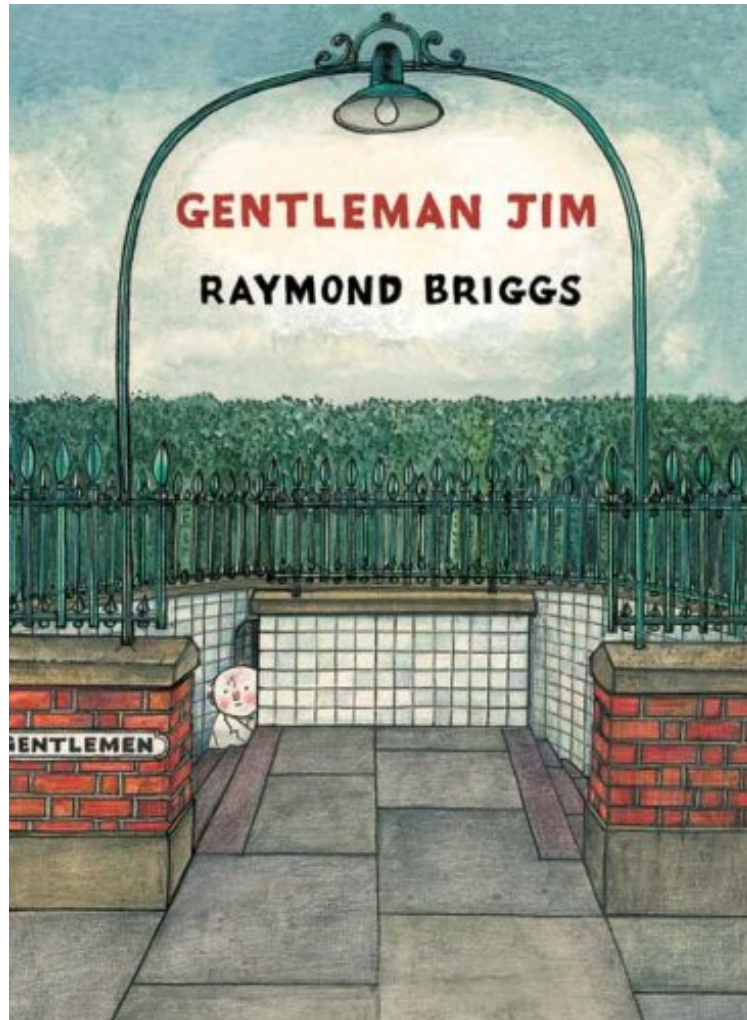


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## Gentleman Jim

*Raymond Briggs*

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#1913508 in Books 2008-07-08 2008-07-22Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 .33 x .34 x 6.86l, .39 #File Name: 189729936240 pagesGentleman Jimby Briggs, Raymond | File size: 47.Mb

**Raymond Briggs : Gentleman Jim** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gentleman Jim:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Gentle JimBy Jayelle KaySimply delightful. Raymond Briggs brings his character to life with a naivet that is neither childish or simpleminded. Gentleman Jim is innocent in his own way. Of most everything he encounters. He seems to have lead a sheltered life that winds up making his efforts more complicated than they would be for anyone of us. Pick up and enjoy any of Mr. Briggs's works. I haven't found a clinker yet.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy IsabelleGood condition.3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Draws humor and hope out of sadness and despairBy GraphicNovelReporter.comAuthor and illustrator Raymond Briggs has certainly balanced his work between kids' tales and more adult-oriented fare, from things like Father Christmas and The Snowman to When the Wind Blows, an ominous graphic novel take on nuclear

war. Gentleman Jim's small size and playful cover don't give much of a hint as to its dense contents and marvelously constructed themes. At just a scant 32 pages, it's a short yet delightful bit of whimsy that wouldn't be inappropriate for kids but has enough smart edginess underlying its story that mark it as a sweet story for adult dreamers. The title character, Jim Bloggs, has a steady but unfulfilling job cleaning toilets. He wants to do more, so much more, and he dreams of it constantly, looking at want ads and trying to figure out what steps to take. But every attempt Jim makes to advance his career to new heights is met with disdain and disapproval from an authority figure. Tellingly, those authority figures are sparsely illustrated, sometimes just angular features obscuring any real details (like a face, for example). Ever an optimist, Jim still perseveres, blissfully unaware of the sheer futility of his plight. It's almost heartbreaking to witness, or at least it would be if Briggs didn't take so much care to ensure the story stayed light. There's real hope inside Jim; no wonder he remains one of Briggs's signature characters. He still resonates. As direct commentary on societal structures, Gentleman Jim uses brevity to its benefit. The book was first published in 1980, just a year after Margaret Thatcher had become England's first female prime minister. That its British-born author directed most of his social commentary at his native society doesn't diminish Gentleman Jim for American readers. Jim and his wife, Hilda, are rumored to be based on Briggs's own parents, whose lives he detailed in *Ethel Ernest*. Jim and Hilda made their own return in 1982's *When the Wind Blows*, which pitted the two against the perils of nuclear winter. Always, Briggs finds a way to draw humor and hope out of sadness and despair. He's also a master at using symbolism in his design to support his story: Notice the size of the panels in Gentleman Jim, for example, and how they reflect Jim's plight in life throughout the story. It's a pleasure to see Drawn Quarterly reviving one of his pivotal works in such a nice edition. Briggs has long been overlooked in the field--even though he's worked steadily writing and/or illustrating since the late 1950s--so it's good to see him get his due.-- John Hogan

A graphic novel classic from one of the world's best-known cartoonists Gentleman Jim is the story of Jim Bloggs, an imaginative toilet cleaner who, dissatisfied with his station in life, devotes his time to envisioning a world beyond it. His walls are lined with books like *Out in the Silver West*, *The Boys' Book of Pirates*, and *Executive Opportunities*, which provide fodder for his ruminations on career change. Encouraged by his wife, who is also eager to incorporate more adventure into her life, Jim sets out to bring these dreams to fruition by accumulating various accoutrements, only to discover that the life of an executive, an artist, or a cowboy is more complicated and costly than it appears. Jim's childlike understanding of the world that surrounds him is enhanced by Raymond Briggs's subtle and inventive illustrations. Fantasies are portrayed as organic clouds that move between and overlap outlined panels of his reality, and myopic Jim is drawn smaller and softer than the policemen and bureaucrats interested in impeding his search for adventure. As he begins to infringe more seriously on the law, the city workers and their speech boxes become increasingly angular, much like the rigid rules and regulations restricting his sincere quest. With this playful style, Briggs expertly transforms common feelings of inadequacy into an endearing and enjoyable experience that speaks across generations, concluding with an optimistic implication that even a misfortunate outcome can be better than no change at all. This classic novel, originally published in 1980, is presented by Drawn Quarterly in a new edition.

From School Library Journal Grade 7 Up Jim Bloggs is a middle-aged toilet cleaner who dreams of a life filled with adventure. Influenced by his nightly reading of children's storybooks, he imagines himself as a pirate, a cowboy, and even a successful Renaissance painter anything to help break the monotony of his daily life. While the storybook-inspired illustrations appear simple, Briggs makes skillful use of every element on the page; from layouts to the look of text boxes, everything functions to match and enhance the moods and themes of the tale. Jim's imagination is little more than a quaint eccentricity until it starts to bleed into his real life. His desire to become a highwayman prompts him to wear a dramatic cape and toy sword; he finally comes to the attention of the authorities when he illegally buys a donkey for a valiant steed and rides it around the city, looking for excitement. But his charming, childlike innocence wins in the end; when confronted with circumstances that could have been very sad, Jim's fertile mind manages to turn it into another triumph. This edition of a 1980 work includes an introduction by cartoonist Seth that explains how influential Briggs has been over the years. While the innocent-looking art might turn off readers looking for an edgier story, anyone picking up this title will be treated to a sweet, whimsical tale. Matthew L. Moffett, Pohick Regional Library, Burke, VA Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Long before the current graphic-novel craze, Briggs created book-length comics for children (e.g., *The Snowman*, 1978) and adults (*Ethel and Ernest*, 1998). *Gentleman Jim* (1980; this is its first U.S. edition) presents Jim Bloggs, who decides he'd like a new line of work after cleaning toilets for 37 years. Childishly naive, he considers becoming a commando, Parisian artist, business executive, and cowboy before finally settling, with the uncomprehending support of his equally clueless wife, Hilda, on the glamorous and lucrative occupation of highwayman. He is, however, thwarted by the authorities. His donkey (can't afford a horse) violates zoning laws and draws the RSPCA's attention, and once he finally takes to the highway, he runs afoul of the police. Briggs cartoonlike pastel drawings and spot-on dialogue vividly portray Jim and Hilda's unsophisticated ways, though his affection for

their salt-of-the-earthness is clear. He used the same characters in the heartbreaking *When the Wind Blows* (1982), in which they uncomprehendingly face a nuclear attack on Britain. Knowing that book bestows even more poignancy on this relatively minor work. --Gordon Flagg

About the Author  
International bestselling cartoonist/illustrator Raymond Briggs has been writing and drawing children's books and graphic novels for more than forty years, including his best-loved books *Father Christmas* and *The Snowman*. An early pioneer of literary graphic novels with his brilliant satire on nuclear war, *When the Wind Blows* (1982), he is also well known in North America for his poignant depiction of the lives of his parents in *Ethel Ernest*.