

THE MIST THAT'S OVER IRELAND.

There's a mist that's over Ireland where the blackbird calls. And when you come it's risin' and when you go it falls. It's made of green and silver and the rain and dew. And the finest sun is over it you ever knew. Oh, sure it isn't mist at all, except a mist o' tears. A haze of love and longin' for the happy years. When myself that's old and fretted now and colder than the stone. Was young in golden Ireland with the friends that's gone. The mist is like a curtain that the wind'll blow And lift a little wisp of it till you see below. The shinnest country ever was of hills and streams. With the faces do be haunting you in lonesome dreams. There's people do be in the mist; their like's hard to find. Their faces full of welcome, and their smile so soft and kind. It was little I was thinkin' in the days that ran away. How I'd sit and break my heart for them one weary day. It isn't fields and mountains and it isn't streams and trees. Though all o' them is in the mist, nor hummin' of the bees. Nor yet the thrush and blackbird, could vex me as I stand. And look the way of Ireland with my head in my hand. 'Tis little that we value them, when we are young and gay. We think we'll have them with us for ever and a day. We never knew the good we have till lovin' friends depart. And leave us just with half a life and half a heart. There's a gold mist over Ireland that will never rise. And some is walkin' in its way the light of my eyes. They're never old and troubled now, and never sick and sad. The days we had together were the best I ever had. Please God, some day that's comin' when the dread death is past. And I take the lonesome valley we all must take at last. I'll sigh the hills of Heaven and the people all in white. And you, and you, among them was my heart's delight. And the mist that's over Ireland will be blowin' in my face. I'll reach the other side of it to the happy place. And I'll not be lookin' backward like a lonesome ghost. From the mist that's over Ireland and the friends I lost.—Katharine Tyan.

A FRIEND OF THE MARRIED.

Lucia Bannard, in a becoming lavender gown, sat in her pretty yellow bedroom on a Sunday morning, gazing at a large and dingy overcoat spread out before her on the bed. The Bannard's small home was conceded to be one of the most charming in the neighborhood. Everything which Lucia had to do, was perfect so far as taste was concerned; even the Bannard's big roomy mansion, with its old, harmonious furnishings, its stacks of books and air of comfort and prosperity, could not compare in a sort of exquisite, inspiring beauty with the Bannard's. In the nine years of her married life she had been one of Lucia's chief objects to gather the things together which, as she expressed it, were "right," even if the house had to wait, scantily furnished, from Christmas to Christmas, for a chair, or bookcase, or rug. Lucia herself bore out the character of the house. She was a beautiful young woman, with a slender figure, very large and expressive dark eyes, a short upper lip with a proud yet infantile curve, and pale golden hair. Her taste in her own dress was as perfect as in other things. She was a clever manager, and never told anyone but Elinor Chandor, her next door neighbor, how little her clothes cost; she seldom talked of any of her economies. Even the maid who answered the door, showed an extra nicety of cap and apron, as well as in smiling good looks. Where everything was so aesthetically "right," the one discordant note, in the matter of suitable appearance, was Mrs. Bannard's husband; he was a delightful young man, but he would not buy clothes. As he came in now, tall, happily light-footed, with a noticeably distinguished bearing and a teasing twinkle in his nice blue eyes, she interrupted his cheerful if useless whistle to say abruptly, as her eyes wandered over the big figure: "Ronald, you will have to order your new overcoat at once, if you're going up to the head office with Rex Courtney on the first; it's only two weeks from Wednesday!" "Why do I need a new one when I've got this?" asked her husband with prompt conclusiveness. "Why? For the same reason I've told you twenty times before, Ronald Bannard, because this one is worn out!" "I don't see anything much the matter with it," said Mr. Bannard unimportantly. He took up the garment and examined it with a cherfully appraising eye. "All it needs, is to have a few little things done to it: a new collar, perhaps, velvet gets worn of course; and the buttonholes worked over where they're split, and the lining patched up. I don't see but what that will make it all right for this winter; lots of wear in that coat yet!" "Ronald Bannard, if you begin talking like that again after all I've said to you before, you'll drive me raving crazy! I've worn that dreadful cheap thing—I've always detested it!—for five years. I've had the collar renewed three times, and the buttonholes worked over so often that the last time even the tailor objected to doing it. If you have it done again, it will take buttons the size of tea plates to hold them. And it's all frayed out around the wrists and shiny in the seams; it's horrid; it's disgusting! I took away all my pleasure every time I went out with your last winter. You owned, yourself, in the spring, that you could never put it on again. Whenever I've spoken to you about it since, you've promised me you'd go to Grandon's this fall and order a really handsome coat, good material and all, the kind Rex Courtney wears. And now—" The tears welled thickly in Mrs. Ban-

nard's lovely eyes, while her husband obviously searched for something in a chiffonier drawer, whistling under his breath. "And you needn't try and act as if you didn't care when I speak to you this way; you ought to care! I have to work, and work, and work, to make you buy the ordinary clothes that other men get as a matter of course. If you hadn't the money now, Ronald, I wouldn't say a word, but when I've taken such pains to save up enough so that you could get a really good coat—going without a new suit myself, though goodness knows I need one; but, then, a woman can fix up things to cover deficiencies, and everything does show so on a man! And I've made over my blue satin myself, just because I had set my heart on your looking as you ought. Are you listening?" "Yes, I'm listening," said Mr. Bannard, smiling at his wife. He had a smile that invariably charmed; it was always with great effort that Lucia withstood it, but she did so now; she met his eyes stolidly as he continued with growing restiveness: "What difference does it make what I have on, anyway? It's my own affair if I choose to wear what I please. Great Scott, Lucia, I'll be so busy these next two weeks I'm nearly crazy as it is; I haven't time to go hanging around the tailors. All this talk about dress makes me sick; people don't judge me by my clothes!" "You're very much mistaken, that's just what lots of people do judge you by," returned his wife triumphantly. "One thing is certain, you cannot go up to the head office with Rex Courtney if you haven't a new overcoat; I'd die of mortification if you did! And if you think going there looking like a tramp will advance your interests, Ronald Bannard—" "Oh, well, then, don't say another word," said Mr. Bannard in a slightly raised key. "Stop right there! I'll get the coat." "And you will go to Grandon's and bring home samples of cloth to-morrow?" "Yes, I suppose so. Look here, Lucia," Mr. Bannard's tone changed from one of reluctant submission to that of masculine authority, "have you been taking my small screw-driver out of this drawer again?" "No, no, I haven't taken it! Oh—yes, perhaps I did take it for just a moment. Ellen wanted one for the wringer, but I put it right back again; I'm perfectly positive." "Well, you didn't," said her husband witheringly. He faced her with his shoulders thrown back and his nice blue eyes flashing lightning. "How many times have I told you, Lucia, not to touch that screw-driver? Things have come to a pretty pass if I can't keep one thing of my own where I can lay my hand on it!" "I know I put it back, but I'll go and look for it this minute," said his wife hurrying off with placating alacrity. She had gained her point! The next evening he really brought the samples home with him, and studied over their possibilities with her, in as deep interest as if he had been fighting against the proceeding. They spent the evening, in the intervals of reading and conversation, in hanging small dabs of cloth on his coat-sleeve and considering them from different angles. There were all the ones that wouldn't do at all, and the four or five that were so attractive that one hardly knew how to make a choice. But both at last fixed on one Oxford gray that wasn't an Oxford gray, but something darker, richer, indescribably satisfactory in color, and stylish, as Lucia proclaimed, to a degree. She saw Ronald in prospect in a questioned, richly soft, superlatively cut top-coat, which would even surpass that of Rex Courtney. Rex Courtney was the one unmarried man in the little intimate social circle of which the Bannards composed a part. There were other young men in the place of course, they were of the ordinary sort, who were only interested in their own kind, or in girls, whereas Rex was superlatively the friend of the married. He was credited with having had an affair of the heart—perhaps, indeed, two or three—in which he had been, colloquially, so "hard hit" as to turn his mind from love toward the less demanding comforts and pleasures of friendship. He, like Ronald Bannard, was "in Steel," but he traveled much of the time in his interests, often returning only over the week-end, and so warmly pleased to be welcomed in the houses of his more fortunate fellow men that each household envied with the other in the possessiveness of its welcoming; each wife wished to believe that hers was the abode in which he really felt most at liberty to smoke when he desired to, and ask for cake when he wanted it. He was a favorite with all the men. He was indeed an extremely nice fellow, cheery, entertaining, and indefinitely considerate of womankind, performing all the little courteous attentions for them which their husbands meant to perform, but didn't; he brought boxes of candy and flowers, and never forgot the children, who were devoted to him. His perfection in these respects, instead of casting a slur on the husbands, seemed on the contrary to raise the standard of the males; the men concerned had the effect of generously allowing services that belonged to them by right. If at times he strove to help over those places where both husband and wife from their inner circle knew that no help was needed, they only smiled at each other comprehendingly. Lucia liked to feel that Ronald was really the nicest after all. Rex gave the impression of thinking sympathetically: "If I could get as charming a wife and as delightful a home as this, you bet it wouldn't be long before I'd leave them; but I know very well it can't be duplicated. It's awfully good of you to let me have a little corner here." For the rest, he was in the early thirties, not very tall, but broad-shouldered, fair, clean-shaven, and with very white teeth; as Lucia Bannard had hinted, he was always notably well dressed. The women, though giving him his little converse, always spoke of him as Rex Courtney; there was something in the name itself that showed you what he was like. The men called him, familiarly, Court. He had been at one time most intimate with the Crandalls, and then at the Chanse; more frequent to the Bannards, with whom, though the latest known, he found many interests in common. He and Ronald were both ambitious so far as Steel was concerned, and his appreciation of Lucia's love of beauty was of an intellectual kind which she didn't usually receive. He had, besides, a real masculine force that made his sympathetic insight of her aims and motives very delightful to receive. When he occasionally joked with Ronald on some solicism in the latter's attire, she felt deeply—though she

never spoke on the subject to Rex Courtney—that he saw and appreciated her troubles in that line. It was this man with whom Ronald was to travel in company to report at the head office on the first of the month. "Did you take the samples back to Grandon's to-day?" Lucia asked her husband anxiously the next night after he had come home from town. "Yes," said Ronald lightly. "I hope to goodness you showed him the right sample!" "I certainly did. Grandon says it will make a fine coat." "And when will it be finished, dear?" "Oh, some time within the next two weeks; before the first, you may depend on that; Grandon never disappoints. And look here, Lucia," he spoke gently but firmly, and kissing her upturned face half absently, as if it were some necessary refreshment, "I don't want to be questioned about that overcoat every night when I come home! When it's done I'll get it, and that is all there is to it. And by the way, you might as well telephone to Bergwitz to-morrow, and have him send over for the old coat and put it in some kind of shape. It may turn cold suddenly." "Well," said Lucia grudgingly, "I'd like to pitch the thing out of the window the very minute, but I don't want you to get pneumonia, of course." It did turn cold by the end of the following week, that bitter cold that comes coming home in late November. Only he thought of the beautiful garment, and his husband was to have, supported Lucia in the ordeal of seeing him in the old one. The tailor's art had somehow failed him in the renovation; perhaps he had tried it so often that he had lost heart; those awful buttonholes of her husband, side, the threadbare edge, its indescribable air of rustiness and collapse, were accentuated by the new velvet of the collar. It took enormous self-control on Lucia's part not to burst out at him violently when he put it on. 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