

THE GIFT

By Louise M. Whelan
Matt, the maid of all work, as he called himself, put it well when he said to Father Tom:

"Sure, a genius is only one who does one thing terrible well, in order to do everything else under the sun terrible bad, and that same is Master Ricardo. Sure, any one would know he was a genius, even if they didn't know him at all, at all; but sure, being half Spanish, he's not to blame."

Matt put his pipe back into his mouth. He had spoken, and coolly the question was settled for time and eternity.

An amused look spread itself over Father Tom's strong, glad face. "And I suppose I am not half Spanish," he laughed, "even though I am Ricardo's brother?"

"Well, sure your reverence is, but God help ye, ye're no genius. That ye ain't. No one could throw that up to ye, Father, no one, and God knows no one would want to," he added as an afterthought.

Matt was right. Ricardo O'Donovan was a genius. God had stooped down from his high Heaven and breathed music into his soul.

The only world that existed for the boy was the world of melody—the sweet sounds. Stretched at the piano, Ricardo O'Donovan forgot most things.

Ricardo inherited the impulsiveness of his Irish father and the ardent nature of his Spanish mother. He had the good looks of both races.

Father Tom, the matter-of-fact, the serious one, worried over him, and tried to fathom where he would end, this great love for only one thing. Surely, no good could come of it.

The manager was behind the scenes, screaming at him as though O'Donovan were deaf. With one hand he was pushing Heinrich back away from Ricardo.

"An encore," he cried, excitedly; "a duet, you see, and a grand encore with enthusiasm? Do you not see they are calling for you? An encore, Herr O'Donovan."

The black hair was slightly silvered then. It must be white now. And the eyes, those brown eyes, they, too, must be dimmed.

When the tide had first turned he had sent her the papers and clippings from periodicals. She would glory in them.

He left most things to him. Heinrich watched over him like an old hen over a brood of chicks. The old man worried over him, for Ricardo practiced until his health was about gone.

He felt that Tom was quite near him now. He felt his hand, colder than the mother's, and he felt his foot, colder than the mother's, and he felt his foot, colder than the mother's.

"Give it to me," he sobbed; "I know she's dead." With trembling fingers he tore it open, and having opened it, he was afraid to look at it.

"If you would see mother alive," he read, "come immediately." "I am waiting for you," he sobbed, happily. "I'm waiting for you."

He stumbled into the room, and fell down at the bedside. "Oh, I knew you'd come. I knew you'd come. Oh, thank God, you are here again."

"For some minutes no word was spoken. She kissed the forehead and the cheek, and again. The moment was so wonderful to be spoiled by words.

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You Can't Cut Out A HOOP SPAIN, PUFF or THROBBER, but ABSORBINE

It is not Ricardo's way, the priest echoed. "Ricardo," but she did not finish the name. She was dead.

Ricardo took the still hand in his long, slender one. He covered it with kisses. "Tom," he sobbed, "Tom, you have taken away the guilt of my sin from my soul."

Ricardo looked at Tom, his white face buried in the pillow beside the beloved dead. Then he looked at her, and he kissed the dead face again and again.

Never on earth would he hear her voice again. Ricardo looked at Tom, his white face buried in the pillow beside the beloved dead.

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so fully carries out the precepts of Christ? What Church the living embodiment of the Sermon on the Mount? What Church has so striven for the purity of the home and so fought against divorce?

The Catholic Church has only one aim, one desire, and that is to save souls to the glory of our Father Who art in heaven. We all have to die. We all hope for eternal life with Him.

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speech before the Assembly National, for even so long ago, some of the members wished to drive God and religion from the public schools.

When we consider that an irreligious socialism is the danger which threatens the whole civilized world in the twentieth century, let us hope that the American people may be aroused in time and may see clearly the need of religious education in all our American colleges and the cultivation of those virtues which are distinctive of Christianity.

General Washington called religion and morality the two great pillars of human happiness, and the firmest props of the duties of men and citizens.

There is a neglect of religious education and of spiritual development in our American colleges for young men which is a threat of future danger.

Some gems from the proceedings of the Philadelphia and Central Pennsylvania Methodist Episcopal Conference meeting at Reading, Pa., a fortnight ago, sparkle with interest.

This is a heritage which it is a sacred duty to preserve. To swerve from religion is to endanger the life of our nation.

In France, too, great men who were patriots have fearlessly defended religion, and urged the necessity for religious education, which they foresaw would do more for their warning words should be unheeded.

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A GOOD OBJECT FOR CHARITY. Rev. Father Bernier, of Vegreville, Alberta, has in hand the erection of a hospital which will prove of inestimable value to the people of the district.

BROWNSON ON IMMORTALITY. I lingered several weeks around the grave of my mother and in the neighborhood where she had lived.

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