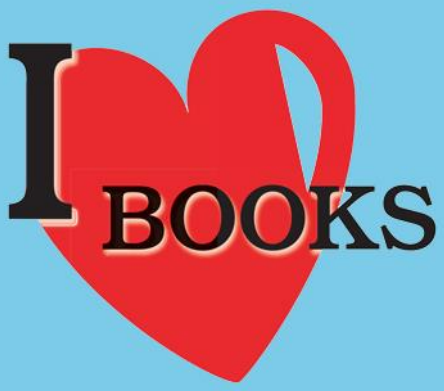


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Opening extract from

Murray the Race Horse

Written by

Gavin Puckett

Illustrated by

Tor Freeman

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For Evan
My best pal and inspiration – G. P.

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MURRAY the Race Horse

Gavin Puckett
Illustrated by Tor Freeman

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FABER & FABER



Hello young reader . . . !

Thanks for taking the time,
In selecting my book of ridiculous rhyme.
I'm Gavin, (you'll find my full name on
the cover)
The teller of tales, which you're soon to
discover.
It's taken me years to unearth these
strange fables,
By visiting farmyards and hanging round
stables

– And this is a series with just a selection,
of some of the weirdest in my
collection.
They're all about horses –
each one of them true,
And it's such a nice privilege to share
them with you!
Well, when I say "*True,*" I mean . . .
that's what I've heard.
(It's hard to believe, since they're all so
absurd!)
So, instead of returning this book to the
shelf,
Why not read on and decide for yourself?



On a warm summer's day at a
race track in Surrey,
Something odd happened to a
racehorse called Murray.
The events that unfolded were
certainly strange,
Events that by chance caused
his whole life to change.

Murray decided – as a young foal –
To make championship-racing
his ultimate goal.
He dreamed of *success*,
of riches and
fame;
Dreamed fans the
world over would cheer
out his name.





He came from a family of true
sporting glory,
Where triumph and praise was
a regular story.



His parents won trophies and
medals galore
And hoped beyond hope that
their son would win more.





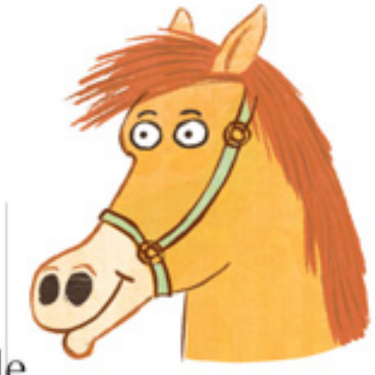


But despite Murray's plans to
reach stardom some day,
There was one major problem
that stood in his way.
A difficult hurdle he couldn't get past . . .
Murray the horse wasn't that fast!

He trained as often as any horse could,
But this dutiful racehorse just
wasn't that good.
His trainer once dubbed him,
'A racing disaster!'
Claiming that **'jockeys could even run faster!'**



To make matters worse,
Murray lived in a stable
With racehorses FAR more
athletic and able.



Big Brandy Wilson

There was **Big Brandy Wilson**
and his brother
Ned Plumb,
Who were cousins
of horseracing
legend **Red Rum**.



Ned Plumb

There was **Bucky the stallion** and **Old Reggie Clover**,
Each of them champions
several times over.
But the fastest of all was a
racehorse called **Pete**,
Who was known to his fans
by the name
'Thunder-Feet'.



Bucky the Stallion



Old Reggie Clover



"Thunder Feet" Pete



Compared to these marvels, Murray was
small and had never been trusted by
jockeys at all.
Instead, he was used as a ground
steward's horse,
Carting equipment around the racecourse.
When he worked, they all *laughed* if he
even dared canter,
And they ridiculed him with their teasing
and banter.