

LOVE'S STORY

He was noble, she was lowly,
Two a dream all pure and holy;
She was like the lily, fair,
Handsome beyond compare,
Oh, that tale so old in story,
Life's first rapture, love's first glory!

When the early flowers were growing
Crawling wild and crimson blowing,
First they met. Ah! golden day!
Fast, so fast, it sped away,
Oh, that tale so old in story,
Life's first rapture, love's first glory.

Perish bud, and perish blossom,
Angry winds, of Autumn toss them;
Ere the last leaf quiver fall,
Love had lost its magic spell,
Oh, that tale so old in story,
Love's last rapture, life's last glory.

HAL'S ROMANCE.

The ball was over. Carriage after carriage rolled up to the magnificent portal, and each in its turn rattled off amid the clatter and laughter of its occupants.

Leaning on the arm of an elderly gentleman stood a beautiful girl, hooded and cloaked. The two were evidently awaiting their carriage, for the old gentleman muttered irritably: "Well, well, will our turn never come? I told Joseph particularly to be here on time."

The girl paid little attention to her companion. Her eyes were directed toward a finely built young fellow, who was talking earnestly to a friend.

"Will he not even bid me good night?" she thinks starting to her eyes.

At this moment the gentleman and his friend walked out into the street, arm in arm.

At this juncture their carriage drove up, and after administering to Joseph a reproof for his tardiness, the old gentleman handed his fair companion into the vehicle, followed, and slammed the door to. Joseph spitefully cut the off grey with the whip, and they were whirled rapidly away.

At the next street they passed the befondemented gentleman and his friends; but he did not see the white face, with its quivering lips, nor the tear-laden eyes that looked out upon him for a second as the carriage flew past. And yet, strange to say, the young men were at that very moment speaking of her. The younger was saying:

"Hal, why the deuce did you act so coldly—I might say, almost rudely—to Miss Thornevale to-night? Why, it was the talk of the whole room. Do you know that in the lobby she waited for you to say good night to her, when you dragged me off so precipitately?"

A sigh was Hal's rejoinder. "Can it be that you don't care for her? Can't you see, man, that she's head over ears in love with you?"

A pained expression passed for a moment over Hal's handsome face as he answered:

"Yes, alas, I have seen it."
"What!" exclaimed his companion. "You've known it, and still treated her like a brute? Halsted Moore, you have a heart of adamant!"

"Chester, would that I had—would that I had!"

There was something in his tone so indescribable that his friend looked at him for a moment in astonishment.

"I say, Hal, what's up with you to-night? I've never known you to be like this before."

No answer to this. The question was not pushed, and so they walked on in silence, until Hal's companion suddenly stopped.

"Well, here I am at home. Will you step in for a while?"

Hal evidently did not hear, for he returned no answer.

"Hal, you're something on your mind. Now don't deny it; your face shows it only too plainly. Mind I don't ask your confidence; but if I can be of any use in extricating you from any trouble, pecuniary or otherwise, command me, and if it's in my power it will be done."

Hal grasped his companion's outstretched hand, and said fervently:

"Thanks, old fellow, thanks! You have been a true friend to me Chester, and therefore why should you not have my confidence? Yes, I have something on my mind, something that is making me miserable, and life well nigh unbearable."

Chester led the way to his apartments, and soon both were ensconced in easy chairs, pipes in hand.

The friendship of these two men had originated at Florence, where both were studying painting. Their support depended entirely on their calling, both being special artists on a popular weekly. Halsted Moore lived with his mother in a neat little cottage in the suburbs. Little or nothing was known of the Moores or their past. On this subject Hal had never opened his heart to Chester, and the latter, with uncommon delicacy, forebore embarrassing his friend with questions.

After a few nervous puffs Hal plunged abruptly into his recital.

"Chester, you asked me a while ago whether or not I cared for Helen Thornevale. I do care for her; nay, I love her, I idolize her! By day, by night, she is before me; my thoughts, my dreams, are but of her! In view of this fact, you will wonder more than ever at my treatment of Miss

Thornevale. I will tell you the secret of my trouble."

He had overcome his agitation and now spoke with due deliberation.

"My parents' marriage was the result of an elopement, in consequence of which my paternal grandfather cursed his own son on his deathbed. He prayed that ruin might follow all his endeavors and those of his children. This death-scene affected my father deeply. He became morose and unloving. One night, six months later, a neighbor broke the terrible intelligence to my mother that her husband was dead, drowned while crossing the ice-covered river on a homeward journey. His body was never recovered. Among his effects was found a sealed letter which was to be delivered to me (I was then 2 months old) when I should attain my majority. My mother carefully preserved that letter unopened, and on my twenty-first birthday delivered it to me. It contained a sketch of what I have told you and concluded with the injunction never to marry, as the consequence must be unhappy."

That injunction I look upon as a message from the dead, and one that I must hold sacred. Now you know why I dare not declare my love to Helen Thornevale."

Chester has become deeply interested in his friend's recital. At the conclusion of the narrative he settled back in his chair and exclaimed:

"Well, well! Who would have thought such a romance mingled with the matter-of-fact Old Hal's life!"

Two months later saw Hal and Chester on their way to the north of Scotland, where they had been sent to sketch a picturesque series of ruins. They had letters of introduction to a part owner of the paper, Hugh McLeod, who cordially invited them to make his dwelling their headquarters. Only too happily did they accept this kind offer nor had either of them cause to regret the step, as we shall see.

Hugh McLeod, of Bonnie Park, was a gentleman of leisure, living in quiet, unostentatious style with an only daughter, Laura, a sweet unaffected girl of eighteen summers. The old gentleman was delighted with his visitors, offering them every attention, even accompanying them on their sketching tours.

They had been there about a month when one morning Mr. MacLeod proposed a little excursion to some old ruins that would make a capital subject for their pencils. The friends acquiesced, and Laura was forthwith instructed to order luncheon. They arrived at their destination, and Hal and Chester were soon busy transferring several picturesque views to their sketch-books, while the old gentleman stood by chatting. Laura in the meantime had wandered off through the woods in search of flowers.

"Now, boys," said MacLeod, presently, "when you've sketched your fill here, I'll take ye up to Vulture's Nest for a fine landscape view."

"Vulture's Nest!" What an ominous name!" ejaculated Hal.

"Yes, and it's had an ominous history, too. It deserves its name from the number of vultures that used to flock there. Many is the terrible experience the people hereabouts have had with the creatures. Why, it was only two years ago that Donald Stuart's daughter was attacked on Vulture's Nest, by two of the vile creatures, and before help could reach her she was so terribly torn about the face as to be disfigured for life. It's never safe to venture there unarmed, for even yet—"

A piercing shriek, followed by another and another, here rent the air, and the three men simultaneously started to their feet. Once more that terrible cry for help rang out.

"My God!" shouted MacLeod. "Laura's voice! The Vulture's Nest!"

With blanched faces the men hurriedly grasped their rifles and dashed off toward the spot whence the cries seemed to come. Suddenly, as they issued from the thick undergrowth, a terrible sight burst upon them. Far above, on an overhanging rock, her figure clearly outlined against a background of azure, anguish depicted on every line of her face, stood Laura McLeod, while above her circled an immense vulture, the uncanny neck outstretched and the small eyes sparkling with greedy expectation.

The men stood spellbound, and then, with a shout, Chester led the way up the incline, his eyes fixed on the girl he had learned to love so well. At that moment the monster ceased circling about its victim and prepared for attack. Just as it poised itself for the last fatal swoop, the sharp report of a rifle rang out on still air, and the creature fell dead at the feet of its intended victim.

The next moment a man emerged from the shubbery near by, with a rifle, still smoking, trailing after him. He ran to the now prostrate girl, and kneeling beside her, chafed her wrists and held to her lips a small flask. By this time Chester and his two companions, breathless and speechless, reached the spot where Laura lay.

"How can I thank you, sir? You have saved my darling's life," cried Mr. MacLeod, sobbing with joy.

Laura soon returned to consciousness, and Chester explained to her what had taken place. During the excitement that followed, her strange savior was entirely forgotten. When, however, they had regained calmness, they found that he had disappeared as silently and suddenly as he had come. They searched the surrounding ground for some trace of him, but without avail.

It is needless to state that no more sketching was indulged in that day.

One evening, a week after the adventure on Vulture's Nest, our friends were all congregated in the drawing-room at Bonnie Park, when a servant made his appearance with the announcement that a man had called and desired to see Mr. MacLeod. The old gentleman immediately rose and followed Benjamin out of the room. Soon his voice was heard in the hall extending a hearty welcome to his visitor, and the next moment he re-entered the room, arm in arm with none other than their elusive friend of the Vulture's Nest incident. He was a remarkable looking man, tall and erect in carriage, with a sad handsome face, golden brown beard, and deep blue, penetrating eyes.

Laura thanked him with her own sweet simplicity, and Chester and MacLeod were loud in praise of his coolness and bravery. Hal stood a little aloof from the group and concentrated his gaze on its central figure. For him the stranger had an explicable fascination.

After they had thanked him to their heart's content the stranger made known the object of his visit. He had found a locket on the scene of the encounter, and thinking one of party must have lost it, took the first opportunity to return the trinket—a small, oddly-shaped affair—on seeing which Hal exclaimed:

"My locket! You have made me your debtor, sir, for I prize this trinket very highly. It was a gift from my father to my mother before I was born."

The stranger started slightly and a deathlike pallor overspread his face.

"Would you have any objection to my seeing the interior of that locket?"

Hal looked surprised, but silently opened the trinket and presented it to the stranger. The latter gave a hasty glance at the picture within and started back, almost dropping the locket as he did so.

"I beg your pardon for my awkwardness. And is this a picture of your mother?"

"Yes, taken a short time after her marriage," answered Hal.

"Strange, strange!" muttered the other. "Can it be a mere coincidence? No, it is impossible! Loving sir, I know not who you are, but the picture you have shown me is that of my wife."

"Your wife?" gasped Hal.

"Yes; she is dead. She and an only child were killed in a railway accident."

Hal turned ghastly pale. It flashed through his mind that his mother and he had a narrow escape from death in a railway accident soon after his father's demise. A startling suspicion was dawning on his mind. In an unnatural voice he spoke:

"Have you undoubted proof that they were really killed in that accident?"

The stranger took from his pocket a time-stained newspaper. He pointed silently to a paragraph describing a fatal railway collision; and there in the list of dead Hal saw "Mrs. Julia Moore, widow, and her baby boy, Halstead Moore."

The paper dropped from the young man's lifeless hands.

"My God! man what is your name?" he cried.

The stranger's face was white with suppressed excitement as he answered:

"Archibald Moore."

"Father," cried Hal, "I am Halstead Moore, your son."

The next moment the father and son were locked in their first embrace. But little more remains to be told. A week later the husband and wife whom fate had so cruelly torn asunder were once again united and happy.

Some months after, in a quiet little Scotch church, a double wedding ceremony was performed. Laura MacLeod changed her name for that of Chester Lawrence, and Helen Thornevale became the happy wife of Halstead Moore.—Boston Traveller.

Good Company.

One evening a lady of New York, while on her way home at a late hour, without an escort, was approached by a lewd fellow, as the boat on which they rode neared its landing, who asked:

"Are you alone?"

"No, sir," was the reply, and without further interruption when the boat touched, she jumped off.

"I thought you were alone," said the fellow, stepping to her side again.

"I am not," replied the lady.

"Why, I don't see any one; who is with you?"

"God Almighty and the angel's, sir, I am never alone!"

This arrow pierced the villain's heart, and with these parting words, "You keep too good company for me, madam," he got out of sight, leaving the heroic lady to enjoy her good company.

Get Aboard.

The comments of an audience are often more amusing than any effort of those who are trying to interest them from the platform.

At a recent reading of Shakespeare the phrase "Go, get aboard," was used with emphasis, and one, at least, of the listeners had some difficulty in understanding that the words were to be interrupted: "Go on board the ship."

"A board!" repeated she, in audible tones. "Get a board? What does he mean to do with a board?"—Youth's Companion.

WILD ASTERS.

It was a very charming little shopping-bag, and Sadie had wanted such a one for a long time. When she discovered it on her dressing-table her birthday morning it pleased her more than all her other presents combined, though some were more valuable.

Later in the day she said to her mother:

"Now, mother, you know—and if you don't, I do—that the very first time I carry this bag I'll leave it somewhere as sure as fate."

"Yes; but Sadie, you're old enough to be more careful."

"Very true, mother, but then I'm not; and I never shall be, I very much fear."

"Perhaps if you lose this it will be a lesson you will remember."

"But I don't intend to lose it, even if I do leave it; for I mean to have my full address engraved on this silverplate, instead of simply initials."

She had it engraved that afternoon, and displaying it in triumph, said: "There, mother! see that! Now he who runs may read: 'Sadie M. Farnham, Pleasantville, Me.'"

"Yes, perhaps somebody will read it whom you won't wish to," responded the mother, sagely.

"O, I shall keep that side toward me when I carry it."

The last of September she went to visit her most intimate friend, Laura McQuisten, lately married, and living in Ohio. Laura's former home had been in Sadie's own village; and knowing Laura's fondness for the wild purple aster which bordered all their road-sides, nestling beside the golden-rod, she gathered a large bunch of them to carry to her friend, with but one gorgeous spray of golden-rod in their midst.

Her brother Harry found a pleasant seat for her in the car and, handing her the bag and flowers, he said:

"There! these are almost equal to a big box, little box, hand-box and bundle."

"Now, Harry! you know father says that I'm a finished traveler. I never burden myself or any one else with luggage."

"You'll get sick enough of those flowers before you get there; they'll be withered, anyway."

"No, they won't for I shall put fresh water on the cotton every little while."

"Here are your tickets. Take care of yourself, and don't get into any scrapes. Good-bye, little sis; remember me to Laura."

The car was empty, save for a few passengers behind Sadie, whose faces she could not see. She loved dearly to study faces, herself unobserved, and began to wish the car would fill up. It did with a rush at the next station, every seat soon being full. Just as she was wondering who would occupy the seat with her, a rather elderly lady, with a slightly troubled expression, entered the car, and looked anxiously up and down the rows of seats. She approached Sadie somewhat timidly, but Sadie lifted the flowers from the seat beside her, and said brightly: "You can sit here if you like, madam." The lady—that she was a lady was written all over her, though evidently unused to traveling alone—thanked her with a very relieved face, and sat down beside her. The lady's eyes fell at once on the flowers and lingered there. Sadie, who was watching her new traveling companion, saw from the half-sad, half-tender smile which curved her lips, and the abstracted dreamy look on her face, that she was far away from her present surroundings, and busy with memories which the asters and golden-rod had stirred. As she looked up with a half sigh, Sadie said: "You love flowers?"

"O, very much! Wild ones particularly. I used to gather such as those when I was a little girl. I used to trim my sun-hat with them, and up by the old school-house on the hill my girlhood's friend and I had a plot of them walled around with stones."

"I haven't seen them in ages before, my home having been in the far West."

"I am taking these to a friend whose favorite flowers they used to be; but you must please accept half of them."

The lady thanked her but declined the gift saying she could not rob her of them.

"You will not rob her, for I can send her a box full," separating the flowers as she spoke.

The lady's lip quivered, and her eyes grew moist, as she gracefully accepted them. She told Sadie that she was on her way back to her home in the West, having made a trip to her home in the East to see her son, who had been quite ill, but now convalescent. Her immediate presence was required at home, and she was obliged to return alone, the friend with whom she had come not returning for some weeks. "I am so unused to traveling alone that I am quite timid," she said, with a deprecating look and smile.

Sadie did all in her power to make her comfortable as far as her ways lay together, and enjoyed her companionship, since she was very intelligent and cultured, as further conversation revealed. When they reached K— they parted with real regret; Sadie wishing the lady, whose names she did not know, a safe and pleasant journey.

Laura was delighted with the flowers, which had kept wonderfully fresh, more than delighted to see her friend,

and in the happy, busy days which followed all remembrances of the lady with whom she shared the flowers gradually faded from Sadie's mind.

One day there came a letter from home in Harry's handwriting, which contained the following paragraph:

"The other day the expressman brought a box addressed to you. Mother was dying with curiosity to know what was in it. Of course, I had none, being a man, but at her solicitation I opened the box. It contained a beautiful panel, painted in oils, of wild asters, with a spray of golden-rod. Underneath lay a card, on one side of which was inscribed: 'George L. Cranston, Boston, Mass.' On the other: 'Will Miss Farnham please accept as a slight token of gratitude for kindness shown my mother while traveling.'"

"I wrote to Charles Livingston, inquiring in a casual way if he knew him. When he replied, he spoke very enthusiastically of him, and asked where I had met him. So father wrote to young C., acknowledging receipt of box, with thanks for contents."

"Now, I should like to know, although, as you know, I've no curiosity, what you've been up to? Wasn't my last charge to you a solemn warning not to get into scrapes?"

Laura said it was most romantic; quite like a story; and when Sadie left for home declared she knew her departure was hastened by a desire to see that panel.

Sadie had no adventure during the homeward journey, having a seat to herself most of the way. The remainder of it was occupied by an old gentleman, who took snuff and had catarrh, saying "Um! um!" in the most emphatic manner after each application of his handkerchief.

The panel was almost the first thing shown Sadie on her arrival.

"And how did you happen to give your name and address to an entire stranger?" chorused the family.

"Why, I didn't."

"How did she know it, then?"

Just then Harry's eyes happened to fall on the pretty bag with a silver plate, in a voice brimming with mischief he read: "Miss Sadie M. Farnham, Pleasantville, Me.," and added: "I suppose you labeled yourself with that all the way, didn't you, Sadie, like a package sent by express?"

"The idea! I kept the plate out of sight all the way; but I left it on the seat when I went out to get some lunch."

"It's wonderful to me," said Harry. "That you didn't leave it somewhere altogether, that being your usual custom."

Autumn passed, and early winter. With the holidays came another package to Sadie in care of her father. The box, when opened, was found to contain a beautiful lacopin, the design a spray of asters, from Mrs. Cranston. Later came a very charming letter from the lady, begging Sadie's acceptance of the gift.

All the young readers are saying: "Why doesn't she hurry up and tell when Mr. Cranston came to see Sadie, made love and was accepted?"

My dear girls, I leave you to imagine that part, and I will simply tell you that Mr. C. came up with Charlie Livingston in the winter, and when the asters bloomed again there was a quiet wedding, in which Sadie Farnham and George Cranston were central figures.

And the bride wore asters instead of orange blossoms—how odd?—Anna C. Andrews, in Woman's Magazine.

Bogus Eggs.

Artificial eggs have been sold in Pittsburg and offered to the public instead of real ones. A woman walked into the office of the board of health on 7th street with a basket containing four dozen eggs.

"All these eggs have been manufactured and not a single one has been laid by a hen!" the woman exclaimed to one of the health officers. "What am I to do about the matter?" she then asked.

The gentleman took up one of the eggs, looked at it, and gazed at the woman in astonishment, saying:

"What is wrong with the eggs? They look all right, and I don't see any difference between them and any other eggs. You mean to say that they are manufactured? They may be rotten, but I don't think that this egg was made by the ingenuity of any human mind."

"Well, then, you are just a little mistaken, that is all," said the woman, "and I will prove it to you. Look here, now, at this egg."

She took one of them from the basket and broke it and when the officers observed the yolk their faces bore the evidence of unmistakable wonder.

In shape the yolk was similar to that of a real egg, but its color differed somewhat from that article, being darker and of a browner tint than the ordinary egg. Besides that, however, the yolk of the false egg consists of a more jelly-like substance.

Its composition appeared to consist of gelatine, syrup, and starch. The white of this manufactured article looked exactly like the white of the real egg. It had the same transparent appearance, and the imitation seemed to be perfect.

But the most puzzling thing is the shell. There is no difference noticeable to the eye at all, and it is not wondered that any one should buy such an egg as real hen fruit.

The entire article, outside of the yolk, is a perfect counterpart of anything we see in the real egg. The woman bought them in the market at 30 cents a dozen.

Dreamed he was a Horse.

There are dreams and there are dreams—dreams which are as vague as thin air and dreams which make and leave an impression on the mind which days cannot eradicate; dreams which make us laugh and dreams which make us cry; dreams which are foolish and simple; dreams which are profound and mysterious; but it was left for good old Parson Squills of Florida to dream that he was a horse—one of your masculine, noisy, neighing, kicking kind.

The good old parson had many appointments far and wide apart and some days he rode as much as fourteen hours to reach the more remote ones from his home. One night about dark he rode up to a good brother's house to spend the night. The brother had been killing hogs, and at supper the table was laden with spare-ribs, sausage, hog's-head cheese, etc. The parson had missed his dinner and had a keen appetite, and he could not resist the tempting, steaming bites of choice meats before him, and, unmindful of dyspepsia or what not, he ate very heartily.

At a reasonable hour he was shown to his room, and he retired for the night. The good farmer brother was also wearied from his day's labor, and he also retired early.

About midnight, says the Valdosta (Ga.) Times, the farmer was aroused from a peaceful slumber by a considerable noise somewhere about the premises. He lifted his head from the pillow, and he plainly heard a horse neighing, whickering, and kicking violently against the stable door, and assuming at once that the visitor's horse had gotten out of the stable, and was creating a riot among his own stock, he bounced out of bed, hurriedly dressed and stepped out of his bedroom door into the hall. Then his attention was drawn to the parson's room across the hall, where he heard the horse squealing and neighing, and kicking—bam—bam—bam! and puzzled beyond measure, he tore open the door he saw the outlines of the good man standing erect in the middle of the floor, and he heard him panting for breath, which was followed by a long-draw sigh of relief. "Strike—a match—my good brother," said the parson, between breaths, and then he ejaculated: "Pshaw! Good sakes alive, I must be a fool!" The brother struck a light and he found the bedstead scattered and broken up. The footbar was shattered and the mass of bedstead and bedding had come down upon the floor in a heap. "Pshaw!" ejaculated the parson again. "I must be a fool—I dreamed I was a horse and I thought I was kicking at the barn door. Fetch the light this way, brother. I don't believe there is any skin left on my heels!"

The bedstead was past further service and the brother had to spread the parson's bed on the floor.

Added to the Weed.

A Waterbury man drove into Ansonia, Conn., a few days ago with an aged and apparently gentle horse. On his return, in going up Foundry hill the horse balked. Everything was done that a numerous helpful crowd of bystanders suggested, from blowing in his nose to building a fire under him, but the beast would not move.

At this point an Ansonian happened along, and, looking at the horse, he recognized it as one he had known many years ago and he volunteered to start him without difficulty. Telling the Waterbury man to get into the carriage, he borrowed a big chew of fine-cut tobacco from one of the crowd, stepped up to the horse, and inserted it between his teeth. The horse actually seemed to grow younger. He chewed once or twice, gave a slight whinny, and started off, and no further trouble was experienced on the homeward trip. The man said the horse learned to chew tobacco when a colt by nosing a paper out of his owner's pocket, and the habit clung to him.

Up in Waterbury, says the New York Sun's correspondent, a father and son each smokes a pipe. The father uses one kind of tobacco, while the son uses another. One morning recently the father said to his son: "John if you have got so you like the Turkish brand why don't you buy it?" The son replied: "Well, father, I was just thinking that if you are so well pleased with the Virginia mixture you should use it altogether instead of your own."

The father and son thereupon came to an understanding. Each denied using the other's tobacco, and its mysterious disappearance from their respective jars was the cause of much suspicion. Sunday afternoon the father lay on a lounge in the sitting-room, and, by chance, glanced through an open door just in time to see the family cat jump on the table where the tobacco-jars were kept.

It exceedingly surprised him to see the cat put her paw first into one jar and then the other and paw out a big wad of tobacco, which she eagerly devoured. This she did for perhaps fifteen minutes, and then jumping on to the floor proceeded to the back of the store and lay down calmly.

Later in the day the same performance was gone through with, and the entire family saw it, though they could scarcely believe it. The cat has been stolen several times, but has always come back home again in a famished condition, but began to fatten up just as the tobacco began to disappear.