

# The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER,  
Editor and Proprietor.

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## The Bloomfield Times.

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FRANK MORTIMER.  
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IN ADVANCE.

### A Woman's Answer to her Lover.

I am fair and young but the rose will fade  
From my soft young cheek one day—  
Will you love me then, 'mid the falling leaves,  
As you did 'mid the blossoms of May?

Is your heart an ocean so strong and deep  
I may launch my all on its tide?  
A loving woman finds heaven or hell  
On the day she becomes a bride.

I require all things that are grand and true,  
All things that a man should be;  
If you give this all, I would stake my life  
To be all you demand of me.

If you cannot be this—a laundress and cook  
You can hire; and a little to pay;  
But a woman's heart and a woman's life  
Are not to be won in that way.

### HUSKISSON'S LOVE AFFAIR.

WHEN IT came at last to asking Samuel Rowley's consent to pay my addresses to his ward, I knew it was all over with me. I felt that it was all over directly. I was down into the library where Samuel Rowley sat before the fire, toasting his gouty feet, and reading his *Times* newspaper. I felt it was so completely all over with me that I would very gladly have backed myself out of the room without entering into any particulars as to the object of my visit. I would have cheerfully informed him that I was an agent for Boshiter's hair-restorer, and had called with a sample, which might be returned if not approved after one day's rubbing. But he knew me, and I knew him. He understood perfectly well why I had solicited the honor of an interview with him at 12 o'clock a. m.; he was a sharp old gentleman who had his eyes upon me for some time, and was not to be imposed upon.

"He said, 'Take a seat, Mr. —, I forget your name,' and then he fumbled with his glasses and referred to my polite epistle, which lay on the table near him. I took a seat and nursed my hat. I perspired a little. I had a tremulous motion of my knees come on, which made me look ridiculous. I waited for him to begin, but he did not. I began myself, after one or two secret encounters in my throat, with a something which felt very much like a cork out of a soda-water bottle.

"You are not aware—that is, you cannot but be aware—that I have long regarded your ward Clara with— Did you speak, sir?"

"No, sir. I did not speak."  
He had given an awful cough of a double-knock character, that was all. He kept his glasses on his nose, and focussed me, and the operation was unpleasant. He was not pleasant in his reception of my statement either; he was decidedly unpleasant, not to say desperately disagreeable. But then he was a cross, ill-grained old fellow; everybody knew it in Wolverston, and I have no particular reason to disguise it here.

I recommenced my statement; I poured forth the best feelings of my heart, and with an eloquence that might have melted adamant, I confessed to him that Clara was my one ambition. As I have said already I knew that it was all over with me, but I was poetic even in the midst of my despairing consciousness.

Mr. Rowley put aside his newspaper, drew his chair an inch or two closer to me, put his great hands—rather disposed to be gouty, like his feet—upon his knees, and surveyed me from head to foot contemptuously.

"May I ask your age, young man?" he said.

"Seventeen."

"And how did you first become acquainted with my Clara, who is a year your junior, the husny?"

"Well, Mr. Rowley, it has been a long attachment; my finishing school at Beesborough was situated opposite her finishing

school, and we saw each other at church; and I think—"

"I think that you both ought to be horse-whipped!" he said, fiercely interrupting me; "and as for my consent to Clara's engagement to a boy like you—I will even go so far as to say a whipper-snapper like you—"

"A whipper-snapper, sir?"  
"I repeat it, a whipper-snapper!" cried old Rowley, becoming very red and apoplectic in appearance. "I decline to listen to your preposterous proposal for one instant. Clara is only sixteen, and does not know her own mind—she is a mere child."

"But we shall both grow older, Mr. Rowley."

"Ah, and more sensible, I hope. Good morning."

"Good morning, sir."

I did not wait to tell him of my expectations from my grandmother, or to reason with him on his want of justice and consideration. I went away crest-fallen and heart-broken. I dashed from the library in despair, and brought my forehead against that of my beloved's with a concussion that was nearly the means of stretching our senseless forms outside the tyrant's den, the victims of his cruel obduracy. Clara, naturally interested in the result of my interview with her guardian had forced her pure but anxious soul to listen at the library key-hole. I had retired in haste and floored her.

"Oh, my gracious!" she sobbed forth; "I did not know you were coming out like that! Oh, my head! Oh, how dreadful! Oh, Alphonse, we must part forever!"

She rested her head on my shoulder and shed many tears. I kissed away her tears; I patted her head fondly, keeping clear of the bump which I had raised there. I could scarcely see her golden hair for tears myself—the water had risen into my eyes immediately we had met each other. I sought to calm her emotion. I bade her be firm, and I recommended vinegar and brown paper for her damaged brow. I said that I should try them myself when I got home. I told her that I would rather die than relinquish her; she said the same thing in a burst of uncontrollable emotion; we renewed our vows of eternal fidelity, and tore ourselves from each other's arms, crushed in spirit, but strong yet to resist unjust oppression.

I told all my troubles to Jack Edwards, my bosom friend and adviser. Jack and I had been school-fellows together; we were going into the medical profession together presently; my father had resolved that I should walk the hospitals instead of the rosy path of love. Jack heard my story, and said that he would not have stood half of old Rowley's nonsense; but what he would have done under the circumstances he did not impart to me at the time, and I forgot to ask him afterward.

Clara and I met clandestinely. We were lovers from our youth; the flinty heart of a guardian who had outlived mortal passion was not to stand between our fresh young souls.

I met Clara in the village; I scaled the park fence and met her in the green wood; and Jack, good fellow, kept watch on the door of the hall, and old Rowley's library windows, with a telescope, lest we should be surprised at any moment. Clara and I passed much of our time talking of what we would do when she came into her property at twenty-one, and my grandmother favored me by departing from this earthly sphere; but it was a sharp winter, and our teeth chattered over our prospects. Clara and I used to arrange our meetings in this wise; Clara had a confidant in the game-keeper, Peter Stokes, an invaluable man, with a weakness for tobacco, and with a heart all charity toward his fellow-creatures. Peter was always getting up subscriptions for his fellow-creatures in the village; and what with his subscriptions and his tobacco, —I kept him entirely in tobacco,—my pocket-money knew but little rest. Still, he had a good heart, and was kind to us. He took charge of our correspondence, which was carried on by a circumlocutory but sure process. Clara gave it to her maid Selina, another confidant,—who alas! proved herself a perfidious snake,—and Selina intrusted it to Peter, who took it to a gauged monarch of the forest—an oak tree, in fact,—and concealed it from all human gaze in a small hollow cavity some ten feet from the ground, where, at a late hour I found it, and deposited my answer to be conveyed by the same process, in to my dearest Clara's hands.

Peter was a lank old man, and very wiry; he could climb a tree like a squirrel, and I was agile myself. The whole conception

was romantic, if you will, but grand! I thought so. The idea was from Millais' picture, which we both carefully studied; and if Peter had not generally deposited his small notes to myself, at the same time asking my "kind considerations as a gentleman born with a warm heart, to an afflicting case in the parish," the romantic would have been pure and unalloyed.

Clara defied the obdurate guardian for two months; it was February when Selina Muggins betrayed us. I was advancing in an innocent and unsuspecting manner to the secret postoffice in the wood, half a mile from Mr. Rowley's house, when I became conscious of the whole perfidy. I was close upon the tree,—that brave old oak which had held so many secrets,—when voices in another direction filled my soul.

They were the voices of Samuel Rowley, Esq., J. P., and Peter Stokes, my Mercury. I sank down in the long grass,—there was a rapid thaw that morning, and the damp struck me at once,—I and trembled for my love. I was not an instant too soon; their footsteps were upon me, also; he shaved my features by a hair's breadth, and passed on. The harsh tones of his voice rang in my ears an instant afterward.

"You don't consider yourself an abominable scamp, I suppose," Mr. Rowley said, "an unprincipled old vagabond, to act as a go-between to a silly school girl and that idiot of a boy? You never thought of the harm of encouraging this, did you?"

"I'm werry sorry, sir," whimpered Peter.

"Teaching my ward to be deceitful, for the sake of a few sixpences, I suppose."

"I've never had a ha'penny, your honor, much more a sixpence."

Neither had he. They were generally half crowns he was in the habit of receiving from me.

"You deserve to be kicked out of my service, Stokes—drummed out of the village, for a wicked old hypocrite!"

"They were very fond of each other, sir, and Miss Clara used to ask me so beseechingly; and when I told her there was harm in writing to Master Huskisson without her dear gardewan's knowing anything about it, she allers said it was for the last time, sir—really."

"If it was not for your age, Stokes, I'd send you about your business this very day."

"I werry sorry, sir," Stokes said again, shedding many tears.

"Is this the tree?"

"Yes, sir, that's the tree."

"And Clara's last letter is up there now, eh? In that hole? Now, no more lies?"

"Yes, sir, in that hole."

"How on earth do you get at it?"

"Master Huskisson climbs up there, sir, for his answer. I'll go up and fetch down Miss Clara's letter in a minute."

There was a small epistle of his own he wished to obtain as well, perhaps, or it was possible that his noble mind had suggested some scheme to save dear Clara's missive from sacrilegious eyes. But Mr. Rowley suspected this old servitor.

"Stop where you are, Stokes!" he roared forth; "I'll have no more of your monkey tricks. Give me a back."

"Give you a wot, sir?"

"Bend your back, you rascal, and I'll jump on it and get the letter myself."

"Jump on it?" repeated Stokes, with a look of dismay at Mr. Rowley's portly figure; "it don't strike me that I can bear your weight, master."

"It will be only for a minute," said Mr. Rowley quite brutally; and if I break your back, it will serve you right enough. I'm not an elephant, man, and I will have no more of this nonsense."

Mr. Stokes resisted no further. He bent his back, as if about to commence a game of leapfrog with a justice of the peace; and with more agility than I had given Mr. Rowley credit for, the guardian was aloft, and within an inch or two of our letter-box.

"O, lor! shall you be long, sir?" asked Mr. Stokes, groaning softly to himself.

"Raise your shoulder, you rascal, a little more," cried his employer.

Stokes did so, and from my hiding place I saw the hand of Mr. Rowley strive with some difficulty—for it was a fat, gouty hand, I have already said—to force itself into that casket, which had contained so many of my dear Clara's epistles. Samuel Rowley was an excitable man; but he swore a little in his efforts, and turned very red, and moved his feet restlessly upon poor Stokes' back.

"I have got it!" he cried at last. "The artful jade—the cunning plotting little mixx to serve her own guardian in this—"

"What's the matter, sir?"

"Wait a moment, Stokes—don't shake. O, lor, have mercy upon us! O, hang it! O dear, what is to be done?"

"Is anything particular the matter, sir? Not a hadder, I ope, or a nest of serpents or anything?" and old Stokes hid his head a little more—tucked in his tuppenny we called it at school—to conceal his laughing sardonic countenance.

"No Stokes; it's something much worse, I'm sorry to say."

"Wus, sir?" said Stokes, who left off laughing immediately.

"Yes! I—I can't get my hand out!"

"The devil you can't, sir!" cried Stokes, in dismay.

"It's twisted somehow, or swollen, or the wood has gripped me. Wait a moment, Stokes. Oh, it's all up with me! I can't!"

"Take it quiet, sir. Keep cool, or you will never do it—don't agitate yourself—but for God's sake look sharp. I'm cracking."

"Don't move, Stokes—as you are a man—don't move! If you were to drop, I cannot imagine what would become of me.—It will be all right in a minute."

"Make it less if you can," groaned Stokes; "all the blood's got into my head, orful! O, lor, what is to be done? Are you out, sir?"

"No, I'm not; I'm fixed, Stokes. I'm a dead man if you move; I am, indeed."

Stokes burst into tears, and howled with all his might; and Mr. Rowley shouted a great deal, and swore a great deal, too.—Stokes would have run for it probably, for he was succumbing fast to the dead weight above him, had not Mr. Rowley held him by the throat with his boots, and fixed him, too. In another moment, I had sprung to my feet, and was rushing to the rescue.

"I am really very sorry, Mr. Rowley; can I be of any assistance?"

"Assistance, you—you—young devil!—Yes, you can my dear child. Run for a ladder, and a saw, or something, quick as lightning, to the house."

"Hi—hi—hollow!" shrieked Stokes, as I prepared to obey Mr. Rowley's commands; "don't run—come here, and let me run, or bust up I must! O, lor, Master Huskisson, don't leave me any longer—do come and take a turn. He's not so heavy when you're used to him—he isn't, indeed."

I saw the necessity of advancing to the rescue at once, and so did Mr. Rowley. I was tall for my age and tolerably strong, and I hastened to take the place of Mr. Stokes which I did with great caution on all sides. Behold me at last bearing the guardian of Clara on my shoulders, and feeling terribly the weight of my responsibility as he stood with his face to the tree, still exercising his ingenuity to get his hand out of the trap.

"I hope I'm not too heavy for you, Master Huskisson," he condescended to say politely for the sight of me was even not pleasant to witness.

"Not at all," was my cheerful answer.

"You'll make yourself as light as you can to oblige me, perhaps?"

I had not quite done growing, and man is fragile during that process. Mr. Rowley was very heavy, and Stokes was wrong in his assertion—wickedly wrong.

"This is all your fault, mind you, Huskisson. This might have been my death," he said reproachfully.

"Yes, Mr. Rowley, if I hadn't been in the way," was my happy rejoinder.

"Ah! but!" he looked around with difficulty, and found Stokes still there, making every human effort to straighten his back before flying on his mission. "Curse it, Stokes run for your life!—don't stand there you wretched lunatic, another instant!"

Stokes ran away, and I was left as the one support of Mr. Rowley. Stokes had not been gone a minute and a half, when I wished that he had remained and shared the weight with me. I tried to keep firm, but the difficulty was immense.

"Boy, you're giving! Don't shake! so. Keep yourself more against the tree," Mr. Rowley called down.

"All right. I'll do it for Clara's sake, if it's possible; but if I snap—"

Then I remember that he called me a whipper-snapper; and so did he, too, I think, and was sorry.

"O, you'll keep up," [he] said, offering me every encouragement in his power.

"You're a big boy for seventeen, and I'm only nine stone ten—not a great weight. I've seen people in a circus do this kind of thing for hours, you know."

It was a gross exaggeration, and I felt it to be one. I was getting faint also. I had undertaken too much; and his language at times was still violent, as he endeavored to extricate his hand.

"If I should die, sir," I said feebly, "will you please give my love to Clara? Tell her I did all I could to bear up—and to bear you up. O, dear! Did you say nine stone ten?"

"I did."

"You're giving!" he roared again with a vehemence that revived me. "Keep up a little longer, my dear boy. I can hear them coming in the distance."

Which was another falsehood; but no matter. Mr. Rowley was not a truthful man. I set myself firmly against the tree, according to his instructions, but it was of no avail. My heels, in a few more minutes, would slide gracefully away from me, I was certain, and the guardian of my Clara would be swinging about by one arm, like an early Christian martyr. His blood would be on my head, and so would he, if he came down with his whole weight—perhaps armless—on top of me.

"Keep up!" he cried in a great fright now. "You shall see Clara, when you like, my boy. I will not say a word against the match, any more. You're a fine, strapping, brave fellow, that you are—a young Hercules!"

"Thank you, Mr. Rowley," I answered; and his words did sustain me a little, and helped me to sustain him.

But I was sliding, slowly and surely from under his feet when assistance arrived; men with ladders, and saws, and chisels; and Clara, too, wild with fright, and with tears streaming down her cheeks.

"O, my poor gurdy!" she cried. "O, you wicked Alphonse! it's all your dreadful fault."

This was the last feather on the camel's back. I fell back, and the grand rush of the servants at Mr. Rowley's legs only saved the guardian from summary dislocation on the spot. He was got down with difficulty, and once down, he was not grateful.

"A pretty fool you have made of me," he said to Clara, as he walked away rubbing his wrist; "and a pretty pair of fools you and that boy are, too."

Still, after all, he was not so bad as I expected to find him. He was a man who kept his word, and for that I always respected old Rowley. Clara and I saw each other in a more rational manner. I went to the hall once or twice; she was at my house on my eighteenth birthday, at a little party which my mamma absurdly called "Juvenile" in the invitations; and there Jack Edwards was too attentive to Clara, and raised a jealous demon in my breast.

I went to London shortly afterward. Clara and I were to be engaged when I "passed;" and if both were of the same mind, her guardian said. But we were not. While I was walking the hospitals a fellow in the tallow-trade walked off with Clara and I do not think she resisted in the least.

It was an excellent match, though he was forty-seven, and very stout. I went down to the wedding, and returned thanks at the breakfast for the bridesmaids, one of whom has promised to be *mine* when I set up in business for myself.

Your husband has been eating oysters," said a doctor to a woman, whose husband he was visiting and prescribing for.

"Doctor, you are a witch," replied the woman.

A student had accompanied the physician, and asked him on the way out, how he ascertained this fact of the patient.

"I looked under the bed," said the doctor, "and there lay the shells."

A day or two after the student visited the patient alone, and making his report to his master, declared the patient beyond medical skill.

"He has eaten a horse," said he.

"Impossible."

"But it is certainly true."

"How do you make that out?"

"I looked under the bed, as you did," pleaded the student, "and there lay a saddle and bridle."

A magistrate of Waukesha, Wis., who was called upon to perform the marriage ceremony, found, on arriving at the house, that it was situated in the adjoining county, and consequently beyond his jurisdiction. The candidates for matrimony were, however, equal to the occasion. They crossed the road into Waukesha county, sloshed around in the snow, and there, to use the fervid language of the local chronicler, "in the starlight, and in the light of loves shining orb, were joined in marriage Charles Sanders, only 74 years of age, to the sprightly Mrs. Deborah Van Notrick, who has just turned the blooming age of 69."