

walked there; the gate was always locked—a merciful provision—but from her third story window she often leaned out over it imagining the beauty which lay below. No one undeceived her, for the girls kept much to themselves, and incoming tenants never failed to receive due warning from the good-hearted Irish janitress.

"Sure, she thinks it's a foine garden, poor thing," she would say. "And it's a great comfort to her who's needin' all the comfort she's gettin'. You'll just be kind enough not to be undeceivin' her at all."

Celia, for her part, lied shamelessly and was cheerfully abetted by Christine. But the real gardener, the one who planted the garden and caused it to bloom in due season, was Mr. Thomas Alexander Burns, once clerk in the book department of Angers and Son, and now manager for Brindley of the book-shop. He lavished upon this dream garden the thought and skill which would have made the fortunes of a dozen ordinary gardeners, and it was wonderful how his plantings prospered. Only once in a long while did failure come, and then its introduction was most skilfully arranged and with an eye to necessary contrast. The fact was that Mr. Burns, while still considering himself an unsuccessful suitor for Celia's hand, had been for sixteen years the unresisting captive, the willing slave, of her blind sister. He loved her as a knight loves his honour, as a devotee loves the saint he worships. She was too high above him for mere earthly love, but he served her faithfully without hope of return and indeed without the consciousness of serving. It never occurred to him that Celia could see what he kept so well hidden or that her persistent refusal of him was due to anything save a natural inability to care for so uninteresting a person. But Celia had known of Tommy's