

THE WILD GEESE

BY Stanley J. Weyman

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Synopsis of Previous Chapters

Colonel John Sullivan, an Irish soldier, who has served abroad for many years, returns to his native Kerry on the sloop Cormorant, a French smuggling vessel, laden with Bordeaux wines. The cargo of the sloop is seized by the natives of Skull against the protests of Captain Augustin, who realizes that he has no law on his side. Colonel Sullivan is coldly received by Flavia and her brother, The McMurrugh, because of his alien faith and his undesirable position as their legal guardian. When Captain Augustin returns with Luke Asgill, the nearest justice, and demands the return of the confiscated cargo, Flavia and her guardian are in favor of returning the cargo on the captain's payment of the dues. The McMurrugh objects to this, but finally agrees to it on Colonel Sullivan's offer to get back Flavia's favorite mare, which was seized by British soldiers when she was a yearling. The Colonel and his servant, Bale, set out and find the mare at the barracks of Tralee. The Colonel is invited into the mess room by the English officers, and one of them, named Payton, who seized the mare, throws wine in his face. The Colonel refuses to fight, because his right arm is permanently disabled. He wins a left-handed fencing bout with the maître d'armes, at the same time winning the mare on a wager. At dinner, upon his return to Morrinstown, he is amazed when Flavia drinks a toast "to the King across the water" and fears that a rising is contemplated. His fears are realized next morning when his kinsman, Ulick, warns him to leave the place and the people to their fate. The Colonel refuses, and next morning after breakfast is invited to join a family council of war. He refuses to join the proposed rising, knowing his fidelity. Fearing that the Colonel may turn informer, The McMurrugh and his friends imprison him and his servant Bale. The next morning the two are led out to their death by the agent of The McMurrugh, O'Sullivan O'G. At the last moment this sentence is revoked and the Colonel and Bale are rowed out through the mist to imprisonment on a Spanish war ship in the harbor. The rowing party consists of the prisoners, luckily escaping, take refuge on the French sloop. Captain Augustin and his sailors, under the Colonel's direction, steal to the house at Morrinstown under cover of the fog, and imprison the leaders of the uprising on the sloop. The Bishop and Admiral Cammock are to be carried to sea for a period, and The McMurrugh, on swearing that he will attempt nothing against Colonel John, is released, and he returns to Morrinstown with the Colonel. Flavia, incensed at his return and the failure of the uprising, attacks the Colonel, who narrowly escapes death at her hands. She and her brother find the Colonel's presence irksome and consider means of getting rid of him. When Asgill comes visiting Flavia, she and her brother treachery is forbidden the house by the Colonel. The McMurrugh and his sister rebel at the Colonel's authority. Flavia induces the Colonel to send away his faithful servant, Bale, on the plea that he may be injured by the imminent peasant. She then lures the Colonel to an old tower at night and has him imprisoned there, without food or water, in the hope that he may thus be induced to sign over to The McMurrugh the whole of his lands under the will of Sir Michael McMurrugh. Meanwhile, Payton, with some of his soldiers come from Tralee on investigation. Flavia is remorseful, fearing the Colonel still obstinate, may die of starvation and have the tower head. She releases him and bears him back to Morrinstown with the assistance of Payton, while her brother and Asgill flee. That night Payton insults her and angers The McMurrugh, who challenges him to a duel.

CHAPTER XXII.—Continued

"Can't you be seeing?" he answered frantically, but for very shame he could not face her eyes. "Cannot you be seeing I am not fit to get up? See how my hand shakes!"

"What is to be done, then?"

He cursed Payton in a frenzy of rage. He beat the pillow with his fist.

The man swearing in the bed leaped at the hope, as he would have leaped at any hope. Nor was he so upset by fear as not to reflect that, whatever Flavia asked Asgill would do. "Ah, tell him," he cried, raising himself on his elbow. "Do you be telling him! He can make him—wait, maybe."

At that moment she came nearly hating her brother. "I will send him to you," she said.

"No!" he cried anxiously. "No! Do you be telling him! Do you hear? I am not so well to see him."

She shivered, seeing plainly the unmitigated selfishness of the course he urged. But she had not the heart to answer him. She went from the room and, going back to her own chamber, she dressed. By this time the house was astir, the June sunshine was pouring with the songs of birds through the windows. She heard one of the O'Beirnes stumble downstairs. Next Asgill opened his door and passed down. In a twinkling she followed him, making a sign to him to go on, and led him into the open air. Nor when they were outside did she speak until she had put the courtyard between herself and the house.

For she would have hidden their shame from all if she could. Even to say what she had to say cost her in humiliation more than her brother had.

"That does no good," she said.

"I believe you want to kill me!" he complained with childish passion. "I believe you want to see me dead! Why can't you be managing your own affairs, without—without—heavens! And then, in a dreadful voice, 'I shall be dead tonight! And you care nothing!'"

He hid unmanly tears on his pillow, while she looked at the wall, pale to the lips. Her worst misgivings had not pictured a thing so mean as this, a spirit so poor. And this was her brother, her

idol, he to whom she had fondly looked to receive the glories of the race. Truly she had been blind.

She had spoken to Luke Asgill the night before, and he would help her, she believed. But for that she would have turned, as her thoughts did turn, to Colonel John. But he lay prostrate, and the O'Beirnes were out of the question; she could not tell them. Youth has no pity, makes no allowance, expects the utmost, and a hundred times they had heard James brag and brawl. And Uncle Ulick was away.

There remained only Luke Asgill.

"If you are not well," she said, in the same hard voice, "shall I be telling Mr. Asgill? He may contrive something."

It was for aught in his selfish life. But it had to be said, and after a pause, and with eyes averted, "My brother is ill," she faltered. "He cannot meet—that man this morning. It is—as you feared. And—what can we do?"

In another case Luke Asgill would have blessed the chance that linked him with her, cast her on his help. He had guessed, before she opened her mouth, what she had to say—nay, for hours he had lain sleepless on his bed, anticipating it. He had been certain of the issue—he knew James McMurrugh; and, being a man who loved Flavia indeed, but loved life also, he had forgotten, with the cold sweat on his brow, what he would be driven to do.

He made no haste to answer, therefore, and his tone, when he did answer, was dull and lifeless. "Is it ill he is?" he asked. "It's a bad morning to be ill and a meeting in hand."

"She did not answer."

"Is he too bad to stand?" he contin-



"It's You That Struck Him After He Was Disarmed!" Morty Cried

ued. He made no attempt to hide his comprehension or his scorn.

"I don't say that," she faltered.

"Perhaps he told you," Asgill said—and there was nothing of the lover in his tone—"to speak to me?"

She nodded.

"It is I am to—put it off, I suppose?"

"If it be possible," she cried. "Oh, if it be possible! Is it?"

He stood there, with a gloomy face. From the first he had seen that there were two ways only of extricating The McMurrugh. The one by a mild explanation, which would leave his honor in the mud. The other by an explanation after a different fashion, with the word "liar" ready to answer the last explanation. But he who gave this last explanation must be willing to back the word with the deed, and stop cavilling with the sword point.

Now, Asgill knew the Major's skill with the sword; none better. And under other circumstances the justice—cold, selfish, scheming—would have gone many a mile about before he entered upon a quarrel with him. None the less, love had drawn him to contemplate this very thing. For surely if he did this and lived, Flavia would smile on him. Surely, if he saved her brother's honor, she would be won. It was a forlorn, it was a desperate expedient. For no other advantage would Luke Asgill have faced the Major's sword point. But, what- ever he was, he loved. He loved! And for the face and the form beside him, and for the quality of soul that shone from the girl's eyes, and made her what she was, and to him different from all other women, he had made up his mind to run the risk.

It went for something that he believed that Flavia, if he failed her, would go to Colonel Sullivan. If she did that, Asgill was sure that his own chance was at an end. This was his chance. It lay with him now, today, at this moment—to dare or to retire, to win her favor at the risk of his life, or to yield her to another. In the chill morning hour he had discovered that he must risk all or lose all; and he had decided.

"I will make it possible," he said, slowly, questioning in his mind whether he dared make terms with her. "I will make it possible," he repeated, still more slowly, and with his eyes fixed on her face.

"If you could!" she cried, clasping her hands.

"I will!" he said, a sullen undertone in his voice. His eyes still dwelt darkly on her. "If he raises an objection, I will fight him—myself!"

She shrank from him. "Ah, but I can't ask that!" she cried, trembling. "It is that or nothing."

"That or—"

"There is no other way," he said. He spoke with the same ungraciousness; for, try as he would, and though the habit and the education of a life cried to him to treat with her and make conditions, he could not; and he was enraged that he could not.

The more as her wet eyes, her quick, mounting color, told of her gratitude. In another moment she might have said a word fit to unlock his lips. And he would have spoken; and she would have pledged herself. But Fate, in the person of old Darby, intervened. Timely or untimely, the butler appeared in the distant doorway, cried "His!" and, by a backward gesture warned them of some approaching peril.

"I fear?" she began.

"Yes," Asgill replied, almost roughly. "He is coming, and he must not find us together."

The garden gate had barely closed on her skirts before Payton issued from the courtyard. The Englishman paused an instant in the gateway, his sword under his arm and a handkerchief in his hand. Then he looked up and down the road with an air of confidence that provoked Asgill beyond measure. The sun did not seem bright enough for him, nor the air scented to his liking. Hastily he approached the Irishman, who, affecting to be engaged with his own thoughts, had kept his distance.

"Is he ready?" he asked, with a sneer.

"With an effort Asgill controlled himself. "He is not," he said.

"At his prayers, is he? Well, he'll need them."

"He is not, to my knowledge," Asgill replied.

"But he is ill," he said.

"Payton's face lighted with a joy not pleasant to see. "A coward!" he said coolly. "I am not surprised. Ill, is he? Ay, I know that illness. It's not the first time I've met it."

Asgill had no wish to precipitate a quarrel. Only in the last resort had he determined to fling off the mask. But

at that word "coward," though he knew it to be well deserved, his temper, sapped by the knowledge that love was forcing him into a position which reason repudiated, gave way, and he spoke his true thoughts.

"What a bully you are, Payton," he said, in his slowest tone. "Sure, and you insult the man's sister in your drink!"

"What's that to you?"

"You insult the man's sister," Asgill persisted coolly, "and because he treats you like the tipsy creature you are, you'd kill him like a dog."

Payton turned. "I will not trust you, too," he said, "if you say another word! What in heaven's name is another word you, man, this morning? Are you mad?"

"I'll not hear the word coward used of the family I'll soon be one of!" Asgill returned, speaking on the spur of the moment, and wondering at himself the moment he had made the statement.

"That's what I'm meaning. Do you see? And if you are for repeating the word, more by token, it'll be all the breakfast you'll have, for I'll cram it down your ugly throat!"

Payton stared, divided between rage and astonishment. But the former was slow to get the upper hand, and "Enough said," he replied. "If you are willing to make it good, you'll be coming this way."

"Willingly," Asgill answered.

"Have a care what you say!" Payton answered slowly, and in a terrible tone. "You'd do better to look to your friend, for he'll need it."

"It's you that struck him after he was disarmed!" Morty cried, almost weeping with rage. "Not a bit of a chance did you give him!"

"Silence, I say!" Payton answered, in a fierce tone of authority. "I know my duty, and if you know yours you'll look to it."

He turned aside with that and thrust the point of his sword twice and twice into the soft before he wheeled to the weapon. Meanwhile Morty had cast himself down beside the fallen man, who, speechless, and with his head hanging, continued to support himself on his hand. A patch of blood, bright colored, was growing on the side of his vest and there was blood on his lips.

"Oh, whirra, whirra, what'll I do?" the Irishman exclaimed, helplessly wringing his hands. "What'll I do for him? He's murdered entirely!"

Payton, aided by one of the troopers, was putting on his coat and vest. He paused to bid the other help the gentleman. Then, with a cold look for the fallen man, for whom, though they had been friends, as friends go in the world, he seemed to have no feeling except one of contempt, he walked away in the direction of the rear of the house.

By the time he reached the back door the alarm was abroad, the maids were running to and fro and screaming, and on the threshold he encountered Flavia.

answered. "Now, are you meaning? This morning that ever is?"

"Ay, now. Where is—?"

He stopped on the word, and was silent. He had looked across the courtyard in the direction of the house. If he might see her again. If he might speak to her. But no. Yet—as it came to her, she knew—that she understood? And if she understood, would she know that he passed to the meeting well-nigh without hope, aware how large, how very large, were the odds against him?

"But, faith, and it's no jest fighting him, if the least bit in life of what I've heard be true!" Morty said, a cloud on his face. He looked uncertainly from Asgill to the house and back. "Is it to be doing anything you want me?"

"I want you to come with me and see it," Asgill said. He wheeled brusquely to the garden gate, but when he was within a pace of it he paused and turned his head. "Mr. O'Beirne," he said, "I'm going in by this gate, and it's not much to be expected if I come out any way but feet first. Will you be telling her, if you please, that I knew that same?"

"I will," Morty answered, genuinely distressed. "But I'm asking is there no other way?"

"There is none," Asgill said. And he opened the gate.

Payton was waiting for him on the path under the yew trees, with two of his troopers on guard in the background. He had removed his coat and vest, and stood, a not ungraceful figure, in the sunshine, bending his rafter and feeling its point with his thumb. He was doing this when his eyes surprised his opponent's entrance, and without desisting from his employment, he smiled.

If the other's courage had begun to wane that smile would have restored it. For it aroused in him a stronger passion than fear—the desire of hatred. He had never seen him before. These eyes, with the cruel smile, a demon who, in pure malice, without reason and without cause, would take his life, would rob him of joy and love and sunshine, and hurl him into the blackness of the gall. And he was seized with a rage at once fierce and deliberate. This man, who would kill him, he would kill! He thrust to set his foot upon his throat and squeezed the life out of him. These were the thoughts that passed through his mind as he paused to throw off the encumbering coat. Then he advanced, drawing his weapon as he moved, and fixing his eyes on Payton; who, for his part, was doing the same thing—namely, for more than once he had seen that look—put himself on his guard without a word.

Asgill had no more than the rudimentary knowledge of the sword which was possessed in that day by all the more. He knew that, given time and the delicate observations of the fencing school, he would be a mere child in Payton's hands; that it would matter nothing whether the sun were on this side or that side, the longer or the shorter of an inch.

The moment he was within reach, therefore, and his blade touched the other's, he rushed in, lunging fiercely at his opponent's breast, and striking as he went. He was met by the circular sweep of his point to protect himself. Not seldom has a man skilled in the subtleties of the art found himself confused and overcome by this mode of attack.

But Payton had met his man too often on the green to be taken by surprise. He parried the first thrust, the second he evaded by stepping adroitly aside. By the same movement he put the sun in Asgill's eyes.

Again the latter rushed in, striving to get within his opponent's guard, and again Payton stepped aside and allowed the randy thrust to pass wasted away. He parried the second thrust, and evaded the third. Asgill rushed in, Payton parried or evaded with the ease and coolness of long tried skill. By this time Asgill, forced to keep his blade in motion, was beginning to breathe quickly. The sweat stood on his forehead, he was more wildly and with less strength or aim. He was aware—it could be read in the glare of his eyes—that he was being reduced to the defensive, and he knew that to be fatal.

An arch broke from his panting lips and he rushed in again, even more recklessly, more at random than before, his sole object now to kill the other, to stab him at close quarters, no matter what happened to himself.

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By the time he reached the back door the alarm was abroad, the maids were running to and fro and screaming, and on the threshold he encountered Flavia.

Pale as the stricken man, she looked on Payton with an eye of horror, and as he stood aside to let her pass, she drew her skirts away, that they might not touch him.

He went on, with rage in his heart. "Very good, my lady," he muttered; "very good! But I've not done with you yet. I know a way to pull your pride down. And I'll go about it!"

He might have spoken less confidently had he, before he retired from the scene of the fight, cast one upward glance in the direction of the house; had he marked an opening high up in the wall of the yew, and noticed through that opening a window, so placed that it alone of all the windows in the house commanded the scene of action. For then he would have discovered at that easement the face he knew, and a pair of stern eyes that had followed the course of the struggle throughout, noted each separate attack, and judged the issue—and the man.

Ah! he might have taken warning. (To be continued)

INVENTIONS OF THE FUTURE

UNDER this heading, Thomas A. Edison's forecast of the manner in which we may be going to solve some of our present industrial and scientific problems is published in the Independent (New York) in the form of an interview with Mr. Edison, who afterward, it is stated, revised and corrected the manuscript. The article runs, in part, as follows:

"Among the many problems which await solution in the future, one of the most important is to get the full value out of fuel. The wastefulness of our present methods of combustion is tremendous. A pound of coal has enough energy in it to carry itself around the world. We are able to extract only a small fraction of its heat and power; the greater part goes to waste. Our best steam engines use about 15 per cent. of the energy of the coal they consume. With gas engines probably 20 to 25 per cent. of the energy is utilized.

"There are various methods being tried out to convert coal directly into electricity without the use of a boiler—eliminating fire and steam. Some of these are oxidation methods. They are scientifically successful, though not yet commercially successful. Oxidation is, of course, a form of combustion. It is slow burning. The only difference between rusting, burning and exploding is the speed of the chemical reaction. Explosives burn very fast, and though they are used to some extent as fuel in the propulsion of torpedoes, they are not economical. There is not as much power in a ton of 40 per cent. dynamite as there is in a ton of coal. Everything in nature would burn up if it were not for the fact that nearly everything except coal is already burned up. Iron would burn and make a good fuel—if in very fine powder—but it has already been consumed in Nature's furnace. Coal is stored up sunlight; it is the storage battery of the sun, to which we owe about all our energy.

"We may discover the germ of getting all the power from fuel tomorrow; and then again it may take a long time to find out.

"Radium has great power. It has no appreciable limit of end. It is not combustible. It gives off intra-atomic energy. We don't know how its energy was stored up. A carload of radium would have as much energy as all the millions of tons of coal mined in the United States in a year. Radium is the cause of the earth's heat, according to the view of most scientists today. That explains why the earth constantly radiating vast quantities of heat into space, doesn't cool down. The planet would be pretty chilly after all these millions of years if it had no radium in it. While only small quantities of radium have been isolated, it exists everywhere in water, rock and soil; it is universally distributed, and a little of it goes a long way. The possibility of harnessing this force for our use is somewhat of a speculation. A radium clock has been made, and it will go several hundred years without winding.

"I have a splintaroscope, which is a tiny bit of radium, of a size that will go through the eye of a needle, mounted over a piece of willemite. It has been shooting off millions of sparks for the six years that I have had it, and I expect it will be shooting sparks the same way for thousands of years. There will be enough sparks given out by that fragment of radium to speed and illuminate the State of Rhode Island. Some day they travel at the speed of light, others 12,000 miles a second. This speed is the source of radium's power. Infinite velocity makes up for lack of mass.

"Radium is found along with uranium and thorium. Sometimes some one finds immense deposits of it, and then it will be a problem how to handle it without dangerous consequences. A large quantity of the stuff would kill everybody in the neighborhood with a gasping cry, staggered and sank sideways to the ground.

"By the powers!" O'Beirne exclaimed, springing forward. "A foul stroke! By heaven, a foul stroke! He was disarmed. It—"

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that region nature has a power-house

which man could use. Steam under pressure to run engines and make electricity can be had there merely by sinking artesian wells.

"To get rid of friction in our machines is one of the future problems. The only machine without friction that we know is the world, and it moves in the resistless ether.

"The monorail does not appeal to me. It was a fundamental mistake that our railroads were built on, a 4 foot 9 1/2 inch gauge instead of a 6-foot gauge, which we will probably have to come to yet.

"The aeroplane of the future will, I think, have to be on the helicopter principle. A successful air-machine must be able to defy the winds. If Wright's aeroplane had one-twentieth of its surface, the wind would not affect it. The helicopter principle is the only way to rise above atmospheric conditions. By increasing the velocity of propeller revolutions the size of the machine can be diminished and thereby we vanquish the hostility of the wind. A helicopter could have foot-size planes distributed on a 90 to 150-foot circle and controlled from the centre by wires.

"Chemical food has been worked out pretty well by Emil Fischer and his students, but it won't be a commercial proposition. There are lots of synthetic things made. Carbohydrates of the same nature and bulk as the natural material are produced, but you can't beat the farm as a laboratory, commercially speaking. If we should dry up like Mars and couldn't raise vegetables on the earth, we might turn to a chemical diet. There might be local famines which could be mitigated by the food-productions of the chemists. The complaint today seems to be that there are too many chemicals in our food.

"The clothes of the future will be so cheap that every young woman will be able to follow the fashions promptly, and there will be plenty of fashions. Artificial silk that is superior to natural silk is now made of wood pulp. It shines better than silk. I think that the silk-worm barbarism will go in fifty years, just as the indigo of India went before the synthetic production of indigo in German laboratories.

"There is much ahead of us. We don't know what gravity is; neither do we know the nature of heat, light and electricity, though we handle them a little. We are only animals. We are coming out of the dog stage and getting a glimpse of our environment. We don't know, we just suspect a few things. It will take an enormous evolution of our brains to bring us anywhere. Our practise of shooting one another in war is proof that we are still animals. The make-up of our society is hideous.

"Communication with other worlds has been suggested. I think we had better stick to this world and find out something about it before we call up our neighbors. They might make us ashamed of ourselves.

"Art will be increased and distributed as we emerge more and more from the dog stage. Society will have to stop this whisky business, which is like throwing sand in the bearings of a steam engine. In 20 years, by the cheapening of commodities, the ordinary laborer will live as well as a man does now with \$200,000 annual income. Automatic machinery and scientific agriculture will bring about this result. Not individualism, but social labor, will dominate the future; you can't have individual machines and every man working by himself. Industry will constantly become more social and interdependent. There will be no manual labor in the factories of the future. The men in them will be merely superintendents watching the machinery to see that it works right.

"The work-day, I believe, will be eight hours. Every man needs that much work to keep him out of mischief and to keep him happy. But it will be work with the brain, something that men will be interested in, and done in wholesome pleasant surroundings. Less and less man will be used as an engine, or as a horse, and his brain will be employed to benefit himself and his fellows."

WASHINGTON'S CHERRY TREE

THE capital city is to have two thousand Japanese cherry trees. They are a gift from Tokio to Washington, and are now on their way to Washington, where they are expected to arrive about the middle of January. The plan is to set them out along the new speedway skirting the Potomac River in time for them to bloom in all their splendor during the coming spring.

Mrs. Taft, the wife of the President, was responsible for this gift. She expressed a desire to purchase some of these trees, and to present them to the city. Her desire rapidly reached the ears of prominent Japanese officials in this country, the result being that within a very short time afterward, Dr. Takamine and Mr. Midzuno, consular officers of Japan in New York, asked permission in behalf of the Mayor of Tokio to make a gift of the trees to the United States.

Every one of the two thousand trees has been carefully selected as if it were to be placed in the Imperial gardens of Japan. There are one hundred and ten varieties in the gift, and no part of the Japanese Empire was left unsearched for the best. The varieties include the sekijama, which produces blossoms of ten petals and scarlet in color. These blossoms are about two inches in diameter. This species, as may naturally be concluded, was named after Mount Sekiyama, one of the famous mountains in Japan. Then there is the asahitana, meaning morning peony, producing a bright red flower which fades before falling to a pale pink. The choshin, named after the province in which it grows, is another variety. "Looking backward from the carriage" is the interpretation of the species called mikurimayashi. The name is supposed to have been given to this tree from the fact that one of the rulers of Japan was so attracted by the beauty of the tree that he looked back at it every time he passed.

DAISY: "Oh, Dolly, I have had such a nasty, spiteful, anonymous letter."

Dolly: "Whom was it from?"

Daisy: "I don't know; can you guess? The wicked creature says I am vain, silly, frivolous, chattering, over-dressed, empty-headed flirt."

Dolly: "I really can't imagine, dearest; but" (reflecting) "I think it must be someone who knows you quite well."