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BY

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LOVE SONG.

BY W. L. BHOEMAKEL.

"Do I still love you?" Ask the bee
If he still loves the flower;
And of the flower demand if she
Loves sunshine and the shower;
And ask the bird if still he loves
The joy that Summer brings—
Soft airs, blue skies, and leafy groves,
That listen while he sings,
If bee and flower and bird say "Nay,"
Then my love's false and fled away.

"Why do I love you?" Ask the sea
Why it adores the moon;
And ask the queenly rose why she
Dotes on the mouth of June;
And ask the sunflower why she turns
Her bosom to the sun,
And all the dark night fondly yearns
For her beloved one.
If sunflower, rose and sea reply,
"We do not know," no more know I.

Ah, who the secret source can tell
Of love that long endures?
The charm is undecipherable,
That draws my soul to yours,
I only know that still you love,
Is constant all in you—
As constant as the stars above,
And pure as the morning dew,
Enough, though hid the cause may be.

A Mistake Somewhere

FRED JONES, my Fred Jones, was and is, one of the finest fellows in existence. Nearly six feet in height, with a good form which he has well in hand, his appearance is not only imposing, but prepossessing.

But Fred's good looks were not the best of him. He had a good heart and brain, was one of the best engineers in town, and couldn't be mean nor hard if he should try.

One summer he took a vacation, the first himself, in six years. He had made his own way in the world, and had been too busy working to have time for recreation. But he was now getting along so well that he treated

After looking about a little he decided upon visiting a pretty village among the hills, where he would find trout-fishing, a little general gaming, and country fare. Besides, he would be among strangers; and he had lived such a busy life that he really longed to be quiet to himself awhile, free to do and go without reference to any one else.

So one July afternoon he left his step from the stage-coach, on the platform of the Rockland House, in Seldon. There were heads in all the windows looking out as he and his fellow-passengers alighted, a small group of loungers at one end of the long piazza, and mine host, bowing and smiling, on the steps, and looking as delighted as if his long-absent brothers and sisters had returned to his arms, and were at that moment approaching him from the steps of the Leighton and Seldon accommodation.

Fred was delighted with the looks of everything. The lovely view of hills, with a glistening thread of river on one side, and a smooth-gleaming pond on the other, the pretty village street with gardens about every house, the wide cool piazza of the hotel, the clean look of everything, and the smiling face of the landlord.

Never had he been so waited on, not even when he was mistaken for a German count, at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. The landlord escorted him to the book to enter his name, remarking that he would not put him to the trouble of writing it, but he liked to have his visitors' autographs; he placed three different rooms at his choice, he offered him refreshments immediately, though the passengers were always supposed to dine at Leighton, fifteen miles away; he bowed and smiled with painful profuseness, he even treated Fred's trunk with distinguished consideration.

"Confound it!" thought Fred. "I can't stand this. If he doesn't stop his compliments by to-morrow, I'll bolt. I can't take time and strength to return all these bows."

The room he selected was the very best in the house, a corner front that had a fine view west and north. It struck Fred as a little odd that this room should not have been taken before, for there was company at the house, and the price was anything

but exorbitant. The best place at the table seemed also to be vacant for his benefit, and if there was a particularly choice dish it was always near his plate.

"Mighty comfortable," said Fred, to himself; "but I wish folks wouldn't stare at me so, and be so outrageously polite. I'd rather be left alone."

He soon noticed, however, that there was one person who was a shining exception to the general complacency with which the household regarded him, and that one was the very one whose attention he would have preferred. Just opposite him sat a gumpy old lady who ordered everybody about, but who was very civil to him, and beside her was a girl who would be noticed anywhere. See her in rags, and you would still call her a lady. She was not especially handsome, though her form was exquisite, but she was beautiful with that beauty which consists in grace, spirit, refinement and sweetness. This girl sat and ate her meals without once looking at him, though she talked pleasantly to others. She seemed, indeed, to purposely avoid noticing him, and showed a faint coldness, almost amounting to haughtiness, when her aunt referred to him. This couple, Mrs. Conway and Miss Richmond, interested him more than any one else; were, in fact, the only ones who did interest him.

The first evening, after supper, Fred escaped from his abode, and took a long walk about the town, stood beside the river, the pond, went up a hill, and took a look at all the principal buildings. The latter were nearly all what village architecture is likely to be when it tries to be grand—cheaply pretensions. But there was one exception. In a beautiful and commanding position, at the intersection of the two principal streets of the town, was a large estate with a square brick house on it, embedded in gardens and trees, one of the most delightful places in the world. There was an air of comfortable wealth about it that was very pleasant, and the taste of the proprietor was evidently good. Fred liked the looks of it so well that he stopped a boy who was passing by, as he leaned and looked over the fence into the gardens, and asked whose the place was.

"Squire Severns's," the boy said, evidently glad to be questioned. "He's the richest man in town."

Fred saw that he had only to ask in order to get a full history of the Severns family, root and branch. He had no notion, however, of satisfying any person's glibly propensity, and no curiosity to know who Mr. Severns's grandmother was, or what they had for dinner. So he left the boy with his mouth open, and the story already to burst forth from his throat, and went back to the hotel.

It was nine o'clock, and nearly all the family were out on the veranda or the green, getting all the air and coolness they could. He avoided them, and went into the parlor which the ladies and gentlemen shared together, the gentlemen going to the barroom when indisposed for the society of ladies. The room, instead of being vacant, as he had hoped, had a group at one of the front windows. Mrs. Conway and Miss Richmond sat each in an armchair, and between them stood the landlord, and a strange gentleman, rather a consequential person.

Fred would have turned upon his heel and gone up to his own room, if Miss Richmond had not been there; but he wanted to see her, perhaps to speak to her. So he went in, and, bowing slightly as they all glanced round, went to another window, and stood looking out. The landlord came to him immediately. "Squire Severns would be happy to be introduced to you, Mr. Jones," he announced, in a stage whisper. "Will you come over to him and the ladies?"

"What in thunder does Squire Severns know about me?" he thought, but said nothing; only followed the landlord to the other window, and underwent an introduction.

The Squire received him like a son, shook his hand warmly, hoped he liked the town, was sure he was comfortable at the Seldon house, ahem!—with a bow to the landlord—in such excellent company—bowing to the ladies, the elder of whom nodded in return, and the younger turned her head disdainfully away, and looked out of the window.

He hoped that Mr. Jones would stay long enough in Seldon to explore all its beauties, and to facilitate that end he offered any information and assistance in his power to give.

Fred bowed in speechless astonishment, wondering if the millennium had come, or if this was one of the places which had never heard of sin and sorrow, or if he

were really such a tremendous attractive and delightful fellow that people couldn't resist him. Being no fool, and quite up to the tricks of the world, he also wondered if all these people had a little land which they wanted surveyed for nothing.

"I should be happy to have you come up and see my place, Mr. Jones," the squire continued. "It will not seem imposing to you, who are accustomed to metropolitan residences, but you may find it pleasant. It is at least, homelike, and we shall be most happy to see you there. I speak for my wife and daughters, as well as for myself."

The young man's acknowledgements of this generous hospitality were somewhat interrupted by Miss Richmond, who rose with an air bordering on impatience, stepped on to the piazza through the long window, and walked off down the garden path. Fred waited, and made himself agreeable to the company, hoping that she would come back, but she did not. After a while he saw her come in through the hall, and go up stairs.

After that the conversation lost interest for him, and he got rid of his company with none too much ceremony, and went up to his room. He had a vague idea that he had made countless engagements with the squire, that he was to drive, dine and walk with him, that gardens, orchards and conservatories were at his disposal; but all that slipped out of his mind when he heard a soft voice singing lowly across the passage. Holding his breath he listened to the dreamy melody, and even set his door an inch ajar to hear the better. Presently the old lady came up and went into Miss Richmond's room, leaving the door open.

"It is so hot!" she panted. "We must have the draft. Bring a chair, Clara, and put it so the door won't fly open. We can leave it so all night, in this patriarchal place." "But aunt," the young lady replied, "that Mr. Jones's room is opposite."

The tone of disdain in which "that Mr. Jones" was mentioned made Fred's blood boil. He got up with a firm step, and banged the door to, and then was sorry for it the next minute. "It will just show that I overheard a conversation that was not intended for me," he thought.

He sat awhile considering, trying not to feel mortified at the tone taken by Miss Richmond, and wondering at himself for caring about it. Then he started up with a laugh and prepared to go to bed. "I will go about my business, just as I meant to when I came," he muttered. "And if people want to bother me, they can. I will pay no attention to either."

Then, with a good conscience and a firm resolve, he went to sleep, and never woke till the bell rang in the morning.

For a week Fred lived in clover. He was at Squire Severns's every day. He dined there, took tea there, spent the evening there, went to ride with the daughters—three gay, flirting girls, who made eyes at him outrageously; and was patted on the shoulder by papa, and on the arm by mamma. If he wanted to visit some particular spot in the neighborhood, made a picnic there. If he preferred to lounge, some one of them read or played to him. There were moonlight rambles, in which he was nearly always allowed an excellent opportunity to talk sentiment to one or other of the young ladies. He found himself rather bored, indeed, and had to defend his heart and hand with great caution. Still it was pleasant. The only blot on his enjoyment was the constant presence and as constant coldness of Miss Richmond. She was an old friend of the Severns, and spent a great deal of time with them.

All this time Fred noticed several things that seemed to him rather odd in the conversation of the people he met. If he mentioned a word about his business, they stared as if they didn't know what he meant, and they frequently alluded to his visiting that humble locality, as if it were wonderful that he could content himself there, when so many gayer attractions wooed him elsewhere. He carefully held his tongue after the first intimation of these mysteries, and waited to see what would happen.

"It seems to me so odd that you have never been to Europe, Mr. Jones," Miss Severns said. "I should have supposed you had been there certainly once, perhaps more." And she gazed at him with an admiring smile, as if she thought him quite worthy of having a steamer always at his disposal for going to any part of the world he might fancy to see.

"What on earth should make her wonder at it?" he thought; but he only said, carelessly, "I mean to become familiar with my own country first."

"Clara Richmond has been there twice," she added, and though her manner was as sweet as ever, he saw a keen look in her bright eyes.

In spite of himself he colored. Did she suspect that he was interested in that young lady?

"She is then wealthy?" he asked, with an effectation of carelessness. He had often thought he would like to know.

The young lady dropped her eyes, and her face was not quite so sunny. "Mrs. Conway is rich," she replied, dryly. "I believe Clara has only a few hundreds a year of her own. But she acts and dresses quite like an heiress, don't you think so?"

"I really do not know," Fred said; and, indeed, he could not recollect a single garment he had seen Miss Richmond wear.

"She does," Miss Severns went on. "She is fond of dress, and of wealth. I don't blame her, I'm sure. But she will have to marry money."

This last remark was accompanied by a look that set Fred's heart on fire. "A young lady who would marry for money is unworthy the name of woman!" he exclaimed indignantly.

He expected to see Miss Severns angry. Instead of that, she seemed delighted. All her smiles and sunshine returned. But he was by no means in a smiling mood. There was no hiding from himself that in one short week he had fallen desperately in love with a girl who disdained him, and whose worldly advantages placed her beyond his reach, even if she did not. He was angry and astonished at himself. He was frightened too. Well he knew the strength of his own feelings, and how such a passion was likely to possess him. He tried to think that he would go away directly, but the thought of leaving her gave his heart a wrench which made him almost faint. His life had been too busy for love, but now his time had come, and the slavery was more utter, in that it had been postponed.

They were on a picnic to the hills, and it was the view which had brought up the talk about matrimony in general, and lastly, European scenery in particular. Fred and Miss Annie were by themselves, in a little dell, from which the land rose abruptly, braced with rocks, and almost shut out the light. Some one called Miss Severns. She glanced at Fred. "I will stay here," he said rather coldly; so she went, not over-pleased.

He stood and looked absently at a dancing little brook that flowed past his feet, and as he stood a light step came near. He knew Miss Richmond's step, would have known it from a thousand. Some sharp tingle of anger mingled with his pain. Why should she have met his courtesies with coldness, refusing him even the ordinary notice that any indifferent acquaintance has a claim on.

The step came nearer, but he would not look up. How often had she turned away rather than salute him, and affected unconsciousness of his presence while he was waiting for some acknowledgement of it! She should not think that he was hungrily waiting now for a glance.

An abrupt pause showed that she perceived him, then she went on, evidently turning out of her path for the sake of avoiding him. He raised his eyes quickly and, looked after her, longing to follow. Her dress gleamed whitely in the forest shadows, and the long gauze scarf on her hat floated back, as if beckoning him. She stopped and bent to gather a flower, and rising again glanced back at him. Was it his fancy, or did her fair cheek color suddenly? A lady does not like to be caught looking back at a gentleman, and in the case the gentleman was vexed at being himself caught. "She wants to make sure that I do not follow," he thought, putting the worst construction on her look.

Perhaps, indeed, the girl was a little surprised at his not noticing her, and giving her that opportunity of slighting him which she had not failed invariably to take advantage of. At any rate, she revenged herself by not seeing him all the way home though they rode in the same carriage.

"You're going home to tea with us, Mr. Jones?" the Misses Severns said, in chorus. No, he was not going. He had letters to write, he had something to do, he had a score of excuses.

"It is too bad!" exclaimed Annie tossing her flaxen chignon. "And Clara has refused too. Is it a plot between you?"

Miss Richmond opened her blue eyes haughtily, and in scathing her friend, gave Fred also a short flash, as if he were to blame. "It is so little of a plot, Annie," she said, "that I may change my mind. I will go to tea with you, if you will let me now."

It was a little too much. Fred had always, taken her hits in embarrassed humility. He now lifted his head and gave her a look as cold and haughty as her own.

"My refusal has really nothing to do with any other person, Miss Anne," he said. "I was not thinking of any one else. I am going away from Seldon in a few days, and I must write to let them know at home."

Fred went to his hotel in a white heat, and entered the door so abruptly that he nearly knocked down a young man who was just coming out. Both drew back, Fred apologized, and the other rubbed his head.

"Confound it!" said the stranger. "I do not know whether I'll excuse you or not. A man ought not to go like a locomotive unless he has a track all to himself. My forehead is black and blue, I know it is."

Something in this suited Fred's mood. If the man had bowed and smiled it would have irritated him; but this whimsical crossness, which seemed more like a boy than a man, made him smile.

"I will rub your head with vinegar," he said, gravely. "And I will promise not to run against you again. What more can I do to prove my regret?"

The stranger stopped rubbing and stared at him. "Who are you?" he asked, with a frank curiosity, which took the abruptness from the question.

"Fred Jones, at your service," responded Fred, bowing lowly.

"Why, by George! I'm Fred Jones!" exclaimed the other, excitedly. "What's the meaning of it? You don't look enough like me to be my double."

"There must be two of us," said Fred, beginning to see that a mistake had been made. "I have evidently been the proprietor of the name longer than you have, and shall not give it up. But I suspect that I have been unconsciously appropriating some attentions which belonged to you."

"What do you mean?" demanded No. 2. "Come into the parlor and explain. I don't know a soul here. Come?"

Fred went into the parlor, and told the history of his week in Seldon, leaving out, however, all mention of Clara Richmond. He liked his new acquaintance immensely.

"Couldn't have been for me, for I don't know a soul!" No. 2 protested, when the story was told. They must be tremendously good-natured people. But, now, how are we going to do about the name? One of us must leave town, or else we must be numbered."

The new-comer was several years younger than Fred, was dashing, wilful, like a petted child, and had evidently a very good opinion of him. He was also rich. That could be seen at a glance. The daintiness of person and dress did not belong to one who labored, the whole air was that of a man whose wishes had never been thwarted. Fred saw the glitter of a large diamond in the top of his watch-key, and noticed that his handkerchief was of woful fineness.

"He is the Fred, Jones?" he concluded, in his own mind. "And I am in the wrong box. But that doesn't make any difference about Clara Richmond."

The thought of her sent him up stairs, where he sat smoking disconsolately at his window, when she came home, with Squire Severns acting gallantly as escort.

They passed under Fred's window in reaching the door, and he distinctly heard the squire's voice. "A most extraordinary thing, my dear Miss Richmond. The young man came this afternoon, while you were out, and this other must be an impostor."

"I don't think that likely," responded Miss Richmond's clear voice. "It is simply a mistake. Mr. Jones has made no pretences whatever. I am not aware that he has claimed to be a rich man. The trouble is that you all took for granted that he was. There are, doubtless, two Mr. Fred Joneses."

"There's one too many in this town," was the mental comment with which the listener tossed his cigar out of the window. The next morning Fred went down to breakfast rather late, and found his namesake seated in his place at the head of the table, chatting in the most charming manner with Mrs. Conway, who nodded her head at him, and laughed at his jokes, and was too busy for some time to see Mr. Jones No. 1.

"I am very happy to yield you my seat, sir!" said Fred stiffly.

"Am I in your seat?" asked the other. "Well, I didn't know. The landlord put me here, and pushed my chair in, like a waiter. You don't want me to get up now, do you?"

It was impossible to be angry with such a