

Smiles and Tears.

The radiant beams of joyous love
That gild our fleeting hours,
That come with downy wing of dove
To cheer this life of ours,
Are ever like the silver cloud
That hides its misty tears:
'Tis first the cradle, then the shroud—
The lesson of our years.

'Tis smiles and tears, then tears and smiles,
In ever-changeful flow:
'Tis hopes and fears and fancy's wiles
That come, and come and go,
The plowing scenes of life we view
Through youth's romantic eye,
Too soon to learn they are not true,
And bid them all good by.

We greet the smiles of those we love,
And joy to think them nigh;
Then kiss the tear, and sigh to prove
That those we love must die.
We feed the heart with fondest dreams
Of future joys in store,
And cheer the soul 'neath hope's glad
beams
Till hope shall be no more.

The blushing morn, with crimson glow
That gilds the hills afar,
Will sink in shade beneath the flow
Of evening's taper star;
And spring that comes to greet the flowers
With radiance on her brow,
Will soon forsake her fairy bowers
To sleep in winter now.

Oh! like the clouds before the breeze,
That come, then disappear;
Or like the leaves upon the trees,
That autumn frosts will scorch—
Our hopes and joys live but a day,
So rapidly they pass;
For soon, full soon, they glide away,
And leave an empty glass.

But as each bud and flower distils
Some hidden perfume rare,
And as each fading autumn fills
With choicest fruits and fair,
So let us from each hour secure
Life's pleasures as they fly,
And from each passing scene allure
Its sweets before they die.

SELECT STORY.

The Midnight Marriage.

I will go now, father.
Wait a moment, Flora. Remember,
I desire that there shall be no more of
this nonsense, or I'll—

Good-night, father, replied Flora, as
she left the room without waiting to
hear the conclusion of the harsh sentence.
O father! You know I wish to obey
you! she murmured, tearfully, as she
ascended to her room, and threw herself
into her favorite lounging chair.

Flora Everett was called one of the
handsomest girls in the village. Im-
agine a brunette, slender but not tall,
a form graceful as the waving willows,
and agile as the gazelle; a finely shaped
nose, and a little rosebud of a mouth,
displaying, when she smiled, two rows
of dainty ivory teeth, and you will see
Flora Everett, as she sat on this occa-
sion, with her large, beautiful eyes fixed
on the ceiling, as if in perplexing study.

Her father, a stern man of great
wealth, was opposed to her receiving the
attentions of a certain young man, Ed-
ward Morely by name, to whom he sus-
pected she was attached by ties dearer
than those of ordinary friendship. Ed-
ward was a worthy young man, sober,
moral and industrious, but poor. This
fact was a great crime in the eyes of her
stern father, who, ignoring the prefer-
ence of his daughter's heart, regarded
only the one qualification in a suitor for
her hand that he valued, namely, money.
He had selected, as a fitter future
bridegroom for his daughter, a dark,
sinister-looking man named Richard
Clarke; a man, like himself, of wealth,
and the influence which wealth gives,
but totally devoid of those gentler traits
of character which charm a maiden's
heart. Clarke was a cold, hard man,
beloved by none, and disliked by all,
whose only recommendation was the fact
that he was wealthy.

The last words of Flora's father sig-
nified command, a command to resign
the one she loved, and surrender herself,
an unwilling sacrifice, to a man whom
she utterly abhorred. To a truly vir-
tuous and sensitive girl, nothing can
seem more dreadful than this. No true
gentleman, no man with a spark of true
manhood in his breast, would accept
such a sacrifice, though he were to gain
untold gold by the base act. Such a mar-
riage could only be fraught with wretch-
edness to both parties. But Clarke was
a man who did not reason in this way,
who did not stop in his greedy pursuit
of gain to analyze the finer feelings of
the female heart. He knew that Flora's
father approved of his choice, for, in his

cold, calculating way, he had chosen
this beautiful flower to bloom—or, rather,
to fade and wither,—in his desert home,
because she was young and pretty, with
a rich dower in prospect. As to such
romantic folly as love, he never once
troubled his head about that. He put
himself to no trouble to woo and to win
the affections of the fair maiden whom
he sought to wed, even against her wish-
es; but having, in his cool, calculating
way, decided that she was compelled to
marry him, willy nilly, simply bided his
time.

Now a man who honestly and truly
loves a girl is far from being influenced
by such heartless and mercenary moti-
ves; and no one knew this better than
dear little Flora. True, it is well
enough for a man, in selecting a com-
panion for life, to look among those in
his own station, and choose one who is
honest, sincere, and worthy of a life's
devotion. If she is an heiress, that fact
is not an objection; but it is by no means
a recommendation, unless there is love,
pure and undefiled, also. Love is the
magical lamp which reveals to his soul
all her charms and excellencies; with love,
she is a treasure to him all her life,
whether she is the daughter of a million-
naire or of a beggar; without it, she is
undesirable, in a relation so close, and
so sacred, though she possessed the
wealth of Cæsus. And if there is genu-
ine, true love, no time, no waiting, no
penalty of suffering and labor, is so
great that he will not willingly bear it
for her dear sake. Once won, she is his
own, for better for worse, until death do
them part. The love of a true and noble
woman is, as the poet truly says, a beau-
tiful and a fearful thing. And he who

is true to himself, will prize the love of
such a woman far above rubies; he will
love her, shield her, and protect her,
work for her with joy, pet her, please
her, gratify her every wish, and become
to her, in her new and holy relations to
him, all that he has deprived her of—
father, mother, brother, sister—these
are all combined in the one word—hus-
band.

But I am digressing. I need not re-
mark that Richard Clarke's soul was in-
capable of rising to any true apprecia-
tion of the divine intent of wedlock; and
Flora shuddered at the bare idea of wed-
ding such a man.

What am I to do? What can I do?
O Edward, how can I give you up—so
good, so true, so noble? sobbed Flora,
as the little French clock on the mantle-
piece struck ten. I must go to the grove.
I dare not stop to think, she cried, as
she sprang to her feet, caught up a thin
shawl lying near, and hastened from her
room.

I need not remark that Edward Mor-
ley was well aware of her father's oppo-
sition to his suit, and that he had re-
quested her to meet him on this night,
in a beautiful grove which lay at the
foot of the lawn, in order to discuss the
aspects of the case.

All was still as the grave, and Flora
supposed that her father had retired,
she sped silently through the long,
gloomy hall, quietly unbolted the mas-
sive hall door, tripped lightly down the
marble steps, and, the next moment, she
flitted down the gravelled walk like a
spirit of the night. The night was lovely;
the moonbeams darted through the
trees, as if peeping into the solemn re-
cesses, into which the gloomy shadows
of the night had settled, beneath the
dense foliage of the grove.

Flora cast her eyes around somewhat
anxiously, when she reached the grove,
for the familiar form of her lover. He
awaited her beneath one of the monarchs
of the forest, and she stepped quickly
into the woods, to meet the tall figure
that came rapidly forward as soon as she
saw her.

I knew you would come, my darling,
said he; and the next moment she was
clasped lovingly in his arms.

O Edward! It is useless, I fear, she
whispered, trembling like an aspen-leaf.

My father's will is unrelenting. He
will never consent to our union. And
then, with a great sob that welled up
from her full heart, she laid her face on
his bosom.

Darling, you are twenty-one, answer-
ed Edward, and we have loved each
other since childhood. I now can claim
your promise to be my wife. Will you
not be mine? Give me your faithful
promise quickly, for I must not remain
here long.

O Edward! her voice was filled with
agony. How can I, the only child of a
parent whom I have always loved and
obeyed, set his will at defiance? To
think that he has now blasted my heart's
fondest desires! Oh, if I only had a
mother to advise me! I cannot answer
you now. Give me one week, and I will
give you my decision.

Very well, darling, he replied, strok-
ing back her long, dark hair, and press-
ing a kiss upon her fair brow. It seems
an age; but I will wait, and watch and
pray. Meet me here, then, one week
from to-night, at this hour. If you are
not here, I shall depart at once for other
scenes, for I shall consider it a refusal,
and I cannot remain and see you an-
other's. Keep this, he added, as he
took her small, plump hand in his, and
slipped a ring, in which a ruby was set,
upon her finger. I cannot give you dia-
monds, as Dick Clarke could; but such as this
poor offering is, I intended it for you, if
you were mine, and no one else shall
wear it but you. O my darling Flora—
but good-night, and good-by—farewell
perhaps forever.

Her arms moved by that wonderous
twining instinct of the womanly nature,
and wound themselves around his neck,
in a loving embrace, while her eyes
filled with tears, and sobs choked her ut-
terance. He pressed her madly to his
breast once more; their lips met in one
silent heart-kiss, and the unhappy vic-
tims of a father's cruel injustice parted.

Keep up a brave heart, dearest. I
will watch you until you reach the
house, said he, as she retired, with bowed
head, walking slowly back to the
gloomy old mansion which she had left
but a few moments before, with such a
bouyant step.

The next morning, at the breakfast-
table, Mr. Everett looked frowningly on
his lovely child, but remained silent un-
til he had finished his breakfast. Then
he asked her, in a stern voice,—

Where had you been last night, Flora,
when I saw you returning from the
grove?

Flora turned as red as a peony, but
made no answer.

Now go to your own apartments, and
keep them, or I will lock you in.

She rose to obey; her head reeled,
and tears blinded her eyes; but she
managed to reach her room.

Poor Edward! He will now leave me,
believing me false, and I will never see
him again! she sobbed. Then follow-
ed a flood of tears, which relieved her
overcharged feelings to some extent,
and, by degrees, she became calm.

Let us imagine a period of three
years to have elapsed, and pass over the
mutual sorrow and heart-sufferings of
the parted lovers.

Edward kept the appointment, and,
not meeting Flora, concluded that she
preferred marrying a man of wealth, to
please her father, to marrying a poor
one to please herself, and so scraped all
his available effects together, and went
to New York, where we lose sight of
him for the present. It was reported
that he shipped on a whaling vessel,
which was going on a three years' cruise.

Flora, in the meantime, heard by
general report that he had left for parts
unknown, but did not know where. She
did not attempt to see him, at the ap-
pointed time, in opposition to her father's
commands; but she steadfastly refused
to marry Richard Clarke, and no amount
of ill-treatment or persuasion
could induce her to do so. She hated
the man, and instinctively avoided him.
Whenever he came near her she made
some excuse to leave the room, or to
change her seat to one as far from him
as possible. If he spoke to her, she
sometimes feigned not to hear him,
and, at others, answered him as briefly
as possible, with a feigned respect which
even he was not too dull to see was not
real, and employed only in deference to
her father's wishes.

Never mind, he would think, at such
times, with a baleful gleam in his sullen
eyes, wait till you are mine, as you will
surely be, some day, and I will have
my revenge for this scorn.

But at length Richard Clarke began
to become uneasy, for he had heard
where Morley had gone, and, as the
three years drew near to a close, and the
return of the whaler would soon be due,
he feared that Flora's old lover would
return and marry her in spite of her
father's vigilance.

Patience, Dick, patience, said the old
man. She'll give in after awhile; we
can't force her to marry, you know.

The deuce we can't! growled Dick,
with an oath. I've waited as long as I
care to. I've fooled nearly three years
away, now, and if you can't bring the
match about, or won't, why, I must look
elsewhere, that is all.

I know, I know, said the old man.
But how is it to be done?

Easy enough, replied Dick Clarke,
with the baleful gleam in his wicked
eyes. There's Squire Slow, of Piney
Hollow, who will do the job any time,
willy nilly, if he's paid well for it. Once
my wife, she can't help herself, and will
accept the situation.

Well, wait a little longer, Dick. I
will try once more to talk her over, and,
if I can't, why, then—we'll see about it,
replied the old man, evidently looking
favorably upon Dick's project.

He had set his heart on this marriage,
in order to unite the Everett and Clarke
estates, and he was a one-idea man, who
when he made up his mind, did not
change it.

But Flora was as obstinate and de-
termined as ever. The ring with the
ruby never left her finger, and she de-
clared her intention to remain true to
her chosen lover until death, in which
resolution she showed that she inherited
some of her father's stubbornness.

Richard Clarke scanned the papers
closely for the arrival of whalers. One
day he saw it announced that the
"Arctic" had returned, loaded with oil.
This was the vessel Morley was reported
to have gone on. He took the paper to
Mr. Everett.

Now or never, he said, pointing to the
paragraph referred to above. That
scapegrace will be here, doubtless, and
she will find a way to escape and marry
him.

I'll lock her up, said the old man,
turning pale with rage.

Love laughs at locksmiths, said Clarke,
dryly. Come, what say you to my plan
now?

Well, it seems the only way to bring
the stubborn girl around, answered Mr.
Everett. If it's done, the sooner the
better.

That's what I think, replied Clarke.
I've seen Slow, and it will be all right.
Say you take her to Piney Hollow to-
night, after all is quiet, and I'll be there
and Slow'll marry us, whether she is
willing or not. Tell her she is to meet
her old lover, and she'll go readily
enough.

It shall be as you say, replied Mr.
Everett, turning away with a sigh.

He was growing old and childish, and
Dick Clarke had gradually acquired an
unbounded influence over him.

That night, about ten o'clock, he
knocked at his daughter's door, and
commanded her to rise and dress her-
self.

Why, at this unseasonable hour? she
asked, in surprise.

That scamp, I mean Ed. Morley, has
come back, they say. He is sick, at
Squire Slow's, Piney Hollow, and has
sent for us—to make a confession, I
suppose, said her father.

Pale and trembling, haunted by a
presentiment of some impending crisis,
she knew not what, Flora hastily dress-
ed herself, and descended the stairs.
I am ready, she said.

Her father ushered her into a close
carriage, and away they went clattering
over the gravelled road. It was a beau-
tiful moonlight night, not unlike that
upon which Edward and Flora had part-
ed three years before. Her mind
doubtless reverted to that sad scene, for
she sat, pensive and melancholy—she
seldom smiled now—looking out of the
carriage window, and asked no ques-
tions.

This same Squire Slow was a most
villainous personage, who held the of-
fice of justice of the peace, and was
authorized to solemnize matrimony by
the law of the land. He had been elect-
ed by the grog-shop element of the dis-
trict; the dram-drinkers knew him to
be a man utterly devoid of honesty of
principle, who would pervert the office
for their benefit for a price and that
was why they elected him.

To the residence of this worthy re-
presentative of justice, therefore, the
carriage was driven at a rapid pace. It
was a frame building, used as a kind of
tavern, with a bar room on one side of
the hall, and a plainly furnished recep-
tion-room on the other. Into this lat-
ter, Flora, surprised and bewildered, was
ushered. Three or four seedy-looking
frequenter of Squire Slow's saloon were
lounging about the room, and honoured
her with glances of undisguised admira-
tion.

Why, how d'ye do, Miss Flory? Glad
to see ye. I'm sho', said the squire,
waddling up to her and taking her
hand.

Where's Edward? she asked, turn-
ing to her father. Is Edward Morley
here? she continued, turning to the
squire, who stood before her, slipshod
and in his shirt-sleeves, with a book in
his hand.

Oh, bless ye, no, laughed the squire;
but they's another chap here as'll do
just as well.

Before she could reply, the dark form
of Richard Clarke, dressed in a new suit
throughout, emerged from another room,
and took her hand.

What does this mean? she asked,
trying in vain to withdraw it.

It means that we are going to be

married, said Dick, firmly with the
old gleam that she knew so well in his
eyes.

What! Against my will? Father
you could not—
She looked around, but he had disap-
peared, although she heard his voice in
the next room, apparently in earnest
consultation with some one.

This can never be! exclaimed she,
perceiving the plot, and growing indig-
nant. Unhand me, wretch! Men, you
would not be parties to such an outrage?
she demanded, appealing to the seedy
individuals who were present as hired
witnesses.

Better give in quiet like, miss, said
one of them, leaning at her. You see
you're beat, and can't help yourself.

Come, squire, proceed, said Clarke,
who had also heard the voices in the
next room, and began to exhibit symp-
toms of alarm.

All right; splice you in twenty sec-
onds, replied the squire.

Time him, Bill. I'll bet the drinks
ne can't do it in less'n a minute.

Thus spurred up, the squire proceed-
ed to business at once. But who can
imagine Flora's feelings, as she stood,
firmly held by Clarke, and heard the
squire say,—

You, Richard Clarke—I b'lieve yer
name's Richard, ain't it, Dick? Yes, I
thought so—you, Richard Clarke, take
this woman to be your lawful and wed-
ded wife, before these witnesses, so
help your God, do you?

I do, replied Clarke.
You, Flory Everett, take this man
to be your lawful and wedded hus-
band—

No, no! A thousand times no! shout-
ed Flora. And I call all you men to
witness that I do not, and that I utterly
repudiate the position into which I
have been forced against my will. I will
die first!

Clarke still held her firmly.

Come, be quiet, now, he said giving
her a menacing look.

An old clock on the mantel clattered
out twelve. There was a pattering of
feet in the hall, and the room door was
thrown open. Old man Everett stood
on the threshold, pale as death, shouting—

Stop, squire, stop! Don't proceed with
it, ising.

No harm done yet, Mr. Everett, as
Miss Flory hasn't agreed to take the
plaintiff in this case.

No, you jest bet she didn't spoke up
as a wiry old man, with a sharp eye, who
had hitherto sat unnoticed in the cor-
ner. She utterly refused the plaintiff,
who, in my opinion, ought to be licked
on the spot, and then sent to the peni-
tentiary for life.

Three men entered the room at this
juncture, two of whom seized Clarke,
and handcuffed him in less time than it
required to tell of it.

What does this mean? asked Dick,
turning deadly pale.

It means, you're wanted, my man,
said the officers. We've been on your
track some time. We went to your
house in your absence, and discovered
the last link in the chain of evidence.
We arrest you as a counterfeiter.

Old wiry chap said he ought to go to
the penitentiary, an't looks pretty much
as if he's a goin' thar, remarked the
seedy individual addressed as Bill.

Clarke turned ghastly white, and be-
gan to rave and swear, as he was taken
from the room, and continued to do so
as far as he could be heard. For years
he had been engaged in counterfeiting,
and that was the way he made his
money.

And now another figure stood in the
room, with rough, horny hands, and
bronzed face, although dressed like a
gentleman. Flora was the first to re-
cognize it.

Edward?

My own Flora! and they rushed into
each other's arms with cries of joy.

Well, look here; ain't I going to mar-
ry somebody to-night? asked the squire.

You, sir? said Flora, with a scorn-
ful curl of her lips. Why, you shouldn't
profane the marriage ceremony by tak-
ing its sacred words on your purged
lips! And stamping her little foot, and
darting a glance of unutterable con-
tempt upon him, she swept defiantly
from the room, leaning on her Edward's
arm.

On their way home, Edward informed
Flora that, instead of going whaling, he
had gone to Australia, to dig gold, and
feeling that he was toiling for her love
had worked hard, saved his means, and
returned a rich man.

When Mr. Everett was made aware
of the fact, he withdrew his opposition
to Edward's suit, and the patient lovers
were united in marriage a week after-
ward. Let us hope they were happy,
as they deserved to be.

And

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