

The Bloomfield Times.

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The Bloomfield Times.

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A STRANGER.

Alone, alone I sit alone,
I know no one, I am unknown.
With mine no heart will intertwine—
No other soul communes with mine.

There is a mask on every face,
That makes me stranger to my race—
There is a wall round every heart,
That fences them from me apart.

My proffered faith engenders doubt;
My heart's own love meets hate without.
I give my trust and am deceived
My soul's own truth is not believed.

One loving heart—one kindred mind
I seek in vain through life to find;
All hearts my sympathies elude—
Earth's life is one great solitude.

I sit alone in another sphere,
A better world comes hovering near.
A higher life, a higher love
Floats through the etherial space above.

Though I live alone, there glows within,
A pure, bright light that purges sin.
An inner sunshine fills the air—
A love divine is everywhere.

Rose's Elopement,

—OR—

Mr. Emmerson's Surprise.

IT WAS a dull time in Wall street one sultry afternoon in August. Business was over for the day, but Mr. Emmerson still lingered in his office, perhaps because no pleasant home called him away. Certainly the little room, with its piles of account books and swarm of flies, could have possessed no attraction for any but a homeless man.

The day had been one of unprecedented success even to Mr. Emmerson. A lucky bid on gold had resulted in a small fortune, an oil well had sprung into existence on a tract which its former possessor had sold for a song as a barren waste, and some railroad stock in which he had numerous shares advanced beyond all expectation. Yet no evidence of exultation was visible in his appearance, and farther than giving the little flower-girl who daily brought her choicest bouquets to the wealthy broker, a double price for her roses—he was guilty of no departure from his usual methodical ways. If any man in Wall street had cause for satisfaction and self-congratulation it was Mr. Emmerson, when he remembered the struggles by which he attained his present commercial eminence. It was well known among his acquaintances, that not many years before he had returned penniless to his native city after a short residence in Europe, which had proved neither creditable nor profitable. He was no misanthrope, but a cloud of care or sorrow seemed to hang around his happiest moments; and although his constant reserve secured him from the intrusions of the curious, rumor had generally assigned an unhappy marriage as the cause; but beyond that of speculation society had no resource.

Young Harry Waltham stepped into the office on his way down town this afternoon, and was warmly welcomed.

"Well, Harry, how has the world used you to-day?" Mr. Emmerson inquired, shaking hands with his friend.

"Business has been unusually dull at our place, thank you. I heard of your streak of fortune with genuine pleasure. When Atkins told me of it this morning, I said, if there is a man in New York who deserves success, it is my friend Emmerson!"

"You are wasting enthusiasm, Harry. I think we all get more than our deserts in this world, or we should be poor indeed," Mr. Emmerson replied gravely, but kindly, and glancing towards his friend he detected the absence of his usual gaiety.

"What has gone wrong with you Harry; more obstructions in the course of true love?" he asked with his pleasant humor.

Harry Waltham, manly fellow that he was, ordinarily cool and self-controlled, struggled with some emotion. It was a moment before he could speak calmly.

"It has reached a crisis," he said at length. "Mr. Gordon was not content with shutting Rose up in a school in some out-of-the-way place, but he has sent his rascally son Gerald up there, to torment her with his attentions. Their motive is plain enough; Gerald has squandered half her property in speculation, and means to marry Rose to prevent a settlement."

"Where is this school situated?" Mr. Emmerson asked.

"In a small place called Sharon. Belle Landon, who is home on a visit, brought me a letter from Rose. She says the poor girl is very unhappy, although she is greatly loved by the whole school, who do all in their power to make her life more pleasant."

Belle named her Rose of Sharon, when she first went up there, and she is well known by it still, I believe," Harry said, his cheek glowing, and speaking with loverlike pride. "I do not object showing you her letter, Mr. Emmerson; you will see that it places me in a strange position."

Mr. Emmerson unfolded the perfumed sheet, delicately omitting to read the affectionate address, and commenced a little way down the page:

"Gerald's attentions are becoming positively unbearable. He intercepts all my letters, and has so prejudiced Mrs. Rivington against my friends that I fear no one could gain her permission to visit me; as my guardian's son, he, of course, has many privileges which would not be allowed any one else, and he uses them to make me unhappy. I am well aware, dear Harry, of all your scruples against marrying me before you have a fortune of your own, and much as I honor your consideration, I cannot think it reasonable or necessary to leave me longer unprotected. I have a plan which I think might prove successful, if the parties will all be agreeable. Mr. Emmerson was a friend of my father in the happy days of the past, and I can remember his visits at our house when I was quite a child. If he could be persuaded to assist us, I think by introducing himself as an old friend, he might gain Mrs. Rivington's consent to take me to ride. At some convenient place you could await us, when we could call upon our friend, the Rev. Mr. Arnold, and be married before our plan was discovered. I know you will not think me unmaidenly in speaking thus plainly, dear Harry, and you can judge how unhappy I must be to resort to such deception as a remedy. Let me hear from you soon—until we meet—I am, as ever, your loving "Rose."

Mr. Emmerson's face was very smiling when he returned the letter to his friend. "So I am expected to enact the benevolent and chivalrous Mr. Pickwick in this little drama," he said in his quaint way.

"Something very like it, truly, minus the various blunders and accidents which invariably befel that worthy gentleman," Harry replied, appreciating the humor.

"I suppose your happiness would be incomplete without this fair Rose and her fortune," Mr. Emmerson said musingly; "but this is certainly a delicate business gaining the friendship of a lady for the purpose of doing injury to her school."

"I have thought of that, and so has Rose. Consideration for Mrs. Rivington alone prevented her from taking the step several months ago."

"What name did you mention?" Mr. Emmerson questioned hastily.

"Mrs. Rivington; she is a widow, a beautiful and accomplished woman. I met her once in New York and was charmed with her."

"Do you know how long she has been in that place?" Mr. Emmerson questioned, with changing color.

"I do not; my interest in the school dates from the time Rose went there; but Sharon is so insignificant a place, one might be buried there for several years, and few if any know of their existence. Is the lady a friend of yours?"

"No; oh no, it is merely a coincidence of names," was the reply. "I will think about this matter, and let you know my decision; Harry. I have an engagement yet this afternoon," and Mr. Emmerson rose hurriedly. His whole manner seemed altered, and young Mr. Waltham, intent upon his own troubles, interpreted the change as auguring ill for his cause.

"Mr. Emmerson," Harry interrupted hastily, "I will detain you but an instant,

yet I cannot let you leave me, uncertain of your opinion of the course I ought to take in this affair. It is possible you disapprove of my marrying Rose under such circumstances?"

"No, Harry, I do not see that you could be expected to refuse such tempting proposals; not every young man has such at his disposal. The fortune is of course trifling in comparison with other considerations; but Harry," and Mr. Emmerson spoke with an earnestness which amounted almost to solemnity, laying his hand upon Harry's shoulder and looking gravely into his face—"have you weighed well the importance of this step? Have you considered that marriage is something more solemn than a pleasant acquaintance, that it is a stern reality, requiring much forbearance and self-renunciation, and if lacking these elements may be of all existence the most wretched and intolerable?"

Mr. Emmerson paused, as if unable to say more. Harry had never seen his friend thus agitated before, and while it recalled to his memory floating rumors of his early life, it touched his young heart to know how deeply he must have suffered. He was equally earnest when he spoke again.

"If Rose had been devoid of wealth she would have been my wife before this, and I should have rejoiced in each struggle with fortune for her dear sake. That her love is equal to mine, her letter can prove. When I can truly say that it will be the aim of my life to cherish and guard her, may I not reasonably hope that our future may be one of happiness?" he would have said, "that we may escape the misery and unhappiness which fall to so many," but delicacy checked his words.

"God grant you peace!" was the fervent reply. "You have done much to cheer my lonely life, Harry, and when you have a wife and home to gladden your own, you must not forget your old friend, Harry, nor allow the obliging and convenient Mr. Pickwick to be laid neglected upon the shelf," he added pleasantly.

"Mr. Emmerson, you do me great injustice by the thought, and it is not like you to doubt your friends. You must know how warmly Rose and I will always welcome you to our home, and how sacredly we will cherish the remembrance of this kindness," Harry answered with emotion.

"It is little to remember; if your happiness is secured I am well repaid. In regard to others—I am quite indifferent to the opinion of Rose's guardian or his son; but I must confess some scruples against such a design upon the Preceptress, Mrs. Rivington, I believe you called her," and Mr. Emmerson spoke with hesitation. "I fear such a scheme against an unprotected lady is scarcely consistent with the character of Mr. Pickwick," he added, laughingly, as he parted from his friend.

If Harry Waltham, with the elasticity of a youthful nature, buried his troubles in the sweet oblivion of slumber that night, he was more fortunate than his friend. Long after the stones in the street below ceased to echo the footsteps of the passing crowd, Mr. Emmerson paced his lonely room. The incidents of the afternoon had disturbed his thoughts from their usual quiet course, and now, after hours of struggle, he still battled with an army of long buried hopes and affections;—each bitterness and transgression of the past standing forth like an accusing foe. He paused at last before an antique cabinet of rare value and workmanship, unfastened the locks, and throwing open the doors, disclosed a portrait set something after the manner of an ancient shrine.

The beauty and life of the picture alone were sufficient to betray a careless observer into admiration; but standing as the only visible link between the desolation of the present and that past, of which a part at least had been one of bewildering happiness, it was more than priceless to the lonely man who guarded it with miserly care. The canvas bore two figures:—

A woman young and lovely, but little beyond girlhood; a roguish smile encircled her small mouth, but a tender light shone in her violet eyes, as she gazed upon the dimpled laughing child in her arms. It was difficult to recognize the imperturbable broker, in this sad agitated man, over whom these pictures possessed such painful but irresistible fascination. The long years of the past, which he had so jealously guarded from prying eyes, memory with unsparring hand spread plainly before him, and after years of repentance, it was more than he could bear unmoved.

When Mr. Emmerson warned Harry of the solemnity of marriage, his mind was full of the memory of his own suffering

and he feared to see his friend place his happiness in the hands of a young undisciplined girl. Very like Harry Waltham had Mr. Emmerson been ten years ago.—At that time he was the unrestrained master of his own destiny, and also a liberal fortune; well calculated by his generous, unsuspecting nature, to become the tool of craftiness and design. Three years of student life in Paris and Germany was fast corrupting him, teaching him recklessness and desperation, when his heart was taken captive by Helen Rivington, a pure and lovely girl, the daughter of an English clergyman. From that time he led a different life; forsook his gay companions, and filled with honor those positions for which by nature he was so well qualified. He became the kind son of the aged clergyman, the devoted husband, and the tender father of the little girl he fondly called his "Pearl." Four years of happiness passed in the quiet foreign town where they lived, when Mr. Rivington was gathered to his fathers, and Mr. Emmerson resolved to travel with his wife and child. They settled at Paris for the winter, and there occurred the errors he had now to repent.

In the happiness of his married life he had forgotten the exciting pleasures of former days, or supposed the taste which craved them supplanted by one of pure nature; that it only slumbered to burst forth again upon the renewal of familiar scenes and acquaintances, was not the evidence of a depraved heart, but the scars which a course of transgression and waywardness invariably leaves. Helen was conscious of a change in her husband, but her pure, refined nature could have no sympathy with his temptations, and she met his excuses and apologies with coolness and reproach. Each day increased the estrangement, and one night when Helen, unable to sleep, awaited her husband's return, he was brought home insensible, flushed with wine, and wounded in a duel over a French actress, who brought him in her carriage, and then hung around his bed, weeping and wringing her hands. Helen stood motionless, looking on with an aching heart, but when the actress, with natural kindness would have poured out her explanations and pity, she pushed her away like something unclean, and gathering up her skirts, swept from the room. She was told her husband's wound was trifling, that he would soon recover, and, waiting to hear no more, she fled with her child, leaving no trace of her course.

The remorse which came to the young husband upon the return of consciousness, may be imagined. It was in vain that he employed every means to discover his deeply injured wife; at length finding his search useless, he placed the remnant of his fortune with a friend, to be held in trust for her, hoping that she might come forward and claim it, when no longer pursued. But all these years had given nothing but struggle and discipline; in loneliness and sorrow he had achieved a noble manhood, though to-night the light from the overhanging chandeliers betrayed many a silver hair, and his broad white forehead was seamed by many lines of care. In the prime of life, Mr. Emmerson stood alone, uncheered by affection, bereft of the ties which make life a pleasure, haunted by remorse and the memory of happy days, the sole remnant of the past; the pictured resemblance of those he had so fondly loved and deeply wronged.

Whatever scruples Mr. Emmerson entertained against the part he was solicited to undertake for the benefit of his young friends must have been happily overcome, for not many days after the proposal was made to him, he embarked for the scene of action. The delightful freshness of the country scenery and the bracing mountain air were invigorating to the city business man, who saw so little of nature; his spirits rose rapidly, and when the little village of Sharon was reached, which lay basking in the sunlight blissfully, unconscious of any design upon its peacefulness, he felt equal to the performance of any task, however difficult. Just enough of day remained for Mr. Emmerson to acquaint himself with the location of the principal features of the place, including of course the young ladies' seminary. A conversation with mine host of the hotel, made him familiar with most of the residents of the place.

Pretty Rose Lawrence had received due notice of Mr. Emmerson's intended arrival, and when that gentleman sallied forth the next morning, a short walk brought him in contact with a young lady to whom the encounter was no surprise. But even the pretty face of Rose did not prevent him from gazing in a puzzled, eager way upon

the little girl who accompanied her. It was the way we often gaze upon a face which recalls a lost or absent friend. Rose was puzzled by his abstraction; half fearful of mistake, she advanced to meet him, the color fluttering in and out of her cheeks.

"I cannot be mistaken, I think. You are my father's friend, Mr. Emmerson," she said, timidly.

"Quite right; and you are, or rather were, my little friend Rose," Mr. Emmerson returned, with sincere pleasure at the meeting, looking down with something of tenderness upon the pretty girl he had promised to befriend in such a strange way.

"I remember too well the happy days when I was your little Rose, and searched your pockets for the *bon bons* you were sure to bring me," she replied, tears swelling up in her dark eyes. "And you will be the same kind friend now, Mr. Emmerson, when I have no dear father to guard and protect me. Will you not?" she asked prettily.

He pressed her little hand kindly, answering in his quaint way, although his heart was tender for the orphan girl. "I cannot refuse my little friend her wish, though she asked me for a husband instead of *bon bons*," he added, softly.

She was a blushing Rosy by this time, answering him only by the tears in her dark eyes.

"Maggie," she said, after a moment, addressing the child to whom Mr. Emmerson's eyes wandered frequently, "do you not want to buy some caramels at the confectioner's? Our box is quite empty, I think I will wait for you at the corner."

"Who is your little companion?" Mr. Emmerson asked as the child ran away.

"Maggie Rivington, the daughter of our Preceptress. The poor child is fatherless as I am, but she has a loving mother to care for her."

Mr. Emmerson seemed upon the point of questioning farther, but checked the impulse. "My dear Rose," he said, and his voice was grave, almost stern: "I cannot give my encouragement and assistance to this scheme, until you assure me that you have not decided upon it without much thought and consideration. Your happiness as well as Harry's is very dear to me, and I should grieve to see you rashly take a step which might bring sorrow and wretchedness to both."

"Please, Mr. Emmerson, do not think me childish or frivolous; I love Harry too sincerely to urge him to an act which I did not think would be for his happiness, as well as my own," she answered, with womanly earnestness. "I have but a moment to explain our plans," she continued, hurriedly, "for I see one of our teachers coming. Fortunately Gerald Gordon had an imperative business engagement in New York, and has left me unguarded for once; and this morning Mrs. Rivington was unexpectedly called from home. It will not be difficult to gain the consent of Miss Fuller the assistant teacher, to take me to ride. Harry is awaiting us at the clergyman's a few miles from here, and the absence of two sentinels is too favorable an opportunity to be lost, although I had not expected to elope until to-morrow," she added, laughing. Rose had only time to assume a careless air, when a number of the young lady pupils and their teacher approached.

"May I detain you a moment, Miss Fuller?" Rose asked, in her sweet persuasive way. "I have just met a gentleman who visited my father's house when I was a little girl. May I not introduce him to you?" adding before she could remonstrate.

"This is my friend and instructress, Miss Fuller, Mr. Emmerson. Your mutual experience of my waywardness ought to make you friends," she said gaily. "I doubt not Mr. Emmerson could tell you terrible stories of my childhood."

"I am not inclined to believe you were ever very terrible, my dear," the teacher replied, looking fondly at her pretty young charge.

"If I remember rightly, Rose was quite a faultless little girl, with the exception of a great fondness for confections, in which respect I perceive she has not changed," the gentleman returned pleasantly, pointing to the package Maggie Rivington was at that moment placing in her hands.

"She is the good fairy of the school, and as generous of her gifts as the goddess of plenty," Miss Fuller remarked smiling.

CONCLUDED ON SECOND PAGE.