

Situate near the base of Croghan Mountain and among the woods that environed it, stood the lonely cabin of Widow Mullen. Hid among the trees, midway between the mountain and the river a view of it could not be obtained from either, and the only indication of life apparent in that woody solitude which the passing traveller could observe on that Summer evening that we have mentioned, was the spiral wreaths of smoke which rose from the humble hearthstone, and, soaring above the trees in fantastic shapes, melted and were lost among the clouds.

As the evening advanced and the last rays of the sun were darting behind the hill, a young girl stepped from the cabin and cautiously approached the bank of the river. For a few minutes she gazed wistfully up the stream, and then with a look of sorrow on her pale face slowly retraced her way homewards, casting now and then a look backward on the path she had traversed as if expecting some one whom she eagerly longed to meet. Slowly she entered the cabin and noiselessly approached the only bed which it contained. Its occupant, a pale, emaciated woman, whose breathing came thick and heavy, and upon whose face Death had set his seal, opened her eyes and looked anxiously at the girl as she drew near. The rustling of her dress, which was scarcely perceptible to herself, caught the acute ear of the sufferer and awoke her from the momentary slumber which had steeped her senses in oblivion.

"Has he come yet, Mabel?" she eagerly inquired, addressing the girl in Irish, and regarding her with a look in which the concentrated feelings of suffering, anguish, sorrow and despair were painfully apparent.

"No, mother," the girl replied, in the same language, "he has not come yet, but it is still early; the sun has not yet gone down, and you know he told us not to expect him until *after* sunset. He may not have found Father John in the cave at Urney, and perhaps was obliged to go to Castlefin or Raphoe to find him, and you know, mother, that in a case of life and death, our Brian is not the one to tarry or be deterred by any obstacles that he may encounter. He will soon be here, and Father John, too." And as

the poor girl spoke she hid her face in her hands to conceal the tears that came streaming down her cheeks.

"God grant it may be so, Mabel, but I feel a weakness *here, here*"—and she pressed her hand upon her heart—"that tells me that I have not long to live. But O, it is not death I fear; could I receive the consolations of our holy Church I would die happy. But to think that I must die here, without a priest—without the rites which a Christian should receive—to die," she added with vehemence, "like a Sasanach, this is what I dread, this is what makes my death-bed miserable."

As the mother spoke, the daughter, unable to conceal her feelings longer, gave vent to passionate sob; and, clasping the sufferer in her arms, wept upon her bosom. At length, freeing herself from that loving embrace and brushing the tears from her eyes, she stood erect, and in a voice of deep religious feeling and pathos which none but an Irish Catholic *can* feel, she said:

"Mother, do not despair. God is good, and who knows but at this moment Brian and the priest are hurrying to your aid. Remember when my poor father was shot down by Crosby's troopers at Mid-night Mass, in Glenmonan Valley, and when they left him for dead with two bullets in his side, he lived until the neighbors brought him home, and Father Dominick gave him absolution. Remember the words of the good father. He said: 'Blessed were the dead who died in the Lord, and that those who kept their conscience pure and held the faith would never be afraid to die.' We have clung to the old faith and suffered poverty and hunger and sorrow, and whatever death we meet we should endure it with meekness, for it is God's will. Father Dominick himself was hanged one week after, without priest or bishop to attend him, and he said that he died happy. And, O, mother! You have been so good and charitable that I have often known you to give out of your own scanty resource to those whom you thought more wretched than yourself. You who never committed a crime in your life, why should you be afraid to die? And, after all," she added, a bright