

## Irish Crime & Irish Retribution

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*Ireland.*

*A Tale.*

Harriet Martineau

1832.

THE Sullivans and Mahonys were not immediately pursued. Dora watched by day and listened by night, in vain, for tokens of the approach of enemies, till she began to believe, as she was told, that the place of their retreat was not known ; or, if known, was supposed to be so surrounded by a disaffected and desperate peasantry as to render any attack too perilous to be attempted. That this last supposition was true she had some reason to believe, though she knew little more than Mr. Flanagan himself what was passing around her. Her father disappeared the day after their arrival on the coast ; but he had since looked in on them, twice at night and once early in the morning, which seemed to prove that his abode was not very distant from theirs. He brought with him each time a supply of whiskey for his sick wife, who was failing fast, and able to enjoy little besides a drop of spirits to warm her. These gifts, coupled with what Sullivan had let fall about what went on in the bog, led Dora to think that he had connected himself with an illicit distillery in the neighbourhood ; but no confession could she get from him but eloquent gestures and significant snatches of song. Dan was yet more mysterious. His tenderness to his wife in great measure returned after the night of the flitting, but there was no confidence with it. He went and came at all hours, never saying where he had been, or how long he should be absent ; but always desiring her not to be uneasy, and showing that he thought of home during his excursions by bringing little comforts for her mother and herself, which she wondered how he could procure. Once he threw over her shoulders a cloak which was much less rent and tattered than her own ; another time he produced a packet of tea for his mother-in-law ; and with it a handsome teapot and cups nicely secured in straw : lastly appeared a piece of fine linen for the use of the expected baby. Dan expected very warm thanks for this, as he knew that Dora's great anxiety was on account of nothing being provided for her little one, who would too probably scarcely outlive its birth in circumstances of destitution : but Dora looked at her husband with anguish in her countenance, saying,

“ O, husband, you would not doom your child before it is born ! You will not wrap it about with crime as soon as it sees the light ! This is not earned, Dan. It cannot be yours ; and my child shall not be touched with that which is stolen.”

Dan, far from being angry, coolly observed that when there was an end of justice, there was an end of law. If he was cut off from earning what he wanted, he must take it where he could get it ; and to take it thus was a less crime than to let his family die of hunger, and his child of cold, while food and clothing were within reach. In answer to his wife's timid questions what this would avail him when the law was urged against him, and soldiers were dogging his heels, he laughed, and said that if the gentry brought the matter to that pass, he and others must fight for it. They had driven him out, and must not wonder if he did not come in again at their beck and call. If the orderlies chose to try their strength against the desperates, there should be a fair battle. He was ready to fight bravely or to swing merrily, according as the powers decreed the one party or the other to prevail.

Dan could not succeed in any degree in imparting his spirit of recklessness to his wife. She became more thoughtful as he grew less so : a deeper and deeper melancholy shaded her countenance. Her form wasted, her spirits were hurried, and she seemed unable to control her temper by other means than perfect silence. Instead of soothing her mother's complaints, and patiently answering her incessant questions, as formerly, she heard the former in silence, and escaped as often as possible from the latter. Her practice was to set within the old woman's reach whatever she was likely to want, and then wander out, sometimes sitting on a perilous projection of the cliff to watch the swell of the sea, and sometimes hiding herself in a cave immediately below the cabin ; whence she would come forth occasionally, climb the cliff laboriously, peep in at the door stealthily, to see if she was wanted within, and creep down again to her place of idleness and solitude. Yet it would seem as if, even in this place, she heard her husband's step from a distance, so invariably did she appear as he approached. At other times she came forth when it was not Dan moving over the bog, but some less welcome visitor ; and then she turned back quickly and tried to evade observation. One woman, and another and another, came to visit her, she knew not whence nor why ; but they were of a more companionable nature than herself, and gave broad hints that as their husbands or fathers or sons were united in enterprise, the women should be so in confidence ; and would have told many a horrible tale of what was nightly done and daily suffered by the band they professed to belong to. Dora always stopped such communications at the outset ; professing that Dan and she belonged to nobody and nobody to them, and that all she wished for was, to live alone and be left quiet. She did not so much as know where her visitors came from, she said. They pointed, some to the bog, some to the rocks, and others to little mounds of turf, from which a thin blue smoke was seen at times to curl up. Some hinted at an intention of building cabins on the cliff, near hers ; to which she gave no encouragement. This kind of reception did not tempt them to repeat their visits very often, and after a short time, Dora flattered herself she had got rid of all intruders. She was not deceived. In a little while she was solitary enough.

It was a December night, wrapt in that kind of gloom which is as a stifling pall descending to shroud the world, when a vessel came ashore almost directly below Dan's dwelling. How the accident happened, those on board were wholly ignorant. They had believed themselves acquainted with the coast, and felt themselves secure while the beacon glimmered south-east of them. It did, indeed, only glimmer ; but the fog lay so thick, that the wonder was how the beacon could be seen at all. What wind there was blew directly on shore ; so that it was too late, when the vessel was once among the breakers, to preserve her. She struck ; and with the first cry uttered by her crew, the supposed beacon vanished. The shouts of the mariners rose at intervals amidst the hoarse music of the waves, which renewed their dirge with every human life that they swept away. All might have been saved if there had been a ray of light to guide their efforts ; but, murky as it was, they struggled in vain, while wave upon wave, without a moment's pause, found them full of desperate effort, and left them less able to encounter its successor. The first man that gained a footing on the beach found himself unable to yield the slightest assistance to his companions, and looked about for signs of human habitation. The only token was a feeble gleam from Dan's cabin, towards which he directed his steps, not perfectly satisfied at first whether it was light from a dwelling on an eminence, or a star seen through an opening in the gloom. Tripping, stumbling, now climbing, now falling, but still shouting all the time, he pursued his way in a direct line to the light, fearing every moment that it would vanish, like the supposed beacon, and leave him no choice but to sit down and wait on the spot for day. When he had drawn near enough to feel pretty secure of his object, his shout was suddenly answered by many voices, in immediate succession and from different distances ; and moving lights at once appeared along the whole face of the cliff. A man started out from the darkness on either hand of the astonished sailor, and told him he was going the wrong way for assistance, there being none but women above. The sailor,

on whom, being a foreigner, this information was lost, swore his deepest oaths at them for their delay, and for the artifice by which he suspected the vessel had been purposely brought on shore. His wrath, vented in unintelligible threats, was only laughed at.

“ Be easy, now,” said one. “ Sure it takes a man a long time to wake with such a lullaby going on all the while.”

“ Sure a darker curtain was never about a sleeping man's head than this fog,” observed another.

“ The beacon !” exclaimed a third ; “ it’s just the drop made you see double, that’s all. The beacon is far away south, and yon cabin’s the only light.”

Their explanations were as much wasted as the foreigner’s wrath ; and after a prodigious expense of eloquence on both sides, recourse was had to action, the purport of which was presently intelligible enough. A shrill whistle set all the wandering lights converging towards the beach : the sailor’s two guides, whose outer garment was a shirt, bound round the waist with a hayband, in which pistols and knives were stuck, slung their lanterns to their belts, seized each an arm of the stranger, and led him rapidly down the cliff. Instead of permitting him to proceed towards the wreck, they ordered him into the cave whither Dora often resorted, and set a guard of two men over him. One after another, five of his companions were brought to join him, the guard being strengthened in proportion. When no more live men could be found about the wreck, a small supply of food and spirits, and materials for making a fire, were sent into the cave, as an intimation that all the business was over in which the crew was to have any share. The poor wretches, soaked, battered, exhausted in body, and harassed in mind with grief and panic, were not interfered with by their guards, except when their lamentations became dangerously audible.

The work of violence on the beach meanwhile went on rapidly : all that the vessel contained was seized, and put out of sight, and great part of the wreck broken up and carried away before morning. The aim of some of the people employed was the very amusing joke of persuading the foreigners, on bringing them out into the daylight, that their vessel had been conjured away bodily to a distant point, whither they were to be sent to seek it. These people were scarcely aware how some of their noisy operations were heard by the crew, and how well they understood the knocking, heaving, and crashing, and especially the shouts which followed every grand achievement in the process of destruction.

Dan was among the plunderers. He was not at liberty to decline any enterprise proposed by the captain of the gang with which he had associated himself ; and on his return from a distant expedition, which had detained him from his home for some days, he found himself called upon, in fulfilment of his oath, to take part in a scene of plunder, of a kind which he abhorred, in sight of his own dwelling. While he was ordered to rob middlemen, terrify agents, and half-murder tithe-proctors, he discharged his mission with hearty goodwill, under the notion of avenging his own wrongs : but it was quite a different thing to delude foreigners, put them in peril of their lives, and strip them of everything ; and he said so. In reply, he was reminded of his oath (an oath too solemn to be slighted), and immediately commanded, as a test of obedience, to take up a bale of goods from the wreck, and carry it up to find house-room in his cabin. He did so with a heavy heart, dreading thus to meet Dora, after a separation of some days. She had never yet seen him equipped as a whiteboy, or been expressly told what occupation he followed.

He paused outside, leaning against the doorless-entrance to watch what was passing within. All was so strange and fearful, that a deadly horror came over him, lest the one whom

he saw moving about should not be the real Dora, but some spirit in her likeness. She was employed about her mother's corpse, which lay on the bare ground. Her motions were so rapid as to appear almost convulsive. Now she kneeled beside the body, straightening the limbs, and striving in vain to cover it completely with a piece of linen which was too small for the purpose, now she fixed her one rush-light in a lump of clay, and placed it at the head; now she muttered from beneath the hair which fell over her face as she stooped; and then, leaning back, uttered the shrill funeral cry with a vehemence which brought some colour back to her ashy pale countenance.

"Whisht, whisht!" muttered she impatiently to herself. "I have given the cry, and nobody comes. Father Glenly forgot me long ago, and my own father has forgot us, and Dan—I don't know what has been done to Dan, and he tells nobody. He won't forget me long, however."

"Forget you, Dora!" said Dan, gently, as he laid hold of her cloak. "Did I keep my oath so long when you lived in your father's cabin in the glen, and shall I forget you now?"

She folded her arms in her cloak with a look of indifference, as she glanced at the bale he carried.

"O, you have brought a sheet, as I was wanting," said she; "but where are the candles? I have but this one; and nothing in the way of a shutter or a door, you see; and there's no company come yet; so you will have time. Make haste, Dan."

"Shall I bid the neighbours to the wake?" inquired Dan, who thought the best way of gaining her attention was to help her to fulfil first the duties to the dead, which rank so high among social obligations in Ireland.

At a sign from her he threw down his load and hastened to the beach, whence he brought a plank, on which to lay the body, candles where with to illuminate the bier, and spirits with which to exercise hospitality. He gave notice, at the same time, to his captain and comrades, that when a blaze should be seen on the cliff, and the funeral lament heard, all would be ready for their reception at the wake:—the burning of the bed of the deceased before the door, and the utterance of the death cry, being the customary mode of invitation to the wakes of the Irish poor.

Dan was yet more struck with the deathlike paleness of his wife's face when he again joined her. He inquired whether any neighbours had helped her to nurse her mother, and whether her rest had been much broken: but she scarcely attended to his questions. She clapped her hands, as if in glee, at sight of what he brought, and seemed altogether so much more like a wilful child, than like his thoughtful and devoted Dora, that the fancy again crossed him that some mocking fiend had taken possession of her form. He asked her, with much internal trembling, whether she had duly prayed this night?

She started, and said she had strangely forgotten herself; and forthwith went through her customary devotions in a way which, though hurried, was very unlike any which a fiend would dare to attempt; and Dan was so far satisfied.

"Bring out the bed," said she, pointing to the straw on which her mother had been wont to lie. "While it is burning, I will raise the cry once more, and see if any one will come."

Dan moved a bundle which lay on the straw, but let it go again in a pang of horror when the feeble cry of an infant proceeded from it. In an instant he understood all. He took up the child, and placed it on Dora's bosom without saying a word.

“ O, my child : aye, I forgot it when I forgot my prayers ; but it cannot have been hungry long, I’m thinking. Hold him while I strip off my cloak that keeps me as hot as if I had a fire burning within me.” And she carelessly slipped the babe into her husband’s arms.

“ O Dora !” cried he in a choking voice, “ is this the way you give a child of ours into my arms for the first time ?”

She looked at him with perplexity in her countenance, said she knew nothing at all about it, and before he could prevent her, set fire to the straw, and gave the other appointed signal. Up came the company of whiteboys, crowding round the cabin, rushing to the bier, and exciting Dora more and more every moment by their looks and their proceedings. She now, for the first time, perceived the peculiarity of her husband’s dress.

She went from one to another, observing upon the arms they carried, and stopped at last before Dan, who was in earnest conversation with his captain.

“ So you have enrolled yourself, Dan ! So you have plighted and pledged yourself to your band since you swore you would wed me only. Much may they do for you that I could not do ! but O, may they never do you the evil that I would not do ! They may give you clothes these winter nights, when I have nothing warmer at home for you than my own heart. They may find you whiskey and lights for the wake, and other things as you want them ; but they will make you pay more than you ever paid to me, Dan. They will take you among snares in the night : they will set you on other men’s beasts to go over bogs where you will sink, and under rocks that will crush you : they will set you where bullets are flying round you ; they will put a knife in your hand and make you dip your soul in blood. If you refuse, they will burn you and me together within four walls ; and if you agree, they will lead you on to something worse than bogs or rocks, or a soldier’s shot : they will send you to be set before the judge, and refused mercy, and then. . . .”

“ For Christ’s sake stop her !” exclaimed Dan. He seized her hands to prevent her stripping his white-boy uniform from his shoulders, as soon as he had given his baby in charge to a compassionate by-stander.

“ Move the corpse,” ordered the captain. “ Keep the wake down below, and bring the first woman you can meet with, to tend this poor creature. Clear the cabin instantly.”

“ Give the word, captain,” cried one, “and we’ll catch a doctor, the same that we brought blindfold when O’Leary was murdered almost. We’ll whip up horses, and have him here and home by noon.”

“ No, no ; not till we see what the women say. Hilloo, boys ! bring out the bier, fair and easy, and decent.”

Dora’s struggles to follow were fierce, and her cries at being kept from this duty heart-rending. No one could effectually quiet her till she had been some hours committed to the care of a matron, who was brought from some invisible place to nurse her.

Slowly and sadly she recovered. Some said she was never again the same Dora ; but others saw no further change than the melancholy which was likely to become fixed in her by such an experience as her’s. She could never recall any circumstances connected with the death of her mother and the birth of her child. She could only suppose, as her husband did, that the old woman’s exertions had sufficed for her daughter, and been fatal to herself.

Sullivan made his appearance ere long from underground, where he had been engaged in breaking the laws after his own method. He was duly grieved at having been absent from the burial of his wife ; but hoped to atone for the involuntary neglect, by devoting his gains at the still to the purchase of masses for her soul.

### Irish Retribution.

It was not possible that the acts of outrage, of which the whiteboys from Tracey's estate and others were guilty, should remain long unnoticed by the officers of the law. The foreigners, who had been deprived of their wrecked vessel, had been, the next morning, tied two and two, and conducted into the neighbourhood of a road, by which they might reach a town, and relate their hardships. Three of their number were missing, and they did not fail to attribute their disappearance to those who had done all the other mischief. As they went along the road, and through small villages, they met with little sympathy in any of their complaints against whiteboys ; but the townspeople were of a different temper, and Ballina and Killala soon rang with the tidings of the horrible outrage which had been committed on the coast. The alarm spread through the whole district. There was, daily, news of intended attacks, which never took place ; exaggerated reports of the numbers of the disaffected, and of their deeds, got abroad ; and many a dweller in a lone house, many an oppressor with an unquiet conscience,—all who had wealth in their houses, and all who suspected that they had enemies abroad,—trembled, as often as the long winter nights settled down, whether in starless gloom, or upon tracts of moon-lit snow. The rovers did not fail to make use of the panic, while it lasted, to punish their enemies, and beat up for recruits among their friends. Opposition gave way before them in every direction ; and many and various were the tokens of welcome they met wherever the population had tasted of oppression, or were struggling with hardship. The immediate occasion of the first check they encountered was an insult offered to an obnoxious landed proprietor,—an insult which roused him from fireside declamation to military action. His finest trees, some of which had ornamented the lawn of his mansion for an untold length of time, had been cut down in one night. He had looked westward the preceding evening, and seen the red sun tinge the tufts of snow that rested on their branchy heads ; he looked again in the morning, and they lay like so many monuments of the grandeur that had been. He galloped off after breakfast in search of brother magistrates, soldiers, informers, guides, and all that was necessary for dislodging the enemy from their entrenchments. He would not wait till his usual body-guard had assembled, but ventured out with only a groom behind him. He had long suspected that some of his enemies were no further entrenched than in their own discretion, and that they were living and moving on all sides of him. He was now sure of it, from the ambiguous greeting which met him on all sides. He never remembered so many inquiries as to how all went on at the Hall, and such tender concern about his honour's rest o' nights, and so many remarks upon the marvellous darkness of the preceding night. He perceived signals pass across the road, before and behind him,—thought he detected hidings behind the fences,—was sure that an ominous whoop travelled over the bog westward,—and that more than one gossoon only waited till the horses were past, to begin an expedition in the same direction.

It was indeed the case, as usual, that instant tidings were conveyed of the motions of those who had been recently injured. Mr. Connor's departure from home, his application to this magistrate, and consultation with that, and the grand letter which his groom was seen to put into his bosom and to ride off with in the midst of an escort, and the other letter carried to the post-office, which looked just like it, were all faithfully reported of to Dan's captain, in time to have the express turned back without his dispatch, and the next mail stopped, in order to rifle the letter-bag. These expedients, however, could not long avail. Soldiers were at length known to be on the way, and suitable preparations were made for their reception. In one of

the most important of these, Dora bore a principal part.

Her husband, whose absences had been shorter and less frequent, until he saw that she was perfectly recovered and able to occupy herself with her infant, but were now again lengthening, came to her one night, and, gently waking her, told her that her services were wanted by himself, and three or four companions who were waiting outside.

“Troth, then, my jewel,” said he, “there’s no need to be trembling and staring as if we were about carrying you off. You are not going out of this ; and the whole matter is nothing in life but writing a slip of a letter, my darling, because it’s you that will be doing it neat and pretty.”

One of the party brought paper, pen, and ink, and as soon as Dora could steady her hand sufficiently, she wrote to her husband's dictation, subject to the suggestions of his companions :

“Major Greaves,

“Come no farther nor the big elms in Rosso’s demesne, or it will be the worse for yourself and them you bring. What you come to ask us for is a trifle that gentlemen should not be thinking of asking of poor men, even if the ship was a ship still, which it is not, never having been more than an awkward boat, and that now burnt and gone entirely, so as not to be given up, except the arms, which will be offered in a different way from that you expect, if a man of you sets foot beyond the elms. Take heed, to the ground, sir, which is mostly such as would bog a snipe, and you without a guide that may be trusted ; for there’s not a boy in the glen that would do your honour the ill turn to bring you here. There are eels in the bog, sir, that slide easy out of the hand when you would take them ; and your honour will find we take after the eels, except that you will be much the worse of not taking us,—being taken yourselves. One word more out of kindness.—No enemy ever sets foot out of this place more, barring he takes us as his prisoners, which not a man of us will ever be : so, unless you come to pick and choose a grave for every man of you, stir not a step farther than the big elms, near which one will meet you with this.”

Having amused themselves with inventing gibberish for the signature, and making rude drawings below of guns, pikes, and gibbets, ornamented with shamrock, the letter was folded, neat and pretty, and confided to one of the party, to be forwarded. Dan wondered that Dora made no remonstrance against being involved in such a proceeding ; and, for a moment, suspected her of the weakness of being flattered, by the compliments paid to her writing, into a disregard of what it was that she had written : but Dora’s passiveness arose from a sense of the uselessness of opposition, as far as the letter was concerned, and of its injurious influence on her domestic state. She would give Dan no shadow of a reason for leaving his home as he did. Her groan, when he kissed her and bade her farewell, on the letter being finished, went to his heart. He told her that it was for her sake, as well as for duty, that he must leave her, the boys being now on the look out to keep the enemy at a distance. He came back to whisper that, in case of real difficulty, she might be easy about himself and her father, as each man had a hiding place in the bog, theirs being below a certain stunted alder-bush, which she well knew.

From this hour, the sole employment of Dora, when not engaged within with her infant, was to sit with her eyes fixed upon this alder bush. No news came to her of the proceedings either of her people or of the enemy ; but as long as she saw no sign from the appointed place, she knew that matters were not desperate. In frost or in fog, in sunshine and in rain,

Dora sat abroad or paced along the ridge above her cabin, bending her gaze till she grew dizzy upon the black turf around the alder bush. There was not a tuft of moss, nor a twig, nor a rush, that was not presently as familiar to her as if she had planted them all. Every evening, as it became dusk, she drew nearer and nearer to the place, and, when it was quite dark, sat on the very spot as long as her child could spare her. Every morning, she devised some apparent reason, in case of curious eyes looking on, for making a circuit of the alder bush ; and returned with a somewhat lightened heart, when she found no indication of any one being there.

This painful watching could not go on for ever, though Dora began to think it would. Some one at last appeared to be moving in that direction through the dusk of a foggy morning, now ducking and vanishing, now crawling among the uneven ground, now cautiously raising himself and looking about him. After vanishing near the alder, he appeared no more. Dora proceeded thither, and found her father.

“ Where is Dan ?” was her first question. Somewhere near, her father told her, but too busy to seek a hiding at present. It was only the old and helpless who were thus allowed to get out of the way ; all who could fight, were out against the soldiers. Dan meant to come to her by the coast way this day, if possible, just to tell her what he was about.

Sullivan had provided himself with a supply of his own manufacture ; but he had no food. Dora hastened to bring him some while it was still dusk, and she promised more at night, in case of his being unable to leave his hiding place before that time. Sullivan joked on the chances of an old man’s keeping soul and body together in such a place for twelve hours, and promised to thank her heartily for food and warmth at night, barring he was dead. He bade her not be scared at the soldiers if they should cross-examine her this day ; she was not his own daughter, he declared, if she could not delude the ruffians, and save her own kith and kin at their expense. Dora retired home to watch more nervously than ever, since she was listening for her husband’s footstep from below ; and to meditate on the entanglements of these her kith and kin. Her father had broken the law in the matter of the distillery, and her husband was under ban for burning his late dwelling, for his share in the robbery of the wreck, and probably for many more feats of whiteboyism, of which she had yet heard nothing. Her own liabilities she did not for a moment remember; yet the act of writing a threatening letter was uniformly punished very severely, whenever the perpetrators could be discovered. She stood in nearly as much jeopardy as her husband ; and he knew it ; and the purpose of his intended visit of this day was to convey her to a hiding. Her father was not aware of what she had done, and therefore thought no more than herself of her being in any danger.

How often since being involved in these troubles had she sighed for an opportunity of confession ! It was long since she had eased her conscience ; and she felt it among the greatest of the sins the family had committed, that they had cut themselves off from the services of devotion, and what she thought the means of repentance. Again and again, in her solitude, she had meditated a night expedition to Father Glenny’s dwelling ; but it was a step she dared not take without Dan’s approbation ; and he always put her off without an express permission. At this crisis she was more than ever distressed at her own spiritual state, and said to herself that her mind was so perplexed by her long solitude, and her conscience so burdened with an accumulation of sins, that she was not equal to what she might have to go through. Her ingenuity and presence of mind were gone, and she felt that, at the first question, she should betray either her conscience or her cause ; that is, that she should either tell a direct lie or the plain truth, instead of being able to baffle and mislead, as she had been taught it was meritorious to do, on such an occasion. She had not much time to ponder her case.

As soon as the fogs began to disperse before the risen sun, she saw a glancing and gleaming on the extreme point of the track which led from the glen into this district. It was the glittering of the arms of a strong party of soldiers, who were accompanied by several horsemen in plain clothes, probably some of the neighbouring gentry who had offered their services as guides ; none of the country people having being found trustworthy in the office. Dora's heart beat thicker and thicker as she traced them among the windings of the bog road. Presently they stopped at a cross track, and separated into three parties, as if more for purposes of search than battle. One of these parties, the smallest, seemed to receive directions from the gentry as to the course they should pursue, and then turned directly towards the alder-bush. Folding her arms forcibly on her bosom, to keep down her agitation, she stood conspicuous on the ridge of the cliff, hoping to draw their attention to herself. They looked about them at every step ; but not more keenly when alongside the alder-bush than before. They passed it, and one pang was over. They came rapidly towards her, and she turned to enter the cabin. They shouted : she stopped, and awaited them with every appearance of willingness, gazing at the officer and his six soldiers as a child gazes at a show.

“ Where do you live, my good woman ? ” inquired the officer. She pointed to the cabin.

“ Who lives with you ? ”

“ My child. My mother did live here too, but she died many weeks ago.”

“ And your father ? ”

“ I had a father too, your honour : but he is in the ground. Soft may the rain fall, and warm may the sun shine on the turf that hides him ! ”

“ Is not your name Dora Mahony ? I was told your father was alive, and engaged in some unlawful doings hereabouts.”

“ He told me nothing of the nature of his doings, and it is not from strangers that I wish to learn them, when he is not here to speak for himself. Keep what you have to say against him till the judgment day.”

“ How long has your father been dead ? We know he left the glen with you.”

“ He was hid from the light of day before my mother shut her eyes upon it for ever. One of my griefs was, that he was not here to wake her. O, it went to my heart to lay her out with my own hands, and none to help : and I raised the cry many times, and no one came. How should they in such a lonesome place ? ”

“ Where was your husband, Dora ? It was not being a good husband to leave you at such a time.”

“ It was before that, that he left me, and he knew nothing of my state. Far, far away he was before my mother breathed her last blessing on him ; if a blessing she had for him, which is just what, with many other things, I have no memory of, your honour. I was crazed with grief, I suppose, for my husband having left me ; and all is lost and gone belonging to that time, but the crying and crying on the cliff, and nobody coming.”

She was next questioned about the shipwreck ; and here she was safe. She knew nothing of the matter but by hearsay, and could not answer a single question. Then came inquiries whither her husband had gone. She did not know ; from place to place, she supposed, as he

did before he married. It was a sore temptation to a man to leave a wife when he was turned out of his tenancy into a desert like this, while he knew that there were work and wages to be got elsewhere.—When did she expect her husband back, and how was she living in the mean time?—As for the living, it had been off the provision of potatoes they brought with them; but it was nearly gone, and she did not know what to look to next. She had thought many a night and day of seeking out Father Glenny and some of her old neighbours; but the fear lest her husband should come back and miss her, weighed with her to stay where she was. As to when that return would be, many was the morn when she said to herself, as she did this morn, that he would come before the sun went down; but the sun staid for none, and solitary it ever left her, as solitary it found her. They might as well ask her child about it as her,—the child that was now crying for her in the cabin, and she must go to it.

As she turned, she found herself intercepted by two soldiers, who barred her entrance. A third went in and brought her baby to her. She smiled, and said she did not object to being kept out of her own cabin as long as the sky was fair overhead.

“Will you take a solemn oath,” asked the officer, “that your husband is not concealed within, or in the neighbourhood? and will you deliver up arms and whatever else may belong to him that is in your keeping?”

Dora declared that she feared an oath too much to swear that her husband was not in any place near, when she did not know where on the face of God’s earth he was. She would swear that he was not in the cabin, nor any arms or other things of his, unless it might be any article of clothing left behind. She would swear that she did not know whether he was north, south, east, or west at that moment. This was thought satisfactory, and she took the oath deliberately, looking the officer full in the face as she spoke. This done, the soldiers were ordered to search the cabin, and Dora sat down on the ridge to hush her baby to sleep, and catch opportunities of throwing hasty glances down to the beach.—Before many minutes were over, the searchers re appeared, bringing with them a dozen pikes, a blunderbuss, and three brace of pistols.

“You brought them in yourselves,” said Dora calmly. “There were none there before, to my knowledge.”

“Come, come, mistress,” said the officer; “no more speeches. A false oath is enough for one morning’s work, and more than you will be able easily to answer for. You must come with us and take your trial for perjury.”

Dora declared with such an appearance of innocence that she neither knew of these arms nor could imagine how they came there, and inquired so naturally whereabouts they were found, that the officer appeared to be moved. He asked whether she would furnish him with a written promise to appear when called upon, to give her account of the matter to a magistrate, to save the trouble of carrying her with them this day. The simple Dora, delighted with so easy a way of escape, and suspecting no artifice, wrote the required promise in the officer’s pocket-book. As soon as she had done, he took out a letter and compared the hands.

“Seize her,” said he to a soldier beside her: “she is our prisoner.”

“Prisoner!” repeated Dora, falteringly.

“On two charges,” continued the officer, “one of perjury, on account of the oath you took just now; and the other of writing a threatening letter to Major Greaves.”

Perceiving that some whispering was going on among his men, the officer observed that the crime of perjury was so much on the increase in Ireland, as to make it necessary to prosecute it with the utmost severity. The convictions for perjury in Ireland were double the number in England, and very many more who had been undoubtedly guilty had hitherto escaped. In the present state of the country, justice could no have its course while the people were apt to swear falsely ; and every instance of such swearing must therefore be punished.

“ What is it that drives the people to swear falsely ?” cried Dora. “ You first teach them to take the holy name in vain by offering oaths that they understand no more than this babe of mine. There are oaths to the guager, and oaths at the fair and the market, and oaths at elections, that have no meaning at all to those that take them ; and the blessed book is tossed about as if there was no more in it than old ballads. But when you have driven us from our homes, and taken from us all the bread but that which comes by crime,—when you have dug a pit under our feet, and thrown a halter over our necks, and made our hearts sick, and our spirits weary, and our consciences careless of what is gone and what is to come,—when you hunt our husbands and fathers and brothers till there is but one resting-place for the sole of their feet, then you expect us of a sudden to fear an oath, and to point out the one hiding-place, and to deliver them up to be hanged in the midst of a gaping crowd. This is the way you make it a crime to love one another as God made our hearts to love. This is the way you breed hatred to the law, and then murder us for hating it. This is the way you mock God's truth, and then pre-tend to be jealous for it. This is what you call the course of justice. It is such a crooked course, that you will surely lose yourselves in it one day.”

“ If you threaten me, Dora, by words, as you threatened Major Greaves by letter, there will be another charge against you.”

“ And what are my threats ?” replied she, smiling bitterly. “ You may take me and murder me by law or otherwise, and there will be none that can call you to account, unless it be Father Glennly. You will outlive yonder sun if your life waits on my threats.”

The officer was not so sure of this when he saw how earnestly she glanced from time to time towards some particular spot in an opposite direction from the alder bush. It was an artifice ; for Dora now began to be cunning, and to wish an end to this visit, lest her husband should appear from the beach. To various inquiries respecting tracks in the direction in which she was looking, she replied by asking, had they not better go back the way they came, since they knew that to be safe? By equivocating, hesitating, and giving ambiguous answers, she effected her purpose of determining the party to cross the most perilous part of the bog, where, if not lost, they would be disabled for further active service this day. A soldier was left to guard her till their return. As he ordered her into the cabin, and the rest rode away, her heart smote her as if she had their blood to answer for. She rushed out to call them back, but was only ridiculed for what was supposed to be her last device.

“ I did not speak the word ; I did not point the way,” muttered she to herself. “ They can witness against the devil himself that I called them back, and they would not come. But, ! when shall I see Father Glennly ? If he was here, he would tell me how much I may venture as a woman, because I am a wife and a daughter.”

Still she felt as if murder was on her soul, and her trouble of spirit showed itself in the hurry of what she did. She picked a hole in the mud wall of her cabin, since her guard would not allow her to watch from without the proceedings of the party. While thus engaged, she argued within herself (like thousands of her countrymen before her) the necessity of doing evil that good might come ; the expediency of betraying the agents of the law, to avoid

treachery to the nearest and dearest ; the duty of sacrificing enemies in order to preserve those on whom the heart's love rests. Alas! for those who have taught any thus to reason !

When she had made a chink large enough for her purpose, she saw that the party had separated a little in order to traverse more safely the boggy tract before them. Each, however, appeared shortly to be sinking, sinking ;—and from a distance came their faint shouts to one another ;—and the efforts to rein up and direct the struggling horses were seen. The conviction that her scheme was succeeding,—or, as she afterwards said, the devil in actual presence,—gave her courage to look on and act. Presently she stole to the doorway to reconnoitre her guard. He was standing with his back to the sea, watching his party, and as if spasm-struck at their manifest danger. Dora sprang at him like a tiger-cat upon her prey. She hoped to throw him down the cliff. At the first moment, she had nearly succeeded ; but he recovered his hold of her while tottering on the verge, grappled strongly with her for a few moments, and then mastered her failing strength. He was in a tremendous passion at her for her momentary advantage over him, and showing it in other ways besides oaths and foul names. He tied her hands painfully behind her, and kicked her into the hut again. The utmost mercy she could obtain after a time, was having her bonds transferred to her feet, for her infant's sake. When this was done, her guard told her to look through the chink, and see what was coming. She thanked heaven aloud when she saw the party returning, bemired and exhausted, but undiminished in number.

“ Why there, now,” said her guard ; “ there's your Irish hypocrisy again! You thank God that they are out of the bog, when you know you would have them all sunk to the bottom of it this minute, if you could. And you are the people that call yourselves generous enemies !”

“ I, for one, was not given to enmity till I was driven to it,” said Dora.

When the discomfited party arrived, the prisoner, with her infant in her arms, was mounted behind a soldier, and carried off to jail. While passing the alder-bush, she was in an agony lest her father should leap out in her defence. She carefully avoided looking that way and speaking, while they were within hearing of the place Sullivan saw her pass ; but aware of the hopelessness of resistance, adopted the wiser course of remaining where he was to inform Dan of her fate ; thus sparing the husband the misery,—alas ! too well known to some of his companions,—of finding his house empty, and no intimation why or whither his family had departed.

During her somewhat long and very toilsome journey, Dora had no other consolatory thought than that Dan had not come home this dreadful morning.

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