

who paid her in kind; and made and mended nets for any of the men who could afford to pay her a trifle just sufficient to pay the rent. For fifteen years Judy toiled late and early, and then her grandson Willie was old enough to take his father's boat and nets and earn his living, and support his grandmother. A fine, handsome, manly lad was Willie Merrick, full-chested, clear-eyed and supple, sinewed like the majority of the hardy sons of the sea-coast.

In the market, every one liked to buy his mackerel and haddocks, not only because they could depend on whatever he offered for sale being genuinely good and moderate in price, but they liked the look of his honest face and clear hazel eyes, and the sound of his hearty voice.

Mrs. Merrick was proud of her grandson, and not without some reason, for he was a universal favorite, and deserved to be.

A few evenings after Denis Connor had told his wife of the threatened eviction, Oona, his daughter, was sitting with Willie Merrick on the stone seat outside old Judy's cabin. There was no "take," and the men were all about the beach attending to the drying of the nets, or watching a little boat which was making for the quay against wind and tide.

"She'll never get in, Oona, if they don't tack more to the eastward," Willie said. "Oh, if I had a boat like her, wouldn't I be happy!"

"Aren't ye happy as ye are, Willie?" Oona asked. "Ye told me the other night that ye was the happiest boy in Cloonabeg, or Cloonamore either."

"So I am, darlin'," Willie said, looking tenderly at the fair, saucy face beside him; "but I'll be happier when yer my own intirely. When is it to be?"

"Whenever ye like, Willie; father and mother are willing, and yer granny is teasing me every day. Sure we're all as one as married, aren't we, Willie?"

"Yes, darlin'; but I want the priest to spake the words, and put this on yer *necesshy* little finger;" and young Merrick pulled from his pocket a canvas bag, from the farthest corner of which he pulled a wedding-ring.

"This Shrovetide, then, Willie," Oona whispered with a blush. "Now, I must go in, as mother'll be wanting me. Is that the agent gone into Martin Gill's, Willie? I didn't think it was rent-day yet."

"Yes, faix, it is, Oona, and it wants a week yet to the half-year;" and Oona went into the house, while Willie went to see what the people were gathering into groups for, and talking so mysteriously about. A few words served to explain the object of the agent's visit. He had come, accompanied by the bailiff, to serve "notice to quit" on every house. "His Honor the landlord wanted the place

cleared down," was all the reason he gave. It was a sad thing to walk through the village of Cloonabeg that evening, and go from house to house with the agent. Everywhere he said the same thing: "Ye must clear out; His Honor wants the place. I'll forgive ye half this half-year's rent all round, and give ye till the 1st of January to get away. But remember, the men'll be here on New-Year's day to pull down these dens."

By the time they had reached Denis Connor's the whole village—men, women, and children—were after them, crying bitterly, and Judy Merrick came to ask what the matter was.

"It's evicted we are—served with notice to quit, Judy," Mary Connor said quietly. "It isn't easy to leave the place ye were bred and born in, and go out on the world. But God's good; cheer up, Denis awic."

"What does she mean, Denis Connor?" Judy cried. "Is it that they're goin' to dispossess ye—to turn ye out of the cabin ye were born in, and yer father and grandfather before ye?"

"Yes, ma'am; that's exactly what we mean," the bailiff said. "I'm going to serve you next."

"Serve me! Evict me! Turn me, an old woman of threecore and ten, out on the roadside!" Judy screamed. "No! I was born in that cabin; my father lived and died in it; my ancestors were the first that ever raised a stone of Cloonabeg. Gid Judy, poor Judy, Judy Merrick, ye may call me, but I'm Julia O'Brien, and in the cabin I've lived in, there I'll die."

"We'll see about that," the bailiff sneered, and Judy rushed out, and knelt down at her door-step. "The first one of ye that crosses here will have to walk over me," she shrieked; but the bailiff advanced, and laying his hand on her shoulder, gave her a printed form, and said jeeringly:

"You're served, Mrs. Merrick; and I'd ake it easier, if I were you.—Come on, ir," he added, turning to the agent, who was examining the condition of the house.

Judy Merrick stood up, and looked at the notice in her hand, and then advanced to the agent's side. "Mr. Hayes, sir," she said slowly, "I'm to be out of this cabin on the 1st of January, amn't I?"

"Yes; and see that you are," Mr. Hayes replied.

"Where am I to go to, sir?"

"My good woman, that's nothing whatever to me," he said, shrugging his shoulders; "go wherever you like."

"You know, sir, that in Cloonamore one of us can't get bit, nor sup, nor lodging, for love or money, even if we had that same. Where'll we go to, Mr. Hayes, sir; will ye ask His Honor that?"

"That's nothing whatever to His