

as she answered "I will," in a low voice, there arose outside a sound of eager voices mingled with shouts of laughter and the shrill "Kick-kick-kick-kyar" of a bantam cock in sore distress, while a voice that was unmistakably that of Gurteen's blacksmith cried piteously, "For the love of hiven, don't ye pull the illegant tail out av him, Tim Dwyer!" A subdued titter ran through the chapel, and some one said in a loud whisper, "Tis the way Andy's little hins is got out"—a speech that was followed by a decided movement toward the door by the younger members of the congregation.

Again Father Gallagher had to pause until the commotion subsided. During the pause Katie flashed a look of triumphant meaning up at her betrothed, over whose innocent face the light of understanding gradually stole, and soon his great body was shaking with only half-suppressed laughter, that threatened to become so violent that she had to punch him viciously to bring him to his senses. Then the rings were given up to be blessed, Patsy producing his from the lining of his hat, and dropping it twice afterwards before Katie managed to run her finger deftly through it.

There was nothing left to do now but to sign the register, but before that could be, the hunting party had returned to finish the ceremony. The first to appear was Mrs. Lynham, her gray hair straggling over her face, and breathless with the chase. Under one arm she held a bantam hen, that covered her with its yellow feathers in its struggles; with the other she dragged her son forward, who gave all his attention to mollifying the feelings of an irate cock half hidden in his bosom. Timsie Dwyer, who had obligingly joined the rescue party, brought up the rear with two more or less suffocated bantams under each arm.

"Here he is for ye," panted Mrs. Lynham; "'twas the way—what are ye laughing at, Patsy O'Rourke!" for the newly-made bridegroom was grinning gleefully behind the newly made bride.

"I don't want him," said Katie boldly, "I have no mind for a boy as goes huntin' hins whin he ought to be marryin' before the howly althar."

"Arrah whisht," said the old woman coaxingly; "the prashte will come back agin and say the words for ye."

"Tis too late ye are, ma'am, said Katie, tossing her head. "I couldn't be waitin' for the likes av him, so I just took this dacint boy that was standin' be me," and she put her hand saucily through Patsy's arm.

"Tis no marriage," cried Mrs. Lynham with spirit, while Terence and his wife stood amazed.

"Tis the only marriage I'll ever make," said Katie, drawing closer to her husband, and looking with burning cheeks straight at her mother.

"Have ye nothing to say!" cried Mrs. Lynham, turning to Andy.

"Let her kape Patsy O'Rourke, if she wants him," said Andy simply; "'tis ye made the match for me, tho' I towld ye I had no mind for marryin' at all at all!" and he fell again to stroking the little bantam that tried to peck his way through his coat.

"Lave it as it is, Terence," said Timsie Dwyer, coming forward and squeezing his hins tight with his elbows so that they should not interrupt him. "Lave it as it is, man, an' give Katie the huedred pou' all the same."

But honest Terence felt he had been fooled and shook his head obstinately, until Katie cast such a piteous look of beseeching at her mother that the good woman's eyes filled with tears, and she whispers:

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