

# BESIDE THE WINSOME KERRY SHORES.

"Tales of Ten Travelers" Series.

By EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

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Our Vagabond Traveler was not a vagabond in reality, but only in that genial amiability of tolerant spirit which had led him with receptive eyes and kindly heart among the lowly of many lands.

He had never yet essayed the relation of experience or reminiscence; and a pleasant anticipation broke over our remaining travelers' faces, when, with a little half-apologetic "Ahem!" he began the following recital of tender hours among Irish hearts and scenes.

One has all sorts of good luck in getting at the real things of life when tramping in any country.

Lingering about Killarney, hesitant in my purpose, I looked longingly toward the surpassingly beautiful southwest coast, but felt a trifle cowardly about explorations in that direction without knowing a single human soul beyond Killarney.

In all that splendid coast line were scenes of indescribable beauty and grandeur; there nestled the homes of nine-tenths of the fishermen of Ireland; and over in the almost unknown regions of Duncannon South, Corkaguiny and Iveragh, were some of the quaintest people of Erin, among whom linger customs, usages and ways almost as odd and interesting as the Breton laws of old.

In this mood of indecision I left Killarney on a morning long before its hosts of beggars and guides were astir; and, taking my way toward Dingle Bay on the great highway to Valencia, loitered along past the northern shores of Lower Killarney lake, feasting upon the witching scenery half disclosed through the delicate morning mists.

Before the little Gweethin river was crossed, perhaps ten miles from Killarney, the daily "long-car" with its load of passengers and parcels-post bampers dashed by; and shortly after, a solitary foot traveler, of dubious appearance at a distance, came up from Killarney way as if desirous of overtaking me.

Gladdened by an excuse for companionship, I halted. But no sooner was the man close enough for inspection than I regretted my delay. He carried a tremendous cudgel in one hand, a little package of belongings in the other and walked with a bent, weaving stride, unlike one accustomed to the pleasures of the road.

As he neared me his face took on a most forbidding aspect from the cramped and shaggy hair that hid his features completely; particularly as his eyes were covered with a nondescript hat which had all the swells and bags, but none of the breezy picturesqueness, of a huge "saw-wester." Nor did the hair stop with the face. His coat was flung over his arm, and his shirt, of some heavy woolen stuff like Connemara flannel, was open nearly to the waist, disclosing a breast of huge proportions covered as thickly as his face with hair matted and matted in deep, grotesque swirls. As the fellow halted, he stood a veritable giant beside me.

"Fine morning!" he exclaimed in a voice like a hoarse clap of thunder.

"Same to you, and many," I answered civilly, but with some trepidation; for his two great fists clenched his stick in a most handy way, as one might grasp an aggressive bludgeon or rest upon a silent oar.

He looked at me curiously for a moment; and I now saw that a kindlier pair of eyes never beamed from a human face.

"Faith, I'm John L. Shea, of Avonbeg, Port Magee, An I lolly main!"

"Upon th' deep say!"

He resumed, with an air of confidential pride which at once set my apprehensions quite at rest.

"An' if yer after goin' my way, an' I'll answer me thruly av yer own blissed self, I'll divide th' road wid yer fairly; an' th' bailiff gintly observed to th' mad bull that wor interjuein' his horns to his 'leather crackers' (sheep-skin breeches!)"

"I answered him truly" as to myself. Then he told me with deliciously loquacious candor how he had been sent for, a month before, by Father Flannery, of Carna, away up on the howling coast of County Mayo, to come among the poor fishermen of Blacksod Bay to "fix up boats and gear" that the wretched folk of that region, a class every whit as hopeless and helpless as the Aran Islanders, might attempt deep sea fishing; had executed his little commission, and was now proudly returning to the Kerry shores, having walked every foot of the distance in order to preserve intact his trifling stipend for those he loved in the little home-nest at Port Magee.

I did not say so in spoken words, but my heart said: "Brave John L. Shea, avonbeg Port Magee, that folla fishin' upon th' deep say! you are braver, better, truer than many that have title or station, if you have scales like a fish all over you and your hair like a boar's all over that; with no riches but your rich brogue and a cabin and thatch and those in it, between your kindly life and all manner of harm!"

And our hands came together with a loud, resounding whack, and our tramps' feet rang merrily over the ancient Kerry road that leads by glens and loughs, over Iveragh mountains, to the sea.

From our mountain road we at last saw the sun sink into its flaming bed on the Atlantic horizon; but we yet lacked two or three hours of completing our journey from Killarney to the sea. So we left the heights above Dingle Bay, and after beginning the lovely descent toward Cahirsiveen through the winding valley of the Knocknaboe, my companion shortly led the way over a rocky mountain boreen for nearly a mile from the great stone road we had traversed.

Turning the jutting point of a huge cliff, rising from a deep gorge around which the footpath trailed, we came to a little cluster of cabins in the sweetest and tiniest of Kerry glens; all overhanging, but inaccessible at this point from the highway, which wound like a ribbon of pink along the base of the heights some hundreds of feet below.

Here was a little cove, where were perched an Irish "shoeben," which to one of an inquiring mind might have been given identification with a certain scoundrel still farther up the glens; a few cabins where lived a score of souls who "mind" the herds of the graziers of Kerry; and a mitre of a chaplain, within which at least once a year a little altar is lighted.

We were among friends. Some plain and hearty food was soon at hand; and before the light had entirely faded from the upper peaks of Knocknaboe, myself and my shaggy companion were sleeping peacefully upon a bit of fresh straw in the secure, if not spacious, loft of an ever-hospitable Irish cabin "Shoeben."

Although I slept heavily, several times during the night I heard soft knocks at

the door of our tiny cabin. A regular and interesting order of events, distinguishable only by sounds, followed each of these series of rappings.

Our host would stumble to the door; open a little wicket within it; and then as if in great effort to adjust extraordinary silence, give vent to a "Sh-h-h-h!" that could easily have been heard for a good quarter of a mile.

"Tear an' ager!" he would growl, "an' who are yes, ye spalpeen, that'd split the mountain side entirely wid yer crashin' av th' door!"

"Arragh, ye ould shamer, its meself, Jemmy Dooley, from beyant th' Caragh, (or Timmy Duffy, av th' Dingle side; or Jerry Cooney, av Drung Hill; or Paddy Doran, av Coomasharn;) an' its a feather's weight o' th' rale right sort I'd be havin', swate bad luck to ye!"

"Divil a drop ye'll get here, ye black-mountain gander! But I'll not be oniv to ye, th' hour o' night. How's the woman that owns ye?—Sh-h-h-h!"

"Beter nor th' devil's 'luck ponny' in yer own purse!—I'll go bail to that same, by the elvens!"

"Sh-h-h-h!"

Then, as by this time the night traveler had entered, came a dim light from a "splinter" set alight in the smouldering end of the fireplace and wedged in an open cranny in the chimney angle.

This was invariably followed by the sound of soft and musical gurgling of liquid from some heavy vessel and the silvery wimple of the same into a receptacle of lesser capacity.

Then a heavy clinking of coin like that of copper pence, suggesting a commercial transaction of well established character, would be heard; and after this, a gulp and a hearty smack, from the "boating cup," with the muffled toast, "Shud-ur-lah! (Here's to you!)" when Jemmy, Timmy, Jerry or Paddy would depart down the boreen, humming soft strains of satisfaction and cheer; at which our host would listen and growl for a bit, when the light would disappear and our potheen-merchant would tumble heavily into his bunk near the flickering peat embers beneath the hob.

These incidents, growing more frequent as the morning neared, finally so thoroughly awakened me that for some time I laid listening to a distant rumbling and roaring for which I could in nowise count; and as there was a ladder leading from the loft to the thatch of the cabin byre, and thence into the little paddock below, I silently stole from my companion's side and gained the cliffs overhanging the main highway, as the first tremulous rays of dawn began throbbing over the great heather-sweeps of the mountain above.

A strange confusion of sounds arose from the gorge below.

At first I could but dimly see down there a ghostly jumble of moving things, sometimes massed and accompanied by a Babelic medley of voices, or again separated into straggling objects making at best only sleepy and silent progress toward the hamlet of Cahirsiveen.

But as the low-lying fog lifted, and the morning light flooded in upon the wide stone road, the nature of the all-night intrusions at the shoeben and the cavalcade below me was clearly revealed.

It was Saturday morning, morning of the fair and market day at the old seaport town, and all the quaint folk from the wilds of Iveragh, as was their immemorial custom, were "trundling to the fair afore the break o' day."

And what a queer, kindly lot they were!

Here was a group of "th' byes," wriggling along face to face, settling questions of mountain honor in tremendous though friendly harangue and dispute. Then followed a cart, driven by the "ould man," in which were the "ould woman an' childer, slavin' rings 'round their swate selves." Many carts there were with pigs snorting violent protests and surprise; with geese craning their heads in viciously-hissed defiance and interrogation, and with sheep bleating piteously.

All these were interspersed with or followed by old women with braided-covered baskets; young women with packages of yarn or flannel; lassies thumping donkeys laden with creels, or guiding recalcitrant goats and kids; but every lass or woman knitting away vigorously, in time to step and gossip; old men humped and severe, peering along with thump of stick and puff of pipe; and all full of whimsical importance and gothering, whether they had to sell or the wherewithal to buy; and, of course, a squad of constabulary to remind them of their serfdom, tagging at their heels or occasionally charging at a gallop through the motley cavalcade.

My shaggy companion was shortly ready for our morning march. We descended the mountain boreen and mingled with the fair-going people. Walking thus to Cahirsiveen, we lingered a moment at the ruins of the birthplace of great Daniel O'Connell, at Carhan Bridge; loitered for a time among the market-day scenes beyond—where I saw a face I cannot forget until the moment of all forgetfulness shall come—and by midday we were among the fishermen of the southwest coast, at the tiny fishing hamlet of Port Magee.

II.

An Irish fisherman's cabin is hardly a palace; but it often holds love and content, and the one to which my new friend led me with rapid, home-neering strides seemed one of this pleasant, restful sort. Most of the habitations of the fishing village were wretched hovels indeed. This one was not only clean, but from corrag thatch it disclosed the touch of loving hands.

As we neared it I could see that white flounced curtains showed behind the tiny panes of cabin and loft; some pretty vines were trained about the windows themselves, and the little curl of smoke above the thatch, which told of the humble hearthstone within, escaped through a sturdy chimney instead of the usual hole in the roof.

As the fellow bounded into his cabin, I remained outside under the pretense of enjoying the fine coast scenery; and this seemed wise, for the joyous riot within fairly signified that for the time being, there was little place for the stranger.

This shortly subsided, and the giant reappeared at the door, tossing his tiny, barefooted wife in the air as though she was a babe; while a brood of little ones, the youngest as big as the little mother, danced wildly about him; and I was directly installed as a guest with great honor, greater garrulousness and a ringing *cent mille mille*.

And what merry music and bustle were there about that home-welcoming meal!

Blocks of the finest turf were put upon the embers, and the little ones

lopin" above the "praties" in the pot; the "tay was wetted by the fire," and everybody was falling over everybody else in very excess of loving effort.

"Will it be three ails, th' day?" the little wife blushing asked her brawny husband.

"Three ails, is it?" roared the giant fisherman, taking his wife's little head in his two huge hands—hands so big there was no place left on her growing face to kiss. "Three ails! That's three ails to empy craythurs like ourselves, stillish machree?"

The big head descended to the little head with almost alarming caresses.

"Sure impty sacks can't stand. It's rubbing grass to a fat pig to say it, but ye might drink wid this stranger in a co-hole, wid yer eyes to th' slack. Make it sex—an'—an' a sleawther (kiss of fondness) a villish (my sweet)."

Not one, but many "sleawthers" were showered upon the blushing and protesting matron now.

An' a two-eyed beefsteak (a herring) for th' aich av us; an' a fine miscalan (a cone of butter) from Mistress O'Neill's by th' crag; an' a gawliege (large measure) o' milk; an' th' heartsome fayet in Kerry entirely, wid banaght Dhean orrin, ershi misha! (with God's blessing on us, say I!)

It was all that, in the pleasant cabin; and then came the problem of my own housing for the time I should remain among the fishermen of the region.

The cabin, like all others of its class, had but one room below and a little loft above. There surely no place for me in those. But in a little shed at the end, dry and clean, where all the boat and fishing gear was stored, we soon had a fine couch made on a well-defined seine, and though a clearly defined aroma of fish, tar and oakum pervaded the place, as one little window showed some sweet, fern-covered cliffs behind, and another gave a superb view of Valencia Island, the sublime promontory of Bray Head, and of the mighty sea beyond, only a churlish traveler could have found else than congratulation in the sunny and winsome spot.

And yet how little served these quaint folk!

There was not a chair within the cabin. Two stone "strangers' seats," one at either side of the chimney, and a few rude stools answered in good stead. A bunk against the wall was the bed of the fisherman and his wife. The bouchaleens and girshas (boys and girls) slept upon the floor of the loft above. Their only mirrors were each other's eyes. One table of heavy deal stood beneath the window. One cupboard, formed by a little recess in the wall, and another of ancient Irish oak, easily held all the household's scant though precious belongings. One or two case-knives, several fish-knives used in cleaning fish and in all seafaring work, two or three earthen bowls, a power mug for the rare treat of sugar, one modern tin pan, a huge pewter basin and two or three saucers comprised all the ware for the table the fisher family possessed.

Besides these there were a few of those rare old Irish mothers or square drinking cups carved out of solid wood, precisely the same as those used in Erin two centuries ago. A strong bot, or tub, had its place beneath the table. A schragrag, or flat oyster basket, with narrow sides, always held the boiled potatoes at the meal. And the cooking utensils were the same, and as few, as have been used by the peasantry since there were such in Ireland.

There was a great iron pot for the strobout, the potatoes and for boiling cabbage leaves and other delicacies for the pig; a smaller iron kettle in which an egg might be boiled or the "tay wetted"; and a great, round flat iron griddle in which black bread, the schowder and all extraordinary goodies were baked, either hanging from the crane above the fire, or set at an angle against it and turned as necessity required.

The schowder, next to potatoes, being here the great staff of life, really deserves mention. It is made of a thick batter of oat meal, seasoned with salt, and, on festive occasions, with the dripping from fried pork. Strictly speaking, it is only the schowder when, as the oat cake baked on the great hanging griddle, it is additionally toasted or roasted on the muddha arran before the greenhough or embers.

This muddha arran is the only other utensil of the fireplace of these fishermen, or of the Western peasantry at large. It is an iron-forked stick with three legs, on which the schowder or fish, or any bit of meat good luck may send, are toasted or broiled; it is one of the most ancient cooking utensils remaining in Ireland; and I mention it for these simple things mintly, because without John L. Shea's real environment, the strong, brave mold in which his fine and humble nature was cast, could not stand forth so clear and lofty in its sturdy and noble worth.

III.

In comparison, wondrously sweet and happy as seemed this little home-nest beside the lovely Kerry shores, within it already lurked the demon of unrest.

Dumb and voiceless as it might be and was, a pitiful heart-tragedy was enacting here within one silent breast. To me, its recognition saddened every happy hour; gave frowning seeming to crag, headland and lonely islet, dark and bare; lent a shuddering dread to the magic of the sea; and swept a thrill of potent through all the whispers of the breezes along the somber coast.

Not until the first evening did I see Eileen. She was the fisherman's eldest daughter. She crept into the cabin hesitantly, demurely, but not without a certain hint of unconquerable determination and power in her stature, poise and movement, and with a light of strange inquiry in her great blue eyes as they rested upon the stranger diffidently.

Her father greeted her fondly enough, but more like a rough companion and sharer of toil than a loved child, I thought, and still with a shade of anxiety in his honest, rugged face.

She stood for a little leaning against the fireplace, drinking in our words, and particularly all references to foreign lands, with almost fiercely hungry eyes, and finally, after partaking of a bit of food, disappeared with her brothers and sisters to their beds in the loft above.

Whatever subject we spoke upon, we somehow always came back to Eileen. In a little time I found that the girl had been her father's constant companion for years in the dangerous work of the sea; could manage a boat with all the skill and dexterity of a man; and had shared every manner of arduous task involved in mackerel and long-line fishing; and knew every eddy of the sea, every nook and cranny of the coast, every rock, islet, shoal and fishing ground, as familiarly as the canniest Kerry fisherman, from Dingle to Kinsale.

Aside from the few Irish lassies at the fair at Cahirsiveen, Eileen was the only maiden grown I had noticed that day—though I had seen her once before in a way that now filled me with dread for the peace of this fisher's home—and I asked her father where the bright-faced girls of Kerry had gone.

"Gone, is it—Gone?" "Hough!" he answered with sudden spirit. "Over th' say entirely!"

"But surely they could not all go to America!" I ventured protestingly.

"An' couldn't they though? Its bred they are in th' milk av their mother's

breasts to do that same!" This with bitterness. "A girsha's no better nor ten year high, when th' fayver's on her. Faith, an' she'll work like a baste, an' save like an ould bide, alyer an' de-saytfuler nor ould Nick himself; an' when ye'll be thinkin' she'd marry some honest av an' bide wid her own, like a decent craythur—Pz-i-i-pl—an' away she's gone, like an' aigle over the say!"

Here the fisherman drew his little wife closer to him with a gesture of wondrous pride and fondness.

"Arrah, an' this jewel o' me own cabin wouldn't be in it th' day—heaven bless an' kape her till me dyin' hour!—if I hadn't stole her was night from Caragh-side, like a thief o' th' wurld, an' thin baie th' three brothers sinseless, broke th' ould man's skull for a hint o' me temper, an' siet word to eleven uncles for a meelin', at their own conveyance, barrin' any fast day o' th' seven."

"How, then, have you kept Eileen?" I asked eagerly, thinking of what I knew and he did not.

He turned quickly to me with a stern face, putting his little wife almost rudely away. In another instant his huge fist came down with a tremendous crash upon the deal table.

"Fore God, I'd kill th' man or woman that'd entice her from the dura. I'd see her dead afore I'd let her turn wanderer beyant th' say."

The little wife attempted to soothe him with many crooning words, but he was terribly swept by the storm of feeling upon him. He paced the cabin excitedly; plunged through the door into the night and back again; and after a shrug of his whole frame, like some great animal flinging another off, he continued impetuously:

"Ould Ireland—save her!—is sorra enough, heaven knows; but th' heart o' her is aiten out, more by th' fayver o' lavin' than by th' wurra o' stayin'. Luk at her now!—th' young an' th' strong clintchin' th' very pennies from her dead eyes to fly away wid an' enrich some other land, till on'y th' trimblin' ould an' th' roatin' dead remain!"

I saw instantly it was the one subject sore above all others in the heart of the majestic though simple figure before me. He had painted a woefully true picture of one of Ireland's causes of decay; but I was astounded at the revelation which followed, the truth of which I could no longer doubt after what I had seen scarcely two hours before.

"Th' poor craythurs, they're not to blame!" He said this with a compassionate gesture which seemed to comprehend Eileen above us in the loft, where there had more than once been a rustling and stirring, as of some one impatient to hear and know.

"It's th' devil's own sows that like snakes ivy crawl over th' ould sod, wid their blithering tongues, tazyin' th' childer away. Many a bone o' theirs I've cracked already; an', by th' five crasses, I'll murder th' first wan that steps foot in Port Magee!"

Pressing him for explanation, I learned this startling fact: That veritable human ferrets, if not in the direct pay of the trans-Atlantic steamship companies, yet still subsisting upon the profits of the nefarious traffic, penetrate the remotest regions of Ireland, sowing the seed of dissatisfaction and unrest and persistently painting the rewards and delights of effort and life in foreign lands; until the country districts are constantly in such tremors of excitement and heartache for those who are going or are gone, that there is no lowly home where is not hovering the shadow of a terror so great that it lacks even the consoling dignity of death itself.

"And men really do this thing from year to year for a livelihood?" I asked in honest indignation.

"Min?—min! Things worsen nor bastes! No place is free o' thim. They're at ivry fair, weddin' or wake. They're at th' dure o' th' sanctuary. They'll mark yer childer at christnin' an' never lose sight o' thim till they're min an' women grown. They'll folly th' dead among th' livin' to snatch another livin' away. They'll crape in yer home, by day or by night!—Hough!"

He concluded with a gesture at his throat as if choking, "they crape upon yer life here in Ireland, till ye can't brayth widout smellin' th' devil's smoke upon thim eternally."

He bot his shaggy head sorrowfully and ruminatively for a moment. Then, as if thinking aloud, he added:

"Yis, yis, Faith, John L. Shea's sat in his boat, strivin' for thim ashore, wid Eileen beside him, fur many a year, watchin' him stymers trailin' smoke across the water, an' wishin', wishin', wishin' ivry wan'd strike bottom afore they'd take away one body from this blessed Kerry home!"

I could not but give a blessed "Amen" to that; but, long, long into that night, in my couch upon the seines, troubled forms and scenes were woven into my half-waking dreams. With and across these, like pitiful wraiths of sorrow, passed and repassed the faces in this humble fisher's home, the trailing smoke of the far, low-lying ocean steamers, leaving their wakes of woe behind, and that one pitiless face I had now twice seen, and which could never be forgotten until the moment of forgetfulness should come.

IV.

I had seen and heard but little the evening before; but that little, in connection with what had been accidentally and so dramatically revealed while we sat beside the dying embers in the fisher's tiny cabin, told me that the dread and insidious influence the brave, home-saving soul had so long and valiantly battled was about to triumph over all the mighty pleading of duty and love and home.

In a short stroll I had taken along the crazy heights to the south of the slumberous old fishing hamlet, I had all unwittingly chosen an almost daring course around the peak of a sholing promontory.

Constantly tempted to loftier heights for better view of the matchless scenes of coasts and islets and seas, I picked my way around the dangerous cone, coming suddenly upon two figures in a little hollow of an angle of the rock.

From where I stood the man and woman could not observe me, and yet they were plainly within view, while every word they uttered, from the conversation of the rock partially surrounding them, was as distinctly audible as though they had stood beside me.

Whenever they had met, and however they had reached the secluded spot, I felt certain they had not preceded me in the dangerous pathway I had stumbled upon; and I was made further sure of this by the woman, or girl, now and then parting the branches above her, and peering searchingly back along the partly wooded heights above.

She was a maiden of marvelous physical power and beauty, and her manner clearly showed that no other motive than some overwhelming self interest could have brought her to trust with the ambling, skulking wretch before her.

Though he wheedled and blustered, blarneyed and bullied, she still remained imperious and determined. Only once did she seem to betray emotion. This was when the leathery-faced dwarf—a humped, mildewed travesty of a human, with a face withered and pured in the ludicrously pathetic lines of an ailing baboon, and whose restless,

beady eyes never looked the girl fairly in her own—stung her seeming imperturbable purpose by reference to the lad she loved.

"Ye yer only rale friend I am, Eileen, that's four year been waitin' to give ye th' chance o' yer life. I'll hold yer to it in all that time. Lapt it on th' batter (tippling) he's been, those last tin days, an' only this blessed day makin' love like a timpestt ivry girl at Cahirsiveen fair."

"I'm done wid Larry," she answered slowly.

Her tone rather than her action told what a deep hurt was behind her words.

"Give me th' money, thin, fur th' ticket to take ye out."

"I'll not. Ah, Dennis Fahy, it's as hard as th' devil's forehead, yore. I'll go me own way, or stay."

"Arrah, avick dear, ye'll destroy all me grand plans fur ye entirely. It's th' Killarney yes must go, thin. There ye'll get th' rail for Malloy, an' Cork, th' next staymer, wid th' other fine ladies that's goin' out?" whined the little odd game imploringly.

"I'll not."

"Tear an' ager!" he fumed. "But yer th' great fool! 'Tend take a proper rise out o' ye, t' spake a soft word t' your fayther!"

It was the direst threat the fellow could make, and I could see he was sure it would humble her.

"Th' veins o' me heart go wid yer in that, Dennis darian!," she retorted with a contemptuous gurgle of laughter.

"Ch?"

"Can ye swim, Dennis?"

"N-o, faith! An' fur what an' fur why?"

"Then it's lost ye'd be, Dennis; fur no prayst'll shrive th' likes o' ye. At th' first word ye ntered, Dennis, fayther'd toss ye over th' cliff, as alyas as a stale fish from th' schragrag!"

It was Dennis who had been conquered, and he now whiningly begged to know what she would do.

"It's this I'll do," she returned with an impressiveness of tone and manner from which the miserable wrecker of homes apparently saw no appeal. "Go you to th' others an' bid them bide at Malloy or Cork till I come. I'll row to Dingle by night."

"By all th' saints, 'tis twenty miles!" he fumed and blustered again.

"Saturday night 'twill be, at th' turn o' th' tide—that's tin o'clock that night. Thin I'll walk, on Sunday, from Dingle to Tralee. They'll not folly by water, an' if they go slatherin' up the Killarney road, it's not a trace of me they'll find; an' thin they'll come powd'ern back to Port Magee, whin I'll be safe on my way from Dingle to Tralee."

The old wretch's face worked hideously for a while. It seemed to fear he would at the last lose this one poor victim. For years he had worked his merciless toils about her, as about others among the wilds of Iveragh.

"Bad cess t' th' devil's own mess, an' all th' trouble yer givin' me! But me heart's achin' t' see ye go where' in a year's time, ye can come back a lady fine t' shame thin that'd kape ye iver a toilin' baste! I'll come and go wid ye t' Dingle!"

The girl gave a little start at this, but did not oppose him.

"It's lavin' from th' ould pier I'll be, in th' little yawl. Ye'll not be late, Dennis Fahy? A sorra hour fur ye, 'twould be, if ye were found behind me at Port Magee!"

"Who's th' stranger that's come th' day. He looked me o'er unfriendly, th' morn, when I wor dodgin' yer fayther at Cahirsiveen."

The girl merely shook her head.

"Thin ye'll find a chance t' slip these in his pockets, if he bides th' full o' th' week. It's interestin' raydin' they'll make, whin on yer way t' be a grand, fine lady across th' say!"

Without a word, she put in her bosom some crumpled sheets of paper he had handed her and, stepping back among the parted branches, was lost to sight.

This is what I had seen and heard upon the crag above the old fishing hamlet; and this, with the appearance of handsome Eileen in the cabin and what the evening had so startlingly evoked, is what swept the tortuous wraiths through my half-waking dreams all that long, unhappy night.