

[Continued from page 73.]

"I am eighteen, papa!" timidly interposed Rosa.

"Eighteen, indeed! if you were twenty-eight there'd be some sense in it. Hush!—not another word. A city jackanapes too—just as if the honest farmers' sons weren't good enough for you. Just let him show his whiskered face here, and I'll give him a dose that shall last him one while!"

The Squire's face had grown fairly purple with rage. Rosa shrank back, white and terrified. Alas! it was of little use to plead Kent's cause, and she crept away to her own room.

"I'll write to him," she thought. "He must never face papa in this mood. I am afraid we must give each other up—only I think it must break my heart!"

And she sat down to her desk, to write a pitiful tear-blotted note to Kent Lorimer, entreating him to return to New York without making any attempt to soften her father's heart, or to see her.

When Kent received the incoherently written message, he read it over twice, and laid it in his desk, smiling thoughtfully to himself as he did so, "I must disobey you this once, my little lady-bird," he pondered. I should be a recreant indeed to abandon the precious prize when it is so nearly within my grasp. I intend to have you for my own wife, if you had forty unwilling fathers instead of one!"

Very unreasonable language, wasn't it? but you must remember that Mr. Kent was very much in love.

Squire Millet was climbing heavily into an antequely fashioned "one-hoss shay" at about noon the next day, for he was vexed and puzzled at the unwonted absence of his bustling, cheery wife, and had harnessed up expressly to bring her home from Elder Slingerland's habitation. Eor, was not her consent a necessary and indispensable thing in the famous bargain respecting the clover meadow.

"Hallo! who's this a-comin'?" exclaimed the Squire, as he was taking the lines into his hands. "Rosa! Rosa, I say!"

But Rosa had retreated into the house. "She always was a shy little creature," pondered Mr. Millet. "I bet a cookey that's Deacon Nehemiah's son; and he'll jest have to wait till I can bring mother back, cause if she set her foot down to sell, there's a clean slap and to the hull affair. Mornin', sir; hope I see you well. You're Mr. Lorimer I calculate?"

"That is my name, sir."

"Wal I'm real glad to see you. How's your father?"

"Thank you, sir, he is tolerable well."

returned the agreeably surprised young man "I am not mistaken, sir, in supposing that I am addressing Mr. Millet?"

"Not by a jugfull," quoth the beaming Squire. "It's all right, sir,—all right! You want my property, and I want to get rid on't. I guess we'll make a bargain quick enough."

"Thank you, my dear sir," ejaculated Kent Lorimer, eagerly shaking the Squire's outstretched hand. "I had hardly anticipated such kindness. Then I may consider myself sure of your consent?"

"Sartinly; only, you see, I must get my wife to say yes; women always like to be consulted on such matters."

"Certainly, sir. Mrs. Millet's consent would be most desirable. At the same time you will not blame me for desiring to consummate affairs as speedily as possible."

"As soon as you like, sir; the sooner the better," said Squire Millet, heartily. "Would to-day be too precipitate?"

hesitated the bold young wooer.

"Not a bit," returned the Squire; "and now, Mr. Lorimer, if you'll jest walk in and set down awhile, my little gal'll do her best to entertain ye, and I'll bring Mrs. Millet home in less than two hours."

The Squire drove away, accordingly, and Kent Lorimer entered the low wooden porch triumphantly.

Rosa was hiding behind the window curtain in the back room, tremblingly listening for the sounds of mortal combat between her father and her lover; but as Kent approached, the ripe bloom came back to her aspen cheek.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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