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THE GREAT NORTH SHORE ROUTE!

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The Bridge at The Crossing.

Where the arched bridge widely spans the way,
And the flag man signaled day by day,
And at the crossing used to wait,
Closing the long, long swinging gate,
The tinkling bell at the end of the bar,
When the dash and swing of the train's
last car,
Went sweeping out of sight in a trice,
Then it tinkled, and tinkled, and tinkled
thrice,
Never a flag man now awaits the train,
Never a tinkling bell is heard again,
Over the bridge the train goes by,
Under the bridge the shadows lie,
Nor does a river murmuring glide,
Under the bridge to the city's side,
But under the bridge the carriages go
And hasten their speed to the town below,
There is life and traffic everywhere,
A myriad sounds clash on the air,
While under the bridge a thousand feet,
Travel the way of the city's street,
And passengers borne on the coming train,
Look strangely out for the city again,
There's another bridge by a city's way,
We shall all pass through on some later
day,
Another city lying on the hill,
And its people remain all quiet and still,
The rush of the train that dashing goes,
Disturbs no sleep or their long repose,
But its streets are soft with a grassy edge,
And the Hawthorn blooms along the
hedge,
Along that bridge no flashing light,
Shines on for them by day or night,
While the other city with hurrying life,
Moves onward and onward with eager
strife.

MARY M. BRYANT,
Brockton,
Mass.

YOUNG LOVE.

By CHARLES GORDON ROGERS.

He thought it all over and decided that he would go and put an end to his heart-ache—or learn from her if that heartache must take on the added gloom of eternal hopelessness. For it is to infinity that the eager, ardent, impulsive and impractical logic of youth weds the first disappointment, the shattering of the first dream that youth says must be realized or be inevitably the last.

He had thought it all over so often, indeed there had been no intermittent moments in day-time or in dreams, his mind had been so filled with the sweet memory of this fair girl who had carried away his heart and every intangible attribute of his ease and spirits, that it was but natural he should resolve upon this decisive step at last, and face forth to discover what destiny and Muriel had in store for him. And yet, with the recollection, made dearer by the lapse of time, of certain little happenings—glances that had not been too coquettish, words that had not been trivial—he was sanguine without the alloy of the conceit of youth. Fool that he had been! He should have taken his fate in his hands then. Had he done so, he would not now be in this miserable condition of uncertainty; yet was not the least better, immeasurably better than the bitterness of disappointment? But no! He could not believe that he would have reaped that hard harvest had he spoken. Still from a comparative standpoint—just to philosophize for a moment—this present suspense with its fair sweet chance was infinitely better than the knowledge of having thrown—and lost. If only she remembered him, had not forgotten him, still thought of him in the tender way that he believed she had regarded him when she was here, when they were together not a year ago! If he could only know that, he would have no foolish fluttering fear of failure.

He thought at first that he would write and tell of his promotion, his success, and how he had waited until he could have something to offer: but he penned several epistles, that he thought at first were very

warm and rang true, and which he afterward found lamentably lame and wanting in color, from his stern, self-critical point of view, when he read them over. Besides, they were written in such a palpably bad and trembling scrawl, so unlike his ordinary round and legible hand, that he was forced to see the humor of the thing and smile. So he tore them all up, each as it was written and read, and ground the pieces under his heel; picking them up a few moments later and burning them very carefully lest Mrs. Homecomfort, the landlady, or Ellen, the girl, both of whom were mightily interested in his affairs—and cared for him more than he knew—No; he would be mad to risk the rumination of whatever chance he had by sending such a poor, boyish effusion as that; so he was practical and astute in the midst of romance. He would play the man, and would go to her and trust to his tongue—usually so ready—not playing traitor to his heart. Then he grew practical again, and hoped and prayed he would not be horribly nervous when the time, the time of times, came; and as a picture of the critical moment forced itself upon his imagination, his heart began to beat as if it would break its bonds—as it had beaten on that summer-day, he remembered, of the famous boat-race, and which he had lost as a result, he remembered bitterly also, while she sat by with pitying eyes that saw him lose with a white and set face by half a boat's length. Yet had not that intense look gathered in her soft eyes been better than winning the cup; save that, had he won, he might have seen pride and joy instead? Yet pity, it had been said, was akin to love; and while losing one stake, why had he not tried to win the other? Fool! fool! So our young friend, finding Retrospect such an unsatisfactory and almost cheerless Sibyl, tried to think of something else by taking down a book—of poetry, of course. Whether by accident or intent, it was Byron, and it opened quite accidentally, of course, at "Fare thee well! and if for ever, then forever fare thee well!" Need I say that he read on?

The hour of departure came at last; and with a feeling of at least partial relief Dick gathered together his necessities of travel—which had been in strict readiness for at least forty-eight hours—and took his train. It was ordinarily a long journey from the little town to the city, but on this particular morning the train and the hours seemed slower a thousand times than ever. He tried to take an interest in the flying scenery; which, by the way, did not seem to fly at all, but rather to lag along, each bit of it, parallel with the broad Pullman window, as if hating to vanish from his vision. Then he tried to read, and managed to do so with the result that he found he had been reading without comprehending a line. So he threw books and comic weeklies—that did not seem comic at all—and newspapers, that did not seem to have any news, all aside, and as a *dernier resort* fled to the smoking compartment. In such a desperate mental predicament, when every other resource has failed, who has not found a pipe the most priceless and only satisfying thing on earth? You take refuge and find peace in the very clouds it creates.

"My dear fellow, this is a surprise!" exclaimed someone who was smoking a cigar in a soft corner by the window, and who looked up as Dick bounced in. "Have you been on board all this time without my knowing it?" And the speaker, a fashionably-dressed young man, with the easy off-hand air of one who is in daily contact with the world in its most worldly and metropolitan phases, held out his hand and presented a cigar-case with the other.

Dick shook hands and sat down, refusing the cigar as he filled his briar pipe. "I had no idea you were in here, Harry," he said, "or I should have been in first thing."

"Thanks. And what is taking you east, if I may ask? I thought you were so tied down to the desk in that stick-in-the-mud town of yours, that you never had a chance to get away. Are you going right through?"

"Right through!" answered Dick, pulling fiercely at his pipe as the words suggested themselves to him with another meaning—the meaning of his journey.

"Kee-rect!" exclaimed Mr. Haney, jovially slapping Dick's thigh with his broad palm. "I'm bound there, too. Going home, you know. What are you bound on, a holiday? Or is it on business for the firm? Have you received that commercial distinction yet?"

"Well, it's hardly a holiday, my time is so brief. And it's something more important than business." Here Dick drew up short and took refuge in re-lighting his pipe.

"More important even than business, eh?" said the other, as he half-closed his eyes in an expression of curiosity. Then he said "Ah!" in a tone that denoted a sudden inspiration and drew down one side of his mouth with a knowing look. "Going to get married?" he added in a careless way as he flicked the ashes from his cigar. "Take my advice and don't take a city girl back to that slow old town of yours. She'd tire of it in a week."

Dick changed color. Here was a contingency he had not altogether considered yet it was not, on second thought one to be considered if that other hope of his came true. He drew a breath of relief, and his normal color returned; Mr. Haney's keen eyes regarding him the while with a strange mixture of curiosity and amusement.

"No, I am not going to be married. You see," he added, rather curtly, "it's a sort of matter I don't care to discuss." Then, his sensitive nature fearing he had been unnecessarily terse, he went on hastily: "But perhaps I shouldn't mind telling you. I think we know each other pretty well, though I haven't seen much of you lately."

"I think we do," said the other gravely, regarding the toes of his pointed boots.

"I am not going to be married, certainly; but it's something like that—something in that way."

"A funeral?" suggested Mr. Haney, with gravity.

"I think possibly I have made a mistake in taking you into my confidence," said Dick stiffly, as he stared at the other and then knocked the ashes from his pipe.

"But you haven't!" protested Mr. Haney.

"And I don't intend to any further! What particular relevance has a funeral to a marriage?"

"Now, don't get gay!" pleaded the other with a comical expression of penitence that made the haughty Richard unbend to the extent of smiling slightly. "My dear boy, I meant no offence. You see, we old married men are so apt"

"Old married men?" echoed Dick, letting his tobacco spill. "Are you married, Harry?"

"Why, certainly. What, didn't you know it? Well, that is a compliment! I thought it had told on my appearance some. Didn't you get any of the cake? That's a shame! I told them to send you some."

"Me?"

"Why, certainly. Old friends, you know. Well, never mind, I guess you're lucky, perhaps you'd have eaten it. Why, yes; I've been married for ages."

"Nonsense! Why the last time I saw you wasn't a year ago; and you weren't married then."

"Less than a year ago? Oh, I catch on! Time flies faster when you're single in a small town than it does when you're married in a city. But you wait; just watch the hands when you're married. You'll think they're spiked. I suppose it's no use for me to warn you. I've been married just two months—by the calendar; just two years by sensations."

Dick flushed slightly and refused to smile this time. Mr. Haney's off-hand and irreverent manner of dealing with such a profoundly serious and delicate subject was not at all congenial to either Richard's ethics or his taste. He felt for the moment as if an insult had been offered to the beautiful bloom and sentiment of his creed of romance. Then the practical side of his nature asserted itself, and he felt that this could not be other than the old Harry Haney he had known when he was a lad; not a bad fellow at bottom he had always thought him; rather a good sort of fellow in the worldly sense of the word. So he smothered the gentle wrath of his prejudice, remarking:

"And what possessed you to get married, Harry? I hardly thought you were of the marrying sort."

"Now, I might get my back up. I guess you mean the *unmarriageable* sort it was you thought me. And why?"

"Well, I'll be frank; too light," said Dick bluntly.

"That's right. Don't be afraid to say what you think; though I don't think you are that kind. Perhaps you're right. The governor, you know, had a good deal to do with it. He insisted that I must settle down—better for business—better for me, and all that sort of argument."

"Yes, but—about your wife, you know. Your father didn't actually choose her for you, did he?"

"Well, I guess not," said Mr. Haney complacently, as he lit a fresh cigar, and regarded his companion through the initial cloud of smoke with a smile that was almost pitying. "I think I had something to do with the aspect of the deal. Of course I came half-way like a dutiful

son. The governor did the handsome thing, too. I didn't marry money, you know. Nothing so venery about the governor; virtue first and foremost with him. He put up quite an edifice; not a brown-stone front, you know, but quite snug quarters. That is, they will be. We haven't moved in yet. The interior is being decorated out of sight; the governor's standing all that. And while that's going on we're spending a little while with mamma. That's where you'll have to come."

"I should like to very much indeed," said Dick with an effort at heartiness. "But I'm afraid my time is too short."

"Oh, not at all! And that reminds me; there's a charming little girl at the house, my wife's sister. So you see you'll have to come round, my boy, no excuse. You'll like her. She's rather distant, something after your style; and she's sure to take a fancy to you. Let's see! We get in somewhere around six. We'll go and have a nice little dinner somewhere and then brush up and go round."

"I think you forget what I told you my mission was," said Dick, trying hard to be civil and serene.

"No, I don't though you didn't really tell me. You're going to propose, isn't that it? Ah, I thought I had hit it! But you look solemn enough for it to be a mission, as you call it. Oh, young Lochinvar he came out of the west! eh? Your mission don't need to interfere with your accepting my invitation, and our having a little fun up-town, does it? And now I come to think of it, my idea is a capital one—I mean about my wife's sister; she might smile on you if your suit should happen to pan out badly in that other quarter."

"My time will be altogether too limited," said Dick shortly, heartily wishing he had not allowed the most cherished object of his heart to become the subject of such chatter. "To change the subject, how does it happen, may I ask, that you are so far from home so soon after being married?"

"So soon—Oh, yes, I forgot! But so far away? Your provincial ideas of distance are limited. Why, I've been away back in the wilds of Chicago. Business, you know—of course; business! business! That's a good word, *wilds*. By the way, Dick—you have an artistic eye, haven't you?—how do you like her?"

And Mr. Haney produced a cabinet-sized photo from his breast-pocket and handed it to Dick.

"Your wife?" said Dick politely, as he scrutinized the photograph.

Mr. Haney smiled rapturously. "Oh, of course!" he said; and then Dick handed the card back without any criticism, for which Mr. Haney did not see fit to press. The talk drifted off into other and drier channels after that, more congenial to Dick and less so to the mental palate of Mr. Haney. But Dick was glad that at least he had spared himself the humiliation of uttering her name.

Night and the city at last! Through the straggling outskirts and the tunnels, then the myriad lights flashing by, the gathering roar of the streets, drowning the rumble of the slower-moving train. The passengers, some of them waking up with a start, stretch their arms and stand erect. Coats and belongings are gathered together by their possessors with a sigh of relief; for such is indeed our appreciation of the conveniences and comforts and luxuries of travel of the wonderful age we live in. And upon some faces there is a wistful look, as they gaze through the windows; straining, perhaps, for the sight of some dear one, who is waiting too perchance with eager, expectant eyes. And in the hearts of others there is perhaps an undefinable fear, a dread of the great unknown city in which fate has commanded them to make their home; and the first homesickness for that real home left behind comes with the vision of the old folks standing at the door with dim and loving eyes, and the wee bodies waving their hands, while he drove away waving his until a bend in the old familiar road hid them all from sight; perhaps for the last time. Who knows?

Dick Leslie, bless his fresh and pastoral young heart! was thankful for the end of the journey that had seemed so long; though everything of importance to him lay in the near yet uncertain future. A glow of renewed hope, as the train ran into the depot and he glanced out at the fleeting lights, strengthened his heart, that had grown a trifle heavy and despondent as the hours went tardily by, thanks to the unaccustomed atmosphere of the cars and the conversation of Mr. Haney. Then he grew depressed again as he stepped from the train and the din of the great depot and the full glare of the lights burst upon him; while to his provincial

eye the crowding, rushing people seemed like a motley pack of devils—eager and intent upon destruction—either their own or someone else's. It almost took the sturdy little heart out of him; but not for a moment did he wish himself back in his little native town three hundred miles away. For he felt and hoped that somewhere beyond the bounds of the great metropolitan uproar there was a home-like haven for him, and "a pair of blue eyes" shining,—Oh, how he yearned for the sight of them, and prayed that his pilgrimage might not be in vain.

He had got away from the sleeping compartment when some "friends" of Mr. Haney's own stripe and dear to the heart of that gentleman had come along and he had kept aloof from him for the remainder. Dick now saw the young man looking about for him with a curious half-amused expression. So Dick slipped away unperceived and took a hack and drove to an hotel where, although he did not feel a particle hungry, he very wisely had some dinner. For it was in his stomach that the real depression had lain; it being my firm belief that making love on an empty stomach is not conducive to the most desirable and happy ending; since the mental and sentimental organization, depending in a large degree upon the physical, should have something to fall back upon in the event of unforeseen disaster.

The lights of the city lay behind him at last, and he found himself in the quiet atmosphere of the suburb, going up the gravelled walk toward the house—the house he had only seen in the water-color sketch she had made for him from memory, and in his subsequent dreams. It was an old and picturesque place, not at all pretentious; and to Dick there seemed a welcome in the glow that fringed the heavy curtains of one of the broad front windows and in the red-stained glass on either side of the door. But nevertheless as he rang the bell his heart beat furiously.

He asked for Miss Stevenson, giving the maid his card with "Richard Leslie" scrawled on it—it had been written with rather trembling fingers at the hotel after dinner—and was shown into the parlor. The girl went away for a moment, coming back to light a lamp in the chandelier. Then she crossed the hallway to the opposite room with his card and he heard several voices. Then he knew his name was being discussed, for the voices were subdued, but nevertheless almost distinct to his painfully alert hearing. At last came a footstep, one he thought he knew, and a young girl crossed the hall and parted the curtains, and stood looking at him for a moment, with a half curious gaze.

She was so like her sister in height and face and figure that Dick had almost started forward with the exclamation of delight that was bubbling on his lips, despite the furious and irregular beating of his pulse. Then she came forward and held out her hand with a smile, and Dick saw in the full light that she was taller and graver-looking than her sister without the girlish gaiety he remembered so well.

"You are Mr. Leslie of Dutton?" she said, and her voice was soft and low and sweet. "I would have known you in an instant, if I had not seen your card, from Muriel's sketch of you. Mamma will be delighted to see you! Mamma told us so much about you, and how kind you were and how pleasant you made her visit. Now, sit down, and tell me how you like our big city after the quiet of your dear little town. For Muriel told us all about it and what a charming place it is!" Muriel's sister chatted on, while she made room for Dick beside her on the old-fashioned settee, with the welcoming ease of a woman of the world rather than a girl of twenty. For Dick had not as yet found his tongue.

"I only got in this evening, you know," he managed to say. "So of course I can't commit myself. But from first impressions, I think I should always prefer the country; though of course we don't consider our town quite that." No word of Muriel yet, poor lad!

"I can quite understand your preference, though our up-town friends consider that we are quite in the country out here," said the girl with animation. "I don't think you would ever lose it. You look—what shall I say?—too wholesome! And you have come at once to see us! How good of you! You will have to excuse Mamma, but she will be down in a few minutes. Muriel will be delighted—it will be quite a surprise to her! She ran out after tea to see a friend of her's who lives near-by; but I expect her back at any moment. She would be here now if she only knew. You and she were fast friends, were you not.—I should say *are*, for a little lapse of time and distance should not make one forget."

At that reference to "fast friendship," the blood flamed into Dick's face. Could this charming sister have guessed the object of his visit that she tempted him so perilously near the brink?

"On my side forgetfulness has not had a chance to play a part," he said, a little hoarsely. If only Muriel were sitting beside him! He found it hard to take this sister into his confidence. And yet she was frankness and friendship personified. Why should he not? He faced her suddenly with eager, burning eyes.

"There is only one thing that has brought me here," he began awkwardly. "I thought perhaps you might have guessed it," then he stopped abruptly. Suppose Muriel should say "No!" Suppose her parents should say "No!" Irrational youth! he had never taken them into his reckoning. Would it not be better for him to go away without leaving them any wiser? Muriel perhaps might wish it so. So he stopped with awkward abruptness, while his listener's clear eyes were looking into his own.

But she had already "guessed it." Even as the lad had turned his flushed face to her she had read or divined what that "one thing" was; and for the moment she was herself silent. And if Dick had been cool and keen and wise he would have read his destiny in the pitying eyes of Muriel's sister. For in the first moment of their meeting she had formed a regard for the boy—such a strange thing is this "regard"—that had been treasured in a less definite form ever since she had seen that life-like water-color sketch of him which Muriel had brought home as a souvenir of the dearest recollection of her country-town visit. But Dick was no nearer guessing this than he was to reading the other look in the face of Muriel's sister. So for a while he sat silent and stared at the carpet, that seemed to grow lurid and swim at his gaze.

And Muriel's sister saw she must tell him, somehow. But for a moment, self-possessed girl though she was, she was at a loss to know what to say. She rose, as if at the sound of a step, and walked to the window, drawing the curtains aside and peering out. At the same moment there was a step and a voice in the hall. Dick sprang up.

"Muriel!" called the other girl, going quickly toward the hall. Then Muriel drew the portiere aside and came into the room; and her sister, with rather a pale face, slipped out.

But this was not the Muriel Dick had known; not the rosy, laughing, bright-eyed girl he had remembered so faithfully. This Muriel was thin and grave, with the light gone from her eyes—with the air of a woman.

For a moment they stood looking at each other, under the light of the chandelier; and to them the whole place seemed very still. And in that mutual gaze she read the lad's heart—the story she had thought, a year ago, he might tell her. But now? She put out her hand with a pitiful little attempt at a welcoming smile.

"Dick," she began, faltering, and stopped; for Dick had seized the little hand in both his own and was carrying it to his lips. She drew it gently away.

"Muriel!" said the lad in a low, eager voice, "what is the matter? Have you been ill? Oh, why didn't you let me know? No, I shan't let your hand go; I am going to keep it for my own. Muriel, I've come to tell you what I wanted to tell you last year—what you must have known—for I have thought of nothing but you since then! And I've come to know if you have thought of me in the way I've thought of you—if you can care enough for me, dear, to come back and live with me *always*! Do look at me, Muriel! dear, dear little girl!" And in a tumult of love and feverish impatience, and a dread he could not define that was stealing into his heart at the sight of poor Muriel's miserable face, he caught the girl in his arms and held and kissed her.

She let him hold her for a moment; then she broke away and flung herself into a chair with her face in her hands and began to cry as if her heart was broken. The boy went down on his knees beside her.

"Muriel! Muriel!" he whispered hoarsely, trying to pull the little hands away, "what is it, darling! You do care for me, don't you?"

"You are too late," said the girl, looking up with a miserable face.

"Too late, Muriel?"

"Yes, Dick. Oh, why didn't you speak then! You might have seen—you might have known! Oh, it is hard!"

"But I don't understand, dear. Too late? How is it too late?"

"Ethel might have told you, and it would have saved us both all this. Dick

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Children Cry for

Pitcher's Castoria.