

POETRY.

SINCE TIME BEGAN,

My love had set my heart aglow,
They say she's plain—I think not so;

Her nose is freckled, but her teeth
Gleam whitely from their ruby sheath,

I've scolded my fate—I've made my choice,
Her feet are faultless and her voice

Now these are things I must admire,
Altho' her hair is red as wine,

SELECT STORY.

A LORDLY LOVER.

By the author of 'A Mere Schoolboy,' 'The Ace of Spades,' etc.

CHAPTER V.

Gratified ambition, contented pride,
brilliant anticipations are crowding her
mind, and she, silly girl, caught in the
spider's subtle web, takes them for something
else for different.

"Yes, I love you," she shyly avows,
as though he had asked a question, instead
of stating a fact of which he was already too
confident. "I do love you."

He waits for no further permission.
He takes her into his strong arms and
kisses her.

From behind the hedge a man, with a
white, haggard face, and eyes full of in-
expressible pain, watches that embrace.

"And he doesn't care for her! He can-
not love her as I have loved her! My
Oliver! my one little love lamb!" he moans
incoherently, after they have passed on
together and he is left alone. "And yet—
oh, I cannot believe he would be so base.
I wonder whether he would listen if I
spoke to him. He is so sweet and ten-
der-hearted, it would kill her if he played
her false. Surely he would let me tell
him that."

A long pause, while he turns the notion
over in his mind; then the utter unselfish-
ness of the man triumphs.

"I can but try; he knows I love her.
Surely he must admit that gives me some
right to look after her. What does any
other matter so long as she is happy?"

So he rises and shakes himself, as though
to throw off the overwhelming weight
of care that is pressing upon him, before
turning in the direction of the park.

He will not go to the house and inquire
for his rival, although by this time, he
has discovered his name and title.

Instead, he will linger somewhere among
the trees, trusting that a chance may
bring the earl out into the air, and so af-
ford an opportunity for the interview he
seeks, yet so much dreams. That is the
plan which he, in his ignorance of the
future, thinks to be good.

And this it comes to pass that Bert,
with fixed determination, places himself
amongst the bushes that border a path at
some little distance from the house, and
sets himself to wait, with such patience
as he can command, for what the next
hour or so may bring.

Then a gruff, "Hallo, you! what are
you after here?" arouses him from the
gloom reverie into which he sinks, and
Bert looks up to behold a gamekeeper, a
particular chum of his own, regarding
him with suspicious eyes.

"Don't shoot me, Jack," he cries, with
pretended terror; "I want a word or
two with somebody, and this seems my
best chance to get it."

"Oh! if a lady is in question—"

Jack makes a comic grimace and goes
off, before Bert can quite decide whether
or not he shall correct the error into
which he has fallen; and the incident soon
passes off altogether from his troubled
mind, as he resumes his weary watching.

Meanwhile, within the house, dinner
is proceeding. The table, with its burden
of plate and its huge blocks of glittering
ice, looks invitingly cool this hot sum-
mer's night, and conversation is going on
briskly.

"It is just the weather for a water pic-
nic; don't you think so, papa?" Blanche
inquires, whilst dessert is being handed
round upon tiny silver dishes. "Lord
Rixon suggests that we should visit Eves-
by Abbey to-morrow. What could be
pleasanter than to row down?"

How exquisite she is looking to-night
in her black jet embroidered lace gown,
with white flowers in her blonde hair,
and magnificent diamonds upon her neck;
her dainty fingers toying with the purple
grapes upon her plate.

"You might send out a note or two,
my dear, and ask the Firths and the Gor-
dons to join," he returns readily. "By
the way, Blanche, have you that engraved
diamond brooch on tonight by any chance?"

"Yes, papa, why?"

"Just pass it this way, my darling, if
you will. I have been talking of it to
Lady Eryntrude, who would like to see it."

Mrs. Gargrave unfastens the pin of a
small ornament upon her shoulder with a
light laugh.

"See," she says, turning to the earl
and displaying it, "this is the only one
of my ornaments which my father ever
admires. I think it rather ugly, but it
was found at Pompeii, and is supposed to
be immensely old, and, of course, there-
fore very valuable."

He takes the jewel from her and exam-
ines it carefully.

guide, were any needed, to the spot where
already the earl has stationed himself,
according to appointment. Blanche never
guesses how her own appearance upon
the scene causes dismay to the heart of a
man clad in working clothes, who has
been upon the point of emerging from
his concealment and accosting Lord Rix-
on; nor can she know that, when she
speaks, every word will be audible to two
pairs of ears.

"So you have not kept me waiting. It
is good of you to be punctual, Rollo," she
says, the more thankful for this very
small mercy, because she regards his early
arrival as showing some eagerness for
their meeting.

For an instant Bert Cartwright hesi-
tates. Shall he go away at once, now that
his fresh complication has arisen to
spoil his plans, or shall he stay and listen
for such revelations as seem likely to be
made? The position of spy and listener
is not to his taste; and yet, if this man
is making love to two women at once,
ought not he, for Oliver's sake, to know it?

"For Oliver's sake," he repeats again;
and he stays.

"I hate scenes," the earl replies, with
irritation. "Let us get this one over as
soon as we can. You ought not to be out
in that low dress without a shawl, either;
so there's the more reason to hurry."

"You know that the air never hurts
me," she says, with a half sob. "How
many times have you and I—"

"Don't trouble to wonder any more
about it, then," he interrupts. "There
are your letters; now, if you want to do
so, hand over mine. Where's the good of
further palaver?"

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"It was not always a trouble for you
to speak to me," she wails, her
self-control for the moment entirely leav-
ing her. "Oh, Rollo, Rollo! don't be so
cruel to me. Tell me that you do care
for me after all; say that you've only
been acting like this to test my love, and
even now I'll forgive you."

"What a force you make, Blanche!
Come, let us have an end of this. Do you
desire all the neighborhood to hear your
lamentations?"

But she is past heeding, for the instant,
the mocking intolerance of his words.

"With something very like an oath,
however, he interrupts, pushing her from
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struggle, and afterwards Lord Rixon's ap-
peal for help. Almost before the words
had died away, his friends, followed by
several men-servants, are around him.

"Hold him down," he cries to some of
them, as he lifts himself off his antagonis-
t. "The intention is to murder me!"

"We have come, sir," said the speak-
man, sweeping his arm over his shoulders,
"to know how you stand on the issues of
the day."

"Well," responded the editor, interrupt-
ing the address promptly, "the none of
your business. What I want you to know
is how you stand on the issues of this
paper, and I'll say right here that all of
you owe for the last fifty-two issues. Now
pay up or shut up."

"I know nothing," he protests. "I
have only come up since hearing the pis-
tol shot. As I turned the corner over
there,—pointing to a bend in the path
at a distance of some few paces, "I saw
this man and another stooping over Lady
Gargrave, evidently robbing her. Of
course I rushed to the rescue. But al-
though I succeeded in capturing this
fellow, the other made off. And he, I
fancy, was the one who secured the booty."

Bert listens to the tale in dumb aston-
ishment. That the man should have the
audacity to tell it, absolutely silences him
for a second. At present, however, no
idea of danger to himself arises.

"It is a lie," he manages to articulate,
after an instant, in spite of the rough
grasp upon his collar which almost seems
to stifle him. "It is a lie. He murdered
the lady himself and took her jewels af-
terwards. I did it. Just go and search
him. Prove what I say. I tell you he
has the jewels and the pistol that killed
her, upon him now," the young man
declares, earnestly, as they allow him to
stand up, in order more conveniently to
get him to the police-station.

But who is likely to listen to such a
tale?

As the words faintly reach Lord Rixon,
they remind him that it may be well to
rid himself as speedily as possible of all
these evidences of his crime.

Up to her bed-room she carries the dead,
unfortunate woman, passing through the
bondoir on their way. Of all her dreams,
who could have foreshadowed such a re-
turn to the pretty chamber, as this?

And while they lay her upon the bed,
and having handed gently the beautiful
wreath of flowers, her murderer seeks
the privacy of his own apartment. There
he empties out the ornaments which are
still scarcely cold after contact with
Blanche's warm flesh, the pistol which
has done so cruel a work, and the letters
which were the cause of that final, fatal
meeting.

They take so little space, those silent
proofs of guilt. The dressing-case into
which he crushes them, heedless of the
fragile settings and exquisite filigree that
enriches them, shuts quite easily. He
turns the key in the strong lock, and be-
lieves his secret to be hidden for ever.

"It was a stroke of genius to think
of the jewels. If I'd left them, where would
my history of the robbery have been?"
he meditates, with great contentment,
the expression of disgust upon his face
perfectly visible in the clear summer dusk.
Again her hand has sought her pocket,
and this time she does not snatch it away.

"Because a man tells you that he has
grown tired of you," she says, echoing
his exacting in a dreary, parrot-like tone.
"Then," "Then," and once he swears
that no love could ever be so lasting as
his own! Once he used to whisper that
my kisses were his paradise, my arms his
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She pulls her hand from the pocket
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The man shrieks and covers. Now is
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caught her wrist and is bending it back-
wards. The chance has gone.

There is a rustling among the bushes.
But that, at such a moment, is heeded by
neither of the struggling pair. Then, be-
fore Bert Cartwright can reach and divide
them, there rings out a sharp report.

When the smoke has cleared away,
Blanche Gargrave is lying on her back
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Then an sudden thought seems to strike
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kneels down beside the motionless body.

With quick fingers he unfastens the
diamonds from her throat and ears, the
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All of these, with the two bundles of let-
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Besides, his assailant must at least be
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With a single dexterous twist of the
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"Help! Help!"

In the drawing-room the noise of the
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"Poachers," pronounces the baronet,
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