

If nature had added six or seven inches to Mr. O'Sullivan's stature, and shown better taste in the selection of a set of feature, this narrative might never has been written. The soul of a knight dwelt in this gentleman's body; his possibilities were infinite, his opportunities few. A woman in distress invariably appealed to his sympathies, no matter how old or ugly that woman might be.

In his character of a New York reporter how often had he nearly got his head broken by interfering between quarrelling husbands and wives—the wives, be it is said, being generally the first to turn upon the peacemaker. Before beauty in distress, need it be said, that risk of limb, or life would have been the merest bagatelle.

Yes, the possibilities of heroism were strong in the O'Sullivan; but how is a little whiskerless man, with a rubicund complexion and a turn-up nose, to be heroic? If Sir Galahad had been so blighted, would he ever set forth in search of the Holy Grail? If Sir Launcelot had been so marred, would all his chivalry and the brilliant bravery have given King Arthur ground for the D. C.? The chivalry that is sublime in your tall, your stately, your handsome cavalier sinks to the ridiculous in a sub-editor of five feet five. The instinct was there, but nature and destiny were alike against it.

"Where is the good of thinking about it," more than once had thought Mr. O'Sullivan, with an impatient sigh. "If I were wrecked on a desert island with her, like Charles Reade's transcendental *omadhaun*, and we lived there together for twenty years, sure I'd be not nearer her caring for me at the end than at the beginning. She would let me gather the cocoanuts, and fry the fish, and build her a hut, and smile upon me with that beautiful smile of hers every time, and say, 'Merci, monsieur,' in that sweet voice—and by the same token it's the sweetest I ever heard at home or abroad—but fall in love with me—oh, faith no! Still I think the life would be pleasant, and upon me conscience I'd exchange the *Phoenix* office for it any day."

Neither by inclination nor constitution was the O'Sullivan a sentimental or

romantic man; very much the reverse indeed; but Reine Landelle's dark, lustrous Norman eyes had got a way somehow of floating before him and disturbing his peace of mind, after a fashion quite without precedent in his experience of ladies' eyes. Was he fulling in love?

He did not know; his appetite and spirits were not impaired to any serious extent, and these he had always understood were the symptoms. Nevertheless she was something different to him from all the rest of the world.

There was a strong bond of friendship between him and Longworth. He admired prodigiously the superior talents of his chief. There were few of life's good gifts he would have grudged him; but when his engagement to Reine was made known he came very near it. What the feeling was in O'Sullivan's case, who is to say? It would have been love, deep and true, strong and tender, in a taller, handsomer, more dignified man.

For Reine—ah, well, Reine liked him cordially, and trusted him implicitly by instinct, and without knowing why. She had always a frank smile of welcome for the good-humoured, round-faced, rather elderly young man, whose bald forehead she looked down upon every Sunday from the choir, and who usually walked home with her after service. That he could fall in love with her, that he could fall in love with any one, was a funny idea that never entered her head.

She slept all night. The train flew on, and in his seat O'Sullivan dozed fitfully, and at intervals. His profession had rendered night work of any sort second nature—owls and newspaper men being always at their briskest when the rest of the world virtually sleeps. It was only when the train went thundering into the station that the hub-bub around her fully awoke Reine. She sat up with a startled look, to meet the friendly, reassuring face of her companion.

"Where are we?" she asks. "Have I been asleep?"

"We are in New York, and it is a beautiful sleep ye have had of it all night," replies Mr. O'Sullivan, and rises and proffers his arm. Reine takes it,