

**CARROLL O'DONOGHUE**

CHRISTINE FABER  
Author of "A Mother's Sacrifice," etc.  
CHAPTER XVII.

THE RETURN TO DHROMACOHOL.

Never was there a more exultant heart than that of Tighe a Vohr when he learned of Carroll's pardon; it was only his respect for Father Meagher, the relator of the good tidings, which prevented him throwing his cap over the ceiling of the hotel parlor, and shouting aloud; as it was, his body quivered with contentions expressive of his efforts to contain his joy, and the moment he found himself below stairs in the servant's quarters his comical gyrations, and the tricks through which he put Shaun, relieved his overcharged heart and convulsed the domestics with laughter. He had one anxiety, however: how should he ever wait the return to Tralee to be assured by the evidence of his own eyes that his young master was once more free. The party, however, were already preparing for their return, and in a few hours all were once more on their whirling journey.

On their arrival at Tralee they found Carroll's release still delayed by some preliminaries required by the law, but a couple of days sufficed for all arrangements, and Carroll O'Donoghue, pale, emaciated, but as free man at last, was in the midst of his friends. No eye could remain dry, no heart without a wild palpitation, as they looked into his dear face, and felt that he had been rescued from the jaws of death itself. They would not wait to tell him there in the private apartment of the governor of the prison, the wonderful circumstances which had brought about his release, but in a private parlor of "Blenners," whither they were immediately driven from the prison, and over a repast of which all were too excited to partake, the wonderful, wonderful story was told to Carroll.

"And so my lady-love," he said playfully to Nora, or Marie, as she was now called by her friends, "turns out to be a real lady after all—the daughter of a nobleman! why, it is like one of the romances we used to read in our childhood."

Nora blushed, and was silent. There was one cloud, however on the happiness of the little party—the absence of Denier, or Walter Berkeley, as they all now called the young ex-officer. Carroll so yearned to welcome him, and even Tighe a Vohr, who had been favored with an embrace from his young master as warm as any the latter had bestowed, wondered to himself why the Englishman kept away at this time, when he was so attentive to the little party before they started on that mysterious journey to Dublin. And in the visit that he contrived to make to Corny O'Toole, before they all started for Dhromacohol, when he had given Corny a graphic account of as much as he knew of the wonderful events which had happened, he concluded by saying:

"You see, Corny, the comfortable misgivin' I had about some of those 'good comin' out' o' all them queer journeys to Dublin that Father O'Connor an' Father Meagher wor makin', wasn't far wrong. It's all right now, an' if only Captain Denier, or Mr. Berkeley, as they would be his name was now, was somehow I don't like to see him away from Miss O'Donoghue at this perticuler toime—how an' iver it's all right, or mebbe it'll come all right when the twists an' the knots that's always in three love is taken out. An' now, Corny, we're all off for Dhromacohol this very evenin', an' I don't forget to thry an' do me of devotion to come on to us as soon as I find you for just as shepdy as I found me mother in the right kind o' humor to receive the offer o' yer heart an' hand, I'll aythur come mesel', or I'll find some manes o' sindin' you word."

"Thank you, Mr. Carmody, thank you!" and the little man was radiant with smiles.

Moira Moynahan was hardly prepared for the influx of visitors which came so suddenly to the little pastoral residence; but the fact that Tighe accompanied them, and the still more joyful fact of being permitted to hear all about it from Tighe's own lips, while the remainder of the party repaired to the study, or to the parlor, put her into excellent humor.

What thoughts filled Carroll's mind as he stood once more in the house in which his last arrest had taken place—what burning admiration and love for her whose noble sacrifice of self had really been the cause of his release! he turned to her:

"Marie!"  
Accustomed as he had been to Mora, singularly enough this newer name came to him with little effort to remember it.  
"A life of devotion to you, as I shall strive to make my future, will be far too little to show my gratitude, my love!"

A troubled look came into her eyes, though she smiled faintly; and without answering him, she found some pretext to leave him, and at length to steal her old favorite haunt, the chapel. There, with her face uplifted to the tabernacle, she prayed:

"Oh, my God! I thank Thee—Thou hast well rewarded the little I have done; and now, I pledge myself to do Thy work, to serve Thy poor, to wait upon Thy sick, to deny myself! She rose when her prayer was finished, and rejoined her friends.

It still required some little time before the ancient home of the O'Donoghues would return to the possession of its heir; but Carroll, knowing it would certainly return to him, was well content to wait—passing delightful hours in rambling over the old grounds, planning improvements, and greeting old friends. All Dhromacohol was aroused by the story of his wonderful release, and the still more marvellous tale of Nora McCarthy not being even Nora Sullivan, but having to change her name a second time to Marie Berkeley; Clara, as happy and as eager as herself, always accompanied him, but Marie sought for pretexts to decline joining in the rambles. At first Carroll laughed at the work which she alleged as her excuse, then he became a little annoyed, and at last, on the fifth day of their sojourn in the pastoral residence, he deliberately stood in the doorway of a room which Marie was about to enter, and said reproachfully:

"Now, Marie, this is positively cruel of you! why, if you treat me so unlover-like now, what will be your manner when, on the restoration of our home, I dare propose for a right to your obedience? perhaps, however," he continued in a playful tone, "it is because my lineage does not compare with your own—you, you know, are the daughter of a peer!"

She looked at him with gentle reproach, but before he could answer, Father Meagher's voice was calling to them both from the foot of the stair. They hurried down to find themselves face to face with Rick of the Hills. Yes, there he was, but so wasted by disease that he seemed like the ghost of his former self; his face, however, had no longer its wild, unhappy expression; he gazed and gazed in deep mourning, and on the other side of Rick was a beautiful boy—but his beauty, exquisite though it was, was also saddening by the evidence it gave of early decay—the hectic color, the lustrous eyes, the marble brow, all told of fast approaching dissolution.

Clara was already in the room, standing near the young woman, and on the entrance of Carroll and Marie, Rick trembled so violently that he could scarcely stand.

"You have nothing to fear, Rick," said the priest reassuringly; "you have been forgiven everything. Here,"—approaching the young woman, and leading her forward as Rick's true daughter, Cathleen. And here—drawing forward also the elderly lady—"is the good woman who has proved a true mother to Cathleen. And here"—crossing to the boy, and taking him by the hand—"is the little lad of whom Father O'Connor gave us so touching an account. Now, Rick, tell us why you did not reach Dublin in time to be present at the interview we all had with Lord Heathcote?"

The poor fellow, weak as he seemed to be, would have stood to tell his story; but Father Meagher drew him into his chair; and he dispatched Moira, whose curiosity had made her thrust her head in at the door, for a drink which should revive the feeble man.

"Why, do you see," he began, "the shock of what I told Cathleen, together with my own wild feelings—for I couldn't contain myself at all when I saw in her face that same look that had never left my heart since she was taken from me,—prostrated her entirely; and when she recovered enough to weigh well all that I told her, and to look into the proofs that I brought her of my strange story, and to listen to the promptings of her own heart, which forced her to believe me, it left her so weak—though at the same time happy—that for some days there was even danger of her death. The letter, which told me to come immediately to Dublin, arrived at that time; I could not leave my darling then, when there was likelihood of God himself taking her from me, and I waited, praying to have her restored; she was restored, and with her first return of strength, dressing in the letter which had come to me, she insisted on being my company. Although she is present, I may tell you what she said."

"Father, let me go with you; let me beg forgiveness for you from her whom you caused to make such a bitter sacrifice!"

"So we all came—the good woman, who would not be parted from Cathleen, and the boy, Bartley Donovan, who would not remain after us—and we reached Dublin to find nobody there who wanted us; we came on then to Dhromacohol, and before we got far as this we heard everybody full of Mr. O'Donoghue's release, and the rumor that his estate was to be restored to him, and how Miss McCarthy, that was, was no longer even the daughter of Rick of the Hills, but a Miss Berkeley; though the people, who thought they knew so much, did not seem to know any

more than just these bare facts. They were enough, however, to tell me that justice had been done, and I came here with a lighter heart; and now"—he would rise and face them all—"I have a few explanations to make for my own peace of mind; I'll not dwell on the influence that Carter had upon me—I'll not tire you with telling of the remorse which tormented my conscience through all that dreadful time—perhaps Father O'Connor has told you a little of it—but I must say this: Father Meagher—he turned me immediately to the priest,—when I sought to excuse my claiming of Miss McCarthy as my daughter by saying that it was the love for my child which drove me to it, and when I, seeing you touched and won by my plea, made it the stronger and wilder, it was not a lie—I told you no falsehood;—for it was of Cathleen I thought;—it was of my love for Cathleen that I spoke. And afterward, not to be guilty in the sight of Heaven of allowing a touch of her pure hands upon me, she herself can tell you how I commanded her never to rest, even her fingers upon my arm, God, however, had his own blessed way of rewarding her goodness. Her devotion to me, her kindness, even when I read loathing and horror in her eyes, were breaking my heart; her efforts to reform me, so touched my soul that many a time when nothing else would stop me, the thought of her face, the memory of her words, kept me from drowning my misery in drink. And at last, when Father O'Connor came to us, when he said to me at parting such strange words that they seemed as if he had read my heart, I took desperate courage and determined to fling off my burden; there was little use in waiting longer for Carter to redeem his word, and restore to me Cathleen; my heart misgave me that Cathleen was dead, and that Carter would not tell me, knowing that in that case his chief influence over me would be destroyed. I went to Father O'Connor, and you know the result. I feel now that my days are numbered; but my peace is made with God, and when all of you, whom I have so cruelly injured, assure me that you forgive me, I have nothing more to ask."

He turned to Marie, and before she could prevent him, he was kneeling at her feet.

"Everybody was crying; even Father Meagher, though he sought to conceal his emotion by shaking his head and pretending that the use of his handkerchief was only to remove the perspiration. Carroll O'Donoghue, who stood beside Marie, instantly stooped with her to raise the suppliant.

"Dear Rick," said Marie softly, "my part, my sacrifice, have been little compared with your noble repentance!"

A smile of ineffable joy broke over his face, and motioning to Cathleen to draw near, he put her hand in that of Marie saying to the latter: "May I ask you to be her friend?"

Marie's answer was a warm embrace of the young fragile girl.

Tighe a Vohr had heard from Moira something of the strange scene in the parlor; she had contrived to remain when she returned with the drink which her uncle had ordered for Rick, but which the latter had forgotten to take, though he had been placed beside him. And Tighe, when he had heard nothing from the priest's niece, knew that Rick was craving forgiveness, ventured himself to the parlor door and asked permission to add a little to Rick's statement. The permission was willingly given, and then, in his own peculiar, but none the less interesting manner, he told of the way in which Rick had intercepted Carter's plan for Carroll's mock release.

"I told you I'd not forget that good turn," he said, as a sort of explanation to Rick, "an' I think I can shewer that the young master'll not forget it aythur."

TO BE CONTINUED

**NORA McDONNELL**

(By Mary Catherine Crowley in Ave Maria)

"There is one thing sure: I must find work by this day week, or else the first of the month will see me without a dollar or a notion where to get it."

Nora McDonnell, having counted over her small store of money, replaced all but a few silver coins in the little pocket purse she wore around her neck, and thrust the purse into her blouse.

As she sat on her trunk in the attic she looked indeed forlorn and discouraged. It was too early in the season for her to hope to obtain steady employment. The families who had patronized her in the past were still away in the Adirondacks or Catskills, or at their country homes. They would not require the services of a seamstress for some time yet, and meanwhile what should she do?

Although Nora had for years earned her bread by "going out sewing the monotonous stitching of the days away had not broken down her health, or stolen all the color from a face that had been glowing as a rose of the Irish hedgerows when, for love of the dear ones at home, she became a voluntary exile from Erin and landed in New York in the spring of 1888.

Ella, the American wife of her brother Tom, now called her an old maid; and even Jim, the younger brother, often joked her, saying she was "getting too old to think of taking up with a husband." Yet Nora was only thirty-three, and better-looking than either Ella or Jim's wife had ever been.

But Nora's part in life had been to making pretty frocks and furberlows for others and to be satisfied with the plainest attire for herself; and, since "fine feathers make fine birds" the world over, few people looked twice at the modest seamstress as she hurried through the streets; while to the majority of her customers she was merely the automaton who worked the sewing machine.

Was she much more to her own family, she sometimes wondered, a trifle bitterly, of late? For to Nora had come the moment of the turn of affection's wheel when beneath the surface of the life's sea, many sacrifices are found to have been but tributes to the depths of selfishness in others. Would the tide ebb to its most distant margin, leaving her nature hard and dry for all the future? Or would it roll in again in a great wave of generosity and affection, and renewed faith in humankind?

On coming to America, Nora had obtained a situation in a wealthy family. By her earnings she had "brought out" Tom, then Jim, and last of all Nannie, who, poor girl, lived only a year. The dear mother was still at home with Nell, the oldest of the brothers and sisters, who held the bit of a farm. Many a time had Nora wanted her to come to America, but the good soul could not make up her mind to leave her first-born and his children.

"Perhaps it was for the best that she did not come," Nora acknowledged to herself this afternoon; and there was little use in waiting longer for Carter to redeem his word, and restore to me Cathleen; my heart misgave me that Cathleen was dead, and that Carter would not tell me, knowing that in that case his chief influence over me would be destroyed. I went to Father O'Connor, and you know the result. I feel now that my days are numbered; but my peace is made with God, and when all of you, whom I have so cruelly injured, assure me that you forgive me, I have nothing more to ask."

The story of Nora's life during those eighteen years may be told in a few words. Tom was no sooner earning good wages with a contractor than he married a pretty shop-girl. She made a shiftless wife, but was blessed with "four as fine children as you would find in all America." Tom was wont to declare, with a father's pride,

"Because Ella loved Tom and the children, Nora forgave her much, including her ambitions, which were not of the practical sort; for she never rested until Tom got a place of porter in a wholesale house. As he was much more interested, however, in horses and gravel, than in his new occupation, he did not succeed, but lost his position, and was idle for many weeks. The family was saved from absolute want by the generous gift of his sister's savings."

Then, again, Ella was ashamed to have a sister-in-law "living out," so Tom persuaded Nora to make her home with them and take sewing by the day. It did not pay so well, but was a sacrifice to family pride. When Nannie pined away, it was Nora paid the hospital bill and the undertaker's Tom, with his family dependent upon her, spare nothing toward defraying these expenses.

Jim had fallen in love with a "slip of a colleen" on the ship coming over, and their wedding followed at the next Christmas; so he never had a chance to make much of Nora. She was looked upon as the "best off" of them all, having no one depending upon her, she said; and thus when she gave with free hand during various sieges of illness among Tom's children, and helped Jim when he was in need of ready cash, they regarded her generosity as a matter of course.

But now, Tom having gone back to the employment of the contractor, was a foreman; his two boys and older girl had positions in stores; the family was prosperous. This it happened that, a few weeks before Nora sat pondering what she should do, Ella had signified to her sister-in-law that their home was over-crowded, "the young people wanted more space to entertain their friends of an evening," and so forth.

Nora, not realizing that this move of Tom's wife would prove her own emancipation, indignantly took her departure; but her liberality had left little for herself, and she must find work without delay.

"Well, I did the best I could for all of them, mother alanna, just as I promised you I would when I bade you good-bye," she soliloquized, addressing the little old woman far away. "And though God has tried me, He has never deserted me; so, asking His blessing, I'll go and put an advertisement in the newspaper."

With renewed courage, she put on her jacket and hat, and, passing down the three flights of stairs, opened the house-door and went into the street. Nearly a mile northward she had to go; but Nora walked cheerily enough now; and thus before long came into Herald Square, where Broadway and Sixth Avenue cross each other, and the trains of the Elevated railroad thunder by overhead. The clock on the Herald building pointed to 3 p. m. as she made her way to the newspaper office, where a clerk wrote out her advertisement, for which she paid with the silver she had set aside for the purpose.

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