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MARCELLA GRACE.

By ROSA MULLHOLLAND.

CHAPTER III.

AT HOME IN MERRION SQUARE.

Mrs. Timothy O'Flaherty O'Kelly was sitting in her own particular snugger in her handsome house in Merrion square, and opposite to her on the hearth sat Father Daly, of Bally-downvalley, Distresna, Back o'the-mountains, in Connaught. All of the above three names had to be put on an envelope expected to find its way into the good priest's hand when he was at home. Back o'the-mountains was the post town, the name of which had to be Englished for convenience sake. Bally-downvalley was the parish administered by Father Daly, and Distresna was the townland on which his thatched cabin and cabbage-garden stood.

"No, Father Daly," the lady was saying, "with all due respect to you and your views, I must assure you I have made up my mind that I will never be induced to return to Crane's Castle. Since the people have become so ungrateful as to refuse to be satisfied to live under the rule of an O'Kelly without grumbling, I will no longer sacrifice my own little pleasures in life to spend my time among them, and to show them my countenance. They object to their rents — the rents that their forefathers paid without complaint—

"Or promised to pay and could not," put in the priest.

"True, the rents were often remitted, for which grace they did not seem to be deeply and ever-lastingly grateful. The present rate will never be thankful for anything."

"Try them," said Father Daly, dryly.

"Try them? Really, Father Daly, I am astonished at you. Have I not built them a schoolhouse, put them up new houses, in which they refused to live—

"Not being able to meet the demand for increased rent which the more possession of better dwellings did not enable them to pay," said Father Daly, quietly.

"Did I not give the women flannel-petticoats and shawls when they were so miserably clad that I was ashamed of them as my tenants?" persisted the old lady, with an angry flash of the eyes.

"And paid for them out of the surplus rent which was in your pocket and ought to have been in theirs," returned the priest, with mild bluntness.

Mrs. O'Kelly breathed hard, and sat still for a few moments, trying bravely to restrain her wrath, for she was a good Catholic and a kind-hearted woman according to her lights, and to quarrel with old Father Daly, who had been parish priest of Bally-downvalley for thirty years, whom she knew to be honest, unselfish and devoted to his duty, besides being her sincere friend, with all his plain speaking, would have been to her a catastrophe much to be deplored. She looked upon him as one so blinded by the heavenly lights of his vocation as to be an impossible guide to a sensible woman of the world like herself; and though, from a religious point of view, she held that there could be no more worthy soul alive than this priest, yet from her vantage ground as practical woman and landlord, her own common sense (as she called it) appeared to her a far more respectable thing than the weaker enthusiasm of any one whose only concern in the universe was avowedly with charity and prayer.

"No, I will not be angry with you, Father Daly," she said, "though I find it very hard to keep my temper. The O'Kellys were always friends with their priests, no matter—"

"How misguided the priests might be in venturing to give them a warning," said Father Daly, slyly, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Exactly. Priests are mortals, after all, you know, old friend, and they are liable to make mistakes like the rest of us sinners."

"Too true."

"And so, you must allow me to remain where I am, and do my duty in my own way. I have been driven out of the country where my ancestors, who spent their money freely there—"

"Hunting, drinking, roistering, keeping open house for their equals in station and in folly," said Father Daly, "not in any way that was of use to the poor. If you were one of these, my dear lady, I would not be asking you to return to Distresna. Better for the people to be deserted by their natural protectors than to be subject to the bad example of such as the O'Kellys of by-gone days."

"I agree with you there, though the people need not have been deserted if they would have learned to be content. But their grumbles and their menaces I will not endure. And I wonder greatly, Father Daly, that you would choose such a time to come here and make such a proposal to me. The murder that occurred last night, of a landlord whose property lies not fifty miles from mine, ought to be a sufficient answer, and a very terrible one to all your suggestions as to my conduct. There was a man who, I doubt not, did his duty."

Father Daly shuddered and sighed heavily.

"I cannot enter into that question," he said. "All I can say is, if you were to follow my advice you would run no risk. I pray God," he went on, with deep emotion in his face and voice, "that whatever may happen, none of my flock may ever be stained by ever so small a participation in the crime of Cain. If I sympathize with their cares and miseries, and strive

with them to obtain redress, it is only on the express condition that they obey my teachings on higher matters and keep themselves sinless before God."

"I am sure you do your best," said Mrs. O'Kelly, in an unconsciously patronizing tone. "But I am not going to take the odds as to whether the secret Fenians of your parish may receive orders to finish me or not. I have other duties in life besides trying to humor an unreasonable tenantry. I go to daily Mass, even when the weather is cold and my rheumatism troublesome. I have many charities on my hands here. I do my share in upholding the respectability of the Irish gentry in Dublin. I pay my respects periodically to the vicery of my queen. Neither do I forget to patronize the home manufactures of my country: only this day I expect in a parcel of rich tawny, woven in Dublin, to make me a castle train. My modiste, wished me to have it of Lyons velvet, but I said 'no unless it can be made for me in Ireland.' But, oh, Father Daly, there is something else I want to say to you. What am I to do about these dreadful O'Flahertys?"

"Who are they, ma'am? said the priest, his mind still running on his miserable parishioners.

"Why, don't you know? The people who expect to be my heirs; hardly kindred, so very distantly related, and have always been as disagreeable to me as they could be. I simply can't bear them, Father Daly, and yet I have no nearer of kin. Am I obliged to leave them my property, or can I bequeath it all to the Church, or the poor?"

Father Daly reflected a few moments while an expression something like bitterness flitted over his benevolent countenance. He knew the O'Flahertys to be rack-renting, overbearing people, whose tenants were in even a more wretched plight than the people of Distresna. It seemed, then, that his flock were doomed to fall from bad to worse. As for the alternative so widely proposed by the lady as a last means of defeating the impertinent hopes of the objects of her dislike—that is, the idea of her leaving her property to the poor—well it suggested to the priest one of those fine ironical touches which life is always putting to our plans and projects. On the one hand, a half-starved population drained of a rent a fair deduction from which would help to feed them, and on the other a fortune setting out to look for the poor!

"I cannot undertake to advise you about that," he said. "Are you quite sure you have no nearer kindred in the world than the O'Flahertys?"

"I am afraid—I am quite sure. For a long time I had some hope that a younger branch of our family might turn up. There was one who sank in the world and was forgotten. He might have left heirs, but I hardly hope now to discover them, if they exist. At one time I even thought of adopting somebody. There is Bryan Kilmartin, a fine fellow and always a pet of mine till lately. Since he has shown such very erratic tendencies, quite mixed himself up with Nationalists in politics, I, of course, have changed my views. And seeing that he has disappointed me I shall look for no one else. Now, stay, you are not going away, Father Daly? Would it really be right to leave all I have to the poor?"

Father Daly had taken his hat, and only for this question would have gone out of the room with his present thoughts unspoken. But Mrs. O'Kelly's eagerly repeated query about the poor was the last straw that broke the back of his patience.

"When you are about making that will," he said, "consult some one who knows less of your hardness to those poor whom God placed in your power in this life, than I do. Better, I tell you, to do good while you live than try to snatch back at it with your dead hand. Better be just with your worldly goods from a pure intention than assume generosity in your last hour for the purpose of gratifying your dislike to your neighbor."

He raised his hand in warning, and the old lady got up from her chair and confronted him, with angry eyes and a convulsive movement of the head.

"That will do, Father Daly," she said with a hysterical quaver in her voice. "I will trouble you no further at present. Do not let me detain you any longer, and please don't return here till I send for you."

"I will not, ma'am. Trust me, I will not," said the priest, faintly, and turned away to the door, feeling with a pang that he had lost an old friend and injured the cause of his people as well. He fumbled for his stick in the hall, and took an umbrella instead, then had to turn back and rectify his mistake.

"Now, what does he allin' Father Daly to day, anyway?" said the butler to himself, as he stood on the threshold of the big hall door and watched the old man trudging down the square, absently holding his stick upright like an umbrella, for it was raining. "I suppose the mistress is after rankin' him about them rents down at Distresna. Throth an' she might lave Father Daly alone. But sure, though she's the good mistress to live with, still she does be the devil when she takes a thing in her head."

It was Mrs. O'Flaherty O'Kelly's day at home, and visitors were already waiting for her in the drawing-room, whither she repaired as soon as she could remove the traces of excitement from her countenance. As she sailed in with her rich black silk dress trailing behind her, her black lace shawl floating from her shoulders and her white lace cap crowning her whiter

locks, she looked as stately an old lady as could be found in the three kingdoms.

"Dear Mrs. O'Kelly, how very well you're looking!" cried a tongue with a Galwegian brogue, and a tall, florid young woman came with a bouncing movement across the floor to meet her.

"Thank you, Miss O'Flaherty, I don't know that a flush arising from vexation makes one look particularly well, especially when it gets into the nose. Now, my flush always gets into my nose, and so I would rather you didn't notice it."

"Dear Mrs. O'Kelly, you are always so original. And no wonder you are vexed. Everybody is so wretched about this dreadful murder. Nobody knows whose turn will come next. And to think of them following him to Dublin! It is very comforting, at any rate, to those who take the risk of staying on the spot all the year round, as poor papa does at Mount Ramshackle. People who run away don't fare any better, it seems."

"Humph!" said Mrs. O'Kelly, twitching the end of her lace shawl with nervous fingers. She was well aware of several of Mr. O'Flaherty's reasons for living permanently at Mount Ramshackle. In the first place, he was what is called a Sunday man, who, on week days, was safe from his creditors only within his own walls, and could not stroll abroad with security except on the Sabbath; in the second place, he was enamored of the "mountain dew" of his native wilds, and, being so, preferred to blush unseen in his privacy, rather than show his rubicund countenance on the highways of the world. So, when Miss O'Flaherty boasted that her papa had never deserted his post at home, while other people lived as absentees wherever they pleased, Mrs. O'Kelly always said "Humph!"

"But I am sure I do not wonder," Miss O'Flaherty went on, sipping her tea, "at any one running away from such ungrateful savages. If I did not escape sometimes I should die of disgust."

Now, Mrs. O'Kelly knew well that whatever right she had to the gratitude of her tenants the O'Flahertys had none. They had built no houses and bestowed no petticoats. The tradition of their family, still admirably cherished, had, always been to spend twopence for every penny they could wring out of the wretched tillers of the rocky and boggy wilderness which was crowned by the glory of Mount Ramshackle—owing the balance to any one who would credit them. Miss O'Flaherty looked on the poor of her father's estate much as she regarded the lean horses that dragged her up and down the hilly roads, and the sheep that were killed to furnish the frequent leg of mutton for the family table. They were there for her support and convenience, and any sign of unwillingness on their part was to be infinitely derided. Mrs. O'Kelly knew that in very truth there was much more sympathy between her own views of the people and those of Father Daly, than between her own views and those of Miss O'Flaherty. And, therefore, though to many and various ears the lady of Distresna would formally abuse her tenants and complain of their treatment of her, yet never would she be betrayed into such weakness in presence of an O'Flaherty. Between them and herself she drew such a broad line that by no chance or artifice could she be brought to mingle her grievances with theirs. And it must be said, in justice to her, that her objection to think of the O'Flahertys as her heirs, was not entirely caused by personal dislike of them. In spite of her present anger at the peasantry of Distresna, she felt a genuine distaste to the idea of their falling into O'Flaherty hands. And this distaste was strengthened when it happened, as it sometimes would, that after listening to Miss O'Flaherty's views as now, she heard her in conversation with some one else, alluding to the estate of Distresna, as if it was already in the possession of her family.

Miss O'Flaherty was not in the dark as to this peculiarity of the old lady, but thought herself quite safe in teasing her. She had no nearer of kin to whom to leave her lands. But when Mrs. O'Kelly refused to reply to her remarks, as now, and began to twitch the corner of her shawl, Miss O'Flaherty thought it prudent to change the conversation.

"I'm just after meeting Bryan Kilmartin in Nassau street," said Miss O'Flaherty, who was not above sprinkling her conversation with Hibernalisms, "and I asked him what he thought of this murder, and how he intended to go on defending the people and talking about their virtues."

"And pray, what did he answer you?" asked Mrs. O'Kelly, erecting her head as if to declare that here was another of her pet hobbies going to be taken from under her, and ridden to death before her eyes, and that she would not have it, would seize it by the reins and bring it to a dead stop rather than trust it to another. "I should think Mr. Bryan Kilmartin would have a keener appreciation of the iniquity of murder than you could have, in proportion to the superior size of his heart and brain."

Miss O'Flaherty giggled. "Dear Mrs. O'Kelly, you do use such eloquent language. Can you think men's hearts and brains are really larger than ours, now? I am nearly as tall as he is, you know. I confess he remarked that he had no sympathy with murderers; but rather spoiled the statement, however, by saying that his opinion of the virtues of the people remained the same."

"A rash fool is sometimes more ad-

mirable than a prudent rogue," said Mrs. Kelly, oracularly.

"Well, I wouldn't quite call him a fool," said Miss O'Flaherty.

"I should think not," retorted the old lady; and she was just sharpening her tongue to say something which would make it clear to her visitor that she did not forget the court that had at one time been paid, and in vain, to her favorite-in-disgrace by the ladies of Mount Ramshackle, when more visitors poured in, and the conversation became general—fluctuating as to subject between the terrible murder in the city streets last night, and the approaching drawing room at the castle.

"So lucky it was not an official!" said a sprightly girl who was looking forward to the season of amusement which is so short in Dublin. "How dreadful if anything had stopped the Castle balls!"

"Now, Katty," said her sister, "don't pretend to be so heartless?"

"Well, I did not even know him, and I hear he was an ogre," said Miss Katty, pouting. "I wouldn't kill him an ogre myself. But I never did him any harm, and I don't see why he should interfere with my dancing."

"He won't," said another lady. "What are you going to wear at the drawing room?"

"Now, ladies," said Mrs. O'Kelly. "I am going to petition you in favor of tawny. I have been directed to a first-rate weaver, who will give you a splendid quality cheaper than the shops. I have ordered a train myself, and I am expecting the material home this afternoon. If it comes in time, I will show it to you."

"The colors are so ugly," said a graceful woman who was on the eve of being made solicitor general, a lady who had accepted all the recent improvements in color as to dress and furnishing. "Poplin will never revive until the new delicate shades are introduced."

"I forgot your aesthetic tendencies," said Mrs. O'Kelly, with a compassionate smile. "Indeed, I must say, for my part, I hope the weavers will keep to their genuine greens, blues, and ambers, and leave us something with a bit of color in it. I confess I am not of the die away school, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy."

Mrs. O'Shaughnessy slightly shrugged her graceful shoulders, and glanced round the fiercely ugly room which boldly claimed for its mistress a place in the first rank of the Phillipses. The builder had long ago made the room handsome, with ceiling exquisitely carved in wreaths and figures, and with noble old chimney-pieces of inlaid and sculptured marble. But the gilded consol-tables, the carpet of brilliant varieties, the crude colors staring at one another from ottoman to couch, and from easy-chair to lounge, so distracted the eye that the only beautiful things of the interior passed unnoticed.

"But Mrs. O'Kelly," said another young woman, the daughter of a prominent Castle official, who had of late bravely improved her apartments at home, "I assure you the new colors are admitted to be the best. Why even in the wilds of Donegal the peasants are knitting them into stockings and jerseys for sale. New dyes have been sent over from England."

"It may be, it may be," said Mrs. O'Kelly. "I do not worship everything English as you do, my dear Miss Nugent. I hold that just as many mistakes are made in England as Ireland which, God knows, is saying enough."

And then, feeling that her temper, which had never recovered Father Daly's home thrust, was getting the better of her again, the old lady got up and rang the bell.

"See if that parcel of tawny has come home yet, Murphy," she said, "and if so, bring it to me."

"There's a young woman down below wid it, ma'am," said Murphy, briskly.

"Bring me the parcel then, and tell the young woman to wait," said Mrs. O'Kelly.

The poplin but a few hours ago taken from Grace's loom was carried to the drawing-room, opened out, looped about the chairs, hung over the back of a couch, displayed in every light for the admiration of the assembled ladies.

"You see this is only a sober purple," said Mrs. O'Kelly, "as I would not go out in anything gay, and for even duller people than me there is a lovely green, and they have a very good brown also and a handsome myrtle green. But I confess, if I were young, it would be the emerald green, and the turquoise blue, and the carnation pink, that I would be thinking of."

After the tawny had been admired, criticised, and pulled about for half an hour, and two fresh tea pots had been emptied, fortunately not over it but only over the debate upon it, the visitors disappeared at last, and left Mrs. O'Flaherty O'Kelly rather tired after her "day."

"Roll it up again, Murphy," she said, wearily, looking at the poplin, "and put it in the paper, and then poke the fire. And stay, I will go down myself and speak to that young woman. Where is she, Murphy?"

"I put her in the library, ma'am," said Murphy.

Mrs. O'Kelly drew her shawl around her and moved slowly down the stairs, sighing as she went. What with her feud with her people, Father Daly's denunciation of her rightminded conduct, Miss O'Flaherty's general unpleasantness and particular sting at Bryan Kilmartin, and finally, the new-fangled ways of fashionable women who would not wear sensibly-dyed poplin for the good of their country, her heart felt very sore. What a

world of contradictions and misunderstanding this was! It were good to flee away from it and be at rest!

The library door was not quite shut and she did not make sufficient noise in opening it further to disturb the young woman from the weaver's, who was standing at the table looking up at a portrait that hung over the chimney-piece. In the long strip of looking-glass that divided the mantel-shelf from the picture frame, the face of the gazing girl, whose back was to the door, was reflected, and Mrs. O'Kelly had not taken two steps into the room before she stopped and stood quite still in astonishment. The upraised face framed in its shabby little black bonnet which she saw in the glass of course belonged to the young woman who had brought her tawny from the weaver's, and yet to Mrs. O'Kelly's eyes at that moment appeared to be exactly the same face as that of the lady in the picture on which its eyes were so earnestly fixed.

Recovering from her surprise Mrs. O'Kelly spoke, and Marcella Grace, startled to find that she had so far forgotten herself, in her study of the picture, as to fail to hear the lady enter the room, turned quickly round, coloring deeply.

"It was you who brought the poplin? Yes; well, please to tell Mr. Grace that I like it very much, and will do my best to get him some orders," said Mrs. Kelly, having got quite to the other side of the table where she could see the weaver's messenger in a better light. Then she dropped into a chair, and looked long at the girl, turned away and poked the fire, and then faced the girl again and stared at her.

"Thank you," said Marcella; "shall you require the piece of grey poplin you spoke about? My father would like to know."

"No—that is, yes. Wait a moment, young woman. I am a little tired, and I forget this moment what I wanted to say to you."

She put her hand up to her head, and holding it there, looked covertly at the face of the portrait.

"Yes, it is a remarkable likeness," she was thinking, "a very unaccountable likeness. How in the world can there be such a resemblance between my poor, dead sister and this weaver's girl?"

"Are you Mr. Grace's daughter?" she asked, as Marcella stood patiently waiting her pleasure. Now, that her passing blush had disappeared, the girl was very pale, and the clear, dark beauty of her eyes, with their proud yet tender gravity of expression, struck the old lady forcibly.

"Yes," said Marcella, "you may safely trust me with any message to him."

"I don't doubt it," said Mrs. O'Kelly, absently, not knowing what she was saying. She felt so strangely attracted to this weaver's girl that she could not bear to let her go out of her presence without further parley; and yet she could think of no pretence upon which to detain her. Feeling that some effort was necessary, she struggled to make one.

"Well, my dear, your father is a very clever weaver and I want to talk about him and his work. You see it is raining, and I hope you are not in a hurry."

"Not at all," said Marcella, "though I do not mind the rain."

"Now, I wonder if Murphy would think it very extraordinary if I asked him to bring the girl a cup of tea? Well, I don't care if he does. I am mistress in my own house. And I will know some thing more about this handsome creature," thought Mrs. O'Kelly; and she rang the bell.

"Murphy, make some fresh tea, and bring it here."

"Is it here, ma'am?"

"Yes, Murphy."

"I will, ma'am;" and Murphy stared and withdrew.

"Now, my dear, take off your wet cloak and sit down. You must know I have taken it into my head to patronize poplin, and I am doing my very best to stir up a feeling for it among my acquaintances."

"You are very good, madame," said Marcella, as the old lady helped her to take off her cloak and made her sit near the fire. The tea was brought, and while the girl drank it Mrs. O'Kelly proceeded to explain to the fashionable ladies who were making to the old-fashioned dyes, and to impress upon her that there was a necessity for introducing new ones in the manufacture of poplin. An hour ago she could not have believed that she should ever be induced to advocate so absurd a movement, but in her eagerness to see more of this interesting young woman, she had grasped at the subject as affording the only excuse she could think of for a conversation.

Marcella listened with interest, but when the lady had ceased speaking said, sighing:

TO BE CONTINUED.

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MISSIONS TO NON

There was nothing Apostle Saint Paul more sure than that spirit men, the Jews, which object to preaching the Gospels. "They please says, 'and are adverse prohibiting us to speak that they may be proud, self-satisfied themselves as the chosen. They constituted the did not care to extend which they enjoyed to were outside the pale. cherished an old, long dice against those who from the Commonwealth strangers to the coven and they actually of Paul's extending to the of the salvation which enjoyed.

Is it possible that spirit has been per present day? Can it who enjoy the nesting of Holy Church—th Christ—can be indiffe and important work of Gospel to outsiders? deed, those who allow or their spirit of self- ence to prevent their rival of the Apostolic that in modern times in the Church?

We esteem the move recently been made in of the country as ame portant and promising rival of the Apostolic that in modern times in the Church.

What earthly object have to this really praiseworthy work agine. Surely it doe violation of Church the contrary, it is sim out of the command t world and preach the creature. Nor can v new departure in the ing new in preachi outsiders—we may heathen in our own ignorance of the true heathen the scattere the country districts under that designati whether they are hea are unacquainted w lieve to be God's strong prejudices a know to be the tru If any Catholic be people are as well o even well enough of consistent with his efforts for their e conversion. But, o lightened Catholic such inconsistent a that. We believe t that the Catholic rel imense benefit to and to all the peo world and for that w

Nor can it be for t scheme. It is no The experience of th engaged in the worl its practicability. O the highest degree a peculiar talent, proves that that, to Father Elliot, un champion missioner the important work, recruits have been dioceses and are vigor and success.

But