

АРТУР КОНАН ДОЙЛ

SONGS OF THE ROAD

Артур Конан Дойл

Songs Of The Road

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Arthur Conan Doyle

Songs Of The Road

FOREWORD

If it were not for the hillocks
 You'd think little of the hills;
The rivers would seem tiny
 If it were not for the rills.
If you never saw the brushwood
 You would under-rate the trees;
And so you see the purpose
 Of such little rhymes as these.

Crowborough
1911

I. – NARRATIVE VERSES AND SONGS

A HYMN OF EMPIRE

(Coronation Year, 1911)

God save England, blessed by Fate,
So old, yet ever young:
The acorn isle from which the great
Imperial oak has sprung!
And God guard Scotland's kindly soil,
The land of stream and glen,
The granite mother that has bred
A breed of granite men!

God save Wales, from Snowdon's vales
To Severn's silver strand!
For all the grace of that old race
Still haunts the Celtic land.
And, dear old Ireland, God save you,
And heal the wounds of old,
For every grief you ever knew
May joy come fifty-fold!

Set Thy guard over us,
May Thy shield cover us,
Enfold and uphold us
On land and on sea!
From the palm to the pine,
From the snow to the line,
Brothers together
And children of Thee.

Thy blessing, Lord, on Canada,
Young giant of the West,
Still upward lay her broadening way,
And may her feet be blessed!
And Africa, whose hero breeds
Are blending into one,
Grant that she tread the path which leads
To holy unison.

May God protect Australia,
Set in her Southern Sea!

Though far thou art, it cannot part
Thy brother folks from thee.
And you, the Land of Maori,
The island-sisters fair,
Ocean hemmed and lake be-gemmed,
God hold you in His care!

Set Thy guard over us,
May Thy shield cover us,
Enfold and uphold us
On land and on sea!
From the palm to the pine,
From the snow to the line,
Brothers together
And children of Thee.

God guard our Indian brothers,
The Children of the Sun,
Guide us and walk beside us,
Until Thy will be done.
To all be equal measure,
Whate'er his blood or birth,
Till we shall build as Thou hast willed
O'er all Thy fruitful Earth.

May we maintain the story
Of honest, fearless right!
Not ours, not ours the Glory!
What are we in Thy sight?
Thy servants, and no other,
Thy servants may we be,
To help our weaker brother,
As we crave for help from Thee!

Set Thy guard over us,
May Thy shield cover us,
Enfold and uphold us
On land and on sea!
From the palm to the pine,
From the snow to the line,
Brothers together
And children of Thee.

SIR NIGEL'S SONG

A sword! A sword! Ah, give me a sword!
For the world is all to win.
Though the way be hard and the door be barred,
The strong man enters in.
If Chance or Fate still hold the gate,
Give me the iron key,
And turret high, my plume shall fly,
Or you may weep for me!

A horse! A horse! Ah, give me a horse,
To bear me out afar,
Where blackest need and grimmest deed,
And sweetest perils are.
Hold thou my ways from glutted days,
Where poisoned leisure lies,
And point the path of tears and wrath
Which mounts to high emprise.

A heart! A heart! Ah, give me a heart,
To rise to circumstance!
Serene and high, and bold to try
The hazard of a chance.
With strength to wait, but fixed as fate,
To plan and dare and do;
The peer of all – and only thrall,
Sweet lady mine, to you!

THE ARAB STEED

I gave the 'orse 'is evenin' feed,
And bedded of 'im down,
And went to 'ear the sing-song
In the bar-room of the Crown,
And one young feller spoke a piece
As told a kind of tale,
About an Arab man wot 'ad
A certain 'orse for sale.

I 'ave no grudge against the man —
I never 'eard 'is name,
But if he was my closest pal
I'd say the very same,
For wot you do in other things
Is neither 'ere nor there,
But w'en it comes to 'orses
You must keep upon the square.

Now I'm tellin' you the story
Just as it was told last night,
And if I wrong this Arab man
Then 'e can set me right;
But s'posin' all these fac's *are* fac's,
Then I make bold to say
That I think it was not sportsmanlike
To act in sich a way.

For, as I understand the thing,
'E went to sell this steed —
Which is a name they give a 'orse
Of some outlandish breed — ,
And soon 'e found a customer,
A proper sportin' gent,
Who planked 'is money down at once
Without no argument.

Now when the deal was finished
And the money paid, you'd think
This Arab would 'ave asked the gent
At once to name 'is drink,
Or at least 'ave thanked 'im kindly,
An' wished 'im a good day,
And own as 'e'd been treated
In a very 'andsome way.

But instead o' this 'e started
A-talkin' to the steed,
And speakin' of its "braided mane"
An' of its "winged speed,"
And other sich expressions
With which I can't agree,
For a 'orse with wings an' braids an' things
Is not the 'orse for me.

The moment that 'e 'ad the cash —
Or wot 'e called the gold,
'E turned as nasty as could be:
Says 'e, "You're sold! You're sold!"
Them was 'is words; it's not for me
To settle wot he meant;
It may 'ave been the 'orse was sold,
It may 'ave been the gent.

I've not a word to say agin
His fondness for 'is 'orse,
But why should 'e insinivate
The gent would treat 'im worse?
An' why should 'e go talkin'
In that aggravatin' way,
As if the gent would gallop 'im
And wallop 'im all day?

It may 'ave been an' 'arness 'orse,
It may 'ave been an 'ack,
But a bargain is a bargain,
An' there ain't no goin' back;
For when you've picked the money up,
That finishes the deal,
And after that your mouth is shut,
Wotever you may feel.

Supposin' this 'ere Arab man
'Ad wanted to be free,
'E could 'ave done it businesslike,
The same as you or me;
A fiver might 'ave squared the gent,
An' then 'e could 'ave claimed
As 'e'd cleared 'imself quite 'andsome,
And no call to be ashamed.

But instead 'o that this Arab man
Went on from bad to worse,
An' took an' chucked the money
At the cove wot bought the 'orse;

'E'd 'ave learned 'im better manners,
If 'e'd waited there a bit,
But 'e scooted on 'is bloomin' steed
As 'ard as 'e could split.

Per'aps 'e sold 'im after,
Or per'aps 'e 'ires 'im out,
But I'd like to warn that Arab man
Wen next 'e comes about;
For wot 'e does in other things
Is neither 'ere nor there,
But w'en it comes to 'orses
We must keep 'im on the square.

A POST-IMPRESSIONIST

Peter Wilson, A.R.A.,
In his small atelier,
Studied Continental Schools,
Drew by Academic rules.
So he made his bid for fame,
But no golden answer came,
For the fashion of his day
Chanced to set the other way,
And decadent forms of Art
Drew the patrons of the mart.

Now this poor reward of merit
Rankled so in Peter's spirit,
It was more than he could bear;
So one night in mad despair
He took his canvas for the year
("Isle of Wight from Southsea Pier"),
And he hurled it from his sight,
Hurled it blindly to the night,
Saw it fall diminuendo
From the open lattice window,
Till it landed with a flop
On the dust-bin's ashen top,
Where, 'mid damp and rain and grime,
It remained till morning time.

Then when morning brought reflection,
He was shamed at his dejection,
And he thought with consternation
Of his poor, ill-used creation;
Down he rushed, and found it there
Lying all exposed and bare,
Mud-bespattered, spoiled, and botched,
Water sodden, fungus-blotched,
All the outlines blurred and wavy,
All the colours turned to gravy,
Fluids of a dappled hue,
Blues on red and reds on blue,
A pea-green mother with her daughter,
Crazy boats on crazy water
Steering out to who knows what,
An island or a lobster-pot?

Oh, the wretched man's despair!
Was it lost beyond repair?

Swift he bore it from below,
Hastened to the studio,
Where with anxious eyes he studied
If the ruin, blotched and muddied,
Could by any human skill
Be made a normal picture still.

Thus in most repentant mood
Unhappy Peter Wilson stood,
When, with pompous face, self-centred,
Willoughby the critic entered —
He of whom it has been said
He lives a century ahead —
And sees with his prophetic eye
The forms which Time will justify,
A fact which surely must abate
All longing to reincarnate.

"Ah, Wilson," said the famous man,
Turning himself the walls to scan,
"The same old style of thing I trace,
Workmanlike but commonplace.
Believe me, sir, the work that lives
Must furnish more than Nature gives.
'The light that never was,' you know,
That is your mark – but here, hullo!

What's this? What's this? Magnificent!
I've wronged you, Wilson! I repent!
A masterpiece! A perfect thing!
What atmosphere! What colouring!
Spanish Armada, is it not?
A view of Ryde, no matter what,
I pledge my critical renown
That this will be the talk of Town.
Where did you get those daring hues,
Those blues on reds, those reds on
blues?
That pea-green face, that gamboge sky?
You've far outcried the latest cry —
Out Monet-ed Monet. I have said
Our Art was sleeping, but not dead.
Long have we waited for the Star,
I watched the skies for it afar,
The hour has come – and here you are."
And that is how our artist friend
Found his struggles at an end,

And from his little Chelsea flat

Became the Park Lane plutocrat.
'Neath his sheltered garden wall
When the rain begins to fall,
And the stormy winds do blow,
You may see them in a row,
Red effects and lake and yellow
Getting nicely blurred and mellow.
With the subtle gauzy mist
Of the great Impressionist.
Ask him how he chanced to find
How to leave the French behind,
And he answers quick and smart,
"English climate's best for Art."

EMPIRE BUILDERS

Captain Temple, D.S.O.,
With his banjo and retriever.
"Rough, I know, on poor old Flo,
But, by Jove! I couldn't leave her."
Niger ribbon on his breast,
In his blood the Niger fever,
Captain Temple, D.S.O.,
With his banjo and retriever.

Cox of the Politicals,
With his cigarette and glasses,
Skilled in Pushtoo gutturals,
Odd-job man among the Passes,
Keeper of the Zakka Khels,
Tutor of the Khaiber Ghazis,
Cox of the Politicals,
With his cigarette and glasses.

Mr. Hawkins, Junior Sub.,
Late of Woolwich and Thames Ditton,
Thinks his battery the hub
Of the whole wide orb of Britain.
Half a hero, half a cub,
Lithe and playful as a kitten,
Mr. Hawkins, Junior Sub.,
Late of Woolwich and Thames Ditton.

Eighty Tommies, big and small,
Grumbling hard as is their habit.
"Say, mate, what's a Bunerwal?"
"Sometime like a bloomin' rabbit."
"Got to hoof it to Chitral!"
"Blarst ye, did ye think to cab it!"
Eighty Tommies, big and small,
Grumbling hard as is their habit.

Swarthy Goorkhas, short and stout,
Merry children, laughing, crowing,
Don't know what it's all about,
Don't know any use in knowing;
Only know they mean to go
Where the Sirdar thinks of going.
Little Goorkhas, brown and stout,
Merry children, laughing, crowing.

Funjaub Rifles, fit and trim,
Curly whiskered sons of battle,
Very dignified and prim
Till they hear the Jezails rattle;
Cattle thieves of yesterday,
Now the wardens of the cattle,
Fighting Brahmins of Lahore,
Curly whiskered sons of battle.

Up the winding mountain path
See the long-drawn column go;
Himalayan aftermath
Lying rosy on the snow.
Motley ministers of wrath
Building better than they know,
In the rosy aftermath
Trailing upward to the snow.

THE GROOM'S ENCORE

(Being a Sequel to "The Groom's Story" in "Songs of Action")

Not tired of 'earin' stories! You're a nailer,
so you are!
I thought I should 'ave choked you off with
that 'ere motor-car.
Well, mister, 'ere's another; and, mind you,
it's a fact,
Though you'll think perhaps I copped it
out o' some blue ribbon tract.

It was in the days when farmer men were
jolly-faced and stout,
For all the cash was comin' in and little
goin' out,
But now, you see, the farmer men are
'ungry-faced and thin,
For all the cash is goin' out and little
comin' in.

But in the days I'm speakin' of, before
the drop in wheat,
The life them farmers led was such as
couldn't well be beat;
They went the pace amazin', they 'unted
and they shot,
And this 'ere Jeremiah Brown the liveliest
of the lot.

'E was a fine young fellar; the best roun'
'ere by far,
But just a bit full-blooded, as fine young
fellars are;
Which I know they didn't ought to, an' it's
very wrong of course,
But the colt wot never capers makes a
mighty useless 'orse.

The lad was never vicious, but 'e made the
money go,
For 'e was ready with 'is "yes," and back-
ward with 'is "no."
And so 'e turned to drink which is the
avenoo to 'ell,

An' 'ow 'e came to stop 'imself is wot' I
'ave to tell.

Four days on end 'e never knew 'ow 'e 'ad
got to bed,
Until one mornin' fifty clocks was tickin'
in 'is 'ead,
And on the same the doctor came, "You're
very near D.T.,
If you don't stop yourself, young chap,
you'll pay the price," said 'e.

"It takes the form of visions, as I fear
you'll quickly know;
Perhaps a string o' monkeys, all a-sittin' in
a row,
Perhaps it's frogs or beetles, perhaps it's
rats or mice,
There are many sorts of visions and
there's none of 'em is nice."

But Brown 'e started laughin': "No
doctor's muck," says 'e,
"A take-'em-break-'em gallop is the only
cure for me!
They 'unt to-day down 'Orsham way.
Bring round the sorrel mare,
If them monkeys come inquiren' you can
send 'em on down there."

Well, Jeremiah rode to 'ounds, exactly as
'e said.
But all the time the doctor's words were
ringin' in 'is 'ead —
"If you don't stop yourself, young chap,
you've got to pay the price,
There are many sorts of visions, but none
of 'em is nice."

They found that day at Leonards Lee and
ran to Shipley Wood,
'Ell-for-leather all the way, with scent
and weather good.
Never a check to 'Orton Beck and on
across the Weald,
And all the way the Sussex clay was weed-
in' out the field.

There's not a man among them could

remember such a run,
Straight as a rule to Bramber Pool and on
by Annington,
They followed still past Breeding 'ill
and on by Steyning Town,
Until they'd cleared the 'edges and were
out upon the Down.

Full thirty mile from Plimmers Style,
without a check or fault,
Full thirty mile the 'ounds 'ad run and
never called a 'alt.
One by one the Field was done until at
Finden Down,
There was no one with the 'untsman save
young Jeremiah Brown.

And then the 'untsman 'e was beat. 'Is
'orse 'ad tripped and fell.
"By George," said Brown, "I'll go alone,
and follow it to – well,
The place that it belongs to." And as 'e
made the vow,
There broke from right in front of 'im
the queerest kind of row.

There lay a copse of 'azels on the border

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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