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## THE LOST RING.

"Hotter than pepper!" said Dr. Gray to himself as he guided his shaggy little horse round the sharp turn of the road and checked him under the shadow of the giant cherry tree whose broad boughs were all sparkling with ruby pendants and then walked to the house.

"Hello!" said the doctor. He shaded his eyes with his hand and looked in at the kitchen window. There was the trim figure of his pretty daughter standing at the table, her sleeves rolled back and a white apron tied about her taper waist, apparently deep in the saccharine mysteries of pie-making. That was nothing surprising, but Dr. Gray could have sworn that a minute ago the apparition of a young man was manifesting a remarkable interest in the sliced apples, spice boxes and sugar bowls, and yet now that he looked again Kitty was trimming off the edges of her pie crust all alone. He walked straight into the kitchen.

"Kitty, where's Harton Browne?" Kitty cut a little star in the center of the sheet of pie crust before she answered.

"I don't know, papa." "You don't, eh?" said the doctor. "I supposed not."

And the doctor proceeded through the hall into his little office, where sat his hopeful student, Harton Browne, deep in the pages of a medical dictionary.

"Hard at work, eh?" said the old gentleman, taking off his hat. "Yes, sir," said Browne. "I've written out that abstract you left and looked over the papers on fractures and—"

"All right; you're a most industrious fellow," said Dr. Gray. "You don't believe in stopping work on all sorts of frivolous pretexts, do you?"

"No, sir." "You are convinced that nothing but steady perseverance will enable a man to succeed in the science of medicine?"

"Yes, sir," replied Browne, moving uneasily on his chair. "Very sensible," said Dr. Gray, shrugging his shoulders. "And now—but what are you looking for?"

"My ring, sir. It was on my finger but a minute ago. You have not seen it?"

"No, not that I know of." "I hope it is not lost," said Harton. "I value it very highly as my father's gift. Where can it have gone?"

"I don't know," said the doctor. "Give me that list of patients we expect this afternoon and then go and ask Jake to keep a lookout for your trinket. That boy has more eyes than most people, I believe—I know he has more mischief."

Browne adopted his preceptor's suggestion, and the old gentleman was left alone, cogitating whether his daughter was really deceiving him as to her innocent love affairs.

"Confound it!" soliloquized the doctor petulantly. "It takes sharper eyes than mine to see through a woman's maneuvers. I'll ferret out the mystery yet, though, hanged if I don't!"

The brazen tongue of the old kitchen creble had just uttered in a sort of shrill treble the fact that it was 12, and dinner was nearly over at Dr. Gray's. Somehow dinner tasted better in the long, shady dining room of the Gray house than it did anywhere else, for the honeysuckles at the window stirred so pleasantly in the wind and held back their green leaves to admit such delicious scents that the most delicate appetite could not help being tempted. And Kitty looked so pretty at the head of the table, her brown hair brushed back and her white throat edged with lace and the color coming and going on her cheek like rosy shadows. No wonder young Browne looked at her so often.

"I'll take another piece of that pie, Kate," said the old doctor. "Capital pie! Where did the apples come from?"

"I believe Patrick gathered them from the gnarled old tree that grows by the south wall of the orchard, papa, and I baked the pies this morning."

"Upon my word, you're getting to be quite a little housekeeper," said the doctor, chuckling. "The first thing I know some young fellow will be—Why—hello—here, what's this?"

For Dr. Gray's teeth had struck against some foreign substance under the crust of the much praised pie with a jar that set every nerve on edge.

"Do they make pie nowadays out of stocks and stones?" demanded the old gentleman tartly. "No—I'm mistaken. It isn't a stone; it's a ring."

And the doctor quietly held up Harton Browne's missing ornament, a carnelian set in gold. Kitty turned scarlet. Browne looked confounded.

"How a ring should happen to get baked in a pie I don't know," said the malicious old doctor, enjoying the confusion of his companions. "Can you tell me what all this means?"

"I can tell you, sir," said Browne valiantly, seeing that now or never was the time. "It means that I am in love with Kitty and that if you will give your consent to our union we will be grateful to you."

"Papa," whispered Kitty, "now be good and say yes. I wanted to tell you before, only—I didn't dare."

"Oh," said Dr. Gray tartly, "I thought I should find things out by and by. I wish, however, it mayn't be at the cost of a snapping toothache."

"May I have her?" pleaded Harton, who had by this time got his arm round Kitty's waist.

"Well," said the doctor, "I don't know that I've any objection. Have it your own way, young people, only if you have any more courting I beg you won't do it up over my apple pies."

Browne was a rich man that July afternoon. He had two treasure troves, a promised wife and a ring. And the doctor was happy, for he had found something to tease Kitty about.—Exchange.

Honest Young Man. "What are your financial prospects?" demanded the old gentleman. "I will not deceive you, sir," replied the honest young man. "I think they are reasonably good."

"I would be glad if you were more explicit." "Certainly. If you will accept me as a son-in-law, you will readily understand that my future is assured. If you do not, your daughter has promised to elope with me, and we feel that we may reasonably expect your forgiveness. Altogether I think I may safely say that the outlook is quite promising."

"It seems to me, young man," returned the old gentleman thoughtfully, "as if you thought you had a mortgage on my fortune." "That's how it seems to me, too," answered the honest young man.—Chicago Post.

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