

**A SEMI-DETACHED
HOUSE: AND
OTHER STORIES**

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A Semi-Detached House: And Other Stories by J. Try-Davies

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J. TRY-DAVIES

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A
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by
J. Try-Davies
illustrated by
Robert Harris

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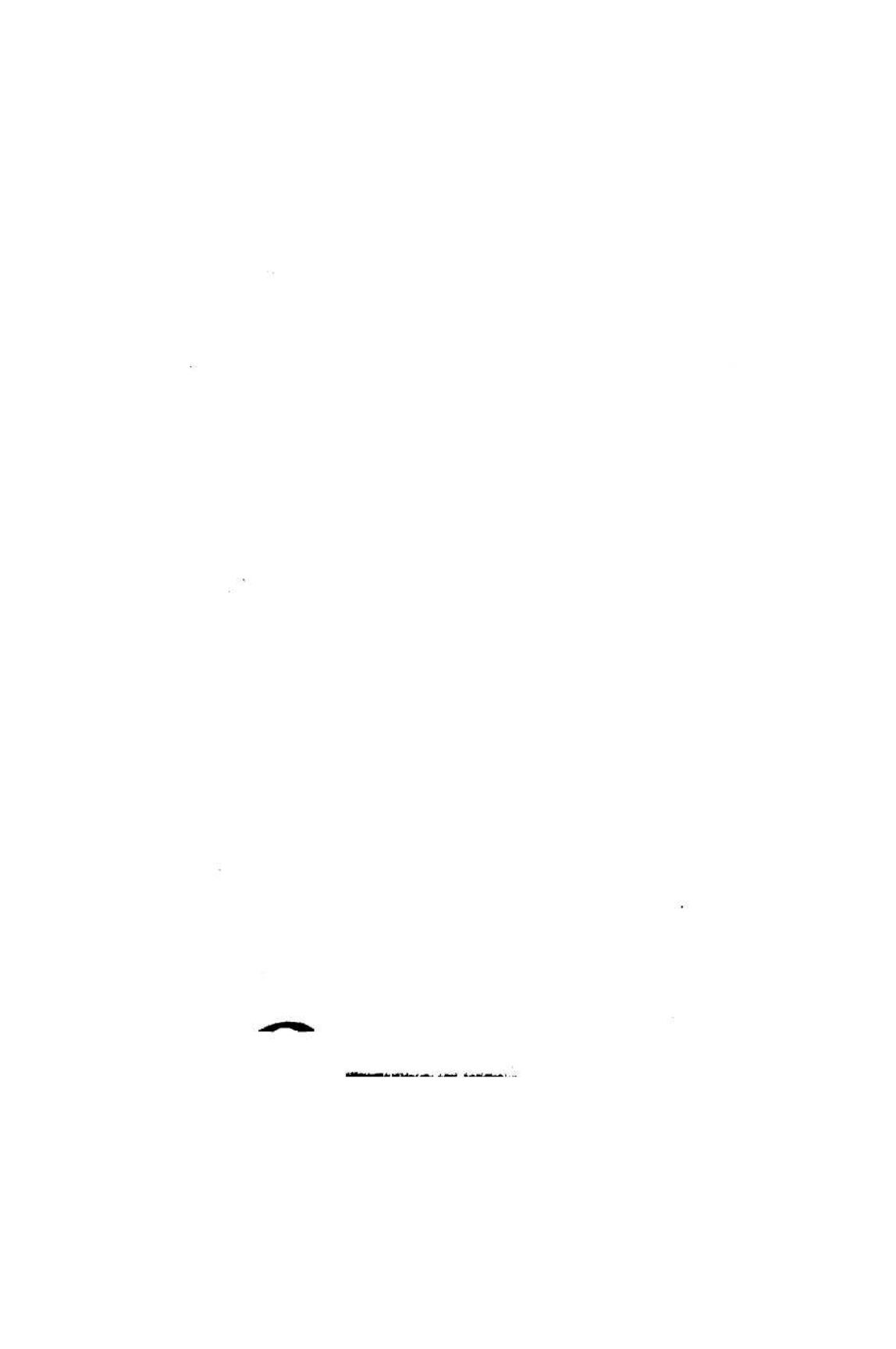
Mastered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year nineteen
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Richard H. H. H. H.
W. H. H. H.
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IN memory of many pleasant evenings,
this book is dedicated to the Pen and
Pencil Club of Montreal, by the author
and illustrator.

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“A SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE”

CHAPTER I.

“I AM all yours, dear,” said Ruth, as I released her, “but, before I promise to marry you, I want to talk it over.”

I had just blundered out my carefully prepared avowal and prayer. When I began the avowal, I immediately perceived, what indeed I might have guessed, that Ruth knew all about it already, and so I jumped at once to the asking with a rather indefinite “Will you?” which, however, served the purpose well enough. My attitude was made rather awkward by the fact that Ruth, being quite prepared, had taken a defensive position in a high but narrow arm-chair on the opposite side of the little tea-table—so, as I could not very well continue kneeling by her side, she easily checked my caresses, and ordered me to return to distance and decorum. Her eyes, however, shone so kindly that I felt

assured that good conduct would receive its reward.

Before I set forth the conditions of her consent, I will say that those conditions were so extraordinary that even my worshipping soul would have hesitated before accepting them had not my own mind been strongly influenced by philosophical study of society and the married state in our own times.

I will also say something about Ruth and myself, so that the reader may be properly introduced to our two selves, and be able to understand that our eccentric experiment, suggested by Ruth, but adopted by me, was the result of no mournful experiences of life, but rather the outcome of serious reading supplemented by a varied and deep knowledge of society and the human heart.

Ruth was as pretty as the may in bloom. Indeed, I loved to call her May-Blossom. Her nature was wholesome and as warm as her heart, while her dear person was ruled by a wise little head. Her will was, I suspect, very strong, but she always managed to keep it veiled in diplomacy. It peeped out now and then, but was promptly called back, and so held me in the awe of the unknown.