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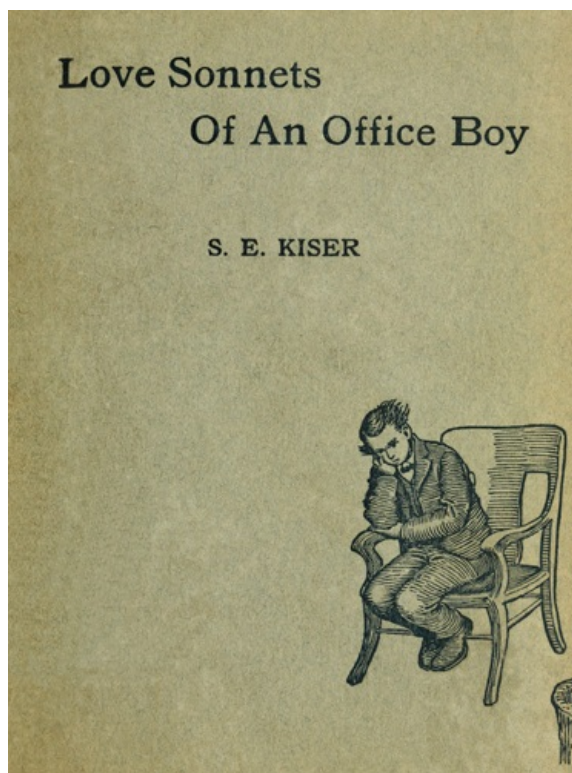
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## LOVE SONNETS OF AN OFFICE BOY

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Love Sonnets of an  
Office Boy

[Pg 3]

By  
Samuel Ellsworth Kiser

Illustrated by  
John T. McCutcheon



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LOVE SONNETS OF AN  
OFFICE BOY

[Pg 5]

## I.

Oh, if you only knewed 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.

## II.

[Pg 6]

I heard the old man scoldin' yesterday  
Because your spellin' didn'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.



[Pg 7]

## III.

[Pg 8]

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 bookkeeper, 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.



[Pg 9]

#### IV.

[Pg 10]

Yesterday I stood behind your chair  
When you was kind of bendin' down to write,  
And I could see your neck, so soft and white,  
And notice where the poker singed your hair,  
And then you looked around and seen me there,  
And kind of smiled, and I could seem to feel  
A sudden empty, sinkish feelin' where  
I'm all filled up when I've just e't a meal.

Dear Frankie, where your soft, sweet finger tips  
Hit on the keys I often touch my lips,  
And wunst I kissed your little overshoe,  
And I have got a hairpin that you wore—  
One day I found it on the office floor—  
I'd throw my job up if they fired you.

#### V.

[Pg 11]

She's got a dimple in her chin, and, oh,  
How soft and smooth it looks; her eyes are blue;

The red seems always tryin' to peep through  
The middle 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, but not carin' who  
Might scold if they should see us actin' so.

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'd break,  
And hear the sighs that showed how glad she'd be.

## VI.

[Pg 12]

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.



[Pg 13]

## VII.

[Pg 14]

If 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.

[Pg 15]



### VIII.

[Pg 16]

This 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.

### IX.

[Pg 17]

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 before;  
And after you had got your apple e't,  
And wasn'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.

## X.

[Pg 18]

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.



[Pg 19]

## XI.

[Pg 20]

Her 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 wouldn'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."

## XII.

[Pg 21]

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.

## XIII.

[Pg 22]

Last 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 wouldn't care  
To ever wake again if I could still  
Dream we was there forever on the hill.



[Pg 23]

[Pg 24]



## XIV.

This 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 didn't care;  
You leaned against me, for you couldn'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.

## XV.

[Pg 25]

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.

## XVI.

[Pg 26]

Last 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 mebbly 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."

[Pg 27]



## XVII.

[Pg 28]

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 couldn'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.

## XVIII.

[Pg 29]

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 wasn'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 tumblin' to,  
And now a piece of her is mine; it come  
Right from the end of her dear little thumb.

## XIX.

[Pg 30]

I wish, some day, when she's typewritin' and  
I've took a note out for the boss somewhere,  
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.



[Pg 31]

## XX.

[Pg 32]

Last 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, wouldn'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.

## XXI.

[Pg 33]

My 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.

## XXII.

[Pg 34]

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.



[Pg 35]

## XXIII.

[Pg 36]

The 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.

## XXIV.

[Pg 37]

That homely clerk took her out for a ride  
Last Sunday in a buggy, and they rode  
Around all through the parks; I wisht I'd knowed  
About it, and the horse would kind of shied,  
And then got scared and run and kicked, and I'd  
Of been a piece ahead and saw him jump  
And leave her hangin' on alone, the chump,  
And she'd of been so 'fraid she'd nearly died.

Then I'd of give a spring and caught the bit,  
And landed on the horse's back, where all  
The people there could see me doin' it,  
And when I got her saved the crowd would call  
Three cheers for me, and then she'd come and fall  
Against my buzzum, and he'd have a fit.

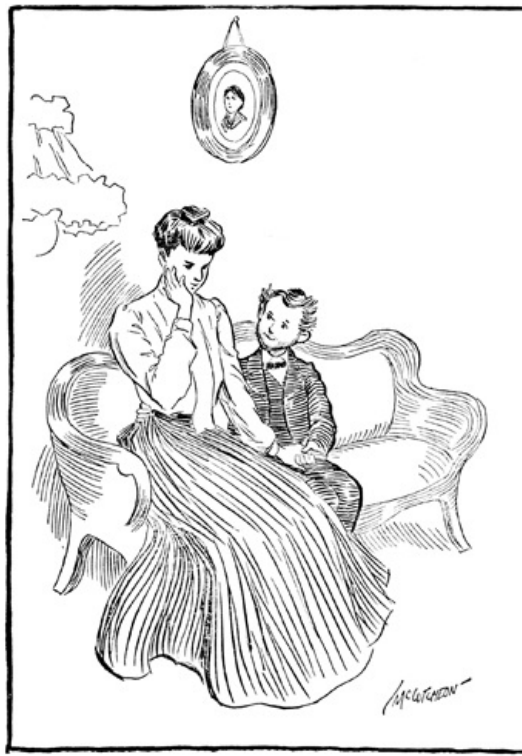
## XXV.

[Pg 38]

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."

[Pg 39]



## XXVI.

[Pg 40]

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 wasn'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 somehow,  
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.

## XXVII.

[Pg 41]

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 married!" Oh,  
It seemed as if I'd sink down through the ground,  
And never peep no more—I didn't, though.

## XXVIII.

[Pg 42]

The chap's a beau we didn'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 didn'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.

[Pg 43]



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And you should come to my cold corpse and say,  
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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,  
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