

THE BIRTH OF THE CELLO

One day Stradivarius was sitting in Cremona
Outside the violin factory, of which he was the owner.
He was eating a Cremona Rice Pudding for his lunch
When he turned to Guadagnini and said, "I have a hunch –

You know these feet and inches? I think they're out of date,
There's an idea of da Vinci's – we ought to metricate!"
So he purchased some converters from a funny little geezer,
Who forgot to say he'd used them when he built the tower at Pisa.

So the factory went metric – every fingerboard and joint
From now on was at the mercy of the dreaded decimal point.
When the new violin was finished, he could scarce believe his eyes –
It was gleaming, it was perfect – and ten times the normal size.

Stradivarius tried to lift it, this enormous violin –
But no matter how he tried, it wouldn't go beneath his chin.
An apprentice, Michelangelo (whose friends all called him Mike)
Said, "I think it might be better if we fit it with a spike".

Stradivarius said, "You're crazy – nobody could play a note
With this thing upon his shoulder and a spike stuck through his
throat.

Mike said, "Master – why not take it from underneath your jaw
And wrap your legs around it and stick it in the floor?"

"Well done!" said Stradivarius, once he'd carefully climbed on,
(And he played a piece upon it which we now know as *'The Swan'*).
"I suppose we ought to name it, (so folk know what they've bought),
Cremona Extra-Large Leg-Over – or Cello just for short".