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# The Highwayman

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off

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Another book able to take on all-comers. Alfred Noyes' poem was included last year in Kaye Webb's anthology **I like This Poem** and this version confirms that her young selectors knew a good thing when they saw it. The verse has enough rum-te-tum splendour to bring out the actor-manager in all of us - writing that's easy to patronise and difficult to emulate. Try matching the swash and buckle of this line, for example; 'And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of lace at his throat.'

Mere rhetoric? You bet - and it grabs you every time. So do Charles Keeping's drawings which have such panache they give black-and-white the impact of full-colour...and that, come to think of it, is just what successful rhetoric does. Altogether this is the best collaboration of versifier and imagemaker since the Coleridge-cum-Peake **Ancient Mariner**. Well, almost. Certainly enough to make me ponder on the best way of cooking a jumbo-size skateboard.

Happy Christmas...burp.

Running Order:

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