THE WILD BIRDS OF KILLEEVY

BY ROSA MULHOLLAND (LADY GILBERT)

CHAPTER I-CONTINUED

But the courage of the little maid was equal to the occasion, and she gave back trill for trill and shake for shake. Kevin lurked behind the tree and listened, and Fanchea's

strife with the thrush. of her godfathers, never fear, and of ner godiatners, never fear, and it's himself that came to give her a lesson. It will be the blackbird's turn next, I'm thinking. I must teach her some verses to sing to their music."

It's not natural for such a big four to be set upon a baby?"

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and the softness of her great, dark eyes. There was a fantastic daring about the mite in her out-door sports, and a sweet, sympathetic expression in her dealings with other creatures, which made her the pet and playmate of everything that lived. When the mountain children held their play in the grass going round and round, with children held their play in the grass, going round and round, with grass beside them.

"Oh, it's only out of her head," linked hands, in a living chain, it was little Fan who sang the tune to sir; about everything she sees. which they moved; and when the little leader was in a carolling mood, there were endless varieties introduced into the music and the game. As she grew older, she acquired a habit of singing almost acquired a habit of singing almost acquired a habit of singing almost acquired as head to savi and indeed it learn books, sir, I can't learn books, sir, I can't which they moved; and when the everything she had to say; and when a story was told to her, she was sure to make a song about it. She soon came to be known among the cottagers as the little singer; and Sibbie, her grandaunt, long famous for her shrill ballads and weird laments, pointed with half-melancholy pride to the melodious little creature, explaining that this beautiful and promising voice could only reach perfection through the extinction of her own.

The tiny girl was likely to be

spoilt with praise and kindness, and the pious young mother con-sulted the priest as to the difficulty of rearing such a fascinating child. 'If she were pretty without the

voice," said the fond mother, toss ing back her darling's curls with one hand, and smoothing them down with the other, "or if she had the voice without being so

"Should you like her better?" asked the old man gravely, studying the child's innocent face with a

benign and serious eye.
"Well, no, Father," said poor
Maury, "I cannot say that I would." Maury, "I cannot say that I would "Neither would God, who made "Neither would Free Who her," said the priest. "He who made bird and flower, color and song, does not bestow any of his gifts at random. Do your part with his help, and leave the rest to

That same day, Father Ulick spoke from the altar of the Savi-our's love for little children; and every evening after this he gathered the little ones into the church in an interval of their sport and heard them sing their simple hymns. The voice of the old shep-herd was weak and unski led, but it quavered forth bravely and led the little choir. Above the shrill sound always one full, clear note, with a free, liquid warble that filled the of the other childish voices heart with joy. The priest heard it with wonder and emotion.

"It is the voice of the bird," he said, "untrammelled and untamed. May she always be content with the mountain nest, the audience of Nature, the arena of heaven. God take care of thee, little wild bird of Killeevy!"

And a blessing was directed specially on one curly pate, as he made the mystical sign of redemption above the heads of the young flock.

CHAPTER II

THE TWO FRIENDS

Father Ulick lived in a cabin no better than Shawn Rua's where a large crucifix, a small bed, a pot of "Be mignonette, a table covered with books and papers, were nearly all that the sun discovered in his chamber besides himself. His old soutane was rusty and threadbare, and his biretta had been many and his biretta had been many times mended and re-covered by unskillful hands. A heavy cloak, hanging in the corner, with a riding-whip above it, told of distant sick-calls upon stormy nights; the ink splashes on the table-cover hinted of communion with the far world beyond the barriers of sea and mountain; the marks in his books betrayed intimacy with another world, companionship in lonely hours, and tranquil enjoyment when labor was done. Various notes and papers at his hand could have borne witness to active interest in the welfare of his parishion-ers; and above all this the smokestained crucifix on the wall suggested the mainspring of the old man's unruffled patience and of his deep contentment with his life.

Contentment with his life.

Into this little chamber walked Connor Mor on a Sunday after Mass, and sitting on the edge of a chair, twirling his hat, complained to the priest about his foolish son.

"He's no better then a fool "He's no better than a fool, Father," said Connor; "I'm altogether disappointed in him."

see, he can't hardly as much as babe read his Prayer Baok."

knowing a letter."

"He isn't a saint nor a hero,"
said the father, disconsolately. "I
wanted him to be a clerk and a
book-learned man like Shawn Kua. His mother and myself were set on it; but he's that stupid that the the tree and listened, and results that the voice sank deep into his heart.

"I told you the birds would be looking after her," said Shawn looking after her," said Shawn Rua, when Kevin told him of her strife with the thrush. "He's one strife with the thrush." "He's one strife with applications with anybody but that quare strife with the thrush. "He's one in the said of the s neighbors remark it, and laught about him. He makes no companions with anybody but that quare little singing girl of Maury Oge's. It's not natural for such a big lout

Fanchea's mother was very proud of the child, and loved to keep her curly locks bright and trim, and to arrange her little scarlet coats so as to enhance the white

to enhance the whiteness of her skin and the softness of her great, dark young pair, the baby and the big

"Are you not tired of listening to er? Wouldn't it be better for you

'I can't learn books, sir, I can't leed. I want to hear things. indeed. Fan teaches me a deal, sir.' Teaches you?

"Yes, sir; she puts beautiful things in my head."
Father Uf k looked at the kin dling face of the boy, generally so heavy and absent in expression. A new soul looked out of the face—new to the priest who marked the strange light and ardor with

She puts beautiful things in your head? Then listen to her, my boy," and Father Ulick put his hand on the same curious head, blessed the pair of friends and passed on.

"What do I put in your head?" round the big boy's neck, and rub-bing her little cheek against his. Oh, I don't know how to tell

you," said Kevin; "I would if I could. I see things while you are singing - such splendid, things!"
"Where are they?" asked Fan,

peering about curiously.
"Oh, up in the clouds there, and floating over the sea. Sometimes they go away the moment you stop singing; sometimes they stay for ever so long after; sometimes they come back again when I am dream-

ing at night."
Fan, being only five years old, found no mystery in anything, and accepted Kevin's "beautiful things" as only a natural part of this beautiful world.

'Do you like them to come back?'

"I bo you like them to come back she asked contentedly.
"Of course I do," said Kevin.
"Then I will sing, sing all the time." said Fan, beginning to warble her conversation. "Shawn says I belong to the birds. Why have I not wings? I want to fly have I not wings? I want to fly went the sea and the mountains."
"What "The child will never be good for the with draughts of buttermilk."

would become of me "But I could take you on my ngs," carolled Fan, gaily.
'I am too heavy; I should break wings,' down your wings; and both of us would be drowned in the sea."

"There are great big birds that come from far away—you told me about them once. One of them about them once. One of them ought to come and carry us both across the sea. Where would they take us to, I wonder. Is there any more world over there?"

"There is a great deal more forld besides this mountain, I now. Shawn Rua told me of parts of it. It is all written about in

Why don't you learn your "Because I am stupid; everybody

tells me so."
"What is stupid?" about the things I want to know.
If I could read Shawn's books now! But I can't get on so far. I get tired of trying, and I would rather

What is thinking ?" "Having things in your mind a long time, and going over them." And is thinking not clever

"Oh, no; anybody can do that."
"I hope I am stupid," warbled little Fan; "for I would like to be the same as you.'

Maury Oge was fond of Kevin because of his devotion to her little girl; and it was rather a help to her that Fan was so much in the safe company of such a steady big

"Come into my mother's, Kevin," cried little Fan, running to meet him on his way home from work: "she has got such a beautiful Indian cake baking on the fire for you." And Kevin left his spade outside the door and went in and sat at the fire, with Fanchea on his knee, turning the cake for Maury who was busy with other things. In the corner sat Sibbie, the grandaunt, rocking the cradle and croongether disappointed in him."
What is wrong with the boy,
Connor Mor?"
What is wrong with the boy,
The corner sat Sibbie, the grand-

read his Prayer Baok."

"Well, can't he pray?" asked the priest; "and can't he also dig? If he will not learn to read, you cannot make him; and saints and heroes have lived and died without knowing a letter."

"Take the bellows and blow, Kevin," said Fan, "and I'll sing you a song about the sparks flying up the chimney! Only I must whisper singing, because Aunt Sibbie is telling baby about the angels."

She laid her cheek against his and

She laid her check against his and coued a little fantastic song. Now, do you see anything in the fire

ing upon one another and falling on every side. Now they are all conquered but a few horsemen, who are riding away with a banner; but as the root of them, and shrivelled and scorent them to the root. Then came the fever, creeping like a hideous ghound the mountain side, and sitting them to the root. The mountain side, and sitting them to the root. The mountain side, and shrivelled and scorent them to the root. The came the fever, creeping like a hideous ghound the mountain side, and shrivelled and scorent them to the root. The came the fever came the feve they are moving up a hill they are changed into the walls of a palace, with a flag flying from it. A great crowd rises up in front, and I see a noble bishop and a king with a crown. It is St. Patrick preaching them.

What is he doing that for ?" "To make the people love God. Just the way Father Ulick preaches

to us, you know,"
"And what do you see next?" "Now I see the palace walls open, and there is a great wide hall, all across the fire, and a long table, and the king is at a feast with his nobles round him. In front of him sits an old bard—" to the raiters and sank amid sobbing and muttering—a sad substitute for and muttering—a sad substitute for an amid sobbing and muttering—a sad substitute for an amid substitut

Shawn saw one and heard it played; journey to see a big town. He showed me a little picture of a blind harper playing on a harp; it was on a bit of paper torn out of a book that his tobacco was wrapped up in, in the shop where he bought it."
"Was the blind harper a bard?"

Shawn. Long ago the bards wandered about the country with their not go, only I leave her to you.

"The bard is singing and touching his harp. He sings of great things that have been done. The king puts down his gold cup and listens. His beautiful daughter is sitting beside him. Her long hair is sitting beside him. Her long hair is down to the ground. Her name is

"What a queer name!"
"It is one of Shawn's stories.
Princesses don't have common names, you know."
"Well?"

they are all changed into golden clouds, moving, moving; and I see the Blessed Virgin rising up into heaven, with all the glory round

her—
"Just the way she is in my
hymn!" cried Fanchia. "Is she
there still? I'll sing it for her."
And she began to warble softly an
ancient Gaelic hymn to the Virgin
Triumphant which had been sung in Triumphant, which had been sung in the mountains since the days of St.

The child will never be good anything but singing," said Maury Oge, as she and her husband and Sibbie sat at the table over their sibbie sat at the table over their sibbie sat at the table over their satisfications. supper of potatoes. "Never so ong as that boy is such a fool about

"Don't deny them the pleasures of God," said Sibbie, nodding her yellow - turbaned head solemnly. A song is a blessing, I can tell you. Many a heart I have lightened in my time with a twist of a tune. There's different kinds of songs, and they come in their turn; there's sleepy song that brings rest, and the merry song that puts care out of the door and brings in laugh-ing and dancing; there's the deathkeen that opens the sore heart and lets out the tears (long may it be before she sings it;) and there's the story-song that is like news of old times, and makes the spinning-wheel go quick and the time by fast. So, Shemus and Maury, you mustn't be

ungrateful."
"We're not, indeed," said

Shemus.

"And when she's singing to ease your hearts for you some day, remember whose voice is on the tip of her tongue. If the poor old aunt never did much for you else, she did that much at least. Every song she sings is taking the breath out of my body and calling me away to the other world. And I'll be glad to go home to my glory, my dears, I'll be glad to home to my glory. There I'll have my voice again, and plenty to do with it. The singing there is grander than anything you could hear on the mountain. I hear could hear on the mountain. I hear it at night sometimes, and I'd like to be helping with it. But it's time for the child to be in her bed."

for the child to be in her bed."
Fan said her night prayers at Kevin's kuee, uttering the words in a sort of low chant, and sometimes finishing her petition or thanksgiving with a little curl of melody that fell on Kevin's heart with an indescribable sweetness. Then, as Sibbie loosened the strings of her pinafore, Kevin folded back the cover of her little bed which stood in a corner of the kitchen, and

"I wanted him to be a clerk, and ee, he can't hardly as much as ead his Prayer Baok."

"Take the bellows and blow, "Take the bellows and blow, "Well, can't he pray?" asked Kevin," said Fan, "and I'll sing you solemnity, and bidding them all good-night, took his spade from beside the door and went home.

> CHAPTER III. CHANGES

what do you see? I can't see anything but red, red cinders, and lumps of turf, and blazes!"

"I see a great plain, and a battle going on that Shawn read about last night. The warriors are rush them to the root. Then came the fever, creeping like a hideous ghoul sitting

On a hot autumn day, Maury Oge and her young husband, Shemus, lay dead, side by side, in their cabin, with a fair-haired boy laid by their feet, and a year-old babe between In a corner of the room two or

three old women were keening dismally, with their elbows set on their knees and their heads between their hands. The weird music rang up to the rafters and sank amid sobbing

"What is that?"

"A bard is a man who sings stories and plays on a harp—a thing that makes beautiful music—far finer than the Boccagh's fiddle. Shawn saw one and heard it played: little face white and fixed with grief. little face white and fixed with grief Shawn saw one and heard it played; that was once when he went a long journey to see a big town. He showed me a little picture of a blind showed me a little picture of a blind

sign of waking and recognition.

A step sounded outside the door, and Kevin came in. He had been busy all the morning doing last services to Maury and Shemus; and "I am not sure; I don't know all the time Maury's last words to "I am not sure; I don't know all the time Maury's last words to him had been beating about his that he sang anything but I will ask that he sang anything but I will ask him had been beating about his that he sang anything but I will heart—"I could not die, I could have to you. My all the time Maury's last words to harps, and they were great people, and kings were glad to see them."

"Go on, Kevin, and see more."

"The bear of the see the

good; but the priest was old, and little Fan was of finer clay than the people around her. To quiet youth, who was called stupid, her dying heart turned in its last

"Dar Thula gets up and presents a cup of wine to the old bard. He drinks it and kisses her hand. Now they are all changed into golden they are all changed in the golden they are all changed in the golden they are all changed in the bring her there.

Speaking in the intensity of feeling, he had uttered, with simplicity, nore of the truth than he often ventured to express. To the dying ears that caught them the words did not seem exaggerated, and no ther ears were by to hear. When Kevin came in, Fan got up

and stole to meet him clinging to him and laying her soft cheek against his strong side. They will not speak," she whisted; "and they are all so cold.

Why are they so cold when the sun is shining?"
Kevin sat down upon the stool, and gathering her up on his knees hid her face on his shoulder.

"They see the angels; they are looking at God," he whispered; why they cannot look at that is Fanchea's tears began to

'Will God never let them look at us again?" she asked, sobbing. Kevin only answered by kissing her dark head again and again, stroking her soft hair with his great hand, and soothing her like a baby till she fell asleep in his arm. Then he carried her, creeping, lest she should wake, into a neighbour's cabin, where he laid her on a bed covered with a mended checker

All was over, the grave was filled and smoothed, the prayers were said, the priest had spoken his simple sermon, and the bitter lamentation of the keen had broken forth again. The crowd was about to disperse when a small flying to disperse, when a small, flying figure was seen on the road above

for the consecrated spot.

'It is the child. 'Tis little Fan may the Lord look to her!" passed

young mother, whose own eyes were

onee, onee, onee!"
Fanchea darted like a swallow in at the gate, her long hair floating, her eyes strained, her face white. She looked wildly round a crowdy on the strain of the swallow of the same of the same

and then her eyes fell eagerly on the ground, searching among the 'Where have you put them?" she cried, with a frantic sob.

You have aug a hole; you have put them in the ground; you have

covered up their faces with the horrible clay!" TO BE CONTINUED

WOMEN ARE QUEER | band would be to hear about the

It is strange what an influence the veriest trifle may have on the fate of an individual. If Mrs. Wise's shoe string had not come untied, and she had not stopped on the Hewitt's front porch to adjust it, she would not have caught the bit of conversation which floated out to

she would not have caught the bit of conversation which floated out to her through the open door.

"I had no idea matters were that serious with the Wises." The

serious with the Wises. The listener recognized Mrs. Gobey's sharp little voice.
"Neither had I," was the reply from Mrs. Hewitt. "He told Wilder." from Mrs. Hewitt. liam himself — said he couldn't stand it much longer. He loathes style, and visiting, and parties; and

ized that the voices were approach-ing. What on earth would she do? She couldn't get away now without betray her. . She stepped back, twisted viciously. She gave a gasp of pain and leaning against the wall pushed the bell. The two women two almost with door and take her mind off this pain would take her mind

"Why, Mrs. Wise!" Mrs. Hewitt had one ghastly moment while she thought Mrs. Wise had overheard, wildered, anguish thought. Phil

almost fainted as the low shoe was emoved showing an insistent swel-

ling at the ankle.
"Oh, I hope it isn't broken!"

want them to think there was any possibility of her having heard that snatch of conversation—"and I tried my best to get here. It's a good thing it happened so near. I'd hate awfully," she did achieve the own disappointment in him. That the could steep to disappointment in him. That strange doorstep. You're awfully brave-"

"It must have hurt you dreadfully—" The two women fussed fully—" The two women fussed around her remorsefully until the arrival of the doctor, who pronounced the injury to be nothing There may be a small bone

snapped, but I doubt it," he said.
"I can tell better when the swelling goes down. Meanwhile we won't bother bandaging until we get you home. Did any one call Phil?" He happened to be a friend of her

husband.
"Oh, no," Mrs. Wise replied hastily. "He has an important meeting this afternoon and this is

neeting this alternoon and this is so trifling. . He said he'd be home early anyhow."
"Righto," the doctor agreed cheerfully. "You'll be all right in a day or so."
With mixed feelings Mrs. Hawitt With mixed feelings Mrs. Hewitt more,

and Mrs. Gobey watched the doctor's car disappear. "I'm afraid it's a more serious injury than he thinks," Mrs. Gobey Mrs. Hewitt voiced a troubled hought. 'You don't think she

thought. could have heard-what we were

she did, wouldn't it?"
"Unspeakable! She mightn't understand, you know—she might think it was worse than it was." 'She'd understand that her own husband had been talking about her," Mrs. Gobey broke in sharply,

'and goodness knows that's bad enough:
Mrs. Hewitt's discomfort visibly
increased. "Well, William didn't
say he said anything about her,
you know. He only said—he said She grew confused under Mrs.

Gobey's wondering look. 'I gathered that they were unhappy—that he was tired of it all. You said—"

1 said Mr. Wise was tired of ll. You said—'
I said Mr. Wise was tired of taid with the was tired of the waster when the waster was the said with the waster was the waster waster waster was a waster the 'society racket' as he calls it,'
Mrs. Hewitt stated desperately, her
face very red. "He told Mr. the graveyard, darting over all face very red. "He told Mr. obstacles as if on wings, and making Hewitt that, but he didn't say anything against his wife, you understand. He said she loved that sort

of thing, but that it bored him.
That's all."
"Oh," Mrs. Gobey's sharp little from lip to lip.

"Oh, then, faix, it's her Angel might have kept his two hands on her eyes a bit longer!" grumbled a her eyes a bit longer whose own eyes were young mother, whose own eyes were to match the significance of the sore with weeping for poor Maury's exclamation. "I'm glad to have my

fate.
"Whist, whist, woman. Och, onee, onee, onee!"

Oh, yes! I wouldn't want to 'Oh, yes! I wouldn't want to 'Oh, yes! I wouldn't want to give you a wrong impression," Mrs. Hewitt hastened to say. "Must you go? Come again soon, won't "Thanks! Come and see me!"

with a conventional smile. "But I hope you never will!" the departing caller said to herself. "And you won't see me if you do—not would have believed she was such a mischief maker? Actually distorting the facts about the Wises, and as well as I know them I didn't have sense enough to realize that it wasn't so! I suppose," she realized the decret away from the thought of it dered away from the thought of a constant and the same of the constant are all the same of the constant are all as a constant are all as a constant and the same of the constant are all as a cons

He was a great admirer By Helen Moristry in St. Anthony Messenger of Phil. Wise—always said he was such a level-headed fellow, and he liked Mrs. Wise, too. Wise people, the Wises," he used to chuckle at his volatile little wife, whose continual chatter served to brighten his life, even if he did sometimes tell her she talked too much. She wondered now shamefacedly if there had not been just the tiniest little hint of enjoyment in the pros pect of being able to tell him that his paragons, the Wises, did not get on very well together. Heavens How glad she was that she had been saved from carrying a false tale! She would never have heard

joiced in the depths of her kind heart that it was not so, for really liked Grace and Paul Wise. being seen, and yet she couldn't face them without showing that she had heard—her countenance would have been seen, and yet she couldn't and the pain soothed, the sharp agony in Mrs. Wise's heart began to make itself more keeply fall. make itself more keenly felt. She almost wished that she had broken

the last of it from John A., for trust him, he wouldn't believe it and he would soon ferret out the

truth. And more than all she

thought Mrs. Wise had overheard,
—then she was reassured.
—'My ankle! I've twisted it!'
gasped Mrs. Wise. Oh!'' She
was pallid with anguish as they
helped her into the living room and
laid her on the couch, and she
almest fainted as the low shoe was

"Matters were serious"

"He loathed style and parties. Alas, how true she knew that was but she didn't know that he loathed they murmured apprehensively.

"We must get a doctor to make"

He had always been dear and nice. "Of course, Grace, if you want to go. . " He had not ever objected

"It isn't broken." The injured woman tried to smile but her lips were unsteady. "I turned on my ankle at the corner—" she did not argument about it—not one that she could remember. No, it wasn't than. It must be something else.

ghost of a smile, "to faint on a he could stoop to discuss her, to family affairs, was worse, infinitely worse, than any disagreement that more serious than the straining of a came home . . She would have

face the horrors of the long night?
When he came home Phil Wise was concerned to hear of his wife's accident and he ran upstairs two steps at a time.
"Why, Grace, how did it happen?" he wanted to know.

happen?" he wanted to know "Twisted the poor little ankle, eh Oh, well, if it's only a tendon.

Does it hurt much?"

"Not so much," she answered quietly. "It's better."

Doctor say you'd be all right tomorrow !

He said I'd have to keep off my foot for a couple of days or maybe more," wearily. How, she was more," wearily. How, she was thinking, would she ever stand inaction feeling like this, when her chief desire was to be up and away, flying like the wind from herself .

from everything?
"Well, you'll get a little rest anyhow," Phil said incautiously.
"I suppose you think that's what

that was it, of course. And the

prospect of being laid up when she did so like to be on the go.

"Poor old girl," he said tenderly.
"It's too bad she has to be laid up! Tell you what I'll do, Graceiekin I'll take a day off tomorrow and do nothing but entertain the invalid—''
He pulled himself back with an absolute gasp as his wife turned on

him stormily. "I don't want you to stay home -I don't want you to stay with me. Why should you?-"And then aghast at his hurt surprise and her own anger, she burst into a perfect passion of tears. It was very comforting to be soothed and petted forting to be soothed and petted just as always, by a penitent husband who told her he was a bungling chap, and he hurt her feelings? He hadn't meant to.

"It was the pain," she said chokingly was departed.

ingly, vexed and miserable. Could he be tender like that and still be he be tender like that and suff of horrid and deceitful, telling people he was tired—of everything. "Oh!" She jerked her head away from his stroking hand. They said so — she heard it distinctly.

"Nervous!" Phil thought to himself. "I'll bet that ankle is worse

than the doctor thought. 'Does it pain very badly, dear?

he asked aloud.

"Yes," was the answer as the tears overflowed again; for, Oh, how it did hurt her, this dreadful pain at her heart! Why couldn't she ask him—why couldn't she, and make an end of it? But she shuddered away from the thought of it. he asked aloud. dered away from the thought of it



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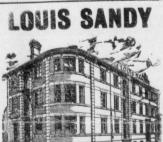
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