

TALES OF OLD TORONTO

"You can speak to her, you can speak to her," quacked Aunt Anne.

"Yes, but, Aunt Anne, I want to speak to her without you."

Belle had jumped up crimson from her work.

"Without me!" began Aunt Anne, but Alec had put her gently out and closed the door, and she did not attempt to re-enter. Belle found herself on Alec's knee, weeping in his arms. "Are you weeping because you must marry me in a week and come away with me?" said Alec. "Kiss me, my precious girl; put your arms round my neck," he pleaded, and they kissed, amidst Belle's tears, warmly and long.

"Was there ever a kiss like that before," said Alec, "in this dreadful little room? It's a wonder this horsehair furniture doesn't fly out of the window. No, my girl, no more kisses like that for a week—business to attend to. What a brute I have been to torment you so. You little temptress, one more kiss before the old times are gone forever."

A moment for the kiss the gods allowed them—the happiest heaven of a moment it was to Belle, no more a widow—then the household, having taken alarm, came trooping