meaning never does appear.

"I never submitted it to anybody, but it got spread some way or other. It's one of those things that got completely out of control. I showed it to a few friends and to a book salesman who came to see me. He liked the thing because it had to do with words. I think I may have given him a copy, and he must have given it to someone else. It first appeared in print in the Merriam Company's magazine *Word Study*. I think it got in *Stars and Stripes* [U.S. Army newspaper] because I heard from people in Baghdad, Sweden, all over the world. *Sports Illustrated* found it in another publication and gave me \$1000 for it. Arthur Godfrey found it in *Sports Illustrated*, and he broadcast it and very generously told any readers that wanted a copy they could have one by sending me postage. To my surprise, I mailed about five thousand of them. After that episode, Prentice Hall asked me to write a series of stories for a book, which I did. [*Anguish Languish* was published by Prentice Hall in 1955.]

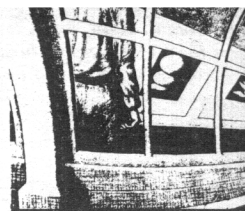
"The book sold fairly well for that sort of thing. It went through four printings I think, maybe 14,000 copies total. "It's used now a good deal in textbooks to demonstrate the phonetic structures of English. The book has been used by some psychologist to determine the ability of people to understand sound, to study the limit of distortion that can be comprehended. That varies from person to person.

"People who like it best are language people, teachers, lawyers, and doctors. That's almost all the people who are interested in it. And children, strange to say. I've had a lot of letters from them."

*I asked him if it bothered him that it is often printed without his name. He said, "Well, it doesn't bother me, but it's just that if I had a cent for every Xerox copy, I'd be much better off because I know it's been copied by the thousands."*

*The book, *Anguish Languish*, is out of print and very hard to find. Chace himself only has one copy. Dover or somebody should reprint it.*

—Anne Herbert



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● Et qui rit des curés d'Oc  
De Meuse raines,<sup>2</sup> houpe  
De quelles loques ce tur  
Et ne d'ânes ni rennes,  
Ecuries des curés d'Oc.<sup>5</sup>

1. Oc (or Languedoc), and  
France, with its capital at 1  
monks and curates were, it  
larly humble and holy grou  
poem is a graceful tribute t

2. Meuse, or Maas, River, t  
traversing France, Belgium,  
Netherlands; raines, old Fri  
frogs (from the L., ranae).  
ful example of Gothic imag  
laughs at the cures of Oc w  
leap at him from the Meuse

3. infect him with a scrofu  
This is particularly interest  
consider the widespread su  
America that frogs and toa

4. "Turkish corners" were  
Western Europe by return  
among other luxuries and r  
Oriental living. Our good r  
concession to the fashion, I  
Turkish corner was made o  
affectation of interior deco  
widespread revival in the U  
of the century. Ah, the Ts  
bizarre beaux-arts.

5. So strict were the monk  
even indulge themselves in  
travels. No fancy mules no  
their stables. They just rod  
their plain French asses.