

A ROMANCE OF BILLY-GOAT HILL

"Well, you see it 's her birthday, an' tormadoes could n't 'a' kept me from bringin' her a cake. Ain't she the purties' object you ever set yer two optics on? Say 'Da-da,' Loreny,—leave off talkin' to her, Chick. Go on, Loreny, say, 'Da-da' fer de purty lady!"

"He's that silly about her," said Maria Flathers, trying to conceal her own pride. "He won't leave me put anything but white dresses and blue shoes on her, an' he works extra time to pay fer 'em. Myrtella says there ain't no fools like old ones."

"That's all right," said Phineas; "she'll have more to say when I give Loreny a diamond ring on her next birthday. Iseling'll be givin' me a raise soon. He's as good as said so. He knows I'm good fer everything from bossin' a big job to drivin' a wagon; then look at the trade I command! Why, Mis' Squeerington, them Ladies' Aiders in the Immanuel Church, follered me solid, an' Mrs. Ivy an' the Anti-Tobacs—Shoo, I could start out fer myself to-morrow."

"It's one o'clock!" warned Maria, anxious to speed her master on his way in order that she might come in for a few conversational crumbs.

"One o'clock! Holy Moses! I must be hiking, if I want to hear the rest of the trial."

"The trial?" repeated Miss Lady instantly alert; "were you at the courthouse this morning?"