

Graham Harry

Ruthless Rhymes for Heartless Homes



Harry Graham

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Graham H.

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Dedicated to P. P

("Qui connait son sourire a connu le parfait.")

I NEED no Comments of the Press,
No critic's cursory caress,
No paragraphs my book to bless
With praise, or ban with curses,
So long as You, for whom I write,
Whose single notice I invite,
Are still sufficiently polite
To smile upon my verses.

If You should seek for Ruthless Rhymes
(In memory of Western climes),
And, for the sake of olden times,
Obtain this new edition,
You must not be surprised a bit,
Nor even deem the act unfit,
That I have dedicated it
To You, without permission.

P. T. O.¹

And if You chance to ask me why,
It is sufficient, I reply,
That You are You, and I am I, —
To put the matter briefly.
That I should dedicate to You
Can only interest us two;
The fact remains, then, that I do,
Because I want to – chiefly.

And if these verses can beguile
From those grey eyes of yours a smile,
You will have made it well worth while
To seek your approbation;
No further need
Of praise they need,
But must succeed,

¹ Transcriber's Note: P.T.O. means please turn over. This is retained in the text although the instruction is not necessary.

And do indeed,
If they but lead
You on to read
Beyond the Dedication.

1901.

H. G.

Author's Preface

WITH guilty, conscience-stricken tears
I offer up these rhymes of mine
To children of maturer years
(From Seventeen to Ninety-nine).
A special solace may they be
In days of second infancy.

The frenzied mother who observes
This volume in her offspring's hand,
And trembles for the darling's nerves,
Must please to clearly understand,
If baby suffers by-and-bye
The Artist is to blame, not *I!*

But should the little brat survive,
And fatten on the Ruthless Rhyme,
To raise a Heartless Home and thrive
Through a successful life of crime,
The Artist hopes that you will see
That *I* am to be thanked, not *he!*

*P. T. O.*²

Fond parent, you whose children are
Of tender age (from two to eight),
Pray keep this little volume far
From reach of such, and relegate
My verses to an upper shelf, —
Where you may study them yourself.

² Transcriber's Note: P.T.O. means please turn over. This is retained in the text although the instruction is not necessary.

Uncle Joe

AN Angel bore dear Uncle Joe
To rest beyond the stars.
I miss him, oh! I miss him so, —
He had *such* good cigars.

Impetuous Samuel

SAM had spirits naught could check,
And to-day, at breakfast, he
Broke his baby sister's neck,
So he shan't have jam for tea!

Inconsiderate Hannah

NAUGHTY little Hannah said
She could make her grandma whistle,
So, that night, inside her bed
Placed some nettles and a thistle.

Though dear grandma quite infirm is,
Heartless Hannah watched her settle,
With her poor old epidermis
Resting up against a nettle.

Suddenly she reached the thistle!
My! you should have heard her whistle!

...

A successful plan was Hannah's,
But I cannot praise her manners.

Aunt Eliza

IN the drinking-well
(Which the plumber built her)
Aunt Eliza fell, —
We must buy a filter.

Self-Sacrifice

FATHER, chancing to chastise
His indignant daughter Sue,
Said, "I hope you realize
That this hurts me more than you."

Susan straightway ceased to roar.
"If that's really true," said she,
"I can stand a good deal more;
Pray go on, and don't mind me."

La Course Interrompue

I

JEAN qui allait a Dijon
(Il montait en bicyclette)
Rencontra un gros lion
Qui se faisait la toilette.

II

Voila Jean qui tombe a terre
Et le lion le digère!

...

Mon Dieu! Que c'est embêtant!
Il me devait quatre francs.

John

JOHN, across the broad Atlantic,
Tried to navigate a barque,
But he met an unromantic
And extremely hungry shark.

John (I blame his childhood's teachers)
Thought to treat this as a lark,
Ignorant of how these creatures
Do delight to bite a barque.

Said "This animal's a bore!" and,
With a scornful sort of grin,
Handled an adjacent oar and
Chucked it underneath the chin.

At this unexpected juncture
Which he had not reckoned on,
Mr. Shark he made a puncture
In the barque – and then in John.

Sad am I, and sore at thinking
John had on some clothes of mine;
I can almost see them shrinking,
Washed repeatedly in brine.

I shall never cease regretting
That I lent my hat to him,
For I fear a thorough wetting
Cannot well improve the brim.

Oh! to know a shark is browsing,
Boldly, blandly on my boots!
Coldly, cruelly carousing
On the choicest of my suits!

Creatures I regard with loathing
Who can calmly take their fill
Of one's Jæger underclothing: —
Down, my aching heart, be still!

The Fond Father

OF Baby I was very fond,
She'd won her father's heart;
So, when she fell into the pond,
It gave me quite a start.

Necessity

LATE last night I slew my wife,
Stretched her on the parquet flooring;
I was loath to take her life,
But I *had* to stop her snoring.

Unselfishness

ALL those who see my children say,
"What sweet, what kind, what charming elves!"
They are so thoughtful, too, for they
Are *always* thinking of themselves.
It must be ages since I ceased
To wonder which I liked the least.

Such is their generosity,

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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