

FROM IN THE HEART OF MARY.

Mother of Sorrows, I— But my Babe is on my breast: He resteth quiet there...

Mother of Sorrows, I— And the sword shall pierce my heart; But to-day I hold Him close...

Derry-Na-Mona

(Continued from last week.)

Eily Quinlan resumed her homeward walk; but her momentary courage had altogether vanished.

"Oh, that it were Christmas Eve!" she said to herself, with a sudden, passionate longing.

On the very day before Christmas Eve, the country-side was startled by the rumor that Corranmore...

"It is enough to make one stay up all night," I declare! Miss Susan Quinlan said, with a shiver.

Her brother took care to follow her wishes. Before night fell, all the windows were shuttered and barred.

Then she stood close by the window and awaited Frank Carroll's coming, with a beating heart.

There is no getting out of it now, Eily," James Quinlan had said. "Hamilton has behaved most generously and nobly."

These words seemed to ring in Eily's ears as she stood by the school-room window.

"Oh, Frank, Frank," she whispered to herself, as a wild longing smote her heart.

Only the swish-wash of the snowflakes on the glass seemed to answer her words.

Six o'clock! Surely, surely, Frank would fulfil his promise.

But the moments passed, and Frank did not come.

Frank, at last! She turned quickly and flung open the window.

A wild, pallid woman's face confronted her — a face stamped with the lines of mental and physical distress.

"You are Miss Quinlan, are you not?—Eily Quinlan?" the strange woman said.

"Yes, I am Eily Quinlan," the girl gasped, after a pause.

"Terribly wrong!" was the rapid answer, the woman's voice sinking to a whisper.

"Oh, God! What does it mean?" Eily cried, horror-stricken.

"His name is Frank Carroll. He has been attacked by Walter Hamilton — as callous a fiend as ever lived."

"Go to the Mass Path. Take help. Lose no time."

"Oh, I must go at once!" she cried wildly, turning from the window.

"He is lying by that jutting rock at the left side of the path," the woman said compassionately.

As the words passed her lips Eily fled from the school-room and down to the kitchen.

Breathlessly Eily poured forth her terrible fears — her frantic request; and in a moment she was surrounded by eager, kindly faces.

"Jerry, Conn, Pat and Curly will go this very minute, Miss Eily!" Nora cried soothingly.

The four men left the kitchen at once, but Eily, with a wailing cry, broke away from Nora's arms.

"You'll never be able to travel the Mass Path on such a night as this!" Nora Brien said.

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(To be continued.)

CHILDREN'S CORNER

THE DECEMBER WOODS.

The following poem, by Jessica Nelson North, printed in St. Nicholas for December, has won for its ten-year-old author a St. Nicholas League silver badge:

I roamed in the woods in winter When the trees were blank and bare;

A few leaves clung to the tree-tops, But those were old and brown;

I gathered a bunch of ivy-leaves, Still bright with autumn's glow;

I turned my footsteps homeward, Along the smooth worn track;

The dull gray clouds had parted, And faintly I could see That the early setting winter sun, Was shining down on me.

THE SPRING FLOWERS ARE HERE.

"Spring flowers are here!" you exclaim. "But this is December, the beginning of winter, when we've just lost the flowers."

It tells us of this year's flowers, but what about those for next year? The profusion of flowers has indeed dwindled away.

The young buds of the skunk-cabbage push their way up before winter sets in.

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winter sets in. Thoreau writes of it in October: "Mortal and human creatures must take a little respite in this fall of the year."

"But," perhaps you next argue, "while this may be plant life starting in the fall, it isn't really and truly a 'flower' as we commonly use that word."

Admitted. Let's consider another — one of the sweetest, most fragile and beautiful flowers of spring — the hepatica, or liverwort.

Mrs. Dana tells us that "these fragile-looking, enamel-like flowers are sometimes found actually beneath the snow."

The same writer tells us of two other winter flowers: "The dandelion occasionally continues in bloom through the entire winter."

John Burroughs, in writing of "Spring at the Capitol" (Washington), says: "Though the mercury occasionally sinks to zero, yet the earth is never so blighted by the cold but that, in some sheltered nook or corner, signs of vegetable life still remain."

When we thus take into consideration this fact of the spring flowers commencing to bloom in the winter, Longfellow's poem "The Flowers," from which the following is quoted, has an especially deep and true significance:

In all places, then, and in all seasons, Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings.

Will our young folks, who love to roam the woods and fields, please keep on the lookout for spring flowers — yes, even in beds of snow — when you may be on a skating or coasting outing?

Keep on the lookout also for many plants that retain their fresh green appearance but do not bloom.

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