

# Ef You Don't Watch Out!

Anne Hills sings the poems of James Whitcomb Riley

## Musicians

Vocals, guitar, banjo, slide whistle, garden weasel: **Anne Hills**

Piano, mandolin, guitar, bass: **Scott Petito**

Violin: **Sara Milanovich**

Concertina, Accordion: **Cindy Mangsen**

Melodeon: **Peter Vitalone**

Percussion: **Sam Zuchinni**

Additional vocals on tracks 2,3,7 & 8: **Cindy Mangsen & Priscilla Herdman**

## The Songs

1. **A Voice from the Farm**
2. **Little Orphant Annie**
3. **When the Frost is on the Punkin**
4. **The Raggedy Man**
5. **The Lugubrious Whing-Whang**
6. **The Little Coat**
7. **Lullaby**
8. **Nine Little Goblins**
9. **Down on Wriggle Crick**
10. **There Was a Cherry Tree**

*All songs copyrighted © 2007 Anne Hills / Raven Heart Music / ASCAP*

Lyrics: James Whitcomb Riley (adapt. Anne Hills) \* Melodies: Anne Hills

## A VOICE FROM THE FARM

It is my dream to have you here with me,  
Out of the heated city's dust and din—  
Here where the colts have room to gambol in,  
And kine to graze, in clover to the knee.  
I want to see your wan face happily  
Lit with the wholesome smiles that have not been  
In use since the old games you used to win  
When we pitched horseshoes: And I want to be  
At utter loaf with you in this dim land  
Of grove and meadow, while crickets make  
Our own talk tedious, and the bat wields  
His bulky flight, as we cease converse and  
In the dusk like velvet smoothly take  
Our way toward home across the dewy fields.

## LITTLE ORPHANT ANNIE

*The character of Little Orphant Annie was modeled after Mary Alice Smith who lived with the Riley family in 1863.*

Little Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay,  
An' wash the cups an' saucers up, an' brush the crumbs away,  
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth, an' sweep,  
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn her board-an'-keep;  
An' all us other childern, when the supper things is done,  
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun  
A-list'nin' to the witch-tales 'at Annie tells about,  
An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you  
Ef you don't watch out!

Onc't they was a little boy wouldn't say his prayers –  
So when he went to bed at night, away up stairs,  
His Mammy heerd him holler, an' his Daddy heerd him bawl,  
An' when they turn't the kivers down, he wasn't there at all!  
An' they seeked him in the rafter-room, an' cubby-hole, an' press,  
An' seeked him up the chimbley-flue, an' ever'wheres, I guess;  
But all they ever found was thist his pants an' roundabout:  
An' the gobble-uns'll git you  
Ef you don't watch out!

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin,  
An' make fun of ever' one, an' all her blood an' kin;  
An' onc't, when they was "company," an' ole folks was there,  
She mocked 'em an' shocked 'em, an' said she didn't care!

An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an' hide,  
They wuz two great big Black Things (shadders) a-standin' by her side,  
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore she knowed what she's about!  
An' the gobble-uns'll git you  
Ef you don't watch out!

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,  
An' the lamp-wick sputters, an' the wind goes *woo-oo!*  
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray,  
An' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away,  
You better mind yer parents, an' yer teachers fond an' dear,  
An' churish them 'at loves you, an' dry the orphant's tear,  
An' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at clusters all about,  
Er the gobble-uns'll git you  
Ef you don't watch out!

## WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN

*One of Riley's best-loved poems.*

When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock,  
And you hear the kyock and gobble of the struttin' turkey-cock,  
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the cluckin' of the hens,  
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes on the fence;  
O, it's then's the times a feller is a-feelin' at his best,  
With the risin' sun to greet him from a night of peaceful rest,  
As he leaves the house, bareheaded, and goes out to feed the stock,  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

They's something kindo' harty-like about the atmosfere  
When the heat of summer's over and the coolin' fall is here  
Of course we miss the flowers, and the blossoms on the trees,  
And the mumble of the hummin'-birds and buzzin' of the bees;  
But the air's so appetizin'; and the landscape through the haze  
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airly autumn days  
Is a pictur' that no painter has the colorin' to mock  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty russel of the tassels of the corn,  
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as golden as the morn;  
The stubble in the furries – kindo' lonesome-like, but still  
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they grewed to fill;  
The strawstack in the medder, and the reaper in the shed;  
The hosses in theyr stalls below – the clover over-head!  
O, it sets my hart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock!

Then your apples all is gethered, and the ones a feller keeps  
Is poured around the celler-floor in red and yellor heaps;  
And your cider-makin' 's over, and your wimmern-folks is through  
With their mince and apple-butter, and theyr souse and sausage, too;  
I don't know how to tell it – but ef sich a thing could be  
As the Angels wantin' boardin', and they'd call around on *me*  
I'd want to 'commodate 'em – all the whole-indurin' flock  
When the frost is on the punkin' and the fodder's in the shock!

## THE RAGGEDY MAN

O the Raggedy Man! He works fer Pa;  
An' he's the goodest man ever you saw!  
He comes to our house every day,  
An' waters the horses, an' feeds 'em hay;  
An' he opens the shed – an' we all ist laugh  
When he drives out our little old wobble-ly calf;  
An' nen – ef our hired girl says he can  
He milks the cow fer 'Lizbuth Ann.  
Ain't he a' awful good Raggedy Man?  
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

W'y, the Raggedy Man – he's ist so good  
He splits the kindlin' an' chops the wood  
An' nen he spades in our garden, too,  
An' does most things 'at boys can't do!  
He clumbed clean up in our big tree

An' shooked a' apple down fer me  
An' nother 'n', too, fer 'Lizbuth Ann,  
An' nother'n', too, fer the Raggedy Man.  
Ain't he a' awful kind Raggedy Man?  
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

An' the Raggedy Man, he knows most rhymes,  
An' tells 'em ef I be good sometimes:  
Knows 'bout Giunts, an' Griffuns, an' Elves,  
An' Squidgicum-Squees 'at swallers themselves!  
An', wite by the pump in our pasture-lot,  
He showed me a hole 'at the Wunks is got  
'At lives 'way deep in the ground,  
An' can turn into me, er 'Lizbuth Ann  
Aint he a funny old Raggedy Man?  
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

An' wunst, when The Raggedy Man come late,  
An' pigs ist root' thue the garden-gate,  
He 'tend like the pigs uz bears an' said,  
"Old Bear-shooter'll shoot 'em dead!"  
An' race' and chase' 'em, an' they'd ist run  
When he pint his hoe at 'em like it's a gun  
An' go "Bang! – Bang!" nen 'tend he stan'  
He's an' old Bear-shooter Raggedy Man!  
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

The Raggedy Man – one time when he wuz  
Makin' a little bow-'n'-orry fer me,  
Says, "When you're big like your Pa is,  
Air you go' to keep a fine store like his  
An' be a rich merchunt – an' wear fine clothes?"  
Er' what air you go' to be, goodness knows?"  
An' nen he laughed at 'Lizbuth Ann an' I says  
"M go' to be a Raggedy Man!"  
I'm ist go' to be a nice Raggedy Man!"  
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

## THE LUGUBRIOUS WHING-WHANG

The rhyme o' the Raggedy Man's 'at's best  
Is Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs,  
'Cause that-un's the strangest of all o' the rest,  
An' the worst to learn, an' the last one guessed,  
An' the funniest one, an' the foolishest.  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs.

I don't know what in the world it means  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!  
An' nen when I *tell* him I don't, he leans  
Like he was a-grindin' on some machines  
An' says: Ef I *don't*, w'y, i don't know *beans*!  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!

Out on the margin of Moonshine Land,  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!  
Out where the Whing-Whang loves to stand,  
Writing his name with his tail in the sand,  
And swiping it out with his oogersh hand;  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!

Is it the gibber of Gungs or Keeks?  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!  
Or what *is* the sound that the Whing-Whang seeks?  
Crouching low by the winding creeks  
And holding his breath for weeks and weeks!  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!

Aoint him him the wraithiest of wraithly things!  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!  
'Tis a fair Whing-Whangess, with phosphor rings,  
And bridal-jewels of fangs and stings;  
And she sits and as sadly and softly sings  
As the mildewed whirl of her own dead wings,

Tickle me Dear,  
Tickle me here,  
Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!

## THE LITTLE COAT

*"In all genuine poetry there is a poignant quality that strikes to the center of the human heart, and quivers there and thrills us through and through with gentler emotions, higher purposes and yearnings to be better than we are."*  
JWR

*Roundabout - a jacket worn by boys, sailors and others (U.S.) From the 1886 Webster's Dictionary*

Here's his ragged "roundabout" ...  
Turn the pockets inside-out:  
See; his penknife lost to use,  
Rusted shut with apple juice;  
Here, with marbles, top and string  
Is his deadly "devil's sling,"  
With its rubber, limp at last  
As the sparrows of the past!  
Beeswax-buckles-leatherstraps  
Bullets (BBs), and a box of caps  
Not a thing of (at) all, I guess,  
But betrays some waywardness

(E'en these tickets, blue and red,  
For the Bible-verses said  
Such as this his mem'ry kept  
"Jesus wept.")

Here's a fishing hook-and-line,  
Tangled up with wire and twine,  
And dead angle-worms, and some  
Slugs of lead and chewing gum,  
Blent with scents that can but come  
From the oil of rhodium,  
Here-a soiled, yet dainty note,  
That some little sweetheart wrote,  
Dotting – "Vine grows round the stump,"  
And "My sweetest sugar lump!"  
Wrapped in this – a padlock key  
Where he's filed a touch hole-see!  
(And some powder in a quill  
Corked up with a liver pill;  
And a spongy little chunk of "punk.")

Here's the little coat – but O!  
Where is he we've censored so!  
Don't you hear us calling dear?  
Back! come back, and never fear  
You may wander where you will,  
Over orchard, field and hill;  
You may kill (hunt) the birds, or do  
Anything that pleases you!  
Ah, this empty coat of his!  
Every tatter worth a kiss;  
Every stain as pure instead  
As the white stars overhead:  
And the pockets – homes were they  
Of the little hands that play  
Now no more – but, absent, thus  
Beckon us!

## LULLABY

The maple strews the embers of its leaves (baby-bye)  
O'er the laggard swallows nestled 'neath the eaves; (baby-bye)  
The moody cricket falters in its cry–Baby-bye!  
And the lid of night is falling o'er the sky–Baby-bye!  
The lid of night is falling o'er the sky!

The rose is lying pallid, and the cup (baby-bye)  
Of the frosted calla-lily folded up; (baby-bye)  
And the breezes through the garden sob and sigh–Baby-bye!  
O'er the sleeping blooms of summer where they lie–Baby-bye!  
O'er the sleeping blooms of summer where they lie!

Yet, baby--O, my Baby for your sake (baby-bye)  
This heart of mine is ever wide awake, (baby-bye)  
And my love may never droop a drowsy eye–Baby-bye!  
Till your own are wet above me when I die–Baby-bye!  
Till your own are wet above me when I die.

### NINE LITTLE GOBLINS

They all climbed up on the high board fence  
Nine little Goblins with green-glass eyes  
Nine little Goblins that had no sense  
And couldn't tell coppers from cold mince pies;  
And they all climbed up on the fence and sat  
And I asked them what they were staring at.

And the first one said, as he scratched his head  
With a queer little arm that reached out of his ear  
And rasped its claws on his hair so red  
This is what this little arm is fer  
And he scratched and stared and the next one said  
How on earth do you scratch your head?

And he laughed like a screech of a rusty hinge  
Laughed and laughed til his face turned black;  
And when he choked, with a final twinge  
Of his stifling laughter, he thumped his back  
With a fist that grew on the end of his tail  
Till his breath came back to his lips so pale.

And the third little Goblin leered round at me  
And there were no lids on his eyes at all  
And he clucked one eye, and he says, says he,  
“What is the style of your socks this fall?”  
And he clapped his hands – and I sighed to see  
That he had hands where his feet should be.

Then a bald-faced Goblin, gray and grim,  
Bowed his head, and I saw him slip  
His eyebrows off, as I looked at him,  
And then he moaned in remorseful pain,  
“Would, Ah, would I'd me brows again.”

And then the whole of the Goblin band  
Rocked on the fence-top to and fro,  
And clung, in a long row hand in hand,  
Singing the songs that they used to know  
Singing the songs that their grandsire  
Sung in the goo-goo days of the Goblin-tongue.

And ever they kept their green-glass eyes  
Fixed on me with a stony stare  
Till my own grew glazed with dread surmise  
And I felt the heart in my breast snap to,  
As you've heard the lid of a snuff box do.

And they sang “You're asleep! There is no board-fence,  
And never a Goblin with green glass eyes!  
'Tis only a vision the mind invents,  
After a supper of cold mince pies  
And you're doomed to dream this way, they said  
And you sha'n't wake up till your clean plum dead.

### DOWN ON WRIGGLE CRICK

*“Best time to kill a hog's when he's fat.” Old Saw*

Mostly, folks is law abidin' down on Wriggle Crick  
Seein' they's no squire residin' in our baileywick;  
No grand juries, suppeenies, Ner no vested rights to pick  
Out yer man, jerk up and jail ef he's outragin' Wriggle Crick!

Wriggle Crick hain't got no lawin', ner no suits to beat  
Ner no court-house gee-and-hawin' like a County-seat;  
Hain't no waitin' round fer verdicks, ner non-gittin' witness-fees;  
Ner no thieves 'at gits “new hearin's” by some lawyer slick as grease!

Wriggle Crick's leadin' spirit is old Johnnts Culwell  
Keeps post-office, and right near it owns what's called “The Grand Hotel”  
(Warehouse now) - buys wheat and ships it; gits out ties and trades in stock,  
And knows all the high-toned drummers 'Twixt South Bend and Mishawauk..

Last year comes along a feller – sharper 'an a lance  
Stove pipe hat and silk umbreller and a boughten all-wool pants  
Tinkerin' of clocks and watches, says a trial's all he want  
And rents out the tavern office next to Uncle Johnnts.

Well, he tacked up his k'dentials and got down to biz  
Captured Johnnts by cuttin' stenchils fer them old wheat-sacks o' his  
Fixed his clock, in the post-office – painted fer him, clean and slick  
'Crosted his safe in gold leaf letters “J. Culwell's, Wriggle Crick.”

Any kind o' job you keered to resk him with and bring,  
He'd fix fer you – jes' appeared to turn his hand to anything!  
Rings, er earbobs, er umbrellers – glue a cheer or chany doll,  
W'y of all the beatin' fellers He jes' beat 'em all!

Made his friends, but wouldn't stop there – One mistake he learnt,  
That was sleepin' in his shop there – and one Sunday night it burnt!  
Come in one o' jes' a sweepin' all the whole town high and dry  
And that feller, when they waked him, suffocatin', mighty nigh!

Johnnts he drug him from the buildin', he'pless – 'peared to be  
And the women and the childern drenchin' him with sympathy!  
But I noticed Johnnts helt on him with a' extry lovin' grip,  
And the men-folks gathered round him in most warmest partnership!

That's the whole mess, grease-and-dopin'! Johnnts's safe was saved  
But the lock was found sprang open, and the inside caved.  
Was no trial – ner no jury – ner no judge – ner courthouse – click  
Circumstances alters cases down on Wriggle Crick!

(Yeah, circumstances alters cases down on Wriggle Crick!)

### THERE WAS A CHERRY TREE

There was a cherry tree. It's bloomy snows  
Cool even now the fevered sight that knows  
No more its airy visions of pure joy  
As when you were a boy.

There was a cherry tree. The Bluejay set  
His blue against its white – O blue as jet  
He seemed there then! – but *now* – Whoever knew  
He was so pale a blue.

There was a cherry tree – Our child-eyes saw  
The miracle – Its pure white snows did thaw  
Into crimson fruitage, far too sweet  
But for a boy to eat.

There was a cherry tree, give thanks and joy!  
There was a bloom of snow – There was a boy  
There was a Bluejay of the realest blue  
And fruit for both of you.