

**"WILL YOU BE MINE?"**

"Will you be mine," he gently asked.  
"I prize your love the most."  
She answered, after a moment passed,  
"I'll let you know by post."

But still he lingered near the spot  
Where she was wont to stray;  
Her parting words he never forgot  
Though she was far away.

Time passed away, and still no news.  
How come his heart to cheer;  
He thought perhaps she might refuse  
To his little dears.

But fate had deemed it otherwise,  
Although her heart was true,  
One day he came to give her surprise,  
There came a postal card.

On one side was Victoria's head,  
His own name and address,  
The other, which he quickly read,  
Contained that sweet word "yes."

**Texas Industries.**

There is nothing like accommodation, even in so trifling a matter as shooting your neighbor, or your neighbor's friends. It is said of Bill Langley, the notorious desperado of Texas, that he gallantly rode over the State shooting people just for practice, and all the time as gay as a cricket. This may be exaggeration, but one thing I do know, he had a profession way of using firearms, and was not at all particular as to his own safety. I have in mind several incidents in the life of this charming youth, but now that he is in the hands of the law it is best to give him a fat shake for glory. It is not so bad now as in former years, but even at the present there are many playful young fellows in the State who can boast of killing their score of men.

Some years ago I went to Texas for my health, and remained in the state for three years. I think the first day I was in the State I saw a man killed. It was this way: I had stepped into a fashionable saloon, in Austin, for a cigar, and while there a pale young man, wearing a white plug hat, came in and ordered a "cocktail." Besides myself and the pale young man, there were two others in the saloon, a quiet looking individual leaning against the bar, and a lean, lank, cadaverous specimen of the Texas frontiersman. The pale young man drank his liquor, paid his coin, and was about to depart when the ranger accosted him:

"You're a queer lookin' chap," he said. "Who ought ye be?"

"An invalid from Boston," was the reply, with a nervous look at the dusty head covering of the stranger.

No reply was given to this, and with a string of oaths, the desperado went on:

"I'd like to see a man wear such a thing in this State, and live. I want to plug that feller's round me. The first chap I see 'pon on it'll fill him full of holes. That's we."

The pale young man quietly slipped out, followed by the sedate looking individual mentioned above, and the two met face to face shortly after on a neighboring street corner.

"I'd like to exchange hats with you a few minutes," said the latter individual, abruptly.

The wild-mannered man from Boston quietly handed over his stylish chapeau, and placing it on his own head in a foolish way, the sedate Texan walked into the saloon. He walked in boldly. He called for whiskey. He drank. Then he turned, and leaning against the bar, fastened his eyes on the yellow-bearded Texan, who was glaring at him like a maniac. The one seemed to know the thoughts of the other perfectly, for suddenly two revolvers flashed into view; there was a sheet of flame, a double report, keen and startling, and then, through the cloud of smoke that filled the room, I saw the tall desperado throw up his hands, reel, stagger, and fall forward on his face to the floor. The bullet had pierced his heart, killing him instantly.

This was not a first-class joke on the Texan, but here is one on myself, with a different, and quite extraordinary, denouement. The third year I was in the State I had editorial charge of a country newspaper. As an ex-member of the newspaper fraternity of that State I am free to confess that had I remained there a year longer I'd have stayed there always—not above ground, however. I think some playful chap would have shot my head off. For instance, whenever a murder was committed in our district, the desperado element generally took the matter in charge, and in order that public opinion might not be turned against the outlaws by the papers, the editors thereof usually received a warning. "So, one day, a few hours after a quiet, law-abiding citizen had been shot down by a well-known desperado, I was not surprised to find this on my table:

"Sir.—That was a man once who talked too much through a paper, and so sum fellers laid for him in the bush an' shot him full of holes. He died. Tenderly yours,"  
"Signed." — JIM SLASHER.

This was warning enough, but my blood was up, and I determined to write and publish what I pleased. So the paper came out with a full account of the murder and a savage editorial on the lawlessness of that particular district in which I lived. Then I armed

myself with a small arsenal of knives and pistols, and awaited developments.

I did not notice anything unusual the first day, but at the close of the second, while I was writing at the table, the door opened and a man, almost a giant, stepped in. He was, indeed, the most desperate-looking man my eyes had ever beheld. Such a long body, a snarling, devilish gait and such eyes! His face was brown and covered with a straggling beard. He carried a heavy whip in his hand and revolver in his belt, and his eyes—well, I could see by them that he was going to murder me!

"Who are you?" I cried, start up, then sank into my chair, nearly frightened to death. I could not speak; I could scarcely breathe; I could only stare at the blood-thirsty wretch before me. I tried to reach for my revolver, but at that moment, the Texan, leaning both hands on the table, and with his hot breath fanning my cheek stabbled me with the remark:

"D'you want ter buy a load of wood?"

Keep roofs, roads and sidewalk clear of snow.

The telephone may be well enough as a musical disseminator, but what the country needs is the invention of some sort of telephone which may be applied to hand-organs and thin-toned pianos in such a manner as to conduct the music noiselessly off, and dump it in some out-of-the-way place where it will not become offensive.

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