

A FAIR EMIGRANT

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CHAPTER XXVII—CONTINUED

"You forget that you said just now that the past is past and wiped out, and that we start afresh as new acquaintances. If you contradict yourself like this I shall have to reject your offer to friendship."

"True, and you are able to carry out your threats," he said, with a look of bitter mortification which transformed him from Somerled into Rory. "You would rise up like a fine night and vanish back to Minnesota rather than allow me to meet you again in the character of a lover. Bawn, why cannot you love me? Am I hideous, coarse, brutal, or in any way accursed? Why did you so persistently reject me?"

The passionate pain in his voice hurt Bawn like the stroke of a rod, but she answered quickly:

"Now indeed you forget yourself, Mr. Fingall. Only reflect. Suppose I had given away. Suppose I had liked you well enough, think of what it would have been. How would you have presented me to your family? A farmer's daughter, without birth or fortune: an acquaintance formed on board ship; a young woman coming alone across the sea to earn her bread by making Irish butter. Would it not all have been unfit and unfortunate?"

"Most fit, most fortunate. If you are a farmer's daughter, what am I but a farmer? If you are poor, why so am I. At Tor you could have made butter to your heart's content."

"If Lady Flora could hear you!" said Bawn with a faint smile.

"Confound Lady Flora!"

"The lady of Tor, your grandmother—what would she have said to me?"

"You do not know her. She would have made you welcome—that is, if you had loved me. But I am raving like a fool. You do not and never can like me well enough, as you say. And that is the end of it."

"I beg you will let it be the end," said Bawn, "and yet, hard though you are, you will not hate me!"

"No."

"But you will not marry me?"

"No."

"You are a resolute woman. You admit, however, that we may be friends. I would like to leave myself an opening through which I may be allowed to watch that farm of yours does not ruin you. You will permit me to befriend you?"

"Only on condition that you never speak like this again."

"Nor will I."

"If you do I shall feel myself bound to go and tell the entire story to that noble-looking old lady at Tor."

"No, Bawn, don't do that. Spare me the humiliation, at least, even if you do not care for me."

"Then I shall have to go away."

"What? Tear yourself from the little, solitary home you have taken such infinite pains to secure for yourself? Fly away over our heads like the eagles from Aura?"

At the word "Aura" Bawn's face changed. What the change was he could not tell, though he saw it, nor could he guess what had caused it. A frown came on her fair brows; her face was for the moment not Bawn's, but looked like some picture he had seen of the Angel of Judgment. She was seeing in that instant the tragedy on Aura; her father was the eagle flying from Aura, branded like Cain—Arthur Desmond, good man and true.

"Aura!" She raised her eyes to the mouldering house so near her, but in the last half-hour quite forgotten. They lit on the fallen roof-tree, the dreary frontage with the red splashes of old blood on its corner-stone. "Murder!" was the word which was formed by the thought in her mind—the murder of a man's good name, his heart, his hopes. That was the murder which was done upon Aura. If this man beside her, whose face, whose voice was become so dear to her that she scarcely dared to look at the one or listen to the other, were to know whose daughter stood before him, would he not turn from her in horror, would he not, with justice, reproach her for putting herself in his way, for stealing his heart in a false character? Well, had she not refused him persistently enough? Did she not act upon the knowledge that there never could be any union between Roderick Somerled Fingall and the daughter of the man who was believed to have murdered his uncle, whose name had been blasted by the Fingalls and Adares with a foul and unforgivable calumny? No, there could be nothing between them, not even friendship. Let him go back to Tor and marry Manon with her gold, as Alister had married Flora. As for her, she had done very ill in dallying with him here so long. She would go back to Betty Macalister, the one faithful soul in all this sickening world, and give all her thoughts to the Adares, and her plans for reaching them in their den.

As her eyes came back from the dreary front of the house with these thoughts in them, her companion stood gazing in wonder at their extraordinary expression. He thought he read in them a revulsion of feeling against himself. "Pardon me," he said hoarsely. "I have tried you. Now, I have broken my word, and I have been persecuting you. I have kept you here too long. You are angry. It was thoughtless of me. Try me again."

"I am only thinking that it is time for me to go," she said, turning away and drawing her shawl around her.

"May I not accompany you to the place where your car is waiting?"

"No; I wish to go alone."

"But I may come to see you—when business brings me your way?"

"Please to take no further notice of me."

He fell back and allowed her to pass, but after she had gone some distance he followed along the path she had taken, and just kept his eye on her figure in advance of him till he saw her safe across the path and seated in her car.

He watched the little trundling cart as far as his eye could see it, and then struck off in the opposite direction.

CHAPTER XXVIII

SO SHE IS, AN EMIGRANT

"I will descend to my churn," said Bawn, "and there seek comfort."

She had already built herself a new dairy, upon improved principles never heard of in the glens.

"That young woman at Shanganagh is going to ruin herself," said Alister to Rory as they met in the village street. "She has taken to building. I hope the girls may get their rent after all."

"She need not ruin herself if she is industrious and persevering," returned Rory. "She does what most of us here do not: she begins at the right end."

"I thought you would take her up, as she is evidently a reformer."

"Some people seize at once the truth that two and two make four," said Rory, "while others will stick to five till their dying day. The flavour of turf freshly burning is pleasant and aromatic enough to those who like it, but nobody likes it stale, especially on butter. Miss Ingram, in providing herself with a dairy out of the reach of her household smoke, is going the right way about securing the money for her rent."

"The last tenant of the farm could not make it pay," said Alister, "although he lost by no unnecessary outlay."

"Rather because he gained by no unnecessary outlay," said Rory. "He was too poor, or too faint-hearted, or too stupid, I don't know which, to invest a little capital and trust to his own energies for the increase."

"Has Miss Ingram got capital?"

"She has plenty of it in pluck, at all events. When I last saw Shanganagh it was a deplorable sight. Ehen! the dislocated gates, the corners of land choked with weeds, the holes in the fences! Now there is a change."

"You have been there?"

"Yes, I have just been there. I wanted to bring Miss Ingram a watchdog. Not that I imagine any one would molest her; she has already won a sort of enthusiasm from her neighbours and servants. If it be true that the Irish would either kill you or die for you, it is evident that the people of Glenmalurcan would prefer to be victims for Miss Ingram's sake."

"There is a charm about her, I own. Still, I am glad you thought of bringing her the dog."

"So am I," said Rory quietly.

"How did she receive it? I have a notion that she is not fond of being interfered with."

"She received it characteristically. I think. First she declared she had no need of him and would not have him. Then she said she would like him for a companion, if he would promise not to hurt anything harmless. Finally she smiled curiously and said, 'I hope he will take a dislike to Major Batt.'"

"The old humbug!—I mean the major. Has he been selling her any more broken-kneed cattle?"

"She is not one to be taken in twice. But I think you and I ought to look after her a little."

"You appear to have been doing it."

"I am like you: I practise as I preach," said Rory, thinking of the lop-sided gates which Bawn had had to hitch up into their places.

"She is young and fair to see, and has put herself into rather a peculiar position," said Alister. "But of course I will stand by her whenever I can."

"She comes from a country where women are brought up to act like reasonable beings, and where, when they have not been born with silver spoons in their mouths, they proceed to do the best they can with their time and their hands."

"Perhaps she ought to have stayed there. I am not sure. Flora and Manon do not like her, somehow."

"Shana and Rosheen do. Two against two, even among the ladies," said Rory, smiling.

"And Gran?"

"Oh! Gran says little: is for giving her a fair trial—like me," said Rory; and then, a brother landlord and magistrate having come up, the conversation turned on boycotting and other troubles of the times in the disturbed part of the country.

"Rory seems inclined to make an emigrant of Miss Ingram," said Alister, smilingly that evening as he sipped his coffee with his feet on his wife's antique brass fender, having, at the moment, one mental eye on improved Shanganagh and the other on his new *édition de luxe* of Horace, in the pages of which he had left his paper knife, intending to find it in them again as soon as he could manage to slip away from the drawing-room.

"So she is, an emigrant," said Shana.

"I wish all our emigrants had her energy," said Alister, who loved every

stick and stone in the Rath and had some misgiving that he would starve and die there, like the Adares in their ruin, rather than be driven out into a new country to put his shoulder to vulgar wheels that any man could turn as well as himself. He had a sneaking sympathy for emigrants, but it took no active form as Rory's did. He would have the people all at home and give them alms, when he could spare any, to keep them alive; but he could not do without his *édition de luxe*, and preferred it to either philanthropy or political economy.

"I wish we all had her energy, for the matter of that. It seems she is making butter already in her new dairy," he added, with a virtuous desire to say a good word for Miss Ingram here, though he had been a little hard on her to Rory.

"I have seen it and tasted it," said Shana, "and if the Danes can do better than that they deserved to conquer Ireland."

"I wish you would speak to Shana, Alister, now we are on the subject, about running so much after that American woman. I have said distinctly that I do not like her, but my feelings and opinions go for nothing. Shana is only too ready to pick up American audacity and impudence."

"Tie a string to her leg, Flora. It is the only thing to be done with young wild animals," said Alister, who was fond of his spirited little sister, and had sometimes asked himself how it would have been if he had been born with her characteristics instead of his own.

"Of course you will take her part; but, mark my words, that Ingram girl will make mischief here yet. There she has Rory and Major Batt running after her already."

"And Shana, which is much more improper."

"And she orders about her everywhere, and drives over the country, superintends her own buildings, for which she will probably pay no rent."

"But then we shall have the new dairy, Flora, if she runs away, or if we evict her."

"All very fine, while she is setting her cap at Rory or Major Batt."

"Flora, how can you be so vulgar?" burst forth Shana.

"All because Rory was thoughtful enough to bring her a watch-dog! I was there at the time, and nothing could be more unlike that than her manner."

"As for Batt, I believe she intends to set the dog at him," said Alister.

"If I am to be called vulgar in my own house and in my husband's presence," began Flora, swelling with anger and injured pride.

"It is a sign you had better let the subject drop," said her husband, rising hastily and thinking of his Horace with a sensation of relief.

"Evidently Shana has already been contaminated. We had better begin to kill the goose with the golden eggs, and give this Jezabel notice to quit."

It was the same day on which this conversation had taken place that Bawn had said to herself that she was resolved to look for comfort in her churn.

She acknowledged to herself that she greatly needed comfort from some quarter. The fiction that Rory was not Somerled, with which she had deceived herself, having been fully exposed, she was feeling all the reality of her uncomfortable position. She had come across the world with one settled purpose in her mind, which now seemed to have been able to shake, and she found herself opposed by a difficulty of the strangest and most unexpected kind—the persevering devotion of the last person in the world who ought to have taken any notice of her.

Here was a man who fascinated her imagination and constrained her heart in a way that made her indignant with herself, and he was the namesake and nephew of that other of his family whose unfortunate and untimely death had ruined her father's life and cast a stain upon her own name. Somehow the contemplation of this fact seemed to make it suddenly become quite unlikely that she should succeed in the mission she had so boldly undertaken. The inhabitants of that rotting ruin were probably either mad or doting; and even if they had anything to tell, how were they to be forced to tell it, and who would believe them when it was told? Then if she should at some moment find herself obliged in honour to inform Rory Fingall of her identity, what would there be left for her to do but to go back whence she had come, disgraced, and perhaps—who could say?—heart-broken, leaving her task abandoned and unfinished?

Why had she not obeyed her father's wishes, followed Dr. Ackroyd's counsels, and letting the past rest, set the current of her life far from the glens of Antrim and the tragedy they knew of?

She might have travelled about Europe leading a pleasant life, in company with some respectable duenna, or she might have stayed in her own country, using her fortune to help those poor Irish emigrants of whom she had lately heard so much. She might have turned her life to account somehow, without incurring that heavy tribulation which she began to feel sorely afraid the future had in store for her. It was possible, however, that by sheer force of will she could yet come to her own assistance.

Standing alone in her dairy, so cool, spotless, and scented with the odour of fresh cream, she clasped her hands across her heart and sighed an impatient sigh. There were two ways by which she could help herself: one was by keeping Mr. Fingall at an

unfriendly distance; and had she not already got her feet well upon the track of this way? The other was by succeeding in her enterprise and clearing her father's character from its stain. Alas! what a moonshine dream the latter seemed at this moment, looked at with eyes enlightened by the strong sunlight of her new experience of life. And then her maidens came back from their dinner, and the business of the dairy went on, till she was told that Mr. Rory Fingall was at the door, praying her to speak with him for a few moments.

"Tell him I am busy making butter, Betty, and cannot see visitors," she said, startled at his boldness.

"He says he will call back in an hour, ma'am, when the butter is made."

Bawn went on with her work, instructing her half dozen maidens of the glen, who were part her servants and part her pupils, and all the time striving to keep her heart as hard and as firm as she was assuring her assistants that her butter ought to be.

What was she to do with him on his return? Great was her relief when another message was brought to her. It was Miss Fingall who was asking for her this time, and, while Shana remained with her, Rory reappeared with his dog. There was now no possibility of turning him away from the door. The question of the dog was discussed; and Sorley Boy, a great, tawny collier, shaggy and silky, with an intelligent muzzle and tender eyes, was finally accepted by Miss Ingram as the champion of her household.

Bawn, in her crisp calico gown and snow-white apron, was waiting on Shana, giving the young lady a taste of the delicious butters she had just got a lesson in making; and in spite of Bawn's stern resolve of an hour ago, the giver of the dog received a cup of well-creamed tea from the milk-white hand which had so recently been busy with the churn.

"Rory, I wish you had not come," said Shana. "You have interrupted my lesson. I know you will not tell, but I am hoping to go into partnership with Miss Ingram by-and-by."

"Indeed!" said Rory. "This is your secret, is it?"

And he was careful not to look at Bawn, lest she should see dancing in his eyes the assertion that, in spite of all that had come and gone, his own hope was somewhat identical with his cousin's.

Finally Rory went away alone, satisfied inasmuch as he had left the dog behind him, and not very jealous of Shana, though she had remained where he did not venture to remain.

The car was waiting for her, Shana had said, and the day was long. It was known at home that she meant to pay a long and profitable visit to Miss Ingram.

The truth was, Shana had brought a manuscript in her pocket, and intended consulting with Bawn as to whether it was worth anything or not—the young authoress being still a little undecided between butter and literature as the means of

endowing herself with a fortune before becoming a wife. Rory's provoking visit had foiled her intentions. It would soon be time to depart, and Bawn's interrupted dairy had yet to be finished.

"What a pity you could not be here in the evening!" said Bawn, looking at the outside of the manuscript. "Of course it is impossible, but I should then be so free."

"I can wait a little longer," said Shana; and when Bawn reappeared from her dairy in the course of half an hour she found Shana looking quite at home in the little sitting-room, with her hat put away, and glancing eagerly over the pages of her formidable-looking manuscript.

"I have sent away the car, with a message that I am going to remain here all night," said Miss Fingall, quickly. "I can sleep on the floor, or anywhere."

But Lady Flora—your family—what will they say?"

"Oh! Flora will say a great deal; but my brother will only laugh, and can hide in his library. Rosheen is at Tor, entertaining the visitor, and so she will not be annoyed in the matter. I shall be freely condemned when I go home to-morrow; but then I am always being freely condemned. People who are constantly grumbling do not produce as much effect, you know, as people who only scold when you do very wrong."

"I am afraid this is really wrong," said Bawn, smiling with pleasure at the prospect of having a companion for so many hours; "but when my lady landlord chooses to sleep under her own roof—well, I cannot evict her."

The evening passed in the reading and discussion of Shana's novel. With all her boldness, Miss Fingall found it difficult to read her own paragraphs aloud.

"I never felt so with Rosheen," she said plaintively, dropping the pages in discouragement. "But then she is as ignorant as myself, and I am not afraid of her."

"I dare say you have both read more novels than I have," said Bawn, and you ought to know quite as much of life. I shall only be able to tell you whether I think your story is like life as I have met with it."

"Oh! it can't be as all like that," said Shana briskly, "because it is altogether about things that happened two or three hundred years ago. It is something in the style of Ossian, only in plain prose. The people are chieftains, and lofty ladies."

"Historical?"

"Not exactly," said Shana, changing colour rapidly "except that Sorley

Boy—that is, Somerled Bluee—the hero, was a real man."

"Was he?"

"An ancestor of ours. Yellow haired Somerled. Rory has named your dog for him. He is named after him himself—Roderick Somerled. Sorley Boy is a contraction for Somerled Bluee. It suits the colour of the dog better than Rory, who is dark."

"But about the story?"

"Somerled Bluee marries a lady who plays the harp, and of course he is very fond of her; but I am dreadfully afraid there is not enough about that. I want the readers to take a great deal of it for granted, and perhaps they won't. I have some good descriptions, though, and they all say such honourable things. Do you think that will make up? Do you believe it will be a popular novel?"

"I can't tell till I have heard it," said Bawn.

Shana went courageously through her work, which was not very long, after all, though it made a great show of footslog. When she had finished her face was damp, and red and white in patches, and she dropped back into her chair as if exhausted.

"Well, what do you say? Have you found it exciting?"

"No," said Bawn promptly.

"Not even deeply interesting?"

"No. I would rather have been talking to you all the time."

Shana drew a long sigh of relief.

"On the whole I am very glad!"

And before Bawn could stop her she had buried her manuscript in the heart of the fire.

"I am no longer afraid that I shall be hiding a great talent by sticking to the churn. My heart has inclined to butter, and butter it shall be."

"But, dear Miss Fingall, why should a young lady like you take to butter?"

"I will tell you," said Shana, and her lips softened and her eyes shone.

"One supreme effort is enough for this evening. But I will tell you some day when I can get myself to speak."

When Shana was tucked up in bed, and Bawn had spread a pallet for herself in a corner, she went back to her little kitchen and stood looking at Sorley Boy, the collier dog, who sat in a dignified attitude on the hearth in the red light of the sinking turf fire. A gentle snoring told that Betty and Nancy were sound asleep not far off, and Bawn and the dog were alone. She knelt down beside him and stroked his tawny silky coat.

"Sorley Boy," she said to him—"Somerled Bluee." She admired his acutely intelligent muzzle, and looked in his grave eyes, full of dog-like tenderness. Then she lifted his fore-paws, one after the other, gently, as if asking a favor, and placed them on her shoulders, and laid her hair against his ear.

"You are a fine fellow," she said, "a gift worthy of your namesake, and you and I are going to be friends. There is no reason in the world, this contrary world, why I ought not to love this Somerled, at all events."

TO BE CONTINUED

THE MESSAGE OF THE EASTER BELLS

Deputy Godefrey, socialist and so-called reformer, was an active agent in the agitation against the clerics; his hatred was strong and bitter. The wife had been a teacher in one of the State schools before her marriage. He had come to Paris in 1888, at the age of fourteen, and, shaking off his school-boy ideas, he had the memory of his youth. Baptiste Godefrey, who had risen to be municipal counselor, then deputy, would not call to mind the little Baptiste who formerly tended sheep, dipped his bare feet idly in the tiny brooks, served M. le Cure's Mass and rang the bells during the processions on feast days. Rest assured, Deputy Godefrey remembered none of these things. The hands of the peasant boy had proudly raised the cross; the hands of the man, trained aloft the red torch of insurrection. The mere thought of a priest now raised his anger. When his eyes rested upon a bellfry he raged; when the ringing of the church bells fell upon his ears he fumed. The bells! He could not turn his head away and they need not offend him. But the bells, the bells! He stopped his ears when the deep toned chimes of Notre Dame announced the glorious Easter day to the people of the city. Oh, those bells, how he hated them!

And his wife was of the same mind. Child of Paris, she was the daughter of modest artisans, but a student. A little science, much sociology and a diploma gave her prestige. She, too, prated of the gods of the revolution, the martyrs of anarchy, hatred of the Church. The sight of the cross was a challenge, the sound of the bells the clarion call of an enemy.

Deputy Baptiste Godefrey maintained a furious campaign against the bells—he would silence them in the interest of the State, of the people. They should live voicelessly in their cages, those bells of France, the great ones forgotten, the little ones vibrating only under the touch of a vagrant wind. When he passed before Notre Dame he would exorcise his tormentors.

"Ah, you will soon be mute! Peal on! Your time is short—and we shall have the last word."

Baptiste and his wife had been married ten years; they had no children, nor wished for any. He

preached the abandonment of children to the care of the State, the abolition of the family, communism. In this blasphemy, however, the woman did not join him.

Their child was born.

When she came into the world, so frail, so white and pink, so helpless, the father contemplated her enraptured, caressing her, murmuring words of endearment; words that rose to his lips unconsciously.

"My pretty little daughter! My pretty little angel! The gift of God!"

No, he did not know what he was saying. The mother was silent, speechless with love, her eyes beaming it, her countenance radiating it, her whole being filled with it.

"She shall be called Angela," said Baptiste Godefrey. "That name suits her best—she is like an angel."

"True," murmured the mother, taking the little hand in hers and holding it, looking at the child with awed gaze, as if the very name set her apart from them.

And Angela grew as a flower grows—a fragile flower, that human hands must not touch too roughly, that the sun must kiss but lightly, that no heavy wind dare disturb. Wise and thoughtful, given neither to tears nor to laughter, but with a smile that lighted up her features with a singular sweetness—a sweetness that was not effaced even in slumber.

She was like a little bird that would not leave its nest, playing always at her mother's side—playing by herself with bits of colored paper, a ribbon, a flower and singing under her breath. And when she grew tired, and the mother would lift her thinking: "How light she is, how light!" clasping her more tenderly in her loving arms.

"Tell me the story of little Red Riding Hood."

This mother, who had written a paper on the pernicious influence of fairy tales on the minds of the citizens of the future socialist state, who had declared against them as creating a false imagination in the young—this mother would relate the story of little "Red Riding Hood" and "Hop o' My Thumb" and the "Sleeping Beauty."

When the father came home he sought his arms as readily.

He trotted her on his knee, tested her in his arms, played bear and lion with her to her heart's content, and between the lion's roars and the lion's bearded lips tenderly caressed her.

One evening Godefrey returned from a public meeting. This was the time of the municipal election, and it behooved all good "reformers" of his kind to be up and doing. He had been more than ordinarily violent, his language more unrestrained. He had set up the guillotine and consigned to it all those who menaced the State—lazy men of fashion, all those wealthy, beautiful women who were crushing the poor under their carriage wheels. He had carried his audience with him, and arrived home still excited, his brain in a whirl.

He mounted the stairs, opened the door of the apartment, entered the room softly that he might not disturb the little one. No excitement was visible on his face as he approached the white bed, so white and spotless that it gave more light to the room than the lamp upon the table.

"Art thou sleeping?" he whispered. An innocent voice responded.

"Look, papa!" She extended her tiny hands. "Dearest papa, see this beautiful bird."

He looked at it.

"That is not a bird, little one. It is an angel."

The father's clumsy answers to the child's eager questions confused him strangely. They were so simple, these questions, so natural, and the man's mind reverted desperately to the old answers of his childhood. The little one's prattle and his own thoughts disturbed him for a while, but soon this discomfort was lost in something larger, more terrifying. Little Angela was sick. She drooped and whitened, and in fear the father and mother hastened off with her to the country, with its wider spaces and purer airs. They went to a pretty little village not far