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Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Molière
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle
Baum Henry Flaubert Nietzsche Willis
Leslie Dumas Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
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Brothers of Pity and Other Tales of Beasts and Men

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DEDICATED
TO MY DEAR SISTER
HORATIA KATHARINE FRANCES GATTY.

J.H.E.

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PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

These tales have appeared, during some years past, in *Aunt Judy's Magazine for Young People*.

"Father Hedgehog and his Neighbours," and "Toots and Boots," were both suggested by Fedor Flinzer's clever pictures; but "Toots" was also "a real person." In his latter days he was an honorary member of the Royal Engineers' Mess at Aldershot, and, on occasion, dined at table.

"The Hens of Hencastle" is not mine. It is a free translation from the German of Victor Blüthgen, by Major Yeatman-Biggs, R.A., to whom I am indebted for permission to include it in my volume, as a necessary prelude to "Flaps." The story took my fancy greatly, but the ending seemed to me imperfect and unsatisfactory, especially in reference to so charming a character as the old watch dog, and I wrote "Flaps" as a sequel.

The frontispiece was designed specially for this volume, by Mr. Charles Whympster, and the *Fratello della Misericordia* (from a photograph kindly sent me by a friend) is by the same artist.

J.H.E.

PREFACE TO NEW EDITION.

The foregoing Preface was written by Mrs. Ewing for the first edition of *Brothers of Pity, and Other Tales*. The book contains five stories, illustrated by the pictures of which my sister speaks; and it is still sold by the S.P.C.K. "Toots and Boots" was so minutely adapted to Flinzer's pictures, that the tale suffers in being parted from them. Still, it is to be hoped that readers of the un-illustrated version will not have as much difficulty as Toots in solving the mystery of the Mouse's escape! I have added four more tales of "Beasts and Men" to the present edition, as they have not been included in any previous collections of my sister's stories. "A Week Spent in a Glass Pond" appeared first in *Aunt Judy's Magazine*, October 1876, and was afterwards published separately with coloured illustrations. The habits of the water beasts are described with the strictest fidelity to nature, even the delicate differences in character between the Great and the Big Black water beetles are most accurately drawn.

"Among the Merrows" has not been republished since it came out in *Aunt Judy's Magazine*, November 1872. At that time the Crystal Palace Aquarium was a novelty, and the Zoological Station at Naples not fully formed—but, though the paper is behind the times in statistics, it is worth retaining for other reasons.

"Tiny's Tricks and Toby's Tricks" as a specimen of versification might perhaps have been included in the volume of *Verses for Children*, but it seemed best to keep it with the "Owl Hoots," as these papers were the last that Mrs. Ewing wrote. The first appeared in *The Child's Pictorial Magazine* a few days before her death, and the "Hoots" soon afterwards. The illustrations to both were drawn by Mr. Gordon Browne at my sister's special request, and they are now reproduced with gratitude for his labour of love.

Horatia K. F. Eden.

October 1895.

BROTHERS OF PITY.

"Who dug his grave?"

"Who made his shroud?"

"I," said the Beetle,

"With my thread and needle,

I made his shroud." — *Death of Cock Robin.*

It must be much easier to play at things when there are more of you than when there is only one.

There is only one of me, and Nurse does not care about playing at things. Sometimes I try to persuade her; but if she is in a good temper she says she has got a bone in her leg, and if she isn't she says that when little boys can't amuse themselves it's a sure and certain sign they've got "the worrits," and the sooner they are put to bed with a Gregory's powder "the better for themselves and every one else."

Godfather Gilpin can play delightfully when he has time, and he believes in fancy things, only he is so very busy with his books. But even when he is reading he will let you put him in the game. He doesn't mind pretending to be a fancy person if he hasn't to do anything, and if I do speak to him he always remembers who he is. That is why I like playing in his study better than in the nursery. And Nurse always says "He's safe enough, with the old gentleman," so I'm allowed to go there as much as I like.

Godfather Gilpin lets me play with the books, because I always take care of them. Besides, there is nothing else to play with, except the window-curtains, for the chairs are always full. So I sit on the floor, and sometimes I build with the books (particularly Stonehenge), and sometimes I make people of them, and call them by the names on their backs, and the ones in other languages we call foreigners, and Godfather Gilpin tells me what countries they belong to. And sometimes I lie on my face and read (for I could read when I was four years old), and Godfather Gilpin tells me the hard words. The only rule he makes is, that I must get all the books out of one

shelf, so that they are easily put away again. I may have any shelf I like, but I must not mix the shelves up.

I always took care of the books, and never had any accident with any of them till the day I dropped Jeremy Taylor's *Sermons*. It made me very miserable, because I knew that Godfather Gilpin could never trust me so much again.

However, if it had not happened, I should not have known anything about the Brothers of Pity; so, perhaps (as Mrs. James, Godfather Gilpin's house-keeper, says), "All's for the best," and "It's an ill wind that blows nobody good."

It happened on a Sunday, I remember, and it was the day after the day on which I had had the shelf in which all the books were alike. They were all foreigners—Italians—and all their names were *Goldoni*, and there were forty-seven of them, and they were all in white and gold. I could not read any of them, but there were lots of pictures, only I did not know what the stories were about. So next day, when Godfather Gilpin gave me leave to play a Sunday game with the books, I thought I would have English ones, and big ones, for a change, for the *Goldonis* were rather small.

We played at church, and I was the parson, and Godfather Gilpin was the old gentleman who sits in the big pew with the knocker, and goes to sleep (because he wanted to go to sleep), and the books were the congregation. They were all big, but some of them were fat, and some of them were thin, like real people—not like the *Goldonis*, which were all alike.

I was arranging them in their places and looking at their names, when I saw that one of them was called Taylor's *Sermons*, and I thought I would keep that one out and preach a real sermon out of it when I had read prayers. Of course I had to do the responses as well as "Dearly beloved brethren" and those things, and I had to sing the hymns too, for the books could not do anything, and Godfather Gilpin was asleep.

When I had finished the service I stood behind a chair that was full of newspapers, for a pulpit, and I lifted up Taylor's *Sermons*, and rested it against the chair, and began to look to see what I would preach. It was an old book, bound in brown leather, and

ornamented with gold, with a picture of a man in a black gown and a round black cap and a white collar in the beginning; and there was a list of all the sermons with their names and the texts. I read it through, to see which sounded the most interesting, and I didn't care much for any of them. However, the last but one was called "A Funeral Sermon, preached at the Obsequies of the Right Honourable the Countess of Carbery;" and I wondered what obsequies were, and who the Countess of Carbery was, and I thought I would preach that sermon and try to find out.

There was a very long text, and it was not a very easy one. It was: "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again: neither doth God respect any person: yet doth He devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him."

The sermon wasn't any easier than the text, and half the s's were like f's which made it rather hard to preach, and there was Latin mixed up with it, which I had to skip. I had preached two pages when I got into the middle of a long sentence, of which part was this: "Every trifling accident discomposes us; and as the face of waters wafting in a storm so wrinkles itself, that it makes upon its forehead furrows deep and hollow like a grave: so do our great and little cares and trifles first make the wrinkles of old age, and then they dig a grave for us."

I knew the meaning of the words "wrinkles," and "old age." Godfather Gilpin's forehead had unusually deep furrows, and, almost against my will, I turned so quickly to look if his wrinkles were at all like the graves in the churchyard, that Taylor's *Sermons*, in its heavy binding, slipped from the pulpit and fell to the ground.

And Godfather Gilpin woke up, and (quite forgetting that he was really the old gentleman in the pew with the knocker) said, "Dear me, dear me! is that Jeremy Taylor that you are knocking about like a football? My dear child, I can't lend you my books to play with if you drop them on to the floor."

I took it up in my arms and carried it sorrowfully to Godfather Gilpin. He was very kind, and said it was not hurt, and I might go on playing with the others; but I could see him stroking its brown leather and gold back, as if it had been bruised and wanted comfort-

ing, and I was far too sorry about it to go on preaching, even if I had had anything to preach.

I picked up the smallest book I could see in the congregation, and sat down and pretended to read. There were pictures in it, but I turned over a great many, one after the other, before I could see any of them, my eyes were so full of tears of mortification and regret. The first picture I saw when my tears had dried up enough to let me see was a very curious one indeed. It was a picture of two men carrying what looked like another man covered with a blue quilt, on a sort of bier. But the funny part about it was the dress of the men. They were wrapped up in black cloaks, and had masks over their faces, and underneath the picture was written, "*Fratelli della Misericordia*" — "Brothers of Pity."

I do not know whether the accident to Jeremy Taylor had made Godfather Gilpin too anxious about his books to sleep, but I found that he was keeping awake, and after a bit he said to me, "What are you staring so hard and so quietly at, little Mouse?"

I looked at the back of the book, and it was called *Religious Orders*; so I said, "It's called *Religious Orders*, but the picture I'm looking at has got two men dressed in black, with their faces covered all but their eyes, and they are carrying another man with something blue over him."

"*Fratelli della Misericordia*," said Godfather Gilpin.

"Who are they, and what are they doing?" I asked. "And why are their faces covered?"

"They belong to a body of men," was Godfather Gilpin's reply, "who bind themselves to be ready in their turn to do certain offices of mercy, pity, and compassion to the sick, the dying, and the dead. The brotherhood is six hundred years old, and still exists. The men who belong to it receive no pay, and they equally reject the reward of public praise, for they work with covered faces, and are not known even to each other. Rich men and poor men, noble men and working men, men of letters and the ignorant, all belong to it, and each takes his turn when it comes round to nurse the sick, carry the dying to hospital, and bury the dead."

"Is that a dead man under the blue coverlet?" I asked with awe.

"I suppose so," said Godfather Gilpin.

"But why don't his friends go to the funeral?" I inquired.

"He has no friends to follow him," said my godfather. "That is why he is being buried by the Brothers of Pity."

Long after Godfather Gilpin had told me all that he could tell me of the *Fratelli della Misericordia*—long after I had put the congregation (including the *Religious Orders* and Taylor's *Sermons*) back into the shelf to which they belonged—the masked faces and solemn garb of the men in the picture haunted me.

I have changed my mind a great many times, since I can remember, about what I will be when I am grown up. Sometimes I have thought I should like to be an officer and die in battle; sometimes I settled to be a clergyman and preach splendid sermons to enormous congregations; once I quite decided to be a head fireman and wear a brass helmet, and be whirled down lighted streets at night, every one making way for me, on errands of life and death.

But the history of the Brothers of Pity put me out of conceit with all other heroes. It seemed better than anything I had ever thought of—to do good works unseen of men, without hope of reward, and to those who could make no return. For it rang in my ears that Godfather Gilpin had said, "He has no friends—that is why he is being buried by the Brothers of Pity."

I quite understood what I thought they must feel, because I had once buried a cat who had no friends. It was a poor half-starved old thing, for the people it belonged to had left it, and I used to see it slinking up to the back door and looking at Tabby, who was very fat and sleek, and at the scraps on the unwashed dishes after dinner. Mrs. Jones kicked it out every time, and what happened to it before I found it lying dragged and dead at the bottom of the Ha-ha, with the top of a kettle still fastened to its scraggy tail, I never knew, and it cost me bitter tears to guess. It cost me some hard work, too, to dig the grave, for my spade was so very small.

I don't think Mrs. Jones would have cared to be a Brother of Pity, for she was very angry with me for burying that cat, because it was such a wretched one, and so thin and dirty, and looked so ugly and smelt so nasty. But that was just why I wanted to give it a good

funeral, and why I picked my crimson lily and put it in the grave, because it seemed so sad the poor thing should be like that when it might have been clean and fluffy, and fat and comfortable, like Tabby, if it had had a home and people to look after it.

It was remembering about the cat that made me think that there were no Brothers of Pity (not even in Tuscany, for I asked Godfather Gilpin) to bury beasts and birds and fishes when they have no friends to go to their funerals. And that was how it was that I settled to be a Brother of Pity without waiting till I grew up and could carry men.

I had a shilling of my own, and with sixpence of it I bought a yard and a half of black calico at the post-office shop, and Mrs. Jones made me a cloak out of it; and with the other sixpence I bought a mask—for they sell toys there too. It was not a right sort of mask, but I could not make Mrs. Jones understand about a hood with two eye-holes in it, and I did not like to show her the picture, for if she had seen that I wanted to play at burying people, perhaps she would not have made me the cloak. She made it very well, and it came down to my ankles, and I could hide my spade under it. The worst of the mask was that it was a funny one, with a big nose; but it hid my face all the same, and when you get inside a mask you can feel quite grave whatever it's painted like.

I had never had so happy a summer before as the one when I was a Brother of Pity. I heard Nurse saying to Mrs. Jones that "there was no telling what would keep children out of mischief," for that I "never seemed to be tired of that old black rag and that ridiculous face."

But it was not the dressing-up that pleased me day after day, it was the chance of finding dead bodies with no friends to bury them. Going out is quite a new thing when you have something to look for; and Godfather Gilpin says he felt just the same in the days when he used to collect insects.

I found a good many corpses of one sort and another: birds and mice and frogs and beetles, and sometimes bigger bodies—such as kittens and dogs. The stand of my old wooden horse made a capital thing to drag them on, for all the wheels were there, and I had a piece of blue cotton-velvet to put on the top, but the day I found a

dead mole I did not cover him. I put him outside, and he looked like black velvet lying on blue velvet. It seemed quite a pity to put him into the dirty ground, with such a lovely coat.

One day I was coming back from burying a mouse, and I saw a "flying watchman" beetle lying quite stiff and dead, as I thought, with his legs stretched out, and no friends; so I put him on the bier at once, and put the blue velvet over him, and drew him to the place where the mouse's grave was. When I took the pall off and felt him, and turned him over and over, he was still quite rigid, so I felt sure he was dead, and began to dig his grave; but when I had finished and went back to the bier, the flying watchman was just creeping over the wheel. He had only pretended to be dead, and had given me all that trouble for nothing.

When first I became a Brother of Pity, I thought I would have a graveyard to bury all the creatures in, but afterwards I changed my mind and settled to bury them all near wherever I found them. But I got some bits of white wood, and fastened them across each other with bits of wire, and so marked every grave.

At last there were lots of them dotted about the fields and woods I knew. I remembered to whom most of them belonged, and even if I had forgotten, it made a very good game, to pretend to be a stranger in the neighbourhood, and then pretend to be somebody else, talking to myself, and saying, "Wherever you see those little graves some poor creature has been buried by the Brothers of Pity."

I did not like to read the burial service, for fear it should not be quite right (especially for frogs; there were so many of them in summer, and they were so horrid-looking, I used to bury several together, and pretend it was the time of the plague); but I did not like not having any service at all. So when I put on my cloak and mask, and took my spade and the bier, I said, "Brothers, let us prepare to perform this work of mercy," which is the first thing the real *Fratelli della Misericordia* say when they are going out. And when I buried the body I said, "Go in peace," which is the last thing that they say. Godfather Gilpin told me, and I learnt it by heart.

I enjoyed it very much. There were graves of beasts and birds who had died without friends in the hedges and the soft parts of the fields in almost all our walks. I never showed them to Nurse, but I

often wondered that she did not notice them. I always touched my hat when I passed them, and sometimes it was very difficult to do so without her seeing me, but it made me quite uncomfortable if I passed a grave without. When I could not find any bodies I amused myself with making wreaths to hang over particularly nice poor beasts, such as a bullfinch or a kitten.

I had been a Brother of Pity for several months, when a very curious thing happened.

One summer evening I went by myself after tea into a steep little field at the back of our house, with an old stone-quarry at the top, on the ledges of which, where the earth had settled, I used to play at making gardens. And there, lying on a bit of very stony ground, half on the stones and half on the grass, was a dead robin-redbreast. I love robins very much, and it was not because I wanted one to die, but because I thought that if one did die, I should so like to bury him, that I had wished to find a dead robin ever since I became a Brother of Pity. It was rather late, but it wanted nearly an hour to my usual bedtime, so I thought I would go home at once for my dress and spade and bier, and for some roses. For I had resolved to bury this (my first robin-redbreast) in a grave lined with rose-leaves, and to give him a wreath of forget-me-nots.

Just as I was going I heard a loud buzz above my head, and something hit me in the face. It was a beetle, whirring about in the air, and as I turned to leave poor Robin the beetle sat down on him, on the middle of his red breast, and by still hearing the buzzing, I found that another beetle was whirling and whirring just above my head in the air. I like beetles (especially the flying watchmen), and these ones were black too; so I said, for fun, "You've got on your black things, and if you'll take care of the body till I get my spade you shall be Brothers of Pity."

I ran home, and I need not have gone indoors at all, for I keep my cloak and my spade and the bier in the summer-house, but the bits of wood were in the nursery cupboard, so, after I had got some good roses, and was quite ready, I ran up-stairs, and there, to my great vexation, Nurse met me, and said I was to go to bed.

I thought it was very hard, because it had been a very hot day, and I had had to go a walk in the heat of the sun along the old