

# **The Number 200: Departing Raynes Park 15:04 The Charge of the Heavy Brigade**

by [Paul Martin Freeman](#) (March 2023)



*Étude pour 'L'Autobus, Gino Severini, 1913*

*TfL: Transport for London, the local government body responsible for most of the capital's buses*

Half a load, half a load,  
Half a load onward,  
Powering to Mitcham  
Raced the 200.

Trouble with TfL;  
Traffic in Wimbledon hell;  
Road up at Ridgway as well;  
Northeast he thundered.

Get there by four, they had said;  
Bloody lights everywhere red!  
Wished he'd have stayed in bed;  
Knew he had blundered.

Half a load, half a load,  
Half a load onward,  
Powering to Mitcham  
Raced the 200.

Victim of credit card scam;  
Password protection a sham;  
Now in a godawful jam;  
Bank account plundered.

Spoke with ex-wife on the phone;  
Shouted he should have known;  
Never would leave him alone!  
Boyfriend a drunkard.

Half a load, half a load,  
Half a load onward,  
Powering to Mitcham  
Raced the 200.

Eldest lad secondary school;  
Shouldn't have been such a fool;  
Broke the most basic rule;  
Days there were numbered.

Hoped he'd do better in life;  
Violence everywhere rife;  
Why did he carry a knife?  
Everything squandered!

Half a load, half a load,  
Half a load onward,  
Powering to Mitcham  
Raced the 200.

Lorries to right of him;  
Cyclists to left of him;  
Prospects increasingly grim;  
More and more flustered.

Shouldn't have had any tea;  
Should have been ready by three;  
Problem in lavatory—  
Why me? he wondered.

## [Table of Contents](#)

Paul Freeman is an art dealer in London. The poem is from *The Bus Poems: A Tale of the Devil*, currently in preparation. His book, *A Chocolate Box Menagerie*, is published by New English Review Press and is available [here](#)

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)