

[Continued from page 69.]

"Then why are you so unwilling to make me happy?" he said bitterly.

She burst into tears—his mood changed instantaneously.

"My love—my little treasure, don't take a thoughtless word so deeply to heart. I'm a villian and a heartless scoundrel to speak to you in that sort of way; but indeed, Rosa, it's only because I love you so dearly."

Rosa looked up, smiling through her tears and exhorted her enthusiastic young lover "not no be a goose!"

"Well," said Kent, rising with an air of unalterable decision, "I shall come here to-morrow, to see your father myself. I shall ask him for you in plain terms, and if he say No—"

"What then?" questioned Rosa anxiously.

"Why I shall take you without his permission," laughed the young man. Hallo! why what's the matter?"

Rosa had sprung to her feet, the rosy red apples rolling in every direction on the floor.

"It's papa," she fluttered, turning white and scarlet alternatively. "I see him coming down through the pasture lot!"

"Is that all?" said Lorimer. Why I supposed it was half a dozen ghosts at the very least!"

"Go, Kent," she said, pushing him from her with breathless eagerness. "He must not know you have been here. Quick! slip down into the road through the path by the currant bushes."

"What for?" asked her lover, boldly standing his ground. "I'm not a burglar, or a pickpocket, am I? Why should I sneak away as though I were? Let me remain here, and have my say out with your father."

"Oh, not to-day, Kent," exclaimed Rosa, in sore tribulation. "He would be so angry if he thought you had been here during his absence. Wait till to-morrow—do please, wait till to-morrow! For my sake, Kent."

"For your sake then!" said the young man, yielding, with very evident reluctance.

"Where's your currant bush-path, if I must sink out like a detected felon. It's a pity I haven't two or three silver spoons in my pocket to complete the illusion. One kiss, darling it's worth that, to make a fellow feel so cheap."

And Kent Lorimer's figure disappeared among the mazes of the tall currant bushes just as Squire Martin Millet walked composedly up to the door-step on the other side of the house, with a broad-brimmed straw-hat shading his good-humored, although rather choleric brow.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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