

For the Hearthstone.

MISERERE MEI DEUS.

BY KATE SEYMOUR.

Be pitiful oh God!—the night is long.
My soul is faint with watching for the light.
And still the doubt and gloom of sevenfold night
Hangs heavy on my spirit.—Thou art strong—
Pity me, oh my God!

I stretch my hands through darkness up to Thee;
The stars are shrouded, and the night is dumb;
There is no earthly help—no light to guide me
In all my holiness, and misery—
Pity me, oh my God!

Be pitiful oh God!—for I am weak.
And all my path is rough, and heized about;
Hold Thou my hand, dear Lord, and lead me out.
And bring me to the city which I seek;
Pity me, oh my God!

By the temptation which Thou didst endure
And by Thy fasting, and Thy midnight prayer,
Join I let me not utterly despair—
Oh! hide me in the flock, from ill secure—
Pity me, oh my God!

My eyes run down with tears, and do not cease;
Oh! beyond the river, dark and cold,
Shall I the white walls of my home behold—
The shining palaces—the streets of gold.
And out through the gate, the city of Ponce!
Pity me, oh my God!

THE ROSE AND THE SHANROCK.

A DOMESTIC STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE FLOWERS OF GLENATON."

CHAPTER XXV.

AN UNSUCCESSFUL LOVER.

When led to an open window, Kathleen soon recovered herself, and declared, with an appearance of truth, that she could not account for the faintness with which she had been seized.

"We fancied it was caused by the approach of Lord Glanore," said Rosamond, jealously; and her brother leaned forward to catch the reply.

"I do not know Lord Glanore, except as the owner of an estate near my aunt Ursula's farm," Kathleen said, after a short pause. "For a moment, his face seemed familiar, or I mistook him for some one else, and was a little startled; but I am quite well again, and ready to return to the dancers."

Frank was satisfied with this explanation, for was not his pretty Kathleen shy, and her equanimity easily disturbed? Rosamond, however, persisted in inquiring for whom she had mistaken his lordship, and added, "Your acquaintances, like ours, are so few, that it surprises us to hear you speak in such a strain."

Kathleen coloured and hesitated; but Frank, to whom she glanced appealingly, as if longing to be helped out of a difficulty, smilingly said, "I think I can guess. This lovely little maiden seeks in every stranger an emissary of her aunt; and so she fancied that the Viscount, was Miss Delany's legal adviser, come to compel her return."

Kathleen did not contradict the supposition, but confessed that she had not yet succeeded in overcoming her dread of being torn from her friends; and while Frank was endeavouring to soothe away the fear which had brought a cloud to her brow, the still dissatisfied Rosamond left them.

The mystery of the miniature had not been unriddled, and it now rose up to tempt her with vague doubts both of Kathleen and the Viscount's good faith. She could not bring herself to believe with Frank that the likeness was accidental; she could not implicitly accept the explanation which Kathleen had offered, and while dancing with one and another of the partners she had already accepted, her eyes roved around the room in quest of his lordship, whose abrupt departure puzzled and displeased her.

Kathleen had recovered her usual gaiety by the time they drove home, and amused Frank and Mrs. Carroll with her excellent mimicry of some of the odd characters she had encountered; but Rosamond, who was to be the widow's guest that night, pined at a headache, and sat silently in a corner of the carriage, asking herself again and again whether Lord Glanore would seek the interview he had earnestly besought her to grant, and how he would account for being in possession of Kathleen's portrait.

Excusing herself from the customary morning drive, she carried her work into a pretty little room at the back of the house which communicated with the conservatory. Mrs. Carroll had fancifully fitted it up as a rustic temple; and the waters of a small fountain in the centre moistened the rare and always beautiful ferns growing round it. A few quaintly-made chairs and tables constituted all the furniture of this summer retreat, except that large pile of cushions, covered with moss, green velvet, afforded an excellent lounge for the indolent or the weary.

The day was intensely hot; but Rosamond, in her white dress, looked charmingly fresh and cool, when a visitor was announced, and Lord Glanore was ushered into the room. He drew a good omen from finding her here, where they were not likely to be disturbed, instead of in the more formal drawing-room; and, refusing the chair offered to him, he seated himself on the cushions at the young lady's feet.

"I had rather be here, dear Rosamond," he murmured, "where I can look into the sweet eyes which so seldom vouchsafe me a kindly glance. My position is more lowly than mine, and whist, 'Charles, I believe you: I will give you love for love.'"

Rosamond was too busy with a knot in her ribbon to answer him directly.

"Has my brother given you permission to come and say these things to me?"

The Viscount started.

"I beg Mr. Dalton's pardon for forgetting him. Authorize me to ask his consent to our engagement, and I will go in search of him immediately; but I have been so engrossed in my efforts to win your favourable opinion, that the proper preliminaries have escaped my memory. Do you bid me go to him now—at once?"

And he half raised himself as if in haste to obey her wishes; but Rosamond, in great confusion, bade him resume his seat.

"Frank is driving with Kathleen and Mrs. Carroll, and your lordship, willfully, I think, misinterpreting me, I feel myself to blame in receiving you, even as a friend, without Frank's

consent to sanction our intercourse. As a lover, I cannot regard you, until I have learned to put some faith in the stability of your affection."

"You are hard; you are cruel," he warmly retorted. "Yet no; I am unjust to blame you. I deserve to be suspected; I am reaping the bitter fruit of the follies that sullied my first youth. To prove the sincerity of my repentance, I put myself into your hands. You shall be my guide, Egbert—my pure-minded counselor; and even though you send me from you, I will not complain, so that you give me leave to love you, and to hope that at some happy moment you will be mine."

Rosamond smiled, a little sarcastically.

"With all your show of repentance for the past, your lordship keeps in view what you are pleased to consider the reward of your present professions. Such promises sound well to the ear; but ah, they cost so little, my lord!"

"To a man of honour," he queried, with some heat. "Can you really imagine that I am not in earnest? Good heavens, Rosamond, what an opinion you have formed of me!"

"Better than your lordship deserves," she asked, archly. "I feared so! My work will be utterly spoiled if you tangle the cotton in this manner. While I re-wind it, let me make you a confession. I have heard so many rhapsodies on my beauty and my virtues since I have been in Dublin, that the subject palls. If you would but choose never to repeat, I should listen more patiently."

"I speak of my affection, and you answer me with a taunt and a jest," he bitterly commented. "Rosamond, will nothing move you—nothing induce you to place any confidence in me?"

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impute to me," he retorted, with an earnest glance at Rosamond.

"But," Norah exclaimed, "you forget that it has been proverbial, ever since Shakespeare wrote, that 'Men are deceivers ever—constant to one love never!'"

"Have you enrolled yourself in the ranks of my enemies?" asked the Viscount, struggling with his annoyance.

"By no means. On the contrary, I very much wish to enlist your lordship under my banners for the short time my aunt has consented to let me stay here," she said, coaxingly.

"If there is anything I can do to oblige Miss Dalton's friend, pray command me," was the polite reply.

Norah dropped him a low courtesy.

"Thanks, my lord! I wish to be very gay—to see all the sights of this fair city—to go to balls, picnics, concerts, *societes*—in fact, to crowd all the enjoyment I can into four weeks of freedom. Will you help me, Miss Dalton? Will you, my lord?"

Rosamond could scarcely conceal her surprise, so great was the contrast between this animated girl and the listless, apathetic Norah of the farm. But the transformed demoiselle did not wait for her reply. Mrs. Carroll had returned, and she hastened to meet the warm embrace of her cousin Kathleen.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A PASSAGE AT ARMS.

Lord Glanore found in Norah's request an excuse for remaining till the amazement her presence evoked had subsided. Mrs. Carroll laughed

when she heard how quickly the new comer had been planning all kinds of gay doings, and predicted that a few days of such excessive dissipation would suffice to disgust her with it.

"You had better resolve to quaff the spring of pleasure with more moderation," she remarked.

"Nay," said Norah, decidedly; "I will drink deep, or not at all. It is not in my nature to do things by halves; and as for moderation, that is the virtue of the timid and weak-minded."

"As you will, my dear," the widow rather coldly replied. "But recollect that I shall not consent to let Kathleen or Miss Dalton lose their roses because you are wilful. When they grow tired, I shall find you another *chaperone* and more robust companions."

Norah saw that Mrs. Carroll was not pleased, but she made no reply. How she had persuaded her stern aunt to let her pay this visit, no one knew. Kathleen would have made some inquiries respecting Miss Delany, but was checked with an impatient, "Do not speak of her! For one brief moment let me forget everything that pertains to the farm and its inmates. What dressmaker do you employ?"

"Madame Lamole," Mrs. Carroll replied, ringing to order back the carriage. "If you are to accompany us to-morrow to the ball, for which we have received tickets, there is no time to lose in ordering a dress for you."

"I must have everything of the best and most fashionable," said Norah. "What colours become me?" Who will go with me to select my dresses?"

"I will not have you put to any expense," Mrs. Carroll kindly observed. "Choose what you like, and Madam shall send the bill to me."

But Norah drew herself up. "I am obliged, but it is not necessary. I came of age last week, and the little property that was my father's has been made over to me. It will suffice for my short campaign, I dare say."

The widow secretly thought that Miss Delany would be furious if she knew that the few hundreds she had been so careful not to trench upon were in danger of being diminished, and for such a purpose; and she whispered to Kathleen to try and control Norah's expenditure, and not to let her purchase anything that was not absolutely necessary.

As the cousins were crossing the hall on their way to the carriage, they met Allie Breen, who had come to her home with Rosamond. Norah coloured a little as she met the old woman's penetrating gaze; but, holding out her hand, she asked lightly, "Aren't you glad to see me, Mrs. Breen?"

"Sure, Miss Norah, no more so, if 'tis a wise errand that's brought ye."

"I'm afraid I cannot say yes to that, for I have come to do nothing better than dance, sing, wear the prettiest dresses I can procure, and tease Miss Dalton and Kitty by winning all their best partners away from them."

Allie nodded sagaciously.

"I'm thinking they can afford to forgive ye if ye do, for they've had their fair share of praise and flattery; and if ye've to worse errand here than this, Miss Norah, I'll wish ye luck in all your ventures."

Norah grew crimson, but arched her black eyebrows, as if greatly surprised at the remark.

"Why, what other motives should I have for coming to Dublin?"

"How will I know?" asked Allie. "Shure, some folks will do queer things for love, or for spite, or for right down revenge, more's the pity."

Norah set her teeth in her lip, and seemed to

make an inward struggle before she answered.

"I am here solely on my own business, Mrs. Breen, and will be accountable to no one for what I do."

She swept on with a haughty air, and was soon immersed in all the bewildering details of fashionable millinery.

Kathleen was pleased to find that she rejected the light materials and bright colours which would have made her well-developed figure look large and coarse, preferring imperial purple, rich-hued violet, and even sober black. With the folds of a soft, lustrous silk falling gracefully about her, strings of pearls encircling her throat and wrists, and her dark hair coiled in thick plaits, she looked like a *Chaperone*, or the dusky Ethiopian queen of still earlier ages.

"Are those your friends, Glanore?" asked Major Colby, as the heavy of beautiful girls entered the ball-room with Mrs. Carroll.

The Major's regiment was quartered at the Curragh, and he often found it necessary to relieve himself for the fatigues of military duties by a short sojourn in Dublin.

"It's fortunate for you," he added, on receiving an assenting nod, "that I came, and refused to be driven away by sulky or snappish speeches. You'd better introduce me."

"Indeed, I shall not risk forfeiting their good will by so unwise a step," the Viscount retorted.

"Then I must go and find some one more obliging, you foolish youth. Isn't it for your own sake I am offering to make a martyr of myself? How can you devote your attentions to one dead creature, when there are three or four all smiling upon you at once?"

He sauntered away, and Lord Glanore, who

hastened to attach himself to Mrs. Carroll's party, hoped that he would find more potent attraction in the card-room; but in the course of a few minutes he came towards them, arm-in-arm with an old friend of the widow, and the ceremony of a formal introduction followed.

Kathleen, over whose chair Frank was leaning, had scarcely a word or look for any one else. She had met Lord Glanore with such perfect composure and freedom from embarrassment, that her lover's gathering doubts had fled, and all was well again. Rosamond, who recognized in the bowing Major the presuming personage who had annoyed her in the railway carriage, made but a frigid acknowledgment of his courtesies, and he turned perforce to Norah, on whose stately beauty he had already been gazing admiringly.

"This is a brilliant scene," he said, dropping into the seat beside her.

"Is it?" she asked, indifferently.

"Is it possible that you do not think with me?" he exclaimed. "Ireland is noted for the loveliness of its ladies, and certainly the faces we see here to-night go far towards justifying the assertion. Take, for instance, the group of which you form the centre."

Norah tilted her fan, with profound indifference to the compliment.

"Ah, yes; my cousin and Miss Dalton are pretty women, and I am what you would call a handsome one. Well?"

Major Colby drew his delicate fingers along his moustache, to give himself time to frame a reply to this unexpected speech.

"I can but endorse what the world has already told you," he said, in his softest tones.

Norah curved her full, red lips disdainfully.

"Am I expected to thank you for that? Is your endorsement really valuable?"

"I wish I could teach you to think so," he answered, with an earnestness partly simulated, partly real. The languid, insolent Major found it hard to hold his own against this scornful beauty.

"Why?" queried Norah, turning her bright deep eyes full upon him.

"Can you not guess? Who would not be delighted to see their opinion deferred to, by one as lovely as yourself?"

"Every one would, of course; that is, all the blockheads on this quarter of the globe," was the contemptuous reply. "I do not want to be told that there are plenty of men, as they call themselves, who may be led into any folly by a woman's smiles. But how fatiguing and insipid is this small talk! Is there any one here worth listening to, Major Colby?"

"I'm afraid not. The people here are all of our own class," he answered; aroused out of his usual slumber, into a spiteful retort.

"Then I think I'll listen to the music; *that's* always worth hearing."

How beautiful she looked, this scornful girl, who was fanning him with her own weapons! Instead of taking her very significant hint to leave her, he continued to watch her half-averted face, as, patting one pretty foot to the music, she sat absorbed in the melody of a favourite waltz.

"Do you not dance, Miss Delany?"

"Rarely. The prospect of a good partner sometimes inspires me," was the careless reply.

Major Colby had not danced for years; it was an exertion of which he was fond of declaring himself incapable; but now he was seized with a desire to hold this magnificent creature in his arms—to see the crimson of her glowing cheeks grow richer—the light in her

eyes deepen, and darken as they whirled round together.

"I wish you would honour me with your hand," he said, with such evident sincerity, that Norah smiled slightly, as if his perseverance amused her, and then suffered him to lead her into the circle.

Slowly, at first, the couples glided along to the steady measure of the air; then more rapidly; and Norah, who, thanks to Rosamond's tuition, moved with easy grace, drew back, and disengaged herself from her disappointed partner.

"Are you tired already, or only giddy?"

"Neither the one nor the other; but you do not value yourself, of your steps, of your partner, instead of giving yourself up to the inspiration of the dance."

"I am sorry I did it so readily to please you," he said, with a profound sigh, and a look which he had always found irresistible.

But Norah only shrugged her shoulders, and turned her back upon him to talk to Lord Glanore, who had just brought Rosamond back to her *chaperone*.

"Have you been dancing?" the Viscount inquired, presently.

"Yes, a little, with this Major, a Major Colby. A good sort of man, but somewhat fatiguing to talk to," she added, carelessly. "He has been trying hard to amuse me."

Every word of this saucy speech was ample to the exquisite, who was accustomed to see women struck from provoking his caustic remarks. He resolved to punish the saucy speaker—to make her lower the dark orbs that so boldly met his own—to compel her lip to quiver with shame and vexation. But the opportunity was not easily found. Norah's was a new face, as a *diva* handsome one; and though she danced a solo, and even retreated to a small room beyond the principal saloons, she was surrounded with gentlemen eager to hear her sparkling repartees. He contrived to catch her and her chair, and great one of her long *trains* with satirical epigrams. But Norah was not disposed even to turn her head to look at a room which seemed to her a provocation which she escaped her.

From what Mrs. Delany has just said, it is evident that this is her first visit to Dublin. What remote district claims the honour of her choice?"

"Sure, then," she answered, ascending the "temple of a peasant girl, whose will I come to see, but my aunt