

VIVA LANDLORD.

"Viva, dear, it's coming near the first of May." And gentle Mrs. Rayner laid down the coat that was perpetually becoming cumbrous, and looked across the lamp-lit table with anxious eyes.

any medicine, the children to shout lustily at sight of him, and Viva to listen for the sound of his firm foot upon the garden path. One evening, when the soft May wind was swaying the "silly-ingers," as the children called them, over the door, Viva snatched up her hat and strolled down to the pretty rustic gate.

Just a little more tired than usual after a desperate struggle to teach an irritable obtuse pupil the mysteries of crochets and quavers and demi-semi-quavers. She stood there, a fair girlish figure, in her soft white dress, a great bunch of blue meadow violets at her throat and waist. The scented wind gently loosened the cord, where sat Jessie, a voluble, overgrown school-girl, "because the front gate's off its hinges, and the roof leaks, and—"

"Yes, Jessie, we all know the reasons for moving, but give mamma an opportunity of suggesting where." "There's hardly much choice about that," said the pale-faced little woman sadly. "Some place where the rent would be moderate, but—a sudden look of longing shining out of the pale-woman's face—"I would give all the world, dear, to see the country again. I feel stifling here."

"But your pupils, Viva?" "I could manage to give all the lessons in three days of the week; taking the train in, you know, is almost as cheap; and do work for Crumley the intervening days. Now, mamma!" triumphantly.

"It looks plausible at first sight, my pet; but I'm almost afraid to hope, dear, that boy does wear out his clothes." Viva came over and clasped two maroon marino around the invalid figure before her.

"Hope as much as you like, mamma, darling," she cried gaily; "I won't watch the papers till we see a treasure advertised 'cheap,' you know, and then—"

Three days later, Viva danced in out of a blinding April shower, with rose-red cheeks and starry eyes. "Here it is, mamma," she cried indignantly, with a hearty kiss and hug that almost demolished the little figure in the arm-chair.

"Now, listen!" and from the open paper of that morning, she read aloud: "To Rent—In a suburban village, 20 minutes ride from the city, an eight-room cottage, with garden attached. Cheap, to good tenant. Apply to Clifford Chandos, Room 12, 74 E. Street, City."

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