

"Why, Louie! were you going to cut me? I knew who you were when I was ever so far away, because of Nero. Here, Nero, old fellow!"

The bicyclist was young, and his handsome brown face fairly beamed with health. His flannel suit showed off his compact figure to advantage, and there was a brightness in his dark eyes and a glow upon his face, which was perhaps accounted for by the exertion of coming up the hill. He was not tall, but his build and carriage were so manly that his rather low stature was hardly a disadvantage, and his head was set on his shoulders like that of a young prince,—I mean, as we suppose young princes' heads ought to be set on.

The young girl bent over the dog and spoke to him, taking his collar in her hand again, as the young man walked beside her, pushing the bicycle.

"I was wondering when in the world I was going to meet you again," he continued. "How fortunate that I came across you now. I didn't see you at Mrs. Johnson's party."

"No, I didn't go. Is it true that she has gone away?"

"Yes, didn't you hear about that?"

"Joe told me she had gone, but we've seen so little of anybody this week that I've heard no particulars. Nobody has called, and I haven't cared about going into town. I suppose her party was a farewell affair."

"No, I don't think she had any idea of going away before it came off."

"What made her decide so suddenly?" asked the girl in surprise.

"She was so disgusted with the way everybody behaved," and he turned to look at the landscape. "What a lovely view one gets from this rising ground."

"Yes, it's very pretty. But how did her guests behave? I thought the party was to be very select."

"Yes, all the nice people were there, but they didn't all behave nicely," and he looked uncomfortable.