

HER SMILE

Her winsome smile, I loved so  
The brief and happy while ago  
When I believed forever mine  
The radiance of its tender shine  
But now another dotes, I know  
Well, let him lavishly bestow  
On her his dream wealth, well I know  
The light that makes his dreams divine  
Her witching smile

HE LOOKED LIKE ME.

One evening, in the winter of 1874, on my way home in a Pendleton street car my attention was attracted to two elderly ladies, who sat near where I stood. The only reason for my noticing them was the fact that they seemed to be quite agitated about me. They shot glances at me and put their heads close together and talked in earnest tones, and they carried it so far that, while no one else in the car noticed it so far as I saw, I was so conscious that I was being observed and discussed that I was on the point of getting out. They were not unladylike, but were evidently so much occupied with what interested them, whatever it was, that they did not realize that they were making things uncomfortable for a person of my sensitiveness. They left the car at the Miami railroad station, and both, as they went out, took a square look into my face, averted though it was. Some two weeks after this affair one of the same ladies came into my office and introduced herself as Mrs. Seymour, and desired some professional advice and assistance. I recollected her at once as one of the street car ladies, although neither made the least intimation that we had ever seen each other before. I did a little, writing, and she soon took leave of me, to come again in a few days when something further was to be done. At the next interview both the ladies came, and I had an opportunity to observe them closely. They were both past fifty—one not far from sixty. I imagined them to be ladies in good circumstances—as afterward appeared—and both were, without the least doubt, thoroughly well bred and intelligent women. The second lady gave her name as Miss Susan Timberlake. Their business did not amount to much, and had, in fact, very little in it, but they saw me several times, and always increased the air of mystery and suspicion which surrounded them from the first. At the last interview we had in my office, while we were together a patrolman came in, to whom one of the ladies said in a quiet tone, "This is the man, take him along." The officer said he had a warrant for my arrest, and wished me to go with him to the Hammond street police station. I should shirk the truth if I did not admit that I was appalled and frightened. However I looked, I felt very pale, but I asked to see the warrant, which was produced. It charged one Charles Wilson Murray with being a fugitive from justice, with the usual formalities. I quietly informed the man that I was not Charles Wilson Murray, but one of the ladies, more by a gesture than by any spoken word, ordered him not to hesitate. It was quite dusk, and we made a solemn little procession along Third street and up Hammond to the bastille. Arrived there, I observed that I was not unexpected, and then I was confronted by a comely young woman, who evinced from the first a degree of interest in me which seemed like a volcano of suppressed affection. The charge against Murray was that he had deserted his wife, but had omitted to desert a lot of her money and bonds. I was supposed to be Murray, and the young woman was Mrs. Murray. In vain I assured them that I was not Murray, and that I had no stolen money or bonds. They cared nothing for the property, but they implored me to acknowledge my identity and to return with them to the home which was desolate without me. All that I said to convince them that I was not Murray seemed to have no effect whatever, and finally Mrs. Murray told the officers that I had a mark on my left side above the hip which would settle the question, but before they seized me to examine my person the late Captain James L. Ruffin, who knew me well, and whom, of course, the officers knew, happened in, and upon his assurance I was discharged. It was solemnly promised on all sides that nothing should be said about the affair, and all record of it, as far as possible, was then and there destroyed. Before we separated, however, Mrs. Murray spoke in the tenderest way of the baby, and the next day, at their request, I called at the Gibson House and there saw the baby, and confirmed myself in the belief that they were good, very well to do people in a frantic search of the absent Mr. Murray, whom they wished not to punish for any wrong, or supposed wrong that he had done, but rather to induce him to return to them and receive from them nothing but love and kindness. As I could be of no service to them further, they offered to pay me liberally for the professional work which I was expected to do, which they said was naught. They had followed me by inquiries after seeing me in the street car, and had come to the office only to assure themselves that I was really the man they were after. I left them with the fact impressed on my mind that there was a man at large who so closely resembled me that his own wife was deceived. I hoped he would always behave well. In the early summer of 1875 I was married, and my wife and I spent the summer and fall at Green Lake, in central Wisconsin. In the latter part of September I joined a party made up of Dr. Kimball, of the United States army, General Bee. Harrison, now Senator Harrison, of Indiana, and Mr. Lock-

wood, of St. Louis, to go off a duck hunt on Lake Puckaway, some twenty miles further into the wilderness. Lake Puckaway is an extensive, shallow lake, overgrown with wild rice and celery, and is a famous breeding place for aquatic fowls. We had to go in a wagon, and the morning after our arrival General Harrison seduced away my man, Sam Marshall, and went off into the lake, leaving us to find each a boy to push his boat for him. The weather was windy and bad, and Dr. Kimball and I, not having any sport at all, returned to shore and to the house where we had all found lodging. We were down in the mouth and somewhat put out by General Harrison's flank movement, and the doctor opened his grip sack and produced a real bottle of real champagne, which we snuck dry at the general's absence. There were a few straggling houses at the place, and a small country store, in which could be found something in every line. Strolling around alone that afternoon, I met a native who addressed me familiarly as Myers. I did not correct him, and when we went into the store the man there also called me Mr. Myers, and when I left them they both had no doubt they knew me, and that my name was Myers. That evening Rev. George Beecher and his wife and mother, and all his dogs and guns, arrived at our lodging house, and from him I learned that the prairie chicken shooting was as good as the duck shooting, and I determined to try it the next morning early. I found a man who knew the country and had a horse, a wagon and a dog. He agreed to take me out. But before I concluded with him I asked him if he knew where Mr. Myers lived. He said that he had never seen the man that he knew of, but he knew that a man by that name lived in a cabin some six miles back in the woods. He said that we would pass over some fine prairie going in that direction, and we arranged to go. That evening, while Dr. Kimball was chatting in another room with Harrison, Lockwood and the Beecher family, I took the empty champagne bottle, filled it with water, drove in the cork, tied it with twine from a guncase and then pressed over it some tinfoil which I took off from a package of cigarettes. I then took out the doctor's only remaining bottle of real champagne and put the harmless water in its place. The wine I hid in my kit for use the next day. We were off long before daylight, and spent a pleasant morning in beating the prairie. We bagged a number of birds. We traveled toward the residence of Mr. Myers, and about noon reached it. It was a log cabin of three rooms, one of which looked like the summer camp of a gentleman. There were guns and traps, boots and books, cigar boxes and some old magazines lying about in careless confusion. We found a woman in charge, and an old man who seemed to be near the shore line. I asked the old fellow if Mr. Myers was at home, and he replied only by a quizzical look and an idle wave of the hand. But the woman eyed me from head to foot and disappeared hastily. The old man thought I was Myers himself with different clothes on, but the woman took me to be his twin brother. Presently Mr. Myers himself appeared. It is not worth while to describe him. Whoever has seen me has seen him, and after that no one will doubt that he appeared well and behaved better. According to the custom of country people, he gave us the best entertainment the house could furnish, and appreciated with zest the favor of a cigar which I was able to offer him. After dinner while we were lingering on the bench by the old cabin door, I bethought me of my stolen wine and proposed that he join me in a post prandial glass, which tasted very well out of a brace of tin cups. When a good flow of good feeling had been established by the cheering wine, and by our pleasant conversation, I tried, as adroitly as I could, to draw Mr. Myers out. He did not seem to be suspicious, nor at all reticent, but seemed most of all to enjoy a friendly meeting, no matter how short, with a person nearer his own level than those with whom his life was spent. He told me that he had lived in the cabin for two years, doing nothing but passing the time. He amused himself at fishing and hunting, reading and sleeping. In the summer time the members of a shooting club came up to Puckaway, and he spent a day now and then in their congenial society. His long winters, however, were tedious and desolate enough, and I did not fail to extort from him that the reason why he endured them was because he had become sour, and was disgusted with the world and had turned his back on it. When I thought it safe to venture it, the conversation suddenly took this turn: "I—Murray, you ought not to bury yourself in the woods like this." "He (with a look of mingled alarm and surprise)—Murray, did you say?" "I—Yes; and to give it all I might say Charles Wilson Murray, alias Myers." "He—Who are you and what are you after?" "I—I am nobody in particular, and I am after nothing." "He—Did I ever meet you in Philadelphia?" "I—Never; I never saw you before today." "He—Did you come out here on purpose to see me?" "I—Yes, I was mistaken for you in the village yesterday, and I wanted to see what you looked like." "He—How did you get my name?" "I—I was once before mistaken for you, and was arrested in consequence. I was confronted by three ladies and charged with theft, but the charge was made only to secure my arrest. They wanted me, or rather you—not anything which they thought they had lost." "He—Three ladies? Two elderly ladies and one about twenty-two?" "I—Yes. They called themselves Mrs. Seymour, Miss Susan Timberlake and Mrs. Murray, your wife." "He—My mother-in-law, Mrs. Seymour; my Aunt Sue—bless her old soul—and

my Fanny! But, for the sake of mercy, tell me about it. When, where and how was it?" "I then told him what I have already related about my arrest, and I also repeated much of what was said at the Gibson House when I called to see them there, and I spoke of the baby. The mention of the baby transfixed him—it eclipsed all thought of every other person. I told him that the child looked like him, for all the ladies said that it looked like me. "I cannot take time to give all the details; his story was this: "His Aunt Susan and he were all that were left of their family. Neither had another relative upon the face of the earth. She was well off, and he had taken to roaming when a boy and had not seen her for many years. She lived in a little town called Angelica, in western New York. "In 1870 he went to see her and was delighted with affectionate attentions. His aunt's most intimate friend was Mrs. Seymour, who had a pretty daughter, Fanny—and the two old ladies handled the matter so adroitly that almost before he knew it he married the girl. "Then Mrs. Seymour broke up her house and they all set up together at Aunt Sue's. "The ladies had between them an abundance of money. He did nothing but idle the time away; and they did nothing but pet him. They all made a small god of him, and he soon felt himself being suffocated with an excess of affection. He never went out nor came in, never coughed or sneezed, without putting all three ladies into more or less excitement. They pampered him with food, fussed over his linen and other garments, satiated him with petty pettings, until his life was a burden. After two months of it, he had to go to Harrisburg on business, and this little sniff of freedom brought back the charms of a Bohemian life and he did not return. He wrote them from different places, but never waited to hear from them, and now over two years had passed since he had written at all. "I suggested that he go back to them, and he at once asserted with great vehemence that if that baby was a boy he would go back; if it was a girl he would go right away to China or India, and never allow them to hear of him again. "In Mr. Murray's opinion a household made up of three women and one man was too uneven. He was too much in a minority. He said that he seemed to be cut off from companionship, and wanted nothing in the world so much as a male friend and the society of gentlemen. "He said that that child was a boy he would not feel so much alone and so lonesome; the women could not smother him entirely; that he and the boy would soon conspire and confederate for mutual comfort and protection. "Unfortunately I could not tell him the sex of the child, but I promised, without disclosing the fact that I had met him, to get the baby's gender, and let him know. When I took leave he said that he understood that he had been charged with theft of bonds and money. "You tell Aunt Sue," said he, "that the staff is in Mr. Lockhart's safe in his store—where she told me to leave it. I may have omitted to mention this to her." "I wrote to Miss Timberlake when I returned home, and the baby proved to be a boy, which fact I communicated to Mr. Myers at Puckaway. He replied, giving me leave to write again to Aunt Sue to say that he was coming home; and in my letter to her I ventured to hint that if she and Mrs. Seymour would expend the wealth of their affections in one house, on each other, and let Mr. and Mrs. Murray and the boy occupy a mansion to themselves, there would be no further separations. I knew that Murray would soon make a genteel Bohemian out of the boy, and the two would make up a working majority. "In 1880 I got the "oil fever" and invested some money of my own and more for other people in petroleum in Pennsylvania. I spent some time in going over the field from Bradford, Pa., to Richburg, N. Y., and at Duke Center, Pa.; I had quite extensive operations. "One day at the little tavern in Duke Center who should come swinging in but Murray, alias Myers. He had grown so much stouter that he was not mistaken for me, nor I for him; but he knew me instantly, and when I asked, "How is Aunt Sue? and how is the boy?" the fellow smiled to his full capacity. He assured me that Aunt Sue was sound to the core; that the boy was a "gusher," and so was his little brother. "Then," said I, "you are no longer in a hopeless minority." "No, sir," answered he, with the emphasis of a driller; "Aunt Sue and Mother Seymour don't count, and we are three to one now." "Do you never reflect," I asked, "that that second boy may not just as well have been mine? When I was taken to be the father of the first one, I was as footloose as a cowboy, and I could have gone right into the house and been its hero, as long as I did not expose my left side, and perhaps I should have been there yet." "What ails your left side?" he asked. "Nothing," I said. "Only that I have no mark there, and you have—that would have given me away." "Well! well!" he muttered in a musing way, "the old cow that gored me when I was a child and was the same day killed for her viciousness may after all have marked me for good luck. But you must come to Angelica and see us all together." "I assured him that I should be glad to do so, but I was not able then to spare the time, and a visit to the "Murrays" is still one of the pleasures which I hope to enjoy in the future—perhaps in my next summer's vacation."—Amos Flint in Cincinnati Gazette.

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