

JIM AT THE CORNER

Eleanor Farjeon

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About the Book

Every time he went out for his daily walk Derry had to pass the corner where old Jim sat on his orange box. And every time he lingered there in the hope of a story. For Jim was a sailor who had grown too old for the sea, but who was never tired of telling of his adventures on the good ship *Rocking-horse* under brave Captain Potts.

A classic tale from one of the UK's most notable and well-loved children's authors, Eleanor Farjeon.

JIM AT THE CORNER

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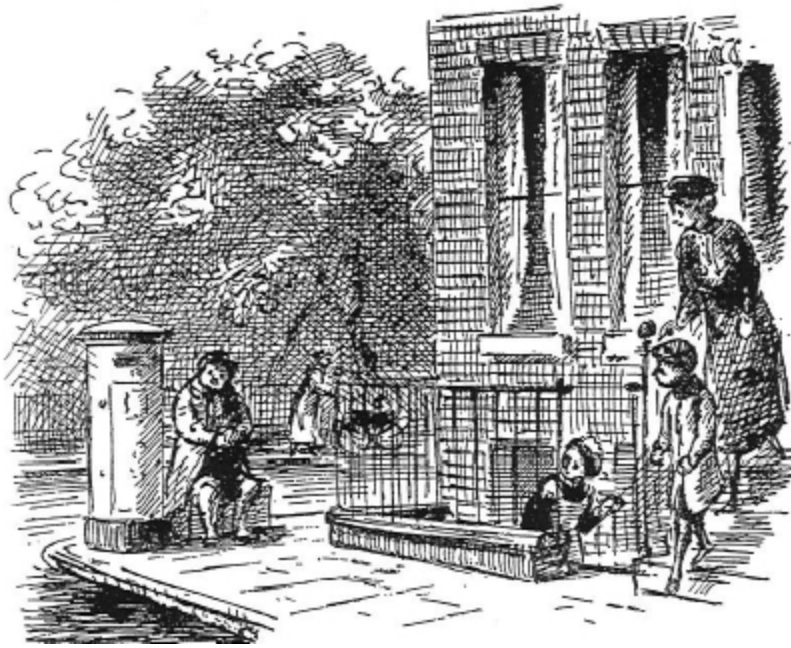


Illustrated by Edward Ardizzone

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Here's a shell
for the ear
of Virginia Bell
too young to read,
too little to spell,
too small
and lately-born
to hear
a merman call
to her through a horn,
or a mermaid sing to
her what I tell
in the shell
I bring to
Virginia Bell.

DERRY AND JIM



JIM SAT AT the corner of the street by the pillar-box, morning and evening, summer and winter, on an orange-box. He had sat there as long as Derry could remember; yes, he had sat there for a lifetime, Derry's lifetime, eight years long.

Derry lived in one of the tall red-brick houses in Jim's street. Whenever Derry went out for his morning walk, there was Jim on his orange-box at the corner; and whenever Derry came back from his walk, there he was still. For all Derry knew, Jim sat there all night as well as all day, taking care of the street and everybody in it. As long as Jim sat at the corner, Derry felt that the street was as safe as houses.

What did Jim look like? He was old enough to have white hair, as shining as silk. His skin shone, too, like a brown

polished table. His eyes were as bright as blue glass marbles. His hands were gnarled, and were generally clasped over the top of a short stout stick, which he held planted between his knees like the third leg of a stool. He always had a pipe in the corner of his mouth. Even when he hadn't any baccy to put in it, Jim kept his pipe between his teeth. His lips always smiled, and his eyes always twinkled, and when Derry said, 'Hullo, Jim! How *are* you?' he always answered, 'Me? I'm fine. And how's yourself?'

Derry knew Jim's clothes as well as he knew Jim. Sometimes he knew Jim's clothes even before Jim did, for Derry's father had worn the tweed hat and the grey flannel trousers before Jim ever saw them.



And the mittens he wore in cold weather had been knitted for him by Derry's mother.

And Major Trumpet, who lived next door to Derry, had given Jim his brown jacket and his old briar pipe.