

**Classic Poetry Series**

**Edwin James Brady**

**- poems -**

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## Lost and Given Over

A Mermaid's not a human thing,  
An' courtin' such is folly;  
Of flesh an' blood I'd rather sing,  
What ain't so melancholy.  
Oh, Berta! Loo! Jaunita! Sue!  
Here's good luck to me and you—  
Sing rally! ri-a-rally!  
The seas is deep; the seas is wide;  
But this I'll prove whate'er betide,  
I'm bully in the alley!  
I'm bull-ee in our al-lee!

The Hooghli gal'er face is brown;  
The Hilo gal is lazy;  
The gal that lives by 'Obart town  
She'd drive a dead man crazy;  
Come, wet your lip, and let it slip!  
The Gretna Green's a tidy ship—  
Sing rally!  
The seas is deep; the seas is blue;  
But 'ere's good 'ealth to me and you,  
Ho, rally!

The Lord may drop us off our pins  
To feed 'is bloomin' fishes;  
But Lord forgive us for our sins—  
Our sins is most delicious!  
Come, drink it up and fill yer cup!  
The world it owes us bite and sup,  
And Mimi, Ju-Ju, Sally;  
The seas is long; the winds is strong;  
The best of men they will go wrong—  
Hi, rally! ri-a-rally!

The Bowery gal she knows 'er know;  
The Frisco gal is silly;  
The Hayti gal ain't white as snow—  
They're whiter down in Chili.  
Now what's the use to shun the booze?  
They'll flop your bones among the ooze  
Sou'-west-by-Sou' the galley.  
The seas is green; the seas is cold;  
The best of men they must grow old—  
Sing rally! ri-a-rally!

All round the world where'er I roam,  
This lesson I am learnin':  
If you've got sense you'll stop at home  
And save the bit yer earnin'.  
So hang the odds! It's little odds,  
When every 'eathen 'as 'is gods,  
And neither two will tally:

When black and white drink, wimmin, fight—  
In these three things they're all alright—  
Sing rally! ri-a-rally!

When double bunks, Fo'castle end,  
Is all the kind that's carried,  
Our manners they will likely mend—  
Most likely we'll be married.  
But till sich time as that be done,  
We'll take our fun as we've begun—  
Sing rally!  
The flesh is weak; the world is wide;  
The dead man 'e goes overside—  
Sing rally! rally!

We're given and lost to the girls that wait  
From Trinity to Whitsund'y,  
From Sunda Strait to the Golden Gate  
An' back to the Bay o' Fundy;  
Oh, it's Mabel, Loo, an' it's Nancy-Poo,  
An' 'ere's good luck, an' I love you—  
Sing rally!  
Oh, it's cents an' dollars an' somebody hollers—  
The sun comes up an' the mornin' follers—  
Sing rally!

We're given an' lost to the octoroon,  
The Portugee cruiser painty,  
The Chinkie gal with 'er eyes 'arf-moon,  
An' the Japanee darlin' dainty.  
Oh, it's Tokio-town when the sun goes down,  
It's 'arf-a-pint and it's 'arf-a-crown—  
Sing rally!  
'Er spars may lift an' 'er keel can shift,  
When a man is done 'e 's got to drift—  
Sing rally! Ho, rally!

The Hooghli gal 'er face is brown,  
The Hilo gal's a daisy,  
The gal that lives by 'Obart town  
She'd drive a dead man crazy.  
So, pretty an' plain, it's Sarah Jane  
'Uggin' an' kissin' an' 'Come again!  
Sing rally! ri-a-rally!  
The seas is deep; the seas is wide;  
But this I'll prove what else betide,  
I'm bully in the alley,  
Ho! Bullee in the Al-lee!

Edwin James Brady

## The Great Grey Water

Now two have met, now two have met,  
Who may not meet again—  
Two grains of sand, two blades of grass,  
Two threads within the skein—  
Beside the Great Grey Water.

Two hands to touch, two hearts to touch;  
And, here forgathered, we  
Will not forget, may not forget,  
Where last forgathered three—  
Beyond the Great Grey Water.

Two glasses filled, two pipes to fill—  
'To all our fortunes, brother!'  
And as they clink—like so—we drink  
Fair passage to the other  
Across the Great Grey Water.

For three have sailed, and one has sailed,  
His sins, like ours, still on him,  
God sleep his soul! five oceans roll  
Their long weight all upon him.  
O God! thy Great Grey Water!

But I am still, and you are still,  
And here our chance has flung us;  
True comrades we, but...there were three  
And one is not among us  
Beside the Great Grey Water.

A breathing space, a biding place,  
Soft lights and beakers beaded,  
Then out again and on again,  
Unminded and unheeded,  
Across the Great Grey Water.

Now two have met where three have met  
With curses or with laughter;  
And so our Day shall pass away,  
And so our Night come after—  
But, ah! the Great Grey Water

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## The Wardens of the Seas

Like star points in the ether to guide a homing soul  
Towards God's Eternal Haven; above the wash and roll,  
Across and o'er the oceans, on all the coasts they stand  
Tall seneschals of commerce, High Wardens of the Strand --  
    The white lights slowly turning  
    Their kind eyes far and wide,  
    The red and green lights burning  
    Along the waterside.

When Night with breath of aloes, magnolia, spice, and balm  
Creeps down the darkened jungles and mantles reef and palm,  
By velvet waters making soft music as they surge  
The shore lights of dark Asia will one by one emerge --  
    Oh, Ras Marshig by Aden  
    Shows dull on hazy nights;  
    And Bombay Channel's laid in  
    Its "In" and "Outer" lights.

When Night, in rain-wet garments comes sobbing cold and grey  
Across the German Ocean and South from Stornoway,  
Thro' snarling darkness slowly, some fixed and some a-turn,  
The bright shore-lights of Europe like welcome tapers burn, --  
    From fierce Fruholmen streaming  
    O'er Northern ice and snow,  
    To Cape St. Vincent gleaming, --  
    These lamps of danger glow.

The dark Etruscan tending his watchfires by the shore,  
On sacred altars burning, the world shall know no more;  
His temple's column standing against the ancient stars  
Is gone; Now bright catoptrics flash out electric bars, --  
    Slow swung his stately Argos  
    Unto the Tiber's mouth;  
    But now the Tuscan cargoes  
    Screw-driven, stagger South.

The lantern of Genoa guides home no Eastern fleets  
As when the boy Columbus played in its narrow streets:  
No more the Keltic `dolmens' their fitful warnings throw  
Across the lone Atlantic, so long, so long ago --  
    No more the beaked prows dashing  
    Shall dare a shoreward foam;  
    No more will great oars threshing  
    Sweep Dorian galleys home.

No more the Vikings roaring their sagas wild and weird  
Proclaim that Rome has fallen; no more a consul feared  
Shall quench the Roman pharos lest Northern pirates free  
Be pointed to their plunder on coasts of Italy --  
    Nor shall unwilling lovers,  
    From Lethean pleasures torn,  
    Fare nor'ward with those rovers,

To frozen lands forlorn.

The bale-fires and the watch-fires, the wrecker's foul false lure  
No more shall vex the shipmen; and on their course secure  
Past Pharos in the starlight the tow'ring hulls of Trade  
Race in and out from Suez in iron cavalcade, --  
    So rode one sunset olden  
    Across the dark'ning sea,  
    With banners silk and golden,  
    The Barge of Antony!

They loom along the foreshores; they gleam across the Straits;  
They guide the feet of Commerce unto the harbor gates.  
In nights of storm and thunder, thro' fog and sleet and rain,  
Like stars on angels' foreheads, they give man heart again, --  
    Oh, hear the high waves smashing  
    On Patagonia's shore!  
    Oh, hear the black waves threshing  
    Their weight on Skerryvore!

He searches night's grim chances upon his bridge alone  
And seeks the distant glimmer of hopeful Eddystone:  
And thro' a thick fog creeping, with chart and book and lead,  
The homeward skipper follows their green and white and red --  
    By day his lighthouse wardens  
    In sunlit quiet stand,  
    But in the night the burdens  
    Are theirs of Sea and Land.

They fill that night with Knowledge. A thousand ships go by,  
A thousand captains bless them, so bright and proud and high:  
The world's dark capes they glamour; or low on sand banks dread,  
They, crouching, mark a pathway between the Quick and Dead --  
    Like star points in the ether  
    They bring the seamen ease,  
    These Lords of Wind and Weather  
    These Wardens of the Seas!

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## Vive Anarchy

With the lifting of the curtain,  
Distance, dim, but grimly certain,  
Breaks my vision of a city, populous and great,  
To my senses, sorrow-sated,  
Senses sad and satiated, Faintly comes the thunder peal of treasured wrong and hate  
    Broken down,  
    Beaten down,  
By awakened people and the iron arm of Fate.  
Pallid forms, by famine shrunken,  
Helots, harlots, ribald, drunken,  
Wine and blood-wet, onward thro' the torchlit highways sweep,  
Through a city disunited,  
Through a city flame ignited,  
To the sound of song and trumpet and the cannon's deep  
    Distant boom,  
    Through the gloom,  
While the fire fiends madly leaps from tower to temple steep.

Reinforced from slum and alley,  
By this wild and weird reveille,  
Pours the army of the people where their banners drape,  
In a city barricaded,  
In a city fusilladed  
By the deadly rifle and the Gatling and the grape,  
    Crashing down,  
    Smashing down  
Lanes and alleys filthy, and the foul abode of rape.

Tyrants flee and cowards falter-,  
For a lamp-post and a halter  
Wait for every tyrant at the corner of the street,  
In the hour of retribution,  
In the night of revolution,  
When on common ground the tyrant and the helot meet,  
    Endless wrongs,  
    Countless wrongs,  
Burning in the helot's bosom - fanned to fever heat.

Let the tyrant beg no pity-  
His the palace, his the city,  
His the silken raiment and the costly food and wine;  
Ours the forms emaciated,  
Of the women violated,  
Ours the endless torture in the workshop and the mine;  
    Hunted down,  
    Hounded down  
To the level of the felon and the concubine.

By our women fever-stricken,  
Where the foetid odours thicken  
In the homes of hunger, where the children cry for bread;  
By your soulless apathetic,

Scorning of our wrongs pathetic,  
By the seas of blood and tears by generations shed,  
    Stealing down,  
    Streaming down-  
Now we ask, with smoking rifle, "vengeance on your head."

Marching on with footsteps steady,  
Shotted guns and bayonets ready,  
Goes the army of the people, in the days to be,  
Through a city barricaded,  
Through a city fusilladed,  
Where the discontented masses struggle to be free,  
    Breaking down,  
    Beating down  
Wrongs of ages to the song of "Long Live Anarchy."

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