

# AS I LIKE IT—*William Lyon Phelps*

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I WENT for the third time to see Rudolf Besier's play, "The Barretts of Wimpole Street." This piece had been running over a year at the Empire Theatre, the longest run of any play at that house, and it is a place famous for successful productions. It was the last week of the engagement, and an attendant shouted in front of the box-office, "No more seats! Every seat is sold for the balance of the week." Hundreds were being turned away, and went out disconsolately into the street. As I passed the ticket-taker, and entered the theatre, the place was jammed, although it was nearly fifteen minutes before the rise of the curtain. The largest number of vertical spectators that I have ever seen made such a wall of humanity in the "Standing Room Only" spaces, that I had literally to fight my way into the aisle. There was an air of expectation such as one seldom feels in the theatre—the vast audience seemed to know that witnessing this play was a matter of life and death.

This has been a bad year theatrically as well as in every other aspect; many theatres are dark, and many others are imploring audiences to come and save their plays from extinction. But here is a drama accepted by Katharine Cornell in manuscript, and already in its triumphant second year in London, and taken off in New York when it seems obvious that it could easily pack the house for two more seasons. Never before have I heard of such a stoppage of success.

After the play was over, I talked with Katharine Cornell, whose impersonation of Elizabeth Barrett is so impressive and so affecting. Naturally I asked her why she took it out of New York in the full tide of prosperity. It is because she wishes other cities to have the privilege of seeing it.

She is not doing the customary thing, sending out a second or a third "road company." She is taking it herself. This might almost be called missionary work; for under the peculiar conditions of theatre-going in America, the only place where the modern drama may be adequately heard is New York. Those

who live in Cleveland, Detroit, St. Louis and Kansas City have hardly better opportunities to know what is going on in modern drama, than if they lived in Manchuria. If a stranger made an estimate of the level of culture in American cities by the number and quality of local offerings in the theatre, his appraisal would not be flattering. To realize this, all one has to do in Boston or Buffalo or Pittsburgh is to glance at the theatrical advertisements.

Thus Katharine Cornell is giving a goodly number of the American people a rare opportunity, the opportunity not merely of seeing a very fine play beautifully presented and acted, but the opportunity of having an emotional experience that will be remembered as long as life lasts. To see "The Barretts of Wimpole Street" is to enrich one's intellectual and spiritual existence.

As SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE is read in every town in America, let me urge the inhabitants of every city where this play comes, not to miss it. Go without three meals if necessary, but don't let this drama pass unseen.

"The Barretts" is being talked about in remote corners of the earth. In consequence of a previous note I had written about it, a letter comes from a man in Australia, who wishes he might be in England or in America to see this play. He received an impact merely by hearing about it; and I hope by this time he has read it, for it is now available in book form. But it is primarily a piece for the theatre; it must be seen incarnate in order to be truly appreciated. Its appearance at this moment in the world's history has a significance more than the birth of a work of art.

Every good play artistically presented creates the illusion; we forget that we are in the theatre, and what is more important, we forget ourselves. We are drawn away from the world of current events and from our own petty affairs to a spectacle of human life, which at the moment takes possession of our attention. But while this is especially true of "The Barretts," it is not merely our interest that is held in bondage; our lives are changed. Among the thou-

sands who have seen this play, there are many individuals who have entered the theatre with one set of ideas, one attitude toward life, and emerged profoundly different. To a certain extent this should be the case with every great emotional experience; one should not hear a symphony of Beethoven, one should not read a great poem, one should not see a painting by Raphael, one should not see the Grand Canyon, and be just the same afterward. As the poet Flecker said, "The business of poetry is not to save men's souls, but to make them worth saving." Every sincere and beautiful work of art should enlarge one's personality.

"The Barretts of Wimpole Street" is unusually long. But it all takes place in one room, and with one tremendous exception, is concerned with the fortunes of one family. Love is the supreme force in the world—*amor vincit omnia*—and this is a love story comparable to no other. It is all *true*. Those who believe that the tyranny of Mr. Barrett is over-emphasized for theatrical effect do not know the real man.

His character was so dominating, so austere, so terrifying, he had that absolute certainty he was right, characteristic usually of those who are wrong, he had so successfully cowed his children from birth, they were so financially dependent on him that mere existence without him was impossible. He had all the conditions necessary for the success of absolute monarchy. He knew he was the Head of the House, and his nine children knew it too. For in order to be a successful aristocrat, the subjects must be as convinced as the sovereign.

But there is one force in the world greater than Fear—it is Love. Only one man in the world could have saved Elizabeth—for once the time and the place and the loved one were all together.

Robert Browning was probably the greatest personal force in English literature. Apart from his genius as an imaginative writer, he had enough energy for ten men. Innumerable times have I witnessed the contact between his poetry and the mind of youth—and there

is always something different from the effect produced merely by great art. Although Browning insisted his poetry was "dramatic," the utterances of persons other than their creator, he himself shows through his work, like powerful muscles through diaphanous garments.

The moment Browning (Mr. Ahearne) enters the sickroom on the stage, the audience feels a current of fresh air, an irresistible rush of vitality. Transfusion of blood is so well-known a means of health as to excite no comment. But we need to be reminded of the even more powerful transfusion of personality, that force which defies diagnosis and explanation, but which is as evident as the wind. The immense and permanent effect of this drama on the spectators is by its illustration of the significance of personality. In such contact faith and hope and vigor take the place of doubt, despair, and weakness.

"The Barretts of Wimpole Street" was never more needed than now. The whole world is sick. An English naval officer told me that although Europe was much worse off than America, he had never seen such pessimism in England or on the Continent as in the United States. Possibly it is because over there they have been accustomed to get along with less luxury than we imagine to be essential; possibly it is because they have outlived more disasters. But for whatever reason, our stock of hope seems to be the lowest in the world. Our young men and women are going out from universities and schools this year into a world gloomy and despairing.

Well, I have one sound prescription for them—*Browning*. Whether they like his poetry or not, they are sure to profit from his spirit. He believed that we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake.

This is why this particular drama, in which he gave health and confidence to one sick and hopeless, contains truth, actual fact, needed now more than ever before. Those who have seen this play have seen something more than a thrilling drama, they have had an experience.

The constantly increasing number of books on Browning receives a notable addition in "*Browning—Background and Conflict*," by F. R. G. Duckworth, of the University of Liverpool. This is a work of over two hundred pages, dealing mainly with British (rather than

American) criticism of Browning in three separate periods—1850–59, 1890–99, and 1920–29. The "conflict" that Mr. Duckworth sees in Browning's personality and poetry is the subject of the second half of his book. This is a thoughtful and even a provocative piece of literary criticism, and the last sentence gives us—if any were needed—a new and additional reason for reading Browning.

"We may come to see some of our own troubles and pleasures, our own most modern doubts and certainties, faithfully mirrored or forecast with a marvellous accuracy."

The present year is one of several anniversaries. First and foremost is that of Goethe, celebrated all over the world. It is pleasant to remember that the greatest writers are after all the Best Sellers. Millions read Goethe. Some months ago, when I mentioned in these columns that in his "*Röslein*" song, the line in the last stanza should read

"Habt *ihr* doch kein weh und ach"

instead of *ihm*, seen in many texts, I got so many letters from all over the world that I was forced to apply closure.

It is also the hundredth anniversary of the death of Walter Scott, who was the first to translate into English Goethe's early romantic drama, "*Götz von Berlichingen*." The two men had for each other respect and admiration.

It is also the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Haydn; he has always been a popular composer, but there have been times when he was not taken too seriously. His fame is brighter now than ever before. During the past season, Bruno Walter conducted a Haydn symphony in New York in a manner that revealed unsuspected beauties in a familiar masterpiece. And just as we now need the poetry and personality of Browning, so we need also the music and personality of Haydn. He was sunnyhearted and his music reflects his temperament. In his old age he said "Anybody just by looking at me can see that I am a good-natured fellow." He was free from a besetting sin of artists—jealousy. There was no room for envy or jealousy in his big heart. The relations between him and Mozart set a fine example. When Haydn went

to London and in Westminster Abbey heard "*The Messiah*," the tears ran down his cheeks and he said "Handel is the Master of us all." I have received an interesting letter from Eva J. O'Meara, of the Library of the School of Music at Yale.

"In looking for works of interest in connection with the Haydn bi-centenary I ran across a notice in Burney's History. In vol. 4, p. 599, Dr. Burney says: 'I am now happily arrived at that part of my narrative where it is necessary to speak of HAYDN! The admirable and matchless HAYDN! from whose productions I have received more pleasure late in my life, when tired of most other Music, than I ever received in the most ignorant and rapturous part of my youth, when every thing was new, and the disposition to be pleased undiminished by criticism or satiety.' Then follow three pages about Haydn and his works."

The death of Edgar Wallace removes one of the most inventive and prolific and versatile authors of our time. His mind teemed with plots and he worked at lightning speed. He spent a few days looking over one American city, and in another few days wrote a crime-play that ran a year. I suppose he can hardly be said to have a permanent place in literature, but he was a public benefactor. He never wrote a dull book. We can give him one of the finest epitaphs ever written, that of Prince Hal on Falstaff.

"I could have better spared a better man."

Here are some authors from whom I want more.

Joe Cook.  
E. Phillips Oppenheim.  
Mary Roberts Rinehart.  
Ogden Nash.  
F. P. Adams.  
Samuel Hoffenstein.  
Dorothy Parker.  
Agatha Christie.  
S. S. Van Dine.  
J. Jefferson Farjeon.  
Harry Leon Wilson.  
What has become of Bulldog Drummond?

The great undertaking of the "Dictionary of American Biography" goes

bravely on, and here is the eighth volume, *Grinnell to Hibbard*. Long ago I found I could not keep house without the (British) "Dictionary of National Biography," and the American is equally indispensable. The greatest man among the statesmen, and also the best known, is Alexander Hamilton, who has 17 columns; others, nearly as well known, though not so great, are Warren Gamaliel Harding, 12 columns, Benjamin Harrison, 9 columns, William Henry Harrison, 7 columns, John Hay, 12 columns, Rutherford B. Hayes, 9 columns, Patrick Henry, 11 columns.

The greatest man of letters is Nathaniel Hawthorne, 10 columns, closely followed by Joel Chandler Harris (only 4 columns) and Bret Harte (6 columns). Other names whom every reader should recognize are Edward Everett Hale, Nathan Hale, John Hancock, Lafcadio Hearn, Paul Hamilton Hayne, Victor Herbert. The two leading college presidents are Arthur T. Hadley and William R. Harper, who receive extended notice. John Harvard is paradoxically both distant and familiar.

My readers of the younger generation may now test the range and extent of their knowledge by considering the following names; I should really like to know if any one under twenty-five years of age recognizes them all.

Louise Imogen Guiney, Francis B. Gummere, Archibald Claverling Gunter, Arnold Henry Guyot, John Habberton, Asaph Hall, Stanley Hall, Fitz-Greene Halleck, Murat Halstead, Hannibal Hamlin, Wade Hampton, Phoebe Hanaford, Marcus Alonzo Hanna, Isabel Hapgood, Arthur Sherburne Hardy, John Marshall Harlan, Henry Harland, Harper Brothers, Edward Harrigan, Edward H. Harriman, William T. Harris, Carter Harrison, Henry Sydnor Harrison, Thomas Hastings, Percy Haughton, Minnie Hauk, Paul Haupt, H. O. and W. F. Havemeyer, Christopher Haverly, Rush C. Hawkins, Joseph R. Hawley, Mayo Williamson Hazeltine, Phoebe Hearst, Frederick H. Hedge, David B. Henderson, Thomas A. Hendricks, Joseph Henry, George H. Hepworth, Henry W. Herbert, William H. Herndon, James A. Herne, James B. and John B. Herreshoff, Myron T. Herrick, Abram S. Hewitt, Thomas Heyward—certainly a variety of talent!

And speaking of tests of knowledge,

here comes a flattish book called "Quiz Yourself," by John Francis Goldsmith, containing a series of questions that will make almost any person lose his self-respect.

I am glad to welcome "Collected Parodies" by our accomplished American poet and man of letters, Louis Untermeyer. This book will add to the gaiety of English-speaking nations. A fine book to read aloud to congenial friends under the lamplight. And along with it, by the same writer, is "The Book of Living Verse," an admirable anthology of English and American Poetry from the thirteenth century to now. Over six hundred well-printed pages in a volume that can be carried in the pocket.

Another brilliant little book of delightful parodies is by the scholarly G. F. Bradby, pleasantly christened "Parody and Dust-Shot." He begins with Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Browning and others.

Two more volumes in "Everyman's Encyclopædia" complete two-thirds of the projected twelve. Cheap and convenient. An enormous amount of information packed in small space.

Mr. Frank Bergen, of Newark, one of the most distinguished lawyers in the metropolitan area, has collected in two handsome volumes his "Essays and Speeches." He is an authority on American Constitutional history and his biographical writings on American statesmen display both knowledge and cerebration. I commend to all thoughtful readers his essays on Washington, on the U. S. Constitution, "The Other Side of the Declaration of Independence," "Webster's Work for the Union," and fifty other papers. At the end he prints some letters from Andrew D. White, Lecky, Trevelyan, John T. Morse, Jr., Bryce and others. Those who remember the speeches of the late Professor William Graham Sumner will recognize his manner in his letter to Mr. Bergen:

New Haven, Conn.,

Jan. 4, 1898.

Dear Sir:

I am very proud, if I contributed, in any degree, to inspire your lecture. Early American history is as mythological as that of early Rome. Our orators and editors seem to think that our people have acquired such an appetite for flapdoodle that it will accept nothing else, I am

not sure that they are not half right. The truth, however, ought to have some respect paid to it and I am glad to see that people here and there do respond to its claims.

Mr. Bergen's book will upset many cherished traditions but that is not its object. Its object is to contribute facts and thoughtful interpretations.

The death of the young British scholar, Geoffrey Scott, was such a loss to the world of learning and letters, that I rejoice to see some Golden Remains are published in a slender volume of "Poems." They are magnificent, wholly original, filled with force and fervor and beauty.

Adapted to the flattening purses of these days, many separate works by famous authors are now being assembled into one volume; so that the reader may obtain three full-length books at about the price of one. I am glad to see that John Galsworthy has given his consent to the binding together of three of his best-known novels (outside of the Forsyte family), to wit: "The Country House" (1907), "Fraternity" (1909), "The Patrician" (1911). The collection is called "Worshipful Society." Of these three I like "The Patrician" best.

An Anthology that will please all those who wish to read in solitude poetry that is spiritual and mystical in thought and aspiration, is called "O World Invisible," the title taken from one of the most famous poems of Francis Thompson. It is a slender book of only a little over one hundred pages, is exclusively a collection of religious poems, and is edited by Edward Thompson.

"A Treasury of Irish Poetry in the English Tongue," edited by Stopford A. Brooke and T. W. Rolleston, is a revised and enlarged edition of what appeared first in 1900 and ran through a number of impressions. It is particularly valuable because so many of these poems are not easy to find elsewhere.

Both readers and collectors will be interested in "Unpublished Early Poems by Alfred Tennyson," edited by his grandson, Charles Tennyson. Most of these were written in his boyhood and in his undergraduate days at Cam-



bridge. Perhaps the nine sonnets will attract the most attention. Tennyson and Browning wrote very few sonnets and suppressed a considerable proportion. The quippy poem on Milton's mulberry tree at Christ's College will amuse many pilgrims.

A new translation of Dante's "Divine Comedy," by Jefferson Butler Fletcher, unencumbered with notes, is so well done and in so fine a metrical fashion that I recommend it to all English readers. Hesitating between the literalness of prose and the loss of meaning certain in English blank verse or in following Dante's metre exactly, Professor Fletcher had the happy inspiration of "unlinked tercets," by which we get both the poetry and the thought. To me this is the most satisfactory of the many translations. The volume is illustrated by the drawings made for the poem by Botticelli.

A new volume of verse by Reginald Pole, called "Nights and Hours," has so many fine things, with varying moods of love and reverence and satire and mirth, that I welcome it as an excellent representative of "intimate" poetry.

We turn from the flame of love to the smoke of nicotine in a learned and diverting volume called "A History of Smoking," written by Count Gorti, translated by Paul England, and embellished with sixty-four marvellous illustrations. There is a good Index and the very full Bibliography will surprise many readers. The book begins with human history, and the last chapter is well named "The Final Triumph of Smoking." At the beginning of the twentieth century, who could have foreseen the conquest of the civilized world by tobacco?

Many interesting anecdotes of famous smokers are given. I did not know that after the capture of Fort Donelson by Grant, he was presented by admirers all over the North with eleven thousand cigars. Carlyle and Tennyson should have been mentioned as prodigious smokers. The late Professor Barrett Wendell of Harvard was as consistent a smoker as I ever knew, and he expressed the opinion that professors should smoke in the classroom while delivering lectures. He had the gift of making rings for which I envied him. He would

shoot six or seven loops in the air and then shoot one final ring through them all. I agree with Frank Crowninshield that one should not smoke just before a meal or during it, though the practice is becoming increasingly common. It spoils the taste of good food. The American railway dining-car used to be free of smoke; women are responsible for the change.

Doctor Henry Seidel Canby has won an enviable position as a critic of American literature, and his latest work, "Classic Americans," with essays on Irving, Cooper, Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne and Melville, Poe, Whitman, is full of penetration and common sense. He has no fads and no eccentricities; he holds the scales with a steady hand. It is still very difficult to write satisfactorily on Whitman; satisfactorily, I mean, to those who are neither scoffers nor idolaters. Doctor Canby in this essay is at his best. There is a good Index and a Selective Bibliography.

A fine book for experts is "Earthquake Damage and Earthquake Insurance," by the famous authority, John R. Freeman. A monumental work of over 900 pages, abundantly illustrated. This man could make the minutes of the previous meeting exciting.

Olin Downes, the music critic of the New York Times, has an immense audience over the radio, when he interprets symphony concerts in New York on Sunday afternoons. He has now wisely collected a number of these lectures in a book of over 300 pages, called "Symphonic Broadcasts." They are admirable commentaries in language adapted to the amateur.

I also recommend a tiny booklet, enjoyed best with a piano at hand, called "Strauss's Tone-Poems," by Thomas Armstrong. I wish he had included the early one, "Macbeth," which some day I hope to hear again. It is thrilling.

Authors are beginning earlier and earlier. Frederick J. Steinhardt, aged twenty-one, writes an admirable book of the sea, "Sailor's Progress," in which his love for his craft is communicated to his readers. Sailing has a thrill all its own.

Dorothy Canfield, who, like her contemporaries Anne Sedgwick and Edith

Wharton, knows France better than most of its inhabitants, has produced an interesting collection of tales called "Basque People," of which I like best "An Ancestral Home." I should like all these even better if I knew something of the Basque country, but the nearest I ever got to it was at Pau, which is as like it as Chillicothe, Ohio.

An astonishingly good piece of condensation is a volume of 250 pages called "The Theatre from Athens to Broadway," by Thomas Wood Stevens. It has none of the routine style of the "manual," but is full of observations that arouse thought. For example:

"The standard of craftsmanship represented by Sidney Howard, Maxwell Anderson, Martin Flavin, George Kelly, Philip Barry, and Marc Connelly—not to go down the list—is high. But so far we have not had from any of these men a play or group of plays which tends to change in the least, for better or worse, the course of the theatre—even that special locus of the theatre which we call Broadway. We may be very thankful for the excellence of the workmanship, but we must in candor admit that without any given example of their works the state of the stage would be the same. Their phase of realism, glossy and persuasive as it is, is wearing down, and Hollywood gets them in the end. . . . A good rebel, steadier than O'Neill, less the journalist than Shaw, more versatile than Pirandello, more purely dramatic than any of these, is what the theatre needs. . . . A large order."

I have often wondered why *Chauve-souris*, meaning "bat," should be the name of an entertainment. I am informed by Madame Serge Beliaevsky of New Haven:

Nikita Balieff opened this "literary and artistic" cabaret in Moscow before the war. He was the *conferencier*, and the "Bat" opened its door for the guests after midnight, after the closing of the theatres.

From Miss Emma B. Mahon, of Rockaway Beach, N. Y.

"In the December number of SCRIBNER'S, in 'As I Like It,' you write of two apple trees growing on your summer golf course. The apples are called 'sheep nose,' although you have known

them as 'gillyflowers,' and you add, somewhat regretfully, 'which word applied to apples in America, seems obsolescent.'

"Oh, Dr. Phelps! What could you expect of apples growing on a golf course? No wonder they have discarded their old-fashioned, poetic name. In the real apple orchards of Wayne County, Up State New York, they are still known as 'Gillyflowers.' I enclose an advertisement from the *Wayne Democratic Press*, Lyons, N. Y.:

"APPLES FOR SALE AT MY FARM.

Baldwins, Greenings, Hess, Tallman, Sweets, Gill Flowers—50 cents a

bushel at the farm, Charas Clausz, near Lock Berlin."

From C. H. Sholes, of Los Angeles: "Here is a word, contained in no dictionary to my knowledge, which seems so worthy of adoption that I want to pass it on to you for your approval.

"Skyugle," pro. long u; skyugled, skyugling.

"I believe it to have been coined by A. M. Fairfield (now deceased), for 25 years a school teacher in and around Susanville, California, from whom I learned it in correspondence. As I gathered from his use of it in his letters, it means to travel about aimlessly, in a

purposeless way, to wander about just to be going somewhere, with no end in view. How delectably it describes certain motor tourists! It's worth adopting for that use alone."

And now we are off to Athens, where my article for the next month will be written. I will close this with the last line of Schiller's "Don Carlos," which an undergraduate put for the benefit of the examiners at the end of his German paper.

"I have done my part. Now do yours."  
*Ich habe das Meinige getan. Tun Sie das Ihrige.*

#### BOOKS MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE, WITH THEIR PUBLISHERS

"Dictionary of American Biography," Vol. VIII. Scribners.

"Browning—Background and Conflict," by F. R. G. Duckworth. Dutton. \$2.

"The Barretts of Wimpole Street," by Rudolf Besier. Little Brown.

"The Theatre from Athens to Broadway," by T. W. Stevens. Appleton. \$2.50.

"Basque People," by Dorothy Canfield. Harcourt Brace. \$2.50.

"Worshipful Society," by John Galsworthy. Scribners. \$2.50.

"Symphonic Broadcasts," by Olin Downes. Dial. \$2.50.

"Strauss's Tone-Poems," by Thomas Armstrong. Oxford. 50 cents.

"Sailor's Progress," by F. J. Steinhardt. Dial. \$3.50.

"Earthquake Damage and Earthquake Insurance," by J. R. Freeman. McGraw-Hill Book Co.

"A History of Smoking," by Count Corti. Harcourt Brace. \$3.50.

"Nights and Hours," by R. Pole. Primavera Press, Los Angeles. \$1.50.

"Divine Comedy," translated by J. B. Fletcher. Macmillan. \$5.

"Unpublished Early Poems of Tennyson," ed. by C. Tennyson. Macmillan. \$5.

"A Treasury of Irish Poetry," ed. Brooke and Rolleston. Macmillan. \$3.

"O World Invisible," ed. E. Thompson. Dutton. \$2.

"The Book of Living Verse," by L. Untermeyer. Harcourt Brace. \$2.50.

"Everyman's Encyclopædia," 12 volumes. Dutton. The set, \$30.

"Poems," by Geoffrey Scott. Oxford. \$1.75.

"Collected Parodies," by L. Untermeyer. Harcourt Brace. \$2.75.

"Parody and Dust-Shot," by G. F. Bradby. Oxford. \$1.75.

"Quiz Yourself," by J. F. Goldsmith. Harcourt Brace. \$1.

## THE CRACKED LOOKING-GLASS *Continued from page 276*

us." "I'd be proud of that as if I came from Mayo," said Kevin, and he went on slapping paint on Rosaleen's front gate. They stood there smiling at each other, feeling they had agreed enough, it was time to think of how to get the best of each other in the talk from now on. For more than a year they had tried to get the best of each other in the talk, and sometimes it was one and sometimes another, but a gay easy time and such a bubble of joy like a kettle singing. "You've been a sister to me, Rosaleen, I'll not forget ye while I have breath." He had said that the last night. Dennis muttered and snored a little. Rosaleen wanted to mourn about everything at the top of her voice, but it wouldn't do to wake Dennis. He was sleeping like the dead after all that goose.

Rosaleen said, "Dennis, I dreamed about Kevin in the night. There was a grave, an old one, but with fresh flow-

ers on it, and a name on the headstone cut very clear but as if it was in another language and I couldn't make it out some way. You came up then and I said, 'Dennis, what grave is this?' and you answered me, 'That's Kevin's grave, don't you remember? And you put those flowers there yourself.' Then I said, 'Well, a grave it is then, and let's not think of it any more.' Now isn't it strange to think Kevin's been dead all this time and I didn't know it?"

Dennis said, "He's not fit to mention, going off as he did after all our kindness to him, and not a word from him."

"It was because he hadn't the power any more," said Rosaleen. "And ye mustn't be down on him now. I was wrong to put my judgment on him the way I did. Ah, but to think! Kevin dead and gone, and all these natives and foreigners living on, with the paint still on their barns and houses where Kevin put it! It's very bitter."

Grieving for Kevin, she drifted into thinking of the natives and foreigners who owned farms all around her. She was afraid for her life of them, she said, the way they looked at you out of their heathen faces, the foreigners bold as brass, the natives sly and mean. "The way they do be selling the drink to all, and burning each other in their beds and splitting each other's heads with axes," she complained. "The decent people aren't safe in their houses."

Yesterday she had seen that native Guy Richards going by wild-drunk again, fit to do any crime. He was a great offense to Rosaleen, with his shaggy mustaches and his shirt in rags till the brawny skin showed through, a shame to the world, staring around with his sneering eyes; living by himself in a shack and having his cronies in for drink until you could hear them shouting at all hours and careering round the countryside like the devils

from hell. He would pass by the house driving his bony gray horse at top speed, standing up in the rickety buggy singing in a voice like a power of scrap-iron falling, drunk as a lord before breakfast. Once when Rosaleen was standing in her doorway wearing a green checker-board dress, he yelled at her: "Hey, Rosie, want to come for a ride?"

"The bold stump!" said Rosaleen to Dennis, "if ever he lays a finger on me I'll shoot him dead."

"If you mind your business by day," said Dennis in a shrivelled voice, "and bar the doors well by night, there'll be no call to shoot anybody."

"Little you know!" said Rosaleen. She had a series of visions of Richards laying a finger on her and herself shooting him dead in his tracks. "Whatever would I do without ye, Dennis?" she asked him that night, as they sat on the steps in a soft darkness full of fireflies and the sound of crickets. "When I think of all the kinds of men there are in the world. That Richards!"

"When a man is young he likes his fun," said Dennis amiably, beginning to yawn. "Young, is it?" said Rosaleen, warm with anger. "The old crow! Fit to have children grown he is, the same as myself, and I'm a settled woman over her nonsense!" Dennis almost said, "I'll never call you old," but all at once he was irritable too. "Will you stop your gossiping?" he asked censoriously.

Rosaleen sat silent, without rancor, but there was no denying the old man was getting old, old. He got up as if he gathered his bones in his arms, and carried himself in the house. Somewhere inside of him there must be Dennis, but where? "The world is a wilderness," she informed the crickets and frogs and fireflies.

Richards never had offered to lay a finger on Rosaleen, but now and again he pulled up at the gate when he was not quite drunk, and sat with them afternoons on the doorstep, and there were signs in him of a nice-behaved man before the drink got him down. He would tell them stories of his life, and what a desperate wild fellow he had been, all in all. Not when he was a boy, though. As long as his mother lived he had never done a thing to hurt her feelings. She wasn't what you might call a rugged woman, the least thing made her sick, and she was so religious

she prayed all day long under her breath at her work, and even while she ate. He had belonged to a society called The Sons of Temperance, with all the boys in the countryside banded together under a vow never to touch strong drink in any form: "Not even for medicinal purposes," he would quote, raising his right hand and staring solemnly before him. Quite often he would burst into a rousing march tune which he remembered from the weekly singings they had held: "With flags of temperance flying, With banners white as snow," and he could still repeat almost word for word the favorite poem he had been called upon to recite at every meeting: "At midnight, in his guarded tent, The Turk lay dreaming of the hour——"

Rosaleen wanted to interrupt sometimes and tell him that had been no sort of life, he should have been young in Ireland. But she wouldn't say it. She sat stiffly beside Dennis and looked at Richards severely out of the corner of her eye, wondering if he remembered that time he had yelled "Hey, Rosie!" at her. It was enough to make a woman wild not to find a word in her mouth for such boldness. The cheek of him, pretending nothing had happened. One day she was racking her mind for some saying that would put him in his place, while he was telling about the clam-bakes his gang was always having down by the creek behind the rock pile, with a keg of home-brew beer; and the dances the Railroad Street outfit gave every Saturday night in Winston. "We're always up to some devilment," he said, looking straight at Rosaleen, and before she could say scat, the hellion had winked his near eye at her. She turned away with her mouth down at the corners; after a long minute, she said, "Good day to ye, Mr. Richards," cold as ice, and went in the house. She took down the looking-glass to see what kind of look she had on her, but the wavy place made her eyes broad and blurred as the palm of her hands, and she couldn't tell her nose from her mouth in the cracked seam . . .



The pipe salesman came back next month and brought a patent cooking pot that cooked vegetables perfectly without any water in them. "It's a lot healthier way of cooking, Miz O'Toole," Dennis heard his mouthy

voice going thirteen to the dozen. "I'm telling you as a friend because you're a good customer of mine."

"Is it so?" thought Dennis, and his gall stirred within him.

"You'll find it's going to be a perfect God-send for your husband's health. Old folks need to be mighty careful what they eat, and you know better than I do, Miz O'Toole, that health begins or ends right in the kitchen. Now your husband don't look as stout as he might. It's because, tasty as your cooking is, you've been pouring all the good vitamins, the sunlit life-giving elements, right down the sink. . . . Right down the sink, Miz O'Toole, is where you're pouring your husband's health and your own. And I say it's a shame, a good-looking woman like you wasting your time and strength standing over the cook-stove when all you've got to do from now on is just fill this scientific little contrivance with whatever you've planned for dinner and then go away and read a good book in your parlor while it's cooking—or curl your hair."

"My hair curls by nature," said Rosaleen. Dennis almost groaned aloud from his hiding-place.

"For the love of—why, Miz O'Toole, you don't mean to tell me that! When I first saw that hair, I said to myself, why, it's so perfect it looks to be artificial! I was just getting ready to ask you how you did it so I could tell my wife. Well, if your hair curls like that, without any vitamins at all, I want to come back and have a look at it after you've been cooking in this little pot for two weeks."

Rosaleen said, "Well, it's not my looks I'm thinking about. But my husband isn't up to himself, and that's the truth, Mr. Pendleton. Ah, it would have done your heart good to see that man in his younger days! Strong as an ox he was, the way no man dared to rouse his anger. I've seen my husband, many's the time, swing on a man with his fist and send him sprawling twenty feet, and that for the least thing, mind you! But Dennis could never hold his grudge for long, and the next instant you'd see him picking the man up and dusting him off like a brother and saying, 'Now think no more of that.' He was too forgiving always. It was his great fault."

"And look at him now," said Mr. Pendleton, sadly.

Dennis felt pretty hot around the ears.



He stood forward at the corner of the house, listening. He had never weighed more than one hundred thirty pounds at his most, a tall thin man he had been always, a little proud of his elegant shape, and not since he left school in Bristol had he lifted his hand in anger against a creature, brute or human. "He was a fine man a woman could rely on, Mr. Pendleton," said Rosaleen, "and quick as a tiger with his fists."

"I might be dead and mouldering away to dust the way she talks," thought Dennis, "and there she is throwing away the money as if she was already a gay widow woman." He tottered out bent on speaking his mind and putting a stop to such foolishness. The salesman turned a floppy smile and shrewd little eyes upon him. "Hello, Mr. O'Toole," he said, with the manly cordiality he used for husbands. "I'm just leaving you a little birthday present with the Missis here." "It's not my birthday," said Dennis, sour as a lemon. "That's just a manner of speaking!" interrupted Rosaleen, merrily. "And now many thanks to ye, Mr. Pendleton."

"Many thanks to *you*, Miz O'Toole," answered the salesman, folding away nine dollars of good green money. No more was said except good day, and Rosaleen stood shading her eyes to watch the Ford walloping off down the hummocky lane. "That's a nice, decent family man," she told Dennis, as if rebuking his evil thoughts. "He travels out of New York, and he always has the latest thing and the best. He's full of admiration for ye, too, Dennis. He said he couldn't call to mind another man of your age as sound as you are."

"I heard him," said Dennis. "I know all he said."

"Well, then," said Rosaleen, serenely. "There's no good saying it over." She hurried to wash potatoes to cook in the pot that made the hair curl.



The winter piled in upon them, and the snow was shot through with blizzards. Dennis couldn't bear a breath of cold, and all but sat in the oven, rheumy and grunty, with his muffler on. Rosaleen began to feel as if she couldn't bear the feel of her clothes in the hot kitchen, and when she did the barn work she had one chill after another. She complained that her hands were gnawed to

the bone with the cold. Did Dennis realize that now, or was he going to sit like a log all winter, and where was the lad he had promised her to help with the outside work?

Dennis sat wordless under her unreasonableness, thinking she had very little work for a strong-bodied woman, and the truth was she was blaming him for something he couldn't help. Still she said nothing he could take hold of, only nipping his head off when the kettle dried up or the fire went low. There would come a day when she would say outright, "It's no life here, I won't stay here any longer," and she would drag him back to a flat in New York, or even leave him, maybe. Would she? Would she do such a thing? Such a thought had never occurred to him before. He peered at her as if he watched through a keyhole. He tried to think of something to ease her mind, but no plan came. She would look at some harmless thing around the house, say—the calendar, and suddenly tear it off the wall and stuff it in the fire. "I hate the very sight of it," she would explain, and she was always hating the very sight of one thing or another, even the cow; almost, but not quite, the cats.

One morning she sat up very tired and forlorn, and began almost before Dennis could get an eye open: "I had a dream in the night that my sister Honora was sick and dying in her bed, and was calling for me." She bowed her head on her hands and breathed brokenly to her very toes, and said, "It's only natural I must go to Boston to find out for myself how it is, isn't it?" Dennis, pulling on the chest protector she had knitted him for Christmas, said, "I suppose so. It looks that way."

Over the coffee pot she began making her plans. "I could go if only I had a coat. It should be a fur one against this weather. A coat is what I've needed all these years. If I had a coat I'd go this very day."

"You've a great coat with fur on it," said Dennis.

"A rag of a coat!" cried Rosaleen. "And I won't have Honora see me in it. She was jealous always, Dennis, she'd be glad to see me without a coat."

"If she's sick and dying maybe she won't notice," said Dennis.

Rosaleen agreed. "And maybe it will be better to buy one there, or in New York—something in the new style."

"It's long out of your way by New York," said Dennis, "There's shorter ways to Boston than that."

"It's by New York I'm going, because the trains are better," said Rosaleen, "and I want to go that way." There was a look on her face as if you could put her on the rack and she wouldn't yield. Dennis kept silence.



When the postman passed she asked him to leave word with the native family up the hill to send their lad down for a few days to help with the chores, at the same pay as before. And to-morrow morning, if it was all the same to him, she'd be driving in with him to the train. All day long, with her hair in curl papers, she worked getting her things together in the lazy old canvas bag. She put a ham on to bake and set bread and filled the closet off the kitchen with firewood. "Maybe there'll come a message saying Honora's better and I shan't have to go," she said several times, but her eyes were excited and she walked about so briskly the floor shook.

Late in the afternoon Guy Richards knocked, and floundered in stamping his big boots. He was almost sober, but he wasn't going to be for long. Rosaleen said, "I've sad news about my sister, she's on her deathbed maybe and I'm going to Boston."

"I hope it's nothing serious, Missis O'Toole," said Richards. "Let's drink her health in this," and he took out a bottle half full of desperate-looking drink. Dennis said he didn't mind. Richards said, "Will the lady join us?" and his eyes had the devil in them if Rosaleen had ever seen it. "I will not," she said. "I've something better to do." While they drank she sat fixing the hem of her dress, and began to tell again about the persons without number she'd known who came back from the dead to bring word about themselves, and Dennis himself would back her up in it. She told again the story of the Billy-cat, her voice warm and broken with the threat of tears.

Dennis swallowed his drink, leaned over and began to fumble with his shoelace, his face sunken to a handful of wrinkles, and thought right out plainly to himself: "There's not a word of truth in it, not a word. And she'll go on telling

it to the world's end for God's truth." He felt helpless, as if he were involved in some disgraceful fraud. He wanted to speak up once for all and say, "It's a lie, Rosaleen, it's something you've made up, and now let's hear no more about it." But Richards, sitting there with his ears lengthened, stopped the words in Dennis' throat. The moment passed. Rosaleen said solemnly, "My dreams never renege on me, Mr. Richards. They're all I have to go by." "It never happened at all," said Dennis inside himself, stubbornly. "Only the Billy-cat got caught in a trap and I buried him." Could this really have been all? He had a nightmarish feeling that somewhere just out of his reach lay the truth about it, he couldn't swear for certain, yet he was *almost* willing to swear that this had been all. Richards got up saying he had to be getting on to a shindig at Winston. "I'll take you to the train to-morrow, Missis O'Toole," he said. "I love doing a good turn for the ladies."

Rosaleen said very stiffly, "I'll be going in with the letter-carrier, and many thanks just the same."

She tucked Dennis into bed with great tenderness and sat by him a few minutes, putting cold cream on her face. "It won't be for long," she told him, "and you're well taken care of the whole time. Maybe by the grace of God I'll find her recovered."

"Maybe she's not sick at all," Dennis wanted to say, and said instead, "I hope so." It was nothing to him. Everything else aside, it seemed a great fuss to be making over Honora, who might die when she liked for all Dennis would turn a hair.

Dennis hoped until the last minute that Rosaleen would come to her senses and give up the trip, but at the last minute there she was with her hat and the rag of a coat on, a streak of pink powder on her chin, pulling on her tan gloves that smelt of naphtha, flourishing a handkerchief that smelt of Azurea, and going every minute to the window, looking for the postman. "In this snow maybe he'll be late," she said in a trembling voice. "What if he didn't come at all?" She took a last glimpse of herself in the mirror. "One thing I must remember, Dennis," she said in another tone. "And that is, to bring back a looking-glass that won't make my face look like a monster's."

"It's a good enough glass," said Dennis, "without throwing away money." The postman came only a few minutes late. Dennis kissed Rosaleen good-by and shut the kitchen door so he could not see her climbing into the car, but he heard her laughing.

"It's just a born liar she is," Dennis said to himself, sitting by the stove, and at once he felt he had leaped head-first into a very dark pit. His better self tried to argue it out with him. "Have you no shame," said Dennis's better self, "thinking such thoughts about your own wife?" The baser Dennis persisted. "It's not half she deserves," he answered sternly, "leaving me here by my lone, and for what?" That was the great question. Certainly not to run after Honora, living or dying or dead. Where then? For what on earth? Here he stopped thinking altogether. There wasn't a spark in his mind. He had a lump on his chest could surely be pneumonia if he had a cold, which he hadn't, specially. His feet ached until you'd swear it was rheumatism, only he never had it. Still, he wasn't thinking. He stayed in this condition for four days, and the under-witted lad from the native farm above did all the work, even to washing the dishes. Dennis ate pretty well, considering the grief he was under.



Rosaleen settled back in the plush seat and thought how she had always been a great traveller. A train was like home to her, with all the other people sitting near, and the smell of newspapers and some kind of nice-smelling furniture polish and the perfume from fur collars and the train dust and something over and above she couldn't place, but it was the smell of travel: fruit, maybe, or was it machinery? She bought chocolate bars, though she wasn't hungry, and a magazine of love stories, though she was never one for reading. She only wished to prove to herself she was once more on a train going somewhere.

She watched the people coming on or leaving at the stations, greeting, or kissing good-by, and it seemed a lucky sign she did not see a sad face anywhere. There was a cold sweet sunshine on the snow, and the city people didn't look all frozen and bundled up. Their faces looked smooth after the gnarled raw

frost-bitten country faces. The Grand Central hadn't changed at all, with all the crowds whirling in every direction, and a noise that almost had a tune in it, it was so steady. She held on to her bag the colored men were trying to get away from her, and stood on the sidewalk trying to remember which direction was Broadway where the moving pictures were. She hadn't seen one for five years, it was high time now! She wished she had an hour to visit her old flat in 164th Street—just a turn around the block would be enough, but there wasn't time. An old resentment rose against Honora, who was a born spoilsport and would spoil this trip for her if she could. She walked on, getting her directions, brooding a little because she had been such a city girl once, thinking only of dress and a good time, and now she hardly knew one street from another. She went in to the first moving picture theatre she saw because she liked the name of it. "The Prince of Love," she said to herself. It was about two beautiful young things, a boy with black wavy hair and a girl with curly golden hair, who loved each other and had great troubles, but it all came well in the end, and all the time it was just one fine ballroom or garden after another, and such beautiful clothes! She sniffled a little in the Azurea-smelling handkerchief, and ate her chocolates, and reminded herself these two were really alive somewhere and looked just like that, but it was hard to believe living beings could be so beautiful.

After the dancing warm lights of the screen the street was cold and dark and ugly, with the slush and the roar and the millions of people all going somewhere in a great rush, but not one face she knew. She decided to go to Boston by boat the way she used in the old days when she visited Honora. She gazed into the shop windows thinking how the styles in underthings had changed till she could hardly believe her eyes, wondering what Dennis would say if she bought the green glove silk slip with the tea-colored lace. Ah, was he eating his ham now as she told him, and did the boy come to help as he had promised?

She ate ice cream with strawberry preserves on it, and bought a powder puff and decided there was time for another moving picture. It was called "The Lover King," and it was about a



king in a disguise, a lovely young man with black wavy hair and eyes would melt in his head, who married a poor country girl who was more beautiful than all the princesses and ladies in the land. Music came out of the screen, and voices talking, and Rosaleen cried, for the love songs went to her heart like a dagger.

Afterward there was just time to ride in a taxi to Christopher Street and catch the boat. She felt happier the minute she set foot on board, how she always loved a ship! She ate her supper thinking, "That boy didn't have much style to his waiting. Dennis would never have kept him on in the hotel"; and afterward sat in the lounge and listened to the radio until she almost fell asleep there before everybody. She stretched out in her narrow bunk and felt the engine pounding under her, and the grand steady beat shook the very marrow of her bones. The fog horn howled and bellowed through the darkness over the rush of water, and Rosaleen turned on her side. "Howl for me, that's the way I could cry in the night time in that lost heathen place," for Connecticut seemed a thousand miles and a hundred years away by now. She fell asleep and had no dreams at all.

In the morning she felt this was a lucky sign. At Providence she took the train again, and as the meeting with Honora came nearer, she grew sunken and tired. "Always Honora making trouble," she thought, standing outside the station holding her bag and thinking it strange she hadn't remembered what a dreary ugly place Boston was; she couldn't remember any good times there. Taxicab drivers were yelling in her face. Maybe it would be a good thing to go to a church and light a candle for Honora. The taxi scampered through winding streets to the nearest church, with Rosaleen thinking, what she wouldn't give to be able to ride around all day, and never walk at all!

She knelt near the high altar, and something surged up in her heart and pushed the tears out of her eyes. Prayers began to tumble over each other on her lips. How long it had been since she had seen the church as it should be, dressed for a feast with candles and flowers, smelling of incense and wax. The little doleful church in Winston, now who could really pray in it? "Have mercy on us," said Rosaleen, calling on

fifty saints at once, "I confess . . ." she struck her breast three times, then got up suddenly, carrying her bag, and peered into the confessionals hoping she might find a priest in one of them. "It's too early or it's not the day, but I'll come back," she promised herself with tenderness. She lit the candle for Honora and went away feeling warm and quiet. She was blind and confused, too, and could not make up her mind what to do next. Where ever should she turn? It was a burning sin to spend money on taxicabs when there was always the hungry poor in the world, but she hailed one anyhow, and gave Honora's house number. Yes, there it was, just like in old times.

She read all the names pasted on slips above the bells, all the floors front and back, but Honora's name was not among them. The janitor had never heard of Mrs. Terence Gogarty, nor Mrs. Honora Gogarty, neither. Maybe it would be in the telephone book. There were many Gogartys but no Terence nor Honora. Rosaleen smothered down the impulse to tell the janitor, a good Irishman, how her dream had gone back on her. "Thank ye kindly, it's no great matter," she said, and stepped out into the street again. The wind hacked at her shoulders through the rag of a coat, the bag was too heavy altogether. Now what kind of nature was in Honora not to drop a line and say she had moved?



Walking about with her mind in a whirl, she came to a small dingy square with iron benches and some naked trees in it. Sitting, she began to shed tears again. When one handkerchief was wet she took out another, and the fresh perfume put new heart in her. She glanced around when a shadow fell on the corner of her eye, and there hunched on the other end of the bench was a scrap of a lad with freckles, his collar turned about his ears, his red hair wilted on his forehead under his bulging cap. He slanted his gooseberry eyes at her and said, "We've all something to cry for in this world, isn't it so?"

Rosaleen said, "I'm crying because I've come a long way for nothing." The boy said, "I knew you was a County Sligo woman the minute I clapped eyes on ye."

"God bless ye for that," said Rosaleen, "for I am." "I'm County Sligo myself, long ago, and curse the day I ever thought of leaving it," said the boy, with such anger Rosaleen dried her eyes once for all and turned to have a good look at him.

"Whatever makes ye say that now?" she asked him. "It's a good country, this. There's opportunity for all here." "So I've heard tell many's the countless times," said the boy. "There's all the opportunity in the wide world to shrivel with the hunger and walk the soles off your boots hunting the work, and there's a great chance of dying in the gutter at last. God forgive me the first thought I had of coming here."

"Ye haven't been out long?" asked Rosaleen. "Eleven months and five days the day," said the boy. He plunged his hands into his pockets and stared at the freezing mud clotted around his luckless shoes.

"And what might ye do by way of a living?" asked Rosaleen. "I'm an hostler," he said. "I used to work at the Dublin race tracks, even. No man can tell me about horses," he said proudly. "And it's good work if it's to be found."

Rosaleen looked attentively at his sharp red nose, frozen it was, and the stung look around his eyes, and the sharp bones sticking out at his wrists, and was surprised at herself for thinking, in the first glance, that he had the look of Kevin. She saw different now, but think if it had been Kevin! Better off to be dead and gone. "I'm perishing of hunger and cold," she told him, "and if I knew where there was a place to eat, we'd have some lunch, for it's late."

His eyes looked like he was drowning. "Would ye? I know a place!" and he leaped up as if he meant to run. They did almost run to the edge of the square and the far corner. It was a Coffee Pot and full of the smell of hot cakes. "We'll get our fill here," said Rosaleen, taking off her gloves, "though I'd never call it a grand place."

The boy ate one thing after another as if he could never stop: roast beef and potatoes and spaghetti and custard pie and coffee, and Rosaleen ordered a package of cigarettes. It was like this with her, she was fond of the smell of tobacco, her husband was a famous smoker, never without his pipe. "It's no use keeping it in," said the boy. "I haven't a penny, yesterday and to-day I did-

n't eat till now, and I've been fit to hang myself, or go to jail for a place to lay my head."

Rosaleen said, "I'm a woman doesn't have to think of money, I have all my heart desires, and a boy like yourself has a right to think nothing of a little loan will never be missed." She fumbled in her purse and brought out a ten-dollar bill, crumpled it and pushed it under the rim of his saucer so the man behind the counter wouldn't notice. "That's for luck in the new world," she said, smiling at him. "You might be Kevin or my own brother or my own little lad alone in the world, and it'll all come back to me if ever I need it."

The boy said, "I never thought to see this day," and put the money in his pocket. Rosaleen said, "I don't even know your name, think of that!"

"I'm a blight on the name of Sullivan," said he. "Hugh it is—Hugh Sullivan."

"That's a good enough name," said Rosaleen. "I've cousins named Sullivan in Dublin, but I never saw one of them. There was a man named Sullivan married my mother's sister, my aunt Brigid she was, and she went to live in Dublin. You're not related to the Dublin Sullivans, are ye?"

"I never heard of it, but maybe I am."

"Ye have the look of a Sullivan to me," said Rosaleen, "and they're cousins of mine, some of them." She ordered more coffee and he lit another cigarette, and she told him how she had come out more than twenty-five years past, a greenhorn like himself, and everything had turned out well for her and all her family here. Then she told about her husband, how he had been head-waiter and a moneyed man, but he was old now; about the farm, if there was some one to help her, they could make a good thing of it; and about Kevin and the way he had gone away and died and sent her news of it in a dream; and this led to the dream about Honora, and here she was, the first time ever a dream had gone back on her. She went on to say there was always room for a strong willing boy in the country if he knew about horses, and how it was a shame for him to be tramping the streets with an empty stomach when there was everything to be had if he only knew which way to look for it. She leaned over and took him by the arm very urgently.

"You've a right to live in a good Irish house," she told him. "Why don't ye come home with me and live there like one of the family in peace and comfort?"

Hugh Sullivan stared at her out of his glazed green eyes down the edge of his sharp nose and a crafty look came over him. "'T would be dangerous," he said. "I'd hate to try it." "Dangerous, is it?" asked Rosaleen. "What danger is there in the peaceful countryside?" "It's not safe at all," said Hugh. "I was caught at it once in Dublin, and there was a holy row! A fine woman like yourself she was, and her husband peeking through a crack in the wall the whole time. Man, that was a scrape for ye!"

Rosaleen understood in her bones before her mind grasped it. "Whatever—" she began, and the blood boiled up in her face until it was like looking through a red veil. "Ye little whelp," she said, trying to get her breath, "so it's that kind ye are, is it? I might know you're from Dublin! Never in my whole life—" Her rage rose like a bonfire in her, and she stopped. "If I was looking for a man," she said, "I'd choose a *man* and not a half-baked little . . ." She took a deep breath and started again. "The *cheek* of ye," she said, "insulting a woman could be your mother. God keep me from it! It's plain you're just an ignorant greenhorn doesn't know the ways of decent people, and now be off—" she stood up and motioned to the man behind the counter. "Out of that door now—"

He stood up too, glancing around fearfully with his squinted eyes, and put out a hand as if he would try to make it up with her. "Not so loud now, woman—it's what any man might think the way ye're—"

Rosaleen said, "Hold your tongue or I'll tear it out of your head!" and her right arm went back in a business-like way. He ducked and shot past her, then collected himself and lounged out of reach. "Farewell to ye, County Sligo woman," he said tauntingly. "I'm from County Cork myself!" and darted through the door. Rosaleen shook so she could hardly find the money for the bill, and she couldn't see her way before her, hardly, but when the cold air struck her, her head cleared, and she could have almost put a curse on Honora for making all this trouble for her. . . .

She took a train the short way home, for the taste of travel had soured on her altogether. She wanted to be home and nowhere else. That shameless boy, whatever was he thinking of? "Boys do be known for having evil minds in them," she told herself, and the blood fairly crinkled in her veins. But he had said, "A fine woman like yourself," and maybe he'd met too many bold ones, and thought they were all alike; maybe she had been too free in her ways because he was Irish and looked so sad and poor. But there it was, he was a mean sort, and he would have made love to her if she hadn't stopped him, maybe. It flashed over her and she saw it clear as day—Kevin had loved her all the time, and she had sent him away to that cheap girl who wasn't half good enough for him! And Kevin a sweet decent boy would have cut off his right hand rather than give her an improper word. Kevin had loved her and she had loved Kevin and, oh, she hadn't known it in time! She bowed herself back into the corner with her elbow on the window-sill, her old fur collar pulled up around her face and wept long and bitterly for Kevin, who would have stayed if she had said the word—and now he was gone and lost and dead. She would hide herself from the world and never speak to a soul again.



"Safe and sound she is, Dennis," Rosaleen told him. "She's been dangerous but it's past. I left her in health."

"That's good enough," said Dennis, without enthusiasm. He took off his cap with the ear flaps and ran his fingers through his downy white hair and put the cap on again and stood waiting to hear the wonders of the trip; but Rosaleen had no tales to tell and was full of homecoming.

"This kitchen is a disgrace," she said, putting things to rights. "But not for all the world would I live in the city, Dennis. It's a wild heartless place, full of criminals in every direction as far as the eye can reach. I was scared for my life the whole time. Light the lamp, will you?"

The native boy sat warming his great feet in the oven, and his teeth were chattering with something more than cold. He burst out: "I seed sumpin comin' up the road whiles ago. Black. Fust

it went on all fours like a dawg and then it riz upon and walked longside of me on its hind legs. I was scairt, I was. I said Shoo! at it, and it went out, like a lamp."

"Maybe it was a dog," said Dennis.

"'Twarn't a dawg, neither," said the boy.

"Maybe 'twas a cat rising up to climb a fence," said Rosaleen.

"'Twarn't a cat, neither," said the boy. "'Twarn't nothin' I ever seed afore, nor *you*, neither."

"Never you mind about that," said Rosaleen. "I have seen it and many times, when I was a girl in Ireland. It's famous there, the way it comes in a black lump and rolls along the path before you, but if you call on the Holy Name and make the sign of the Cross, it flees away. Eat your supper now, and sleep here the night; ye can't go out by your lone and the Evil waiting for ye."

She bedded him down in Kevin's room, and kept Dennis awake all hours telling him about the ghosts she'd seen in Sligo. The trip to Boston seemed to have gone out of her mind entirely.

In the morning, the boy's starveling black dog rose up at the opened kitchen door and stared sorrowfully at his master. The cats streamed out in a body, and silently, intently they chased him far up the road. The boy stood on the doorstep and began to tremble again. "The old woman told me to git back fer supper," he said blankly. "Howma *ever* gointa git back fer supper *now*? The ole man'll skin me alive."

Rosaleen wrapped her green wool shawl around her head and shoulders. "I'll go along with ye and tell what happened," she said. "They'll never harm ye when they know the straight of it." For he was shaking with fright until his knees buckled under him. "He's away in his mind," she thought, with pity. "Why can't they see it and let him be in peace?"

The steady slope of the lane ran on for nearly a mile, then turned into a bumpy trail leading to a forlorn house with broken-down steps and a litter of rubbish around them. The boy hung back more and more, and stopped short when the haggard, long-toothed woman in the gray dress came out carrying a stick of stove wood. The woman stopped short too, when she recognized Rosaleen, and a sly cold look came on her face.

"Good day," said Rosaleen. "Your boy saw a ghost in the road last night, and I didn't have the heart to send him out in the darkness. He slept safe in my house."

The woman gave a sharp dry bark, like a fox. "Ghosts!" she said. "From all I hear, there's more than ghosts around your house nights, Missis O'Toole." She wagged her head and her faded tan hair flew in strings. "A pretty specimen you are, Missis O'Toole, with your old husband and the young boys in your house and the travelling salesmen and the drunkards lolling on your doorstep all hours——"

"Hold your tongue before your lad here," said Rosaleen, the back of her neck beginning to crinkle. She was so taken by surprise she couldn't find a ready answer, but stood in her tracks listening.

"A pretty sight you are, Missis O'Toole," said the woman, raising her thin voice somewhat, but speaking with deadly cold slowness. "With your trips away from your husband and your loud colored dresses and your dyed hair——"

"May God strike you dead," said Rosaleen, raising her own voice suddenly. "If you say that of my hair! And for the rest may your evil tongue rot in your head with your teeth! I'll not waste words on ye! Here's your poor lad and may God pity him in your house, a blight on it! And if my own house is burnt over my head I'll know who did it!" She turned away and whirled back to call out, "May ye be ten years dying!"

"You can curse and swear, Missis O'Toole, but the whole countryside knows about you!" cried the other, brandishing her stick like a spear.

"Much good they'll get of it!" shouted Rosaleen, striding away in a roaring fury. "Dyed, is it?" she raised her clinched fist and shook it at the world. "Oh, the liar!" and her rage was like a drum beating time for her marching legs. What was happening these days that everybody she met had dirty minds and dirty tongues in their heads? Oh, why wasn't she strong enough to strangle them all at once? Her eyes were so hot she couldn't close her lids over them, but went on staring and walking, until almost before she knew it she came in sight of her own house, sitting like a hen quietly in a nest of snow. She slowed down, her thumping heart eased

a little, and she sat on a stone by the roadside to catch her breath and gather her wits before she must see Dennis. As she sat, it came to her that the Evil walking the roads at night in this place was the bitter lies people had been telling about her, who had been a good woman all this time when many another would have gone astray. It was no comfort now to remember all the times she might have done wrong and didn't. What was the good if she was being scandalized all the same? That lad in Boston now—the little whelp. She spat on the frozen earth and wiped her mouth. Then she put her elbows on her knees and her head in her hands, and thought, "So that's the way it is here, is it? That's what my life has come to, I'm a woman of bad fame with the neighbors."



Dwelling on this strange thought, little by little she began to feel better. Jealousy, of course, that was it. "Ah, what wouldn't that poor thing give to have my hair?" and she patted it tenderly. From the beginning it had been so, the women were jealous, because the men were everywhere after her, as if it was her fault! Well, let them talk. Let them. She knew in her heart what she was, and Dennis knew, and that was enough.

"Life is a dream," she said aloud, in a soft easy melancholy. "It's a mere dream." The thought and the words pleased her, and she gazed with pleasure at the loosened stones of the wall across the road, dark brown, with the thin shining coat of ice on them, in a comfortable daze until her feet began to feel chilled.

"Let me not sit here and take my death at my early time of life," she cautioned herself, getting up and wrapping her shawl carefully around her. She was thinking how this sad countryside needed some young hearts in it, and how she wished Kevin would come back to laugh with her at that woman up the hill; with him, she could just laugh in their faces! That dream about Honora now, it hadn't come true at all. Maybe the dream about Kevin wasn't true either. If one dream failed on you it would be foolish to think another mightn't fail you too: wouldn't it, wouldn't it? She smiled at Dennis sitting by the stove.



"What did the native people have to say this morning?" he asked, trying to pretend it was nothing much to him what they said.

"Oh, we exchanged the compliments of the season," said Rosaleen. "There was no call for more." She went about singing; her heart felt light as a leaf and she couldn't have told why if she died for it. But she was a good woman and she'd show them she was going to be one to her last day. Ah, she'd show them, the low-minded things.

In the evening they settled down by the stove, Dennis cleaning and greasing his boots, Rosaleen with the long tablecloth she'd been working on for fifteen years. Dennis kept wondering what had happened in Boston, or where ever she had been. He knew he would never hear the straight of it, but he wanted Rosaleen's story about it. And there she sat mum, putting a lot of useless stitches in something she would never use, even if she ever finished it, which she would not.

"Dennis," she said after a while, "I don't put the respect on dreams I once did."

"That's maybe a good thing," said Dennis, cautiously. "And why don't you?"

"All day long I've been thinking Kevin isn't dead at all, and we shall see him in this very house before long."

Dennis growled in his throat a little. "That's no sign at all," he said. And to show that he had a grudge against her he laid down his meerschaum pipe,

stuffed his old briar and lit it instead. Rosaleen took no notice at all. Her embroidery had fallen on her knees and she was listening to the rattle and clatter of a buggy coming down the road, with Richard's voice roaring a song, "I've been working on the railroad, All the live-long day!" She stood up, taking hair pins out and putting them back, her hands trembling. Then she ran to the looking-glass and saw her face there, leaping into shapes fit to scare you. "Oh, Dennis," she cried out as if it was that thought had driven her out of her chair. "I forgot to buy a looking-glass, I forgot it altogether!"

"It's a good enough glass," repeated Dennis. The buggy clattered at the gate, the song halted. Ah, he was coming in, surely! It flashed through her mind a woman would have a ruined life with such a man, it was courting death and danger to let him set foot over the threshold.

She stopped herself from running to the door, hand on the knob even before his knock sounded. Then the wheels creaked and ground again, the song started up; if he thought of stopping he changed his mind and went on, off on his career to the Saturday night dance in Winston, with his rapscallion cronies.

Rosaleen didn't know what to expect, then, and then: surely he couldn't be stopping? Ah, surely he *couldn't* be going on? She sat down again with her heart just nowhere, and took up the tablecloth, but for a long time she could-

n't see the stitches. She was wondering what had become of her life; every day she had thought something great was going to happen, and it was all just straying from one terrible disappointment to another. Here in the lamplight sat Dennis and the cats, beyond in the darkness and snow lay Winston and New York and Boston, and beyond that were far-off places full of life and gaiety she'd never seen nor even heard of, and beyond everything like a green field with morning sun on it lay youth and Ireland as if they were something she had dreamed, or made up in a story. Ah, what was there to remember, or to look forward to now? Without thinking at all, she leaned over and put her head on Dennis's knee. "Whyever," she asked him, in an ordinary voice, "did ye marry a woman like me?"

"Mind you don't turn over in that chair," said Dennis. "I knew well I could never do better." His bosom began to thaw and simmer. It was going to be all right with everything, he could see that.

She sat up and felt his sleeves carefully. "I want you to wrap up warm this bitter weather, Dennis," she told him. "With two pairs of socks and the chest protector, for if anything happened to you, whatever would become of me in this world?"

"Let's not think of it," said Dennis, shuffling his feet.

"Let's not, then," said Rosaleen. "For I could cry if you crooked a finger at me."

## FARMERS

*By Helene Mullins*

WHAT if the back be stooped and the skin be dried,  
Tending the soil? The sun, the wind and the rain  
Leave kindlier marks than avarice and pride  
On the face and hands of a man. One's share of pain  
Had better be got from simple things like drouth  
And yellowing plants, than from the dread disease  
Of melancholia that puts upon the mouth  
A smile deformed, and lashes the memories  
Until they burn. O farmer, your plow and hoe  
And the sweat you drop on the seedlings in the ground,  
Bring you a harvest of verdant life to show;  
While we who are occupied the seasons round  
With thoughts and cunning schemes, whose souls are curved  
Even as your back is, have not seen the fruit  
Of our cultivation ripen. nor have we served  
Earth, nor ourselves—discouraged and destitute.