

WHIRLWIND

BY CHRISTINE FABER
CHAPTER XXXVII

Mildred, though feeling strangely fatigued, vainly courted sleep that night. She had not retired early, expecting that Cora, according to her habit, would come immediately to her on leaving her uncle; but the girl had gone to her own room, at which Miss Burchill was surprised, and yet relieved.

Now, as an hour after midnight, she tossed on her pillow, seeking some more comfortable position for her throbbing temples, she fancied she heard the sound of sobbing from her pupil's room. In a few minutes she was convinced of it. She rose hastily, and snatching up her morning dress, put it on as she passed into Cora's chamber. She entered so lightly that the girl, face prone on the bed as if she were trying to smother the sound of her woe, did not hear her, and the governess bent over her and watched her for a second without speaking. She seemed to be convulsed with grief, for her whole form shook in such a manner that it made the bed tremble.

"What is the matter?" asked Mildred softly.

The girl started up, and flinging her arms about Miss Burchill's neck, strained the latter to her long and passionately.

"It's about you," she said; "it's something I wanted to tell you to-night before I went to bed; it's something I felt I ought to tell you when I came from him, but I could not. That is the reason I did not go to your room when I came upstairs; but oh, if you knew how much I suffered, lying here and thinking about it all."

"Well, tell it to me now," said Miss Burchill, quietly, though secretly she was almost as much agitated as Cora.

Still the girl hesitated, and she resumed her embrace of the governess, as if by that means she vain would put off her answer. But Mildred would not be put off, and, while she gently unloosed the clinging arms, she insisted on an answer.

"My uncle sees spoofs, as he calls them," the girl burst out, as if, did she not plunge at once into the subject of her communication, she would be unable to make it at all. "He sees them every evening, and he said to-night, when he came out of his fright, that he'd be mighty glad when he was married, for then you'd have to take your turn with them. He didn't mean to say that to me, for he tried to take it back a minute after, and he laughed and said what he always does about his nerves. He was afraid I suppose, that I'd tell you. But I kept thinking about it, Miss Burchill, and about the strange way he gets into every evening when I'm with him, and I got thinking about you and what you said of marrying him from a sense of duty, and it seemed to be my duty to tell you all this; and then again it seemed to be better not to tell you, for if it were your duty to marry my uncle, why should I make your duty hard to perform by telling you this about him? I have never told you of the strange way he gets into every night, because I felt somehow that, as he was my uncle and good and kind to me, it would be mean and dishonorable on my part to tell anything about him which I alone saw, and that perhaps was a secret to everybody else. Then, too, he did not tell me the real cause of his acting so strangely every night, and I, though at first awfully frightened myself, believed what he told me about his being nervous and all that. But to-night he got into a more dreadful state than I ever saw him before, and he said something in his terror that made me know it all. I was so frightened, Miss Burchill, that I thought I should have fainted, and I expected to see the spook myself, but I didn't, I only saw uncle, though he looked bad enough to do for a spook."

"When I left him I wanted to rush right to your room to tell you all, but as I said before, something seemed to prevent me, and I came in here and just threw myself on the bed and hid my face lest I should see something awful. I didn't even dare to put out the light. And then, as I lay here, I thought of you married to uncle, and perhaps having to see what he saw, and I got nearly frantic. Do you understand it now, Miss Burchill? and have I done wrong?"

She lay back partially exhausted by her violent emotions. Mildred, agitated as she was by this weird account, was so deeply touched by the proof which it afforded of her pupil's general forbearance in her own behalf, that it strengthened her decision to sacrifice herself; and as she looked down at the flushed young face, and thought of the happiness it was in her power to bestow on the owner, every abhorrence and fear of her proposed marriage seemed to fly for an instant, but it was only for an instant, for all came back, even as she answered:

"As there was no promised binding you to secrecy, you have not done wrong to tell me about your uncle, and you need not fear for me with regard to what Mr. Robinson imagines he sees. It is but imagination, produced, I have no doubt, by the state of his nervous system. That which surprises me most is your silly fear. Surely, in such an enlightened age as this is, a girl of your years must confess to secret shame at such childishness. Now I shall beg you to go to sleep and think no more of this, and I shall put out the light."

Her decided manner produced, as it always did, the desired effect on Cora. She offered not a single remonstrance, and the governess, having extinguished the light, went to her own room.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

Rodney in his office, diving amid a mass of papers with a corrugated brow and absorbed manner, was aroused from his occupation by the announcement of Thurston's name, the announcement being immediately followed by the young man's presence.

"Why Gerald, my boy, what on earth brings you on here now? Thought this was your busiest season? Anything the matter?" noticing the peculiar expression about the young man's mouth, which the lawyer had seen on other occasions, and which he knew so well how to interpret.

"I have given up my place at the factory, and I am going to travel for a year or two."

Rodney in his surprise, seemed to suspend for a moment the twinkling of his little sharp eyes.

"You don't tell me so!" he exclaimed. "Well, this is a world of surprises. I thought you held a life tenure there, and what's more, I was hoping that pretty, modest governess would have made you forget the treachery of that devilish little step-mother of yours."

"That pretty, modest governess," repeated Gerald, with some bitterness, "is the affianced of Mr. Robinson."

"What!" and Rodney sprang from his chair, and with his quill behind his ear and his mouth wide open, stood looking the picture of ludicrous amazement. But Gerald made no answer to the exclamation. He only stood with folded arms looking down at the floor.

Then other emotions than surprise roused in Rodney's mind. He pitied, acutely pitied, this poor young man, doomed a second time to be the victim of disappointed affection, for from the time he had seen Miss Burchill and had heard Gerald speak of her, he felt that the young fellow was fast learning to love the governess. He went up to Gerald, and putting his hand on his arm, said softly:

"Gerald, I pity you from my soul. But how did such a thing come about? Was there anything to lead you to suspect that Miss Burchill liked Mr. Robinson, that—"

"Nothing," interrupted Gerald, impetuously, "more, indeed, to make me think the contrary; and the first intimation which I received of her engagement was her answer to my own proposal of marriage to her. She stated that she had already promised to marry Mr. Robinson. Then at dinner that same evening he announced the engagement. But, good God! Rodney; what has she—such as she seemed to me to be—in common with a man like Robinson, or are women all deceivers? Can they wear masks at will, and go about with hearts like whited sepulchres?"

"It sickened me, Rodney, and I felt as if I could not draw another easy breath in Eastbury. How I wish I had never seen the place!"

He averted his face for a moment, as if even from the lawyer he would conceal the agony which distorted his features. But Rodney would say another word in defence of Miss Burchill, whose gentle, unassuming manners had quite won him:

"You delayed your proposal too long, Gerald. How do you know what circumstances were brought to bear upon Miss Burchill's acceptance of this man's offer—her poverty, perhaps?"

"Nonsense," said Gerald. "She had promised to consider me her friend, to apply to me in any need. No, there is no use in talking about the matter now. Miss Burchill has made her choice, and in doing so, she has given my heart a wrench such as I thought never would be given to it again, but I shall live through it."

"Yes, you will live through it," said Rodney, assuringly; "and one day, Gerald, you will meet the woman designed by heaven to bless and comfort you."

"Never!" said Thurston, through his set teeth; and then to end a theme on which he could not converse patiently, he began to talk of his future plans.

Rodney, however, would revert to the subject:

"Did you have any parting interview with Miss Burchill?"

"No; I saw neither her nor any one else. I parted with Robinson in the factory. I did not even say goodbye to the hands."

"Umph!" ejaculated Rodney. "Pretty sudden business they must all think it. Well, perhaps it's all for the best, though I confess to a secret wish that you had stayed. I don't know why, Gerald, but I have a queer feeling about Miss Burchill's engagement to Robinson; the more I think of her and the character she seemed to evince, the more I feel that there is coercion in some way."

"Bahaw!" said Gerald, and then he turned away as if he would leave the office were the discussion not discontinued.

"What are your plans?" asked Rodney, willing at length to drop Miss Burchill.

"I have not matured them yet, further than to go abroad; to London immediately. I have decided to spend at least two years in travel."

"The best thing, Gerald, perhaps, under the circumstances, and you will come back with that manly spirit of yours quite restored. But when do you start?"

"To-morrow. I have engaged my passage, and I have only waited thus long to see you before I went."

"But you will let me hear from you," said Rodney, with so much solicitude in his tones that Gerald laughed, though he was also touched by the evidence of the little lawyer's regard.

"Oh, yes," he answered; "You shall have at least a line every few weeks, and in any case my bankers, Cramer & Co., will know where to find me." He turned again to depart, promising, however, to come back and spend the night with Rodney.

Immediately after Robinson had received Gerald's farewell in the factory, a ceremony which on Gerald's part comprised only the simplest words of adieu, and on Robinson's a somewhat constrained invitation to visit The Castle when he would, the factory owner repaired to his home and summoned Mildred. She obeyed immediately, anxious to have at once a communication the import of which her heart assured her would be—at least, in some measure—painful.

As she entered the wide hall leading to the study she came plump upon Mrs. Phillips entering by one of the numerous doors which led out to the broad piazza. The widow seemed as much surprised at the rencontre as the governess, and she drew back with a little real start, while the delicate flush in her cheeks deepened; but she recovered her self-possession in an instant, and, with an effrontery as daring as it was graceful, advanced to Mildred, saying:

"Have I to thank Providence or accident, Miss Burchill, for this meeting? My heart has so yearned to see you, assuring me as it did that, if I could but speak to you, you would reconsider your determination of not permitting me to visit you any more. If you could but know how I have suffered, how I deplore the defects in my character which, I doubt not, have been the cause of such a resolution on your part."

And with head bent and eyes cast down she presented a most perfect picture of engaging humility and diffidence.

"I do not permit you to visit me any more," repeated Mildred, too much surprised to be much impressed by the widow's air. "I am not aware of any such determination on my part, and I do not understand you."

It was Mrs. Phillips' turn to be surprised, and she was in a secret rage well; for her jealousy knew no bounds that Thurston had taken so warm an interest in Miss Burchill as to send upon his own responsibility the note which requested the discontinuance of her visits. She was also angry with herself for having spoken in such a manner, since Mildred was not aware of the sending of the note. But feeling the instant necessity of withdrawing from the position she had assumed, and not willing for a moment to give Miss Burchill the gratification of knowing Thurston's interest in her behalf, she took shelter, as she always did on such occasions, in a subterfuge:

"Dear Miss Burchill, I was led to think you had formed such a determination from chance words dropped by Mr. Robinson; but only assure me now that I am mistaken and that you will receive me again, and I shall be so happy."

She extended her hands as she spoke, but Mildred did not take them. Instead she involuntarily recoiled, while she answered:

"I do not know upon what grounds Mr. Robinson could assert that I had formed such a determination. But since you now ask me to receive your visits again, I must decline to do so, Mrs. Phillips. I feel that we never could be heart friends, and life is too short to spend any portion of it in company which we neither benefit nor are benefited by. You have no possible need of me, Mrs. Phillips. Had you such need, and were it in my power to help you, then gladly would I do so, or should I in the future be able to help you in any way, I shall most cheerfully do so. For the present, I wish you every good, but I must decline all intimacy. Mr. Robinson, I believe, is waiting for me."

She bowed slightly, and was hurrying through the hall before Mrs. Phillips had recovered from the first glow of anger, hate, and mortification into which the last speech had thrown her.

Robinson was somewhat impatiently waiting, and Mildred explained to her detention was owing to Mrs. Phillips, adding also Mrs. Phillips' communication to herself with regard to the factory owner. He laughed until his yellow fangs showed like fangs.

"Mrs. Phillips is a deep un," he said. "She didn't tell you that Gerald wrote to her asking her not to keep up her visits to you; at least, I take it he wrote to her, because he told me he was going to. He'd been sort of watchin' you and I reckon, and he thought her visits wan't very agreeable to you."

Mildred sickened for an instant. Was the sacrifice to which she had pledged herself to be made more bitter by meeting new proofs of Gerald's regard for her?

"But I don't want to take up the time talking about her now," resumed the factory owner. "I sent for you to talk about Chester. Gerald's left the factory; gone for good."

TO BE CONTINUED

When the devil is not fishing he is mending his nets.

A dreamer is not a man of action, and the work of the world is not done by critics.

SPRAYS OF SHAMROCK

(By Eleanor F. Kelly)

The early days of March had come with the keen, blustering winds and bright sunshine. The glad warm rays seemed to turn to gold the thatch of a little cottage which stood at the foot of a green Irish hill where the shamrocks grew in abundance. At the door of the cottage stood a grey haired woman, with a sweet, grave face and a little girl of about seven years of age with eyes which were bluer than the violet and hair which was darker than the raven's wing. It was not difficult to guess the relationship between them, for the child had a strong resemblance to her grandmother.

"Maureen," said the latter, addressing the little girl. "It is time to be gatherin' the shamrocks to be sendin' to your Aunt Bridget in America."

"Very well, Grannie," answered Maureen. "I know where there's a heap of them growin' together, and I won't be long gettin' enough of them to fill a box."

Off she went immediately in search of the wee trefoll, and returned in a short space with as plentiful a supply as her tiny pinafore could hold. Her grandmother proceeded at once to select the best and nicest sprays and place them in a small cardboard box which she had in readiness. When she had it neatly packed she gazed at the green leaves wistfully for a few moments, and, as she did so, a tear fell from her faded eye upon them which seemed to make them all stir in their tiny bed.

"May they bring a blessin' wherever they go, and make them that's gone away think of the old land and the friends they left behind them," said she as she closed the lid, and then tied the box with a piece of tiny green ribbon.

The prayer was heartfelt and perhaps the old woman would have been satisfied that it was heard had she known the part which some of the emerald sprays were destined to play in the great land beyond the sea.

A fortnight later one of them dropped accidentally by its wearer, was lying on the seat of a street car in New York. It caught the eye of a girl on the seat opposite, and she picked it up immediately.

"Just the very thing that poor Minnie will be so glad to get," she said to herself. "I guess she hasn't got any from Ireland, as she told me that her parents died soon after she came over, and that she was quite alone in the world. Poor Minnie! She was a grand chum to have. So sad that she is dying." The girl was an employee in one of the great factories of New York, and was on her way to one of the hospitals to see a friend of her Irish girl named Minnie Cassidy, who was dying of consumption. Between her and Minnie, who had been her special chum at the factory, a strong attachment existed, and whenever she had leisure she visited the sick girl. Not many years before poor Minnie had cheeks like the heart of a rose, and trod the green hills of Ireland with a bounding step. But her parents were poor and would have nothing to support them in their old age, so the girl, who was their only child, resolved to go to America, where she hoped to be able to earn enough to become the staff of their declining years. At most every letter she wrote home brought them something in the way of help, but alas! they grieved so intensely for their loved one that in less than a year after her departure they both died.

Minnie had found work in a factory and was paid fairly well, but very soon the unaccustomed confinement and the close atmosphere wrought havoc with her health. She bore up, however, for her parents' sake, for she knew that she was their only stay, but when the news of their death reached her her spirits gave way, and she was soon in the merciless grip of consumption.

Now she was lying gasping for breath in one of the wards of a New York hospital, with a hectic flush on her cheek and a post-natural brightness in her eyes. Her state was all the sadder that she was a stranger in a strange land. Yet she was not quite alone, for the one friend whom she had made at the factory, Mary Schumann, the girl now on her way to see her, and who had picked up the shamrock spray for her benefit, was staunch and true. Besides, the Sisters of Charity who visited the hospital took a particular interest in Minnie. They had told her that she was dying, but the poor girl found it hard to reconcile herself to death in a strange land.

"If only I could die at home in Ireland, among the people I knew from childhood, and be buried in the little churchyard on the hill with the shamrocks over my grave, I'd be happy to go. But over here among strangers! God help me! I cannot bear to think of it."

Mary Schumann had brought some flowers to cheer her friend, but poor Minnie was too ill to do more than press her hand in token of gratitude, and gaze at them with listless eyes. However, when she broached the shamrock spray which she had picked up in the street car, Minnie's eyes glistened. She stretched forth her weak hand, and, grasping it eagerly, pressed it to her lips.

"I knew you'd like to have it," said her friend. Irish people make so much of the shamrock and of St. Patrick's Day."

"Mary, you couldn't have brought me anything that I'd like half as well. It's like a sight of home," answered the dying girl.

When Mary Schumann was making her exit through the door of the ward she turned for a last look at her friend and saw that she was still gazing at the sprig of shamrock with a far away, yet peaceful and happy look in her eyes.

A short time after a Sister of Charity came to see her.

"Sister dear," she gasped. "I'll die happy if you promise me that you'll see that this little bit of shamrock is buried with me. It'll be like a bit of the old land."

The Sister promised. And when poor Minnie died they found a piece of faded shamrock in her hand.

CHAPTER II

In the dim light of the early morning, in a certain quarter of New York which had not a quite savory reputation, a man issued from a house where light might have been seen burning all night, had not the windows been so closely shuttered. A policeman who happened to be near looked at the building suspiciously and then watched the man closely for some minutes as he walked along the street with an unsteady gait. He seemed about to follow him, when presently he saw him stoop to pick up something which was lying on the pavement.

The article on the pavement which had attracted the man's eye was a small shamrock spray.

"St. Patrick's Day, of course—how un-patriotic of me to have forgotten it!"—said he, as he placed it in his hand.

And as he did so the little trefoll seemed to exercise some of the power of the magician's wand, for the sordid street vanished from the man's sight and in its place he saw a green Irish valley with a white-washed cottage at one end of it, close by which there ran a crystal, murmuring stream whose music he seemed to hear.

"I'm afraid I've been treating the old folks rather badly," said he to himself. "They must think I'm dead it's such a long time since I wrote home. I'm sure I've had more than a dozen letters from them during the last year, and I haven't written a word in reply." And Patrick Kavanaugh there and there resolved that he would write home that very day.

The young man's nature was not really bad, but on his first coming to New York without friends and without experience, he had the misfortune to fall in with a set who were in every way undesirable. They were addicted to drink and to gambling, and it was not long until they had thoroughly infected the uneducated Irishman with their own vices. He often played into the small hours of the morning and frequently went home the worse for drink and without a coin in his pocket, his bon companions having relieved him of his hardy earned wages. At first his conscience reproached him, but the grip of vice grew stronger, his better feelings became stifled, and he plunged deeper and deeper into dissipation. He forgot home and friends—the friends who loved him well, and to their earnest messages soliciting but a word to say if he were well, he turned a deaf ear.

In fact he was already far on the road to ruin, but the three-leaved message from Erin turned him back.

"It will be a great day with the Irish in New York today," said he to himself as he walked homewards. They're sure to have concerts and such like tonight. I think I'll go to one of them, for I should like to hear some of the old songs again. They'll be disappointed at the club when I don't turn up, but they can play without me for one night."

Is there anything that can thrill the heart or stir the spirit more than the patriotic songs of Ireland heard by her exiles in a strange land? Sunk as he was in vice, Patrick Kavanaugh was strangely moved as he listened to them. As he drank in their stirring music he seemed to breathe once more the free air of his native hills, and it made the stifling atmosphere of the gambling den so pulvise by comparison. That evening was a landmark in his life. He joined an Irish club, and the gambling den knew him no more. Soon he had his foot on the ladder of success, and as the years went by he prospered more and more, until eventually he became one of the leading men of the great city of the States.

On that particular St. Patrick's Day which saw the reformation in his life an old man and an old woman were standing at the door of the whitewashed cottage in the green Irish valley which his imagination had conjured up. They were both straining their eyes down the boren which led to their little home. Every morning found them thus eagerly watching at the time the postman was due to pass along the high road, hoping that he would turn his footsteps in their direction, bringing them a letter from "Paddy." But alas! every morning brought them only disappointment, until at last their hearts became sick with hope deferred, and they began to fear that their son was no longer in the land of the living.

They inquired of their neighbors who had friends in America if anyone of them had seen their Paddy, but they could get no definite information. A vague rumor sometimes reached them that he had been seen somewhere in New York, and for weeks their hearts fed fondly on the hope that further news of him would follow, but the days passed and they heard nothing more concerning him. Perhaps the rumor was the invention

To the Voter

TO establish that the 2.51% beer to be voted on—the "Beer of the Ballot"—is not intoxicating, The Ontario Brewers' Association deposited \$5,000 with the Canada Permanent Trust Company on September 16th.

On September 19th, The Ontario Brewers' Association formally challenged the Referendum Committee through the Press to deposit an equal amount with the same Trust Company to support their contention that this beer is intoxicating.

That challenge has never been accepted—clear admittance by the Referendum Committee they do not consider that they have a case. It is too late now to make the tests and render a decision before the day of voting—October 20th—but the failure of the Referendum Committee to answer our challenge will not be overlooked by the man or woman who votes on facts and evidence, and not on sentiment or false statements.

We again assert that 2.51% beer—"The Beer of the Ballot"—is not intoxicating. Tests have only recently been made which prove this conclusively—we will mail a copy of the test to anyone sufficiently interested to write for it.

Moreover, while the "Beer of the Ballot" has an alcoholic strength of but 2.51%, official tests made by the laboratory of the Inland Revenue Department—published in Bulletin 196—showed that the beers on general sale before The Ontario Temperance Act and Prohibition were enacted, had an alcoholic content ranging as high as 7.33% by weight measure—practically three times as strong as the beer to be voted on October 20th. Even such American beers as were sold in Canada and always spoken of as "very light, non-intoxicating beers," were over fifty per cent. stronger than the "Beer of the Ballot."

The "Beer of the Ballot" is a mildly stimulating, healthful and refreshing beverage, brewed from a high grade of malt and hops—containing only sufficient alcohol to make it digestible and nourishing.

Ontario Brewers' Association