

Brian Oge, who was a regular male match-maker, and who thought that "the b'ys and girls ought to hunt in couples, any how," was resolved that it should not be his fault if Bidy Keenahan did not know the true state of the case; or if she did not take proper measures to bring matters to a speedy issue between herself and Lanty. He, therefore (as he himself expressed it), "up an' told her what Lanty had said; an' advised her, as the only way of bringin' him to reason, to go straight to Peg Morrin the fortinteller, at the fut of Magany Bridge, who'd soon give her a charm that'd make Lanty folly her an' spake to the point, as sartin as the rots (rats) folly'd Terry the rot-cacher, an' sure enough he could make thim spake, too, if he thought it worth his while!"

This counsel was too palatable to be rejected by poor Bidy. Her spotted cotton handkerchief fluttered over her bosom while Brian Oge was giving his advice; and had it been of muslin, the deep glow of delight might have been seen through it. Her face had no covering to conceal its blushes; and her eyes swam in tears.

"Och, then, *musha*, Brian Oge!" said she; "it's myself that'e beholden to you for your good nath'r. Why, then cant it be true what you tell me? Little I thought that Lanty cared a *thrancen* for me, though, in troth, it's myself that loves the ground he walkson. Why, then why, wouldn't he tell me so at oncet? If it was't that it wouldn't be becomin' in a young girl to spake first, i'd soon tell him what's neither a shame nor a sin, any how. But I'll folly your word, Brine Oge; for your an ould man, an' a kind one, an' one that knows what's fit for the b'ys and girls, an' that nivir stands between thim but to bring thim closer to one another; an' here's a noggin of rale crame for you Brine, jew'l, for its tired you must be afther the hunt."

While Brian drank off the cream, to which he had added something from a leather-covered bottle that he had a habit of carrying in his side-pocket, Bidy went on to tell him that she would not lose any time, but would step down that very night as far as Maganyford, and cross over in Tom Fagan the miller's cot, which would land her at the very

field in which Peg Morrin's cabin stood. Brian, after wiping his lips with the cuff of his faded green hunting frock, gave Bidy a very fatherly kiss; and, wishing that a blessing might be on her path, he left her to make her preparations.

When night had fairly set in, so that there was little danger of her course being observed, Bidy having arranged all the affairs of the dairy, put her gray cloak on her shoulders, and drew the hood well over her head. She tied her shoes fast on, as she had a rough path to follow for a couple of miles by the river's bank, and pulling her woollen mittens on her hands and arms, she finally slipped out of the back window, made the sign of the cross on her breast, and with a short prayer fervently put up, started on her expedition. She knew her way very well, even had it been pitch dark; but as there was moonlight, and as she stepped buoyantly forward, she reached Tom Fagan's cabin by the river side, without once stumbling or tripping over stone or bramble.

"God save all here!" said Bidy, as she raised the latch and entered the cabin, where the miller and his wife were eating their supper by the fire.

"God save you, kindly!" replied they and the next words in both their mouths were expressions of surprise at this late visit from little Bidy.

"Why, thin, what's comed over you, Bidy, *avick*?" said Molly Fagan. "Sure thin, some misfortin' it is that brings you to our cabin this time o' night. But it's welcome you are, *alanna*, any how; an' the greater your trouble the gladder we are to see you."

"Thank you, kindly, Molly, *asthore*"; but it's no trouble at all; only I'd be after troublin' Tom jist to ferry me across the river in the cot, that's all."

"Wid all the pleasures in life, and heartly welcome, Bidy my darling," said Tom Fagan, a friendly young fellow, who was always ready to do a kind turn, particularly to a pretty girl. But his wife's curiosity was not so easily satisfied.

"Why, thin, the Lord save us Bidy!" said she, "where is it you'd be goin' across the river, into the Queen's County, in the dark night? There's never a wake nor a