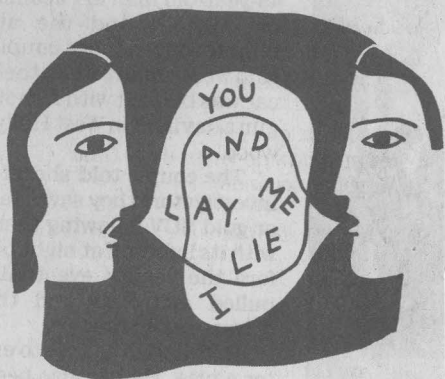


OP-ED

**Conjugation Blues***By Jean Koch*

I think that I must rant and yammer,
At the dearth of proper grammar.
I wish a most unhappy fate,
To those who cannot conjugate.

The verb to lie, as "down in bed,"
A verb I've really come to dread.
"I laid," "He laid," "They laid," I hear,
"She was laying" brings a tear.

It rolls off the tongue as easily as pie,
Misconjugation of the verb, to lie.
On radio and in the press,
I hear *and* read it with distress.

To those who wonder how it should be
said,
"I lie." "He lies" "They lie in bed."
"I lay awake all last night."
"I have lain sleepless 'til it's light."

They lay last Tuesday in the sun,
Tanning 'til they were well done.
Now I am lying on the lawn.
He was lying 'til break of dawn.

They fell down but were not hurt,
They just lay there in the dirt.
I'll lay my book down on the shelf.
I laid it there all by myself.

The chicken laid an egg today
She will lay more, come what may.
To lie, as in to tell untruth,
I lie. She lied. They lied, forsooth.

And if my nerves you want to jangle,
Just let your prepositions dangle.
"Where's it at?" is really awful,
It should truly be unlawful.

"Where is it?" — easier to say,
"Where was it?" This will not dismay.
Put prepositions where they belong,
Not at the end. That is all wrong.
To lie. To lay. What a conundrum,
Say it right. Don't be hum-drum.
To lay. To lie. Please get it right,
So you won't seem a neophyte.

Jean Koch is a Los Feliz homemaker.