

growled again.

"Just listen to me one minute, Louie, and then I'll go."

He leant against his bicycle while he spoke, and she waited with the faithful dog by her side.

"You know, I was always an extravagant fool, for before father lost so much money I had everything I wished for. When I came here to the bank my salary was small, and after a time father got tired of paying my debts, and he told me I'd have to be independent of him and marry a rich woman. Poor mother urged me to do the same, for she thought I never could be economical. But I *never, never* would have thought of such a thing, only that idiot Lighbourne was sweet on you, and you seemed to encourage him and were so cool to me, that I thought I had nothing to wait for. I never had a happy moment while I was engaged to Katie, except when I forgot it now and then and I had every intention of breaking it off when I got an opportunity. Of course, I am sorry for the way it came about, but it's a good thing over for both of us." He paused out of breath, and nervous from his long harangue, and looked at her.

"Yes—but go away now."

"Do you want me to go?"

"Yes."

His face fell at this.

"Shall I go forever?"

"Oh! no," and she raised her eyes to his face as she said the word quickly.

"Then I may come back in a little while and we shall be good friends—more than friends?"

"Yes—but good-bye now," and she held out her hand.

He took it in his own and held it for a moment or two, while Nero glanced inquiringly from the young man to the maiden, as if trying to understand what it all meant.

Louie watched her lover as he mounted his bicycle and sped away under the trees, and then she and Nero turned into the gate, for she had reached her home before they parted.