

might as well try to convince you that the moon is made of green cheese as that she is trying to ensnare you. Men *have* been fools when in love, ever since the world began, and will to the end of it—you are no better than the rest.

"And if I am," he said, coloring painfully, "you are hardly the one to lecture me for it—you, the greatest coquette that ever stepped—you that have made fools of a score of better men than I am before this."

"Perhaps this is the very reason that I can see so plainly Etoile Percy is trying to make a fool of you, now," said I, coolly. "But here comes Kathleen. Do you think her handsome?"

"Handsome! no, decidedly not," he said, quietly; "she is too dark, too proud, too supercilious—too much of the Percy in her, in a word. Too dark and fiery; too much in your own style, Gypsy."

"And not sufficiently in the style of that wingless angel Etoile; that sweet, unsophisticated, little Parisian," I said, with a scornful laugh. "You are deeper in love than I thought, cousin Randal. What simpletons a pretty girl can make of the best of you lords of creation!"

He flushed crimson, and rose angrily from his seat; at the same moment Etoile, radiant with smiles, came gliding up, and laying her hand on his arm, said, in the sweet, low voice in which she spoke, rendered still more musical by her strong foreign accent:

"Come, cousin Randal, we are waiting for you; they are going to play blind-man's buff over there." Then turning to me, she said, softly: "I am very sorry to interrupt your conversation, and take him from you, but we want him so particularly."

She looked up into his face, half shyly, half fondly, like the artful cheat that she was. Randal's handsome face kindled with a look of delight, while I felt inclined to laugh outright.

"Oh, take him and welcome!" said I, carelessly. "I don't think I'll break my heart during his absence."

"Perhaps you will come with us," she said, gently,

"No, thank you, I am engaged. I wish you a pleasant game. Mind, Randal, and don't let her *catch* you," said I, moving away.

"*Au revoir*," then she said, with her bright smile, and passing her arm through his, she kissed her hand to me, and disappeared.