

**A. Mortimer Cleveland, "The Daguerreotype," (fiction) 17 July 1858**

(keywords: A. Mortimer Cleveland, daguerreotype, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography.)

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Published in:

*Ballou's Pictorial and Drawing-Room Companion* (Boston) 15:3 (17 July 1858): 38–39.

[Written for Ballou's Pictorial.]

THE DAGUERREOTYPE .

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BY A. MORTIMER CLEVELAND.  
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MY cousin Fred was a great favorite. He certainly was uncommonly good looking. He was tall, and well-formed, had roguish black eyes, splendid whiskers and hair, which curling a little was thrown back gracefully from a forehead sufficiently high and full. He talked well; that is to say, so as to make people satisfied with themselves and him; said the most common-place things in such an irresistible manner as to make himself esteemed a real wit. He was fully aware of his good points, and made the most of them. It is hardly necessary to add that he was an egotist, and that without being really a flirt, he was addicted to the habit so common among the lords of creation of flattering himself that all the ladies were in love with him. He was for a long time a student in my father's office, and a member of our family. I was his favorite cousin, and to me he showed the little serious corner of his heart; for he was really affectionate and sympathetic and loving of his friends, although many people would not have believed it. He walked one morning into the parlor where I was practising, enveloped in a new gray suit which I had never seen before, and looking as wicked as mischief itself.

"Well, Amy," said he, "I'm ready. Farewell."

"Farewell," replied I, looking round. "So you are ready—ready for what?"

"My journey, of course."

"To be sure; but where are you going?"

"Why, I am sure I thought I told you. I am going out West."

"Well that's very comfortable news for you to interrupt my lesson with; very comfortable too for me to believe that the interruption will be the last till your return. How long shall you stay?"

"I shan't be back before next week. You'll miss your brother, Amy wont you?"

"Miss you? I shall miss you dreadfully."

I then began to realize how much I was going to lose. I knew that his "before next week" meant an indefinite length of time. He was serious now. He only wanted some one to interpret his words; and I was beginning to be serious too.

"You will write to me, won't you, Amy? and direct 'Out West.'"

“No, you naughty boy, I wont write a word. You might have told me you were going before.”

“If you have any messages to send to the people, there is time for them now.”

“You ought not to take me so by surprise.” “What was the need of your feeling sorry any longer? I couldn’t bear to see you sorry. Come, don’t pout any more. You look a great deal prettier when you smile.”

I knew this was true; but I wouldn’t smile until I had an occasion for it, which came soon enough.

“Well, really, Fred, when shall I see you again?”

“O, in a little while. When I’m married I’ll send for you to come and live with me. There’s the carriage for me. Good-by, Amy. Be a good girl, and don’t forget your brother.”

He was off in a moment, and I went again to my practising, until I happened to remember that Fred was gone perhaps for years, and I couldn’t practise if it had been to save my life; so I sat down in a low chair behind the door and began to have a good hearty cry. In the midst of this interesting operation I was interrupted by some one pulling my handkerchief from my eyes. Fred stood before me.

“Why, Fred, I thought you had gone out West?”

“So I did, but I’ve come back again. You see I had my daguerreotype taken for you, and I forgot to leave it, so I came back with it. Now aint you delighted?” And indeed I was, though of course I knew this was not the reason of his coming back; and he put in my hand a small box containing a daguerreotype.

“There,” said he, “isn’t that as good as life?” Don’t I make a splendid picture?”

I opened it and found the picture of a young lady, very young, not more than fifteen or sixteen, almost childish in the perfect simplicity of attitude and dress, and yet in the earnest, serious expression of the eyes, and the deep repose of the features, there was denoted maturity beyond the age. Fred had been leaning his head upon his hand, and had not observed my start of surprise, so that I considered it for a long time attentively. All at once he started up, saying:

“You don’t speak, Amy.” And then looking at the picture in my hand, he smiled a little differently from his usual careless manner, and said, “You think I have changed some, don’t you? Well, I have made a mistake, for which I was sorry at first, but I don’t care now. Here is the box I designed for you.” And he passed me a very fine likeness of himself.

But as Fred was with me, it must be confessed I was much more interested in the strangely beautiful and interesting new face presented to me. Fred was silent, and at last put out his hand to take it.

“Tell me, Fred, who this is.”

“I should be happy to do so, but cannot.”

“Don’t you know?”

“Certainly not, or I could tell you.”

“Well, then, tell me how it came into your possession.”

“With the greatest pleasure, I found it.”

“Don’t be so provoking. I want to know everything about it that you know: where you found it, and when, and how.”

“Well, Miss Curiosity, I found it this morning.”

“And so this was the occasion of your being left by the cars?”

“Precisely so. Immediately before me a carriage stopped, containing quite a large party of gentlemen and ladies. I imagined they would be fellow-travellers, and was going to interest myself in them, when my old college chum, Alfred Clarke, came along. I was so delighted to see him that I forgot everything else, and did not even notice that the car bell was just ringing for passengers to take their seats. In the bustle of the crowd, and confusion caused by Clarke’s voice, I heard distinctly the voice of a lady saying, ‘Good-by, Edward’ and the answer in Edward’s manly tones, ‘Good-by, Alice.’ There was a peculiar sweetness in the lady’s voice which impelled me to look; but Clarke talked on, until suddenly, as the car started, he left me and jumped on. I started to follow him, but my foot struck something and I stumbled. I picked myself up, and found this little box, which I at first supposed to be the one I had designed to leave with you. Opening it mechanically, I discovered my mistake, and also found to my chagrin that the cars were under full speed, and I must make a virtue of necessity, and wait till to-morrow. But aint you glad? You haven’t said one word about my picture. Don’t you find it charming?”

“You haven’t given me a chance to speak a word,” said I, taking the two pictures and placing the side by side. “What a handsome couple.”

“Amy,” said Fred, quite gravely.

“Well, Fred.”

“Don’t you have any suspicion who the original of this picture—this Alice is?”

“How do you know it is Alice?”

“Why, I heard here called Alice this afternoon. That voice could belong to nobody else.”

Poor Fred! I saw that he was too much interested in the unknown. But as if to confirm his impression, my eye fell upon a few words in delicate pencil writing upon the corner of the box which had contained the picture, and which had passed before unnoticed by both of us. “Au revoir.—A.”

“There, Amy,” continued he, “is confirmation enough that my impression was true. And now how am I to find her out? You see it makes me very sorry to have to keep this article which belongs to somebody else.”

“Don’t trouble yourself. I have no such conscientious scruples; I shall be delighted to possess anything so beautiful. I’ll take it off your hands.”

“But it is my duty to find the real owner, my obliging little cousin.”

“You have only to advertise for a nice young man named Edward, and he will be the owner.”

I said it on purpose to make him jealous, and I succeeded; but he would not show it, and adopted my idea immediately.

“Yes, I will advertise it. Edward has gone off in the cars, but Alice will come for it; and if it is at all correct she will have no difficulty in proving property.

“O, but Fred, it’s really too bad to have to give up so beautiful an article; and then to find the lady and learn that she is engaged would be provoking.: I did enjoy teasing him, it must be confessed, and I felt myself entitled to some revenge for all the times he had teased me. “And then if you advertise, you will have to stay a few days longer, or you might leave it with me.”

“O, yes, of course I shall stay myself.”

The picture was duly advertised, and Fred lingered more than a week; but no person came to claim it. But as the probability of his finding the owner grew less, his interest in it did not at all decrease. At last, however, he could stay no longer, and left, taking his treasure with him; for I could not persuade him it was best for him to leave it with me.

He went out West, and went about considerably, and finally he located himself in one of the flourishing villages on the Mississippi, which would be, he said, a city before a hundred years. He was very successful. Everybody said he was destined to be a great man, wealthy, and perhaps the governor of the next new State; and many of our mutual friends began to offer me congratulations, in all simplicity of heart imagining that if he was the governor I must necessarily in the course of time be the governor's wife. Others wondered that he did not return and seek a wife among the many fair friends he had left behind. The secret of the picture remained between us two. We had come to talk about it very seriously; and if ever a man was in love sincerely and earnestly, he was; not, he firmly protested, with the beautiful fair, or sweet little mouth, or fair round arm, but he argued, this picture must have an original, and this representation of her declares that she must have a character very lovely, and by no means common. "I shall find her some day, and I shall certainly wait till I do.: I shared his faith. It really seemed to me so much a reality that I began at last almost to imagine that I had seen her, and in my conversation with Fred, and letters to him, invariably spoke of my future cousin-in-law Alice.

And so the years went by. Fred's yearly visits had been short, and gradually, as he became more and more devoted to business, his letters became shorter and less frequent. I began to wish he would find Alice soon, or cease waiting for her. I feared for him the passing away of those delicate perceptions which are so desirable in a gentleman, and which familiar intercourse with refined ladies is so well calculated to bring out. And as Fred was becoming so old that it was no more the same pleasure for him to give so much attention to the ladies, as he had become less inclined to it from the fact that he was so much interested in Alice, and as he was so constantly and so successfully engaged in business, I feared that selfishness into which people in his circumstances are so liable to grow. I doubted not that he would find some one whom he would love and marry, even should he not find Alice, for almost all men, I believe, may transfer an affection, however devoted, to another object than the one on which it is first placed. But I feared that Fred's love was becoming to him an unreal thing, and that the benefit which naturally results to a young man from the fact of his loving, would not be to him, and that in case he should transfer his affections it would be too late. I will give a few extracts from Fred's letters, which will indicate the progress of this little story. The first was received about four years after he first went away. Here it is.

"I was at church last evening, and sat in the gallery, and on the opposite side of the church, below, I saw the face which has haunted me so long. Though I had been expecting it, yet you may believe that I was at first incredulous. But there was no mistake. Of this I was convinced, as I watched her closely during the remainder of the services. Her companions were strangers to me, and I determined not to lose sight of them until I had found some one who could give me information respecting them. I asked my neighbors on each side. I believe they thought me deranged; but they were as ignorant as myself. All my efforts to reach them as we came out were unsuccessful. I lost them in the crowd, and it was impossible for me to find them or learn anything more of them; but it gave me great joy, a new hope, a proof that sometime I shall see her. Alice is living, nor far from me perhaps, perhaps in this very city (for we are a city now). Of course you cannot imagine my feelings, but you can and will sympathize with your brother Fred."

After a few months, during which Fred had made constant and unavailing search, irresistibly impelled by the circumstance which had revived his hope, I received another letter, from which I make and extract.

“O, Amy, the worst has come to my knowledge, such as I could and would never believe; and I am not ashamed to ask you for your sympathy. The secret of my heart, its hope and fear and happiness, and now its great grief, which have been and shall be secret to all the world besides, are still open to you. Alice is found, and, how shall I write it, lost forever to me. Last week (I have not felt equal to the task of writing it before), on Friday, I was very agreeably surprised by a visit from my friend Clarke. He is settled in my neighborhood—that is, not a hundred miles from me. I hadn’t seen him before for many months; he had been married since, and was looking as delighted and happy as a man ought under any circumstances. Of course I was not slow in offering my congratulations, since I fancied I could sympathize in his joy. The hope of soon meeting Alice, and being perfectly happy myself, was ever present, and I was particularly hopeful this morning. You may imagine I was good-natured, for I could even endure patiently to hear Clarke’s praises of his bride. ‘Just wait,’ I thought to myself, ‘till you see my Alice.’

“I’ll tell you what it is, Winchester,’ said he, ‘you must follow my example. You are old enough certainly, and ought to be married. I know a lady that will just suit you, a lovely little creature, a cousin of my wife, who—’

“I’m much obliged to you,’ I replied drily, ‘I’ve no doubt you are a good judge. Possibly I can suit myself as well as you have done.’

“You are engaged already perhaps?”

“Confound the man,’ I thought, ‘why can’t he stop.’ And I replied that I was quite at liberty, but I could not see that that obliged me to care anything about his wife’s cousin. I was fast losing my temper.

“There’s where you are right.’ replied Clarke, whose temper was proof against any assault. ‘I see how it is. I wish you all success, and at any time we shall be delighted to see you at our house. What changes have been since we came out here nearly five years ago. Do you remember that morning we met, as I was on my way, when you came near being the occasion of my being left behind?’

“Yes, I have occasion to remember it. You made me so late that I could not go that day, as I had been intending to.’

“Really, that was unfortunate. I’d no idea you were on the point of such a journey.’

“Nor I you.’

“But you were also the occasion of my meeting with a loss, quite serious at the time, though it was afterwards replaced. It was a miniature which I was just going to show you, and had taken from my pocket for the purpose, when I perceived the bell had stopped, and the cars were just starting. For a moment I forgot the box which contained the picture, and only knew that it was gone after I was seated in the cars. If I had only known you were going with me, I might have spared myself much vexation, for we would have had plenty of leisure to talk. But it is as well; since now I have the original, of course the picture is of comparatively little value.’ “You can faintly imagine my feelings as I heard him, as the truth gradually dawned upon me that the idol of my thoughts during all my sleeping and waking hours for so many years, was the wife of my friend, was even at the time I began to worship her betrothed to him. And I knew too that this might have been prevented if I could have started with him that day and seen the picture as he designed; yet scarcely wishing that I could have been spared the agony of the pursuit, if at the same time I must relinquish all those sweet hopes of the past. Certainly not knowing what I wished, and scarcely what I said, I replied that a great deal of vexation might have been spared me if I could have known it, for—I could not finish my sentence.

“Good heavens! Winchester, what ails you? You are as pale as death.’

“I was very weak, but feeling the necessity of a great effort, and controlling my physical powers by the strong power of will, I arose, and assisted by Clarke, walked to the window which he had opened, believing it might be the effect of the warm room.

“Are you subject to such attacks, Winchester?”

“O, no. I shall be better directly.”

“You need change of scene, and a little rest. You must come and spend a few weeks with us; Alice, that is my wife, would make you very welcome. You are really ill,” said he, with much anxiety in his tone.

“And I felt that to hear the name of my own beloved thus pronounced by another was more than I could bear. But it would not do to yield to my weakness; the power of my will conquered for the time, and I replied to him that I could not leave immediately, and that when I could, I should be most happy to visit him. Fortunately it was near the time when he was to leave for home, and as I assured him that I did not need him at all, and as I seemed better, he left me—fortunately, I said, for I could not have endured his presence any longer than. Of the following day I will say nothing; it will be only necessary for me to tell you what I have done to-day, as the result of my reflections. I have looked my last at that face you know so well; I have sealed up the box, and within it I enclosed a note of which the following is a copy, and mailed it to Clarke this morning:

“Of course you did not imagine, my friend, that I found your picture, any more than I thought I was learning to love the beloved of my friend. In one respect you may congratulate yourself that it has been in my possession. No unappreciative eye has ever for a moment rested upon it. More carefully than I have guarded my own soul from injury, have I guarded this representation of you Alice, whom I fondly hoped to find and appropriate to myself. With this hope removed, knowing what the reality is, I cannot if I would, and I would not retain that which has been by me most valued of anything on earth. I send you back your property, realizing while I do it that good as it is, it is comparatively worthless, now that you have the original, and to me it was beyond price. You will understand, my friend, why I cannot visit you now. I could not endure to see Mrs. Clarke at present nor you either, even though I remain as ever, and wishing you all possible happiness, your true friend. I shall try to make arrangements for visiting the East very soon.”

“So, Amy, you may be looking out for me before too long. I shall write you again before I start.”

In the course of four or five weeks I received the following:

“I shall not be at home this spring, Amy, and you’d better burn my last letter. It’s all nonsense. I’ll try and see if I can be patient enough to tell you all that has happened since. I told you, I believe, of my sending the miniature to Clarke. He was so much astonished and affected by what I wrote then that he started immediately and came back to me.

“This will never do, Winchester,” said he, rushing into my room; “there’s no use of your running away from us so. Mrs. Clarke has commissioned me to bring you home with me; she is very anxious to make your acquaintance, and you must come.”

“You have not—”

“Been such a fool as to tell her you are in love with her. Of course not. It is not best to yield to difficulties; face them.”

“So I intend to do; but do not ask me to visit you at your home; I cannot do it. I am going East soon.”

“But that will be of no use; you must come with me. That was an unfortunate affair about the picture; but you must accustom yourself to things just as they are.”

“His manner hurt me. I felt provoked with him for seeming so indifferent to my great sorrow, which I had confided to him mostly as a necessary part of the duty of returning the picture. I had at least expected him to respect it and regard my wishes. He only seemed bent upon subjecting my feelings to the severest ordeal.

““You have no right to insist upon this, Clarke, and—”

““I tell you, Fred, I will take no refusal. I do not wish to subject you to unnecessary annoyance, but I am convinced that it is only by seeing Mrs. Clarke that the effects of your mistake will pass away. I am not going to consent to have you miserable, and despairing, and imagining yourself the victim of misplaced affection, casting off my friendship as well as that of my wife, when by acting as a man of sense you may save yourself from an unhappy future. I tell you if you don't come, I'll tell Alice all about you.”

““I am not convinced by your argument nor moved by your threats, Clarke, but since you have determined a course of action for me, I will satisfy you; I will go with you. You may have the privilege of seeing how much I can suffer, if you are so anxious, though I warn you it will probably result in the dissolution of our friendship. I am ready to accompany you at any moment.”

““No you are not; you are to make arrangements to stay a few weeks at least.”

“I obeyed him mechanically, for to the whole arrangement I was forcing myself into an indifference of feeling, and my manner showed it. Clarke did not mind me at all; he seemed delighted, and I should have been constantly more and more provoked only for the fact that I was determined to be indifferent. You would hardly believe me if I should tell you that I retained my indifference as we were approaching Clarke's house, so I will confess to you that it was quite otherwise. However, I had determined to make a martyr of myself. But you are anxious to hear the result, and do not care so much about my reflections by the way. Clarke has a cozy little home, and he took me into his parlor, charmingly neat and tasteful, as I should know Alice would make it, and said he would speak to his wife. He came back in a few minutes accompanied by Mrs. Clarke, a charming little woman, but not at all my Alice; and yet strangely enough her name is Alice. She made me very welcome in the same voice which had been so long ringing in my ears. Of course I was very glad that Clarke had forced me to accept of his invitation. Yet it was very strange; of course I could not understand it. The miniature had not been disowned by Clarke; it must have been the one he had lost, and who but his betrothed would have given him her face with a tender message? Then too he had said the picture was less valuable to him since he had the original. What could he have meant? And when I had been perplexing myself with these thoughts I would look at Mrs. Clarke, half expecting to discover in her some resemblance to the picture. It was quite impossible; Mrs. Clarke has a fair round face, and the most beautiful light brown hair waving about her brow and falling in graceful curls. She is entirely different from the Alice of whom I have dreamed so long; and when I looked inquiringly at Clarke, his calm face betrayed no suspicion of my embarrassment.

“Mrs. Clarke left us after a little while, and I was just going to embrace the opportunity to interrogate Clarke concerning the strange affair, when my attention was arrested by the calm sweet voice of a lady singing. It came in through the open window. I looked out involuntarily, but saw only the skirt of a dress and a straw hat swinging by the string, as they disappeared through one of the doors leading into the house. In another moment she was with us, her hands full of wild flowers, the heavy braids of dark hair scarcely disturbed by the wind, the color just a little deepened on her cheeks, and her eyes

sparkling with great animation, the sweet little mouth parted just ready to speak, when she stopped on observing a stranger. O, Amy, it was my idol-my worshipped one. Of all the thoughts that crowded through my mind at that instant, I remember only that I expected Clarke to introduce me to his wife, thinking he had been playing some game with me, and great was my surprise and delight when he said:

“‘Mr. Winchester, permit me to introduce you to my sister Annie.’

“I’m sure I don’t know what I said. I think I must have acted like a fool. I was beside myself with joy. Alice, no, Annie, was the sister of my friend. You see that ‘A’ may stand for Annie as well as Alice, and I never was very particular about the name. But then Clarke knew that I was in love with his sister, and how I had worshipped her picture, yet he had insisted upon my visiting him. Evidently he was willing I should talk love to Annie, and I promised myself I would do it the first opportunity. Ah, Amy, you should see her! The picture taken so long ago, beautiful as it is, does no justice to her as she is now, in the full glory of her womanly perfection. How angry I was with myself for my awkwardness, and I do not remember one word of what I said while Annie was in the room, and should believe that I did not speak had I not been positively informed that I did.

“‘You are under great obligations, Annie,’ said Clarke, ‘to my friend for the care which he bestowed upon your miniature, which I was so careless as to lose so long ago. You know I told you the other day that it was found.’

“Annie’s look of inquiry satisfied me that Clarke had not betrayed me. I was grateful and looked imploringly at him, and he told his sister the story of his losing and my finding her miniature very correctly, except for a few embellishment of his own, which he could not resist the temptation to insert, though he was kind enough to pass quietly over my real feelings. Well, Amy, the whole story may be told in a few words now. Clarke gave me his free consent to win if I could his beautiful sister, and—and—it’s all settle between us now.

“One thing puzzled me very much, that Mrs. Clarke should be named Alice, and that her voice should have sounded so familiar to me; and her husband has confessed to me that his acquaintance with his wife and his interest in her commenced that very day on which he left me. She was coming out West to visit some relatives, and by means of mutual friends they became acquainted. Was in not a strange coincidence? But I cannot stop to write any more now. You shall visit us both soon, and till then farewell.”

I have visited them. My cousin Annie and I are the best of friends, and Fred declares it is a sweeter name than Alice, and says that Annie’s voice is much more musical than that of Alice. It was quite a long time before we learned to call her by her right name. Fred proposed to give the name of Alice to their little daughter, but Annie declared she would always be jealous of any one who bore that name, even if it were her own daughter. She insisted that the child should have my name.

Fred does not seem quite so splendid since his marriage. He is a kind husband, and agreeable enough to other people, but he seems to me a vast deal more like other men, more common-place, and not at all invested with that peculiar faculty of being interesting for which everybody used to give him credit. I cannot but wonder as I witness the enthusiastic affection with which Annie regards him, and I always say to myself, it is all owing to the flatter which he bestowed so profusely upon her before he ever saw her, by means of that picture, which I need scarcely say is placed safely away, as Fred says, for the especial benefit of “our daughter.”

[End of text. Bracketed text, "Written for Ballou's Pictorial" is per original text presentation.—Ed.]

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**EDITOR'S NOTES:**

Nothing is known to this editor regarding this author nor is this author indexed in Lyle Wright's bibliography, *American Fiction, 1851–1875*. This tale is the single entry for this author in the expansive online resource, *American Periodical Series Online* (ProQuest.)

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Document author: Gary W. Ewer

Creation date: 2008-12-16 / Last revision: 2006-06-22

Citation information: *Ballou's Pictorial and Drawing-Room Companion* (Boston) 15:3 (17 July 1858): 38–39.

Prepared from: from an original volume in the collection of Gary W. Ewer.

Original spelling/punctuation/grammar generally maintained without correction. Any in-text corrections are bracketed.

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