

tude is not hers. Hers suggests some deep trouble or suffering. Then she rises, and the next moment she has passed the pew where he sits, and is gone.

He gets up and follows her out, still obeying that uncontrollable impulse. It is too late for her to be out alone, the night is dark, the way lonely, and drunken men from North Baymouth are sometimes about.

But she does not turn back to town. She goes straight on, to his surprise, in the direction of the station. He, too goes on, with some curiosity in his mind, but with the still stronger instinct that she is unprotected, and that it is his place, unobserved to take care of her.

She reaches the station, lighted, and filled with staring loafers. Many eyes turn upon her, and O'Sullivan can see her shrink and tremble in sudden terror.

Instantly he is by her side.

"Mademoiselle," he says, taking off his hat, "can I be of any service to you here? It's not a pleasant place for a lady to be here alone."

She turns to him and catches his arm with a look he never forgets—a look of infinite trust, and welcome, and relief.

"Oh!" she says, "is it you monsieur? Yes, I want a ticket for New York. I am going away."

For an instant he stands mute with amaze, looking at her. She sees the look and answering it, a spasm of pain crossing her colourless face.

"Oh, it seems strange, I know, alone at night; but I cannot help it. Something very unpleasant, monsieur, and I must go. Do get the ticket; it is almost time for the train to start.

The perceptive faculties of the man are keen: Instantly he knows that she is flying from her grandmother's house to return no more. Instantly, also, his resolve is taken—she shall not go alone:

"Sure, isn't it the most footnate thing in the world," he says, cheerfully "that business is taking me up, too, hot foot, this very night! It will give me the greatest pleasure in life to be of use to you on the journey, and ye know me long enough, mademoiselle, and will do me the honour, I'm sure, to command me in any way I can be of service to you. It's proud and happy I'll be if ye'll only trust me just as if ye had known me all my life."

She looks up in his face, and with a sudden, swift emotion, lifts her hand to her lips.

The dark, upraised eyes are full of tears; and the tears and the light touch of the lips move him greatly. They stand by themselves, no one near to wonder or see.

"Monsieur, I think the Almighty has sent you to me in my trouble. For I am in trouble, and I tremble at the thought of this night journey alone. Now I am not afraid; you are with me, and all is well."

"Stay here," O'Sullivan says, "and I will get the tickets. Oh, then," he adds, inwardly, "may the curse of the crows fall on whoever has brought the tears and the trouble to that sweet face! Didn't I ever and always distrust that soft-spoken young Durand—and don't I know that it's some devilment of his that has brought the trouble upon her! Wasn't it the lucky thing all out that I followed her into the chapel this evening."

He procures two tickets, writes out a brief telegram for the office, to be despatched next morning—

*"Called away unexpectedly. Back in a few days."*

Then he turns to Reine, and has just time to put her in a palace car before the train starts.

She is very tired. The fatigue of the preceding night, the mental strain, the long fast, have utterly exhausted her. She sinks into one of the large, softly-cushioned chairs, and falls asleep almost instantly.

O'Sullivan sits near, ostensibly reading; but he drops his paper and looks at her in pity and wonder as she sleeps deeply and quietly, like a spent child. The small, dusk face looks singularly childish in sleep. Now and then a sob catches her breath, as if the sorrows of her waking hours followed her even into dreamland. What is it all about? he wonders. Does Longworth know? O'Sullivan likes his chief; but he has never liked him less than as Reine Landelle's lover. His strongest feeling, as he sits here near her, is one of intense pleasure and pride that she trusts in him as implicitly as though he were her brother, and that fate has chosen him to be a friend to her.