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Fall Fair Dates
The Western District Fair Association have fixed the following dates for the fairs of that circuit:

Parkhill	Sept. 25-26
Wyoming	Sept. 26-27
Bridgen	Sept. 30
Alvinston	Oct. 2-3
WATFORD	OCT. 7-8

HIS COMRADE'S WIFE
BY GORDON JOHNSTONE

BARRY MALONE lifted his eyes from the carpet and stared at the tousled head of the boy reading the newspaper.

"Did I hear you right, Denny?" he asked. "Did you say Nora Reagan?"

Denny scanned the column and found the paragraph.

"Yes," he answered. "Mrs. Nora Reagan, East Thirty-Fourth Street."

Malone pressed the hot ashes in his clay pipe and rubbed the bowl meditatively with the palm of his big hand.

"Read it again, lad," he urged softly, as his gaze returned to the flowered pattern of the carpet.

The boy read it with the intonation of a boy reciting a memorized lesson at school.

"A young widow. Has child for adoption. Unable to support. Baby eighteen months old. Irish blue eyes. Weight twenty pounds."

Denny laid the paper in his lap and looked at the big man sitting on the horsehair chair.

"Will you tear that out and give it me, Denny?" the man asked. The boy complied with his request.

"Irish blue eyes?" he echoed.

"That's what Molly says you have, Mr. Malone."

"Sure, Molly talks more than her neighbors," smiled Malone, "when John Curley's not round. I'll be telling Johnny myself, if she don't be minding her tongue."

"Johnny's coming to-night," the boy returned.

Johnny's coming every night and all day Sundays. It's another brother you'll be having soon, Denny."

Barry Malone boarded with the Murphy family, and knew, as he said himself, "the ins and outs of it."

Night after night he had seen Johnny Curley and Molly on the steps of the flat, and it was easy enough, as he once told Molly, to "see the nose on your face."

Crossing the room, he picked up his hat and opened the door.

"Where are you going, Barry?" called Murphy senior from the kitchen.

"For a bit of a walk, John," Malone answered.

"Hold your whist and I'll be with you."

Mrs. Murphy happily came to his rescue.

"John," her voice came to the man at the door, "you'll be doing no such thing. When you've smoked that pipe you'll be after helping me with the wringer. How can a woman keep the children's clothes sweet and clean with a lazy man round the house, Molly? Molly?"

The imputation was a libel. No one was ever busier than Murphy senior. But Molly was nowhere to be seen, and Malone closed the door softly behind him. Descending the three flights of stairs, he met the truant girl and her sweetheart standing in the doorway.

Malone was on the point of telling her that her mother was calling when the boy greeted him.

"Good evening, Mr. Malone."

"Good evening yourself, Johnny," he answered. "It's a fine night."

"It certainly is."

"Where are you going, Mr. Malone," Molly asked impishly.

"Would you be knowing?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll not be telling you," he chuckled. "Tis what a woman don't know that worries her," he said, turning up the street.

"Taking a few steps, he paused. He had forgotten to tell the girl her

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mother wanted her.

"Molly!" he called.

"Yes?"

"Your mother—"

He stopped. A smile of childish sweetness spread over his face as he saw the lovers standing hand in hand.

"Never mind, alanna," he said, and continued up the street.

Reaching the avenue, he turned down. By the light in a store window he took out the ragged paper and studied the address. Replacing it in his pocket, he took up his walk, repeating the number to himself.

Ten blocks and he had lost it. This time he scanned it under the street lamp and looked up at the white figures over his head. One block more. Again repeating the number he turned the corner.

Half-way down the street he found the address, and searched the dimly lighted hallway for the name. Running his eyes over the dirty mail-boxes, he found it.

He pressed the button. A pause ensued. There was no response. Again he rang and waited. After what seemed an interminable time the latch clicked.

Pushing his way in, he climbed the stairs covered with oilcloth. On the second landing he backed into the corner to let a much-perfumed woman pass.

On the floor above Nora Reagan stood in the lighted doorway, a little red head pillowed against her shoulder. Malone paused near the top and looked at her. The woman peered into his face.

"Barry!" she cried. "Barry Malone!" She staggered back into the room. "Is it yourself, or am I dreaming?"

"It's no dream, Noreen," he answered. "It's myself."

A bright flush crept up from her white throat over her face and lost itself in the bronze hair. She had not heard that old name in ages. To her husband she had always been Nora. No one but her mother and Barry had ever called her Noreen, and that was years ago on the bogs around Wexford. She reached out her disengaged hand to him.

"Come in, Barry," she said, "and bring your happiness with you. 'Tis a sight you are to cure blind eyes. And it's a girl I am again to see you."

Malone stepped into the room and closed the door. Turning, he looked at the frail little figure radiating her joy, but showing signs of a battle against odds.

The face would always be beautiful. There was the milklike skin, and the charm of eyes and hair. The girls of Nora Reagan's coloring were the glory of Ireland. Malone's eyes rested on the little red head pressed against her shoulder, and the wonder of a childless man dreamed in their depths.

He dropped into the chair she pointed out to him.

"Barry," she cried, "it was my good angel that sent you to-night. There was a woman here just now that wanted to take the baby."

Nora's voice fell to a horrified whisper.

"And Barry, there was point on her cheeks. Think of it! Red paint!"

Malone remembered the woman he passed in the hall.

"Yes," he said, "I met her on the way."

The woman shuddered and hug the little bundle closer.

Malone glanced up at the crayon on the wall.

"When did Tim go?" he asked quietly.

"Twelve months this coming Tuesday."

"I've been down in Panama," he apologized—"working on the canal. I don't know much about what's going on."

"He was killed in the expressman's strike," she explained. "He used to speak of you very often, Barry, and wonder where you were keeping yourself."

"Did he?" Malone asked.

"Yes, and he was so good to me—so—so good."

The tears tumbled down her white cheeks.

"God never made a better man," he murmured. "I said that when you chose him."

"And he was always saying that of you, Barry," she returned.

The baby's chubby hands crept over the woman's breast. What-over was Nora had seen, the child had not shared it. Malone watched the little fingers with a feeling akin

to awe.

"What's the babbling?" he asked.

"A girl?"

Nora looked at him and shook her pretty head. A glad note sang in the man's voice.

"A boy?" he questioned, as though unable to believe it.

"Yes."

"What's his name?"

"You'd never guess."

"Tim?" he ventured.

"No."

"Your father's?"

Again Nora shook her head.

"'Twas Tim that named him."

"What, Noreen?"

"Barry," she answered, beaming into his face.

A strange light came into Malone's eyes, and his big hands opened and closed over his hat.

"Yes," she continued, "I left it to Tim. The priest was for wanting the name of a saint, but Tim would have none of them. I'm going to call him after my comrade-lad," he said. "My comrade-lad that saved my life in Rossare Harbor."

"Who is that?" asked the priest.

"The finest lad ever made," answered Tim. "My friend and comrade—Barry Malone."

There are men in this world who will stand in the shadow of a great sorrow firm of lip and dry-eyed. But let the arrow of a beautiful happiness pierce their hearts and the tears will gush up from a living fountain. Barry Malone was one of them.

"Will you let me hold him, Noreen?" he said, reaching out his arms.

Nora laid the baby in them. The blue eyes turned up on him with all the wonder of unfathomable seas. He put his big finger into the little hand. The soft, petal-like lips closed over it with a clutch that seemed incredible. The hot blood rushed into Malone's face and his whole body trembled.

Nora bent over the pair like a dove above her young. Gently he pulled his finger from its vise and reached in his pocket for his handkerchief to blow his nose. His fingers came in contact with the piece of paper, and he drew it out and passed it to the mother.

"'Twas that brought me here," he said, as she glanced over it.

"I'm boarding with a family by the name of Murphy," he continued.

"The Murphys of Dungarvan—up on Forty-Seventh Street—and I've come down to ask you if you'll be living with us. There's plenty of room, and little—little Barry—the name was music to him now—" will be a great comfort to us all. Will you be coming, Noreen?"

Nora looked at him, and her breast rose and fell with its joy.

"Now, Barry?" she asked.

"To-night, Noreen."

The woman glanced round at the furniture.

"What will I do with this?"

"We'll talk about that to-morrow," he smiled. "It's of no importance now."

For a second she hesitated and then disappeared in an inner room. When she returned she wore her hat and carried a small bundle.

"All ready?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Then 'faugh a ballah!" he cried, jumping to his feet.

"The woman gave a little, frightened scream and clutched the baby. Malone laughed.

"He's snug as a bug in a rug, Noreen—don't be afraid."

Nora put out the light while Barry waited in the hall with the baby.

"Tis like the old days, Barry!" she cried as she joined him. "Only there wasn't any little lad on your shoulders then."

"Wasn't there, though?" he smiled as he paused on the second step. "Are you for forgetting Shamus?"

"My brother!" she cried.

"Yes," he answered, "but there was one thing I was having in the old days that I'm not having now."


"What was that, Barry?"

"A kiss, alanna."

The woman leaned over the railing and her mouth touched the laughing lips upturned above the little red head.

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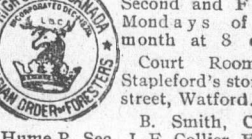
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