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# FIVE SONNETS OF AN OFFICE BOY



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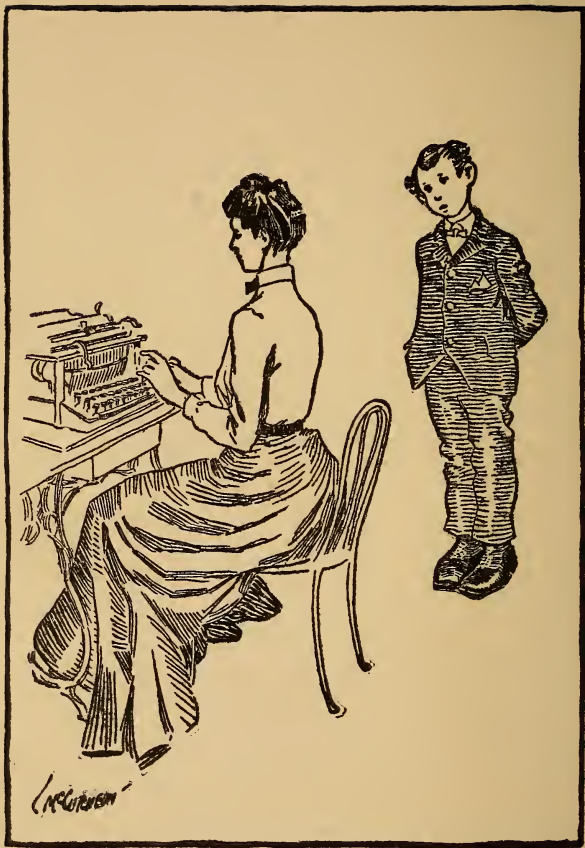
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LOVE SONNETS OF AN  
OFFICE BOY



# LOVE SONNETS OF AN OFFICE BOY

By  
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Illustrated by  
JOHN T. McCUTCHEON



*ENLARGED EDITION*



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LOVE SONNETS OF AN  
OFFICE BOY

I.

OUR new typewriter lady 's came; she 's  
got

The chorus girls all beat a mile or two;  
Her eyes are big and soft and kind of blue;  
Before she spoke to me I never thought  
The world could be so pleasant; every spot  
She touches seems to brighten up; I knew  
The minute I first seen her I was due  
To like her for the gladness that she brought.

She shows a lot of class, all right, all right;  
Her shape is lovely, and she 's full of  
style;

I feel all kind of trembulish and light  
Around the head when she begins to smile;  
It used to seem to be so long till night,  
But now a day is just a little while.

## II.

ONE time, before she come, I thought I'd  
quit,  
Because they wouldn't let me have a raise;  
I'm glad now that I did n't go; it pays  
Sometimes to think again and wait a bit.  
If I would know a place where I could git  
Twice what they pay me here, and holi-  
days,  
Without no lyin' when the home team  
plays,  
I wonder if you think I'd beat it? Nit!

I would n't jump this job while she is here,  
Because some morning mebbly there might  
be  
An earthquake or a flood, and, filled with  
fear,  
The boss and clerk would run, and when  
she'd see  
That I was not a-scared, but lingered near,  
She might be glad to snuggle close to me.

### III.

O H, if you only knowed how much I like  
To stand here, when the "old man"  
ain't around,

And watch your soft, white fingers while  
you pound

Away at them there keys! Each time you  
strike

It almost seems to me as though you'd  
found

Some way, while writin' letters, how to play  
Sweet music on that thing, because the  
sound

Is something I could listen to all day.

You're twenty-five or six and I'm fourteen,  
And you don't hardly ever notice me —

But when you do, you call me Willie! Gee,

I wisht I'd bundles of the old long green

And could be twenty-eight or nine or so,

And something happened to your other  
beau.

#### IV.

I HEARD the old man scoldin' yesterday  
Because your spellin' did n't suit him  
quite ;

He said you 'd better go to school at night,  
And you was rattled when he turned away ;

You had to tear the letter up and write  
It all again, and when nobody seen

I went and dented in his hat for spite :  
That 's what he got for treatin' you so mean.

I wish that you typewrote for me and we

Was far off on an island, all alone ;

I 'd fix a place up under some nice tree,  
And every time your fingers struck a key

I 'd grab your hands and hold them in  
my own,

And any way you spelt would do for me.



V.

I 'VE got a little hairpin that she wore;  
One day she took it out and scratched  
her head  
Until I guess it must of nearly bled,  
And then I seen her drop it on the floor;  
I've got a place next to my heart that's sore  
Where I have had it fassened with a  
thread,  
And every night I put it in my bed—  
I wisht that some time she 'd drop something  
more.

It seems to me when she looks in my eyes  
That everything goes round and round and  
round,  
And I can feel my heart begin to rise  
Up almost where my tonsils are and pound,  
And if she smiles a little bit or sighs  
My feet get light and hardly touch the  
ground.

## VI.

YESTERDAY I stood behind her chair,  
When she was kind of bendin' down  
to write,  
And I could see her neck, so soft and  
white,  
And notice where the poker singed her hair,  
And then she looked around and seen me  
there  
And kind of smiled, and I could seem to  
feel  
A sudden, empty, sinkish feelin' where  
The vittles are when I have eat a meal.

If I would know that some poor girl loved me  
As much as I do her, sometimes I'd take  
Her in my arms a little while and make  
Her happy, just for kindness and to see  
The pleased look that acrost her face 'ud  
break  
And hear the sighs that showed how glad  
she'd be.

## VII.

I WISH a fire 'd start up here, some day,  
And all the rest would run away from  
you —

The boss and that long-legged book-  
keeper, too,  
That you keep smilin' at — and after they  
Was all down-stairs you 'd holler out and  
say :

“ Won't no one come and save me ? Must  
I choke  
And die alone here in the heat and smoke ?  
Oh, cowards that they was to run away ! ”

And then I 'd come and grab you up and go  
Out through the hall and down the stairs,  
and when

I got you saved the crowd would cheer,  
and then  
They 'd take me to the hospital, and so  
You 'd come and stay beside me there and  
cry

And say you 'd hate to live if I would die.\*





MCCUTCHEON

## VIII.

**S**HE telephoned a little while ago  
And after she had quit and was n't there,  
I went and put my mouth up to it where  
Her soft, red lips had nearly touched, and,  
oh,  
Somehow it kind of almost seemed as though  
I breathed the breath she left; the very  
chair  
She sets in is a thing I touch with care  
When I go past, because I love her so.

She keeps her tooth brush in her drawer; I  
seen  
Her put it there this morning when she  
knew  
That I was lookin'; hers are white and clean;  
I wonder if, to-night, when she gets  
through  
And no one else is here, it would be mean  
For me to brush my teeth a little, too?

## IX.

THE lock is broken on her desk; last night  
When all the rest had went I stayed  
and let

Them think that I was keepin' busy yet,  
And when the boss and clerk got out of sight,  
I snuck her tooth brush from the drawer, all  
right;

I kind of trembled and could feel the sweat  
Come on my forrid, but I got it wet  
And started in to brush with all my might.

If we could git the things we try to git,  
We'd be as happy, all of us, as kings,  
And never have to brace ourselves a bit  
To bear the sadness disappointment  
brings;  
The brush was full of oil and dirt and grit;  
I guess she'd used it on the keys and things.

X.

WHEN you're typewritin' and that  
long-legged clerk  
Tips back there on his chair and smiles  
at you,  
And you look up and get to smilin', too,  
I'd like to go and give his chair a jerk  
And send him flyin' till his head went  
through  
The door that goes out to the hall, and  
when  
They picked him up he'd be all black  
and blue  
And you'd be nearly busted laughin' then.

But if I done it, maybe you would run  
And hold his head and smooth his hair  
and say  
It made you sad that he got dumped that  
way,  
And I'd get h'isted out for what I done —  
I wish that he'd get fired and you'd stay  
And suddenly I'd be a man some day.



## XI.

**I**F I was grown to be a man, and you  
And all the others that are workin' here  
Was always under me, and I could clear  
The place to-morrow if I wanted to,  
I 'd buy an easy chair all nice and new  
And get a bird to sing above your head,  
And let you set and rest all day, instead  
Of hammerin' them keys the way you do.

I 'd bounce that long-legged clerk and then  
I 'd raise  
Your wages and move up my desk beside  
Where you 'd be settin,' restin' there,  
and I 'd  
Not care about the weather — all the days  
Would make me glad, and in the evenings  
then  
I 'd wish 't was time to start to work  
again.



## XII.

**T**HIS morning when that homely, long-  
legged clerk  
Come in he had a rose he got somewhere ;  
He went and kind of leaned against her  
chair,  
Instead of goin' on about his work,  
And stood around and talked to her awhile,  
Because the boss was out,—and both  
took care  
To watch the door ; and when he left her  
there  
He dropped the flower with a sickish smile.

I snuck it from the glass of water she  
Had stuck it in, and tore it up and put  
It on the floor and smashed it with my  
foot,  
When neither him nor her was watchin'  
me —  
I 'd like to rub the stem acrost his nose,  
And I wish they 'd never be another rose.



### XIII.

YESTERDAY I watched you when you  
set

There with your little lunch-box in your  
lap ;

I seen you nibble at a ginger snap,  
And wished that where your lips had made  
it wet

I 'd have a chance to take a bite and let  
My mouth be right where yours was be-  
fore ;

And after you had got your apple e't,  
And was n't lookin', I picked up the core.

I pressed my mouth against it then, and so  
It seemed almost the same as kissin' you,  
Your teeth had touched it, and your red  
lips, too,

And it was good and tasted sweet, and, oh,  
I wished you 'd bring an apple every day  
And I could have the cores you 'd throw  
away.

#### XIV.

I WISH, when you was through your work  
    some night  
And goin' home alone, and had your pay  
Stuck in your stockin' — what you drew  
    that day —  
A robber 'd come along with all his might  
And you 'd be nearly scared to death, and  
    right  
There in the street you 'd almost faint and  
    say :  
“ Good robber, please don't hurt me —  
    go away ! ”  
And as he grabbed you then I 'd come in  
    sight.

I wish I 'd be as strong as two or three  
Big giants then, and when I handed one  
Out to him he 'd be through, all in, and  
    done,  
And then you 'd look and see that it was me,  
And, thinkin' of the great escape you  
    had,  
You 'd snuggle in my arms and just be glad.



CAROL KRON

XV.

**H**ER brother come this morning with a  
note

What said that she was home and sick in  
bed ;

She 's got an awful bad cold in her head —  
They think it might run into the sore throat,  
And oh, what if she 'd not come back again,  
And they would get some other girl instead  
Of her to typewrite here, and she 'd be  
dead ?

I would n't care no more for nothin' then.

I wish I was the doctor that they 'd get,  
And when I 'd take her pulse I 'd hold  
her hand

And say " Poor little girl ! " to her, and set  
Beside the bed awhile and kind of let

My arm go 'round her, slow and careful,  
and

Say, " Now put out your tongue a little, pet. "

## XVI.

SHE'S back to work again; I'm awful  
glad;

When she was sick it seemed to me as  
though

The clocks all got to goin' kind of slow,  
And every key she pounds looked kind of sad.

It's tough to have to hear her coughin'  
so —

I wish that I could take her cold and she

Would know I took it, and not have to  
blow

Her nose no more, and be as well as me.

She takes some kind of cough stuff in a  
spoon,

I seen her lickin' it this morning when

She took a dose and put it down again,

And when the rest went out awhile at noon

I got her spoon and licked it, and it seemed

As though it all was something nice I  
dreamed.

## XVII.

**L**AST night I dreamed about her in my  
sleep ;

I thought that her and me had went away  
Out on some hill where birds sung 'round  
all day,

And I had got a job of herdin' sheep.

I thought that she had went along to keep  
Me comp'ny, and we'd set around for  
hours

Just lovin', and I'd go and gather flowers  
And pile them at her feet, all in a heap.

It seemed to me like heaven, bein' there  
With only her besides the sheep and birds,  
And us not sayin' anything but words  
About the way we loved. I would n't care  
To ever wake again if I could still  
Dream we was there forever on the hill.



## XVIII.

**T**HIS morning when we come to work I  
got  
Jammed in the elevator back of you, and  
there  
They made you stick your elbow in me  
where  
The mince pie lands; the lunch that I had  
brought  
Was all smashed flat, but still I did n't  
care;  
You leaned against me, for you could n't  
stand  
Because the ones in front were crowdin', and  
My nose was pressed deep into your back  
hair.

I wish we 'd had to go ten times as high,  
Or else that we 'd be shootin' upward yet,  
And never stop no more until we 'd get  
Away above the clouds and in the sky,  
And you 'd lean back forevermore and let  
Your hairpins always jab me in the eye.



## XIX.

WHEN her and me were here alone, at  
noon,

And she had bit a pickle square in two,  
I set and watched and listened to her  
chew,

And thought how sweet she was, and pretty  
soon

She happened to look down at me and say :

“ You seem so sad, poor boy ; what ’s  
wrong with you ? ”

And then I got to shiverin’ all through  
And wished that I was forty miles away.

I tried to think of some excuse to make,  
But something seemed all whirly in my  
head,

And so the first blame thing I knew I  
said :

“ It ’s nothin’ only just the stummick ache.”

Sometimes I almost wisht that I was dead  
For settin’ there and makin’ such a break.

XX.

**L**AST night I heard Jones astin' you to  
    go  
    To see the opery next Thursday night,  
    And you said yes — and he 'll be settin'  
    right  
Beside you there all through the whole  
    blamed show,  
And you 'll be touchin' him with your  
    elbow,  
    And mebby he 'll say things that tickle  
    you  
    And buy a box of chock'luts for you, too,  
And I 'll not be around nor never know.

I wish I 'd be the hero on the stage,  
    And you was the fair maiden that got  
    stoled,  
    And he would be the villain that would  
    hold  
You frettin' like a song-bird in its cage —  
    And then I 'd come along and smash him  
    one,  
    And you 'd say: "Take me, dear, for  
    what you done."



## XXI.

WHEN I was dustin' off her desk one  
day,  
And she was standin' there, I took the  
pad  
She writes on when she gets dictates and  
had  
A notion to tear off a leaf and lay  
It up against my heart at night, when they  
Was something made her come to where  
I stood  
And say, "Poor boy," as softly as she  
could —  
It almost seemed to take my breath away.

That night I could n't sleep at all becuz  
The thoughts about them words that she  
had said  
Kep' all the time a-goin' through my head  
With thoughts about how beautiful she wuz,  
And then I knowed she loved me, too,  
or she  
Would not of cared how hard I worked,  
you see.

XXII.

I 'D like to have a lock of her brown hair,  
For that would be a part of her, you  
know ;  
And if she 'd tie it with a little bow  
Of ribbon, then I 'd fasten it somewhere  
Clear down inside, next to my heart, to  
wear,  
And fix it over every week or so,  
When I changed undershirts, or maw  
she 'd go  
And raise a fuss because she found it there.

One day when bizness was n't on the boom  
She trimmed her finger-nails, and one  
piece flew  
To where I was, almost acrost the room ;  
I watched the spot where it went tum-  
blin' to,  
And now a piece of her is mine ; it come  
Right from the end of her dear little thumb.

## XXIII.

I WISH, some day, when she 's typewritin'  
and  
I 've took a note out for the boss some-  
where,  
They 'd be some outlaws sneak in here  
and scare  
That long-legged clerk to death and then  
the band  
Would steal her, and nobody else would  
dare  
To try to save her, and they 'd run away  
To where they had their cave, and keep  
her there,  
And ast more for her than her folks could pay.

Then I would get a gun and bowie-knife  
And take the name of Buckskin Bob or Joe,  
And track them to their den, and then  
I 'd go  
A-galley whoopin' in, and save her life,  
And she would say: "My hero 's came  
at last!"  
And we 'd stand there and hold each  
other fast.



## XXIV.

**L**AST night, when she 'd got on her coat  
and hat  
And felt her dress behind and then her  
hair,  
To see if everything was all right there,  
She stopped and said: "Well, now just look  
at that!"  
And then put out one foot a little bit,  
And says: "Ain't that provokin'? I  
declare,  
The string's untied!" She put it on a  
chair,  
A-motionin' for me to fasten it.

So then that long-legged clerk he pushed  
me back  
And grabbed the shoe-strings that were  
hangin' down —  
I wish I was the strongest man in town —  
Oh, would n't I of let him have a whack!  
And I'd of kicked him so blamed hard  
I'll bet  
He'd wonder what he might come down  
on yet.



XXV.

**M**Y darling, often when you set and think  
Of things that seem to kind of bother  
you,  
You put your pencil in your mouth and  
chew  
Around the wood, and let your sweet teeth  
sink  
Down in it till it's all marked up and split,  
And yesterday I seen you when you threw  
A stub away that you'd bit up; it flew  
Behind the bookcase, where I gobbled it.

I put it in my mouth, the way you'd done,  
And I could feel the little holes you made—  
The places where your teeth sunk in—I  
laid  
My tongue tight up against them, every one,  
And shut my eyes, and then you seemed  
to be  
There with your lips on mine and kissin'  
me.

XXVI.

WHEN I was tellin' ma, two days ago,  
About our beautiful typewriter girl  
She dropped the dough and give a sudden  
whirl  
And said: "She's twic't as old as you, you  
know —

She must be twenty-five or six or so.

Don't think about her any more, my dear,  
And you and me'll be always happy here—  
Besides, she's nothing but an old scarecrow."

It made me sad to hear her talk that way;  
My darling's just a little girl almost—  
I can't see why ma give her such a roast,  
And I could hardly eat my lunch next day,  
For every time I took a bite of bread  
I almost hated ma for what she said.



## XXVII.

**T**HE other day a rusty pen got stuck  
    Away deep in her finger, and she held  
    Her poor, dear little hand up then and  
    yelled  
    For me to hurry over there and suck  
The poison out, and when I went I struck  
    My toe against the old man's cuspidor  
    And rolled about eight feet along the floor  
Before I knew what happened, blame the  
    luck!

When I set up and looked around, at last  
    That long-legged, homely clerk was there,  
    and so  
    He had her finger in his mouth, and, oh,  
I'll bet you I'd 'a' kicked him if I dast!  
    I never seen the beat the way things go  
    When there's a chance for me to stand a  
    show.

## XXVIII.

SHE'S got a dimple in her chin, and, oh,  
How soft and cute it looks! Her eyes  
are blue;

The red seems always tryin' to peep  
through

The smoothness of her cheeks. I'd like to go  
And lay my face up next to hers and throw •

My arms around her neck, with just us  
two

Alone together, and not carin' who  
Might scold if they should see us actin' so.

If I was boss I'd have an auto here

To take her to her home in every night;

I'd tell the driver that he need n't fear

That we was in a rush, and holdin' tight

With both hands I would whisper in her ear

While we were snuggled back there, out of  
sight.

## XXIX.

I DON'T care if she 's twic't as old as me,  
For I've been figgerin' and figgers  
shows

That I'll grow older faster than she grows,  
And when I'm twenty-one or so, why, she  
Won't be near twic't as old as me no more,  
And then almost the first thing that she  
knows

I might ketch up to her some day, I  
s'pose,  
And both of us be gladder than before.

When I get whiskers I can let them grow  
All up and down my cheeks and on my  
chin,  
And in a little while they might begin  
To make me look as old as her, and so  
She'd snuggle up to me and call me  
"paw."  
And then I'd call her "pet" instead of  
"maw."



### XXX.

ONE morning when the boss was out  
somewhere  
And when the clerk was at the bank and  
me  
And her was here alone together, she  
Let out a screech and jumped up in the air  
And grabbed her skirts and yelled: "A  
mouse!" And there  
One come a-runnin' right at her, and, gee!  
They was n't a blame thing that I could  
see  
To whack it with, except an office chair.

I grabbed one up and made a smash and hit  
Her desk and broke a leg clear off some-  
how,  
And when the boss came back and looked  
at it  
He said that I would have to pay, and  
now,  
When ma finds out I know just what I'll  
git —  
Next pay-day there will be an awful row.



XXXI.

IT'S over now ; the blow has fell at last ;  
It seems as though the sun can't shine  
no more,  
And nothing looks the way it did before ;  
The glad thoughts that I used to think are  
past.  
Her desk 's shut up to-day, the lid 's locked  
fast ;  
The keys where she typewrote are still ;  
her chair  
Looks sad and lonesome standin' empty  
there —  
I 'd like to let the tears come if I dast.

This morning when the boss come in he  
found  
A letter that he 'd got from her, and so  
He read it over twice and turned around  
And said : " The little fool 's got mar-  
ried ! " Oh,  
It seemed as if I 'd sink down through the  
ground,  
And never peep no more — I did n't,  
though.

XXXII.

THE chap 's a beau we did n't know she  
had,

He come from out of town somewhere,  
they say ;

I hope he 's awful homely, and that they  
Will fight like cats and dogs and both be  
sad.

But still there 's one thing makes me kind  
of glad :

The long-legged clerk must stay and work  
away,

And, though he keeps pretendin' to be  
gay,

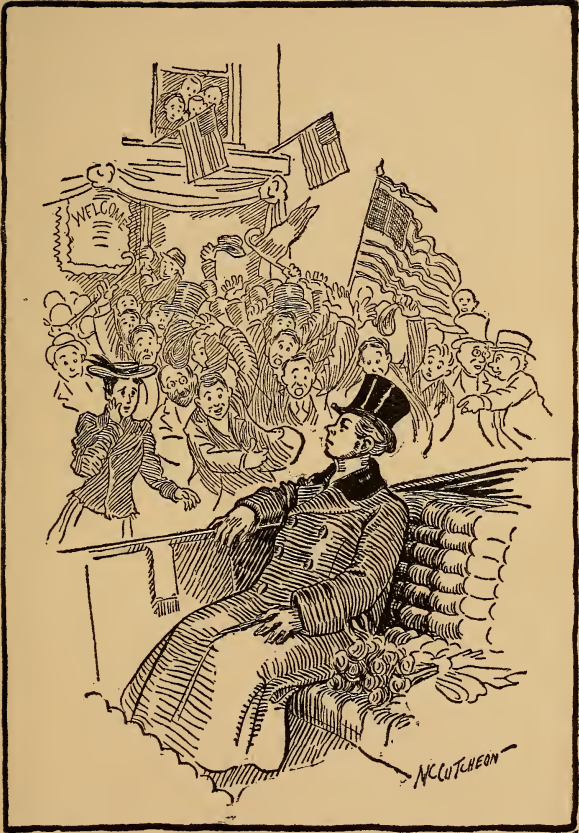
It 's plain enough to see he 's feelin' bad.

I wish when I 'm a man and rich and proud,  
She 'd see me, tall and handsome then,  
and be

Blamed sorry that she did n't wait for me,  
And that she 'd hear the people cheerin'  
loud

When I went past, and down there in the  
crowd

I 'd see her lookin' at me sorrowf'ly.



# BEN KING'S VERSE

## If I Should Die To-Night

If I should die to-night  
And you should come to my cold corpse and say,  
Weeping and heartsick o'er my lifeless clay —  
If I should die to-night  
And you should come in deepest grief and woe  
And say, "Here 's that ten dollars that I owe" —  
I might arise in my large white cravat  
And say, "What 's that?"

If I should die to-night  
And you should come to my cold corpse and kneel,  
Clasping my bier to show the grief you feel —  
I say, if I should die to-night  
And you should come to me, and there and then  
Just even hint 'bout payin' me that ten,  
I might arise the while;  
But I 'd drop dead again.

(From "Ben King's Verse.")

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