

The young man had scarcely finished his sentence when the reality of his apprehension was made audible to them. There was a clatter of iron-shod boots on the hard road.

"A troop of horse!" he whispered, and, seeing all colour leave her face, he added, as if she were the one in danger, "They are like to pass on, I think."

The first part of the sentence was as correct as the last part was inaccurate. A vigorous voice rang out; a voice the girl had never heard before, but which thrilled her with instant fear.

"Halt! Dismount, and surround the mill."

"By God, Cromwell himself!" cried the young man, his right hand instinctively reaching his swordless hip. "Cromwell here, and I weaponless," he added bitterly, as his empty right hand swung round to his side again. "Would I had a thousand lives to exchange for his pestilence existence! But to be trapped like a rat!"

"Come this way," said Dorothy, as she raised a trap-door, "hurry, hurry."

The young man followed her, down into the dark and the damp, stumbling awkwardly. She, however, knew her road, and threw open a door in the outer wall that allowed some light to filter into the gloom. Outside was the dim skeleton of the great wheel.

"Step in here," she said breathlessly, "if the water is turned on you will have to walk for your life."

She bolted the door upon him, and was on the upper floor an instant after, closing down the trap-door.

"Up!" cried a voice from the outside, while a sabbat smote three blows against the timber.

Dorothy instantly pulled back the bolt, and threw open the two leaves of the door. It needed no introducer to identify for her the scowling man in steel breast-plate who stood before her.

"Who are you?" was his demand.

"Dorothy Mitford, sir, daughter of the miller."

"Why is the mill silent when I ordered it to grind?"

"It has been stopped but a short ten minutes since, sir. It was grinding all morning."

"Why was it stopped ten minutes since?"

"It is the dinner hour, sir."

"As I came up I saw you fly back and forth between the cottage and the mill. What were you doing?"

Fear had given place to anger at this rude questioning, so abrupt and discourteous, and this before all these men standing behind him, among whom, with heightened colour, she recognised Standfast Standish.

"Sir," she said, "I must be fed as well as your army."

A grim smile flickered for an instant round those masterful lips, then disappeared as quickly as it came. He made no comment upon her pertness, but turned to one of the men and said:

"Go into the cottage, and see if two have dined there. Have you seen any strangers about?" asked Cromwell as before.

"In the morning there was a dozen, searching the mill. The only one among them that I knew was my father."

"You saw no one else?"

"I have not been out of the mill, sir, except to prepare food. I have been grinding all morning, and no one has entered these doors except myself."

"What is that ladder doing standing against the hopper?"

"I have been filling the hopper with corn."

At this juncture the man returned from the cottage.

"There is one empty trencher, sir, from which one person has fed."

Cromwell strode into the mill, and up the steps of the ladder, thrusting his sword half a dozen times down through the grain. Lucky for Lord Dorincourt that he was elsewhere. Satisfying himself that nothing but wheat was within the bin, the General descended, casting a suspicious glance at the girl, and said:

"We have traced him here. I am certain he is within these walls."

"I am certain he is not, sir," replied Dorothy, with all the assurance of exact truth. "My father knows every cranny of this mill, and he searched thoroughly."

"Humph," growled Cromwell, "begin the grinding again, and if he is among the machinery, let him take peril of it. Your reason for the stopping of the mill seems scant enough."

The girl walked promptly and proudly to the lever, drew it towards her, and

instantly the low rumble of machinery began. She paid no further attention to her visitors, but went calmly to the scupper out of which poured the warm meal, and fingered it flow critically.

Cromwell's eyes never left her, and again the slight smile chased the darkness from his countenance as he saw the testing of the meal, an action well known to him, for he was a miller himself, but was now about to be discomfited, for he lived in a flat country where the water-wheels are small, and it never occurred to him that a water-wheel might act as a prison for a man.

The General set his men at the second search of the mill, and this time the scrutiny was thorough enough to satisfy anyone. He himself went outside, and mounted his horse, awaiting stolidly the result of the investigation. Relieved from the eye of the master, Standfast Standish chose the lower portion of the mill as his ground for search, that perhaps he might exchange a word with Dorothy. She received his greetings coldly enough, and seemed still offended at the treatment the General had accorded her. Standfast himself, although he feared and admired his chief, was indignant that her word should not have been instantly taken, and he said this emphatically to Dorothy, which won him a kinder look than he had yet obtained from her; then, seeking further ground of advantage, he said with enthusiasm:

"I know a place none of them have searched—the water-wheel. I'll go down the trap-door and look to that myself."

The indifference fell away from the girl like a cloak flung off.

"You will not," she said.

"Why not? He might be there."

"He could not be there unless I led him to the wheel. There would be only one chance in a thousand for him to happen on the trap-door."

"But," objected the stubborn youth, "a trap-door is exactly what an escaped prisoner would look for."

"Even if he found it," she urged, "he would descend into darkness, and be little likely to find the door to the wheel."

"Still, it is possible," he persisted, "and there is no harm in looking."

"There is the harm that I forbid you."

"Why?"

"Are you General Cromwell that you should question me thus?" she asked, with rising anger, her eyes ablaze.

The young fellow gazed at her in astonishment, which gradually changed to an expression somewhat approaching distrust.

"General Cromwell," he said slowly, "seems to be much more far-seeing than I am. I am determined to search the wheel."

"Very well," she answered decisively, "do so, and take the penalty."

"What is the penalty?"

"That you never speak to me again as long as you live. I will not have my word doubted by two men in the same day, though one is the highest and the other the lowest in the army."

With that she turned from him, and once more placed her trembling hand in the flow of meal. Out of the corner of her eye, however, she saw that her lover made no move to put his resolve into execution.

The men came down from the upper part of the mill, and reported the fruitlessness of their quest. A bugle-call rang out, and those who surrounded the mill came hurrying to the road.

"Tell the girl to come here," said Cromwell. When she stood before him he went on:

"Are you alone in this mill?"

"No, sir, my mother is with me, although absent at this moment."

"Have you a brother?"

"Two of them, sir."

"Where are they?"

"In General Cromwell's army."

The General looked around him.

"Is any man here a miller?" he asked.

There was no response, until young Standish stepped forth.

"I am a miller," he said, a deep frown on his brow. The girl opened her mouth to contradict him, but closed it without speaking.

"You will remain here," said Cromwell; "the mill must run night and day until every sack of corn within it is ground. The women will look after it in the daytime, and you at night."

Cromwell wheeled his horse towards the south, his men falling in, two and two, behind him. The girl, without a word, re-entered the mill, Standish fol-

lowing. She went to the window, looking again through the pane that again needed dusting, watching the cavaliers now trotting smartly down the valley.

"Well, Dorothy," said the young man, "how much longer are you going to keep Lord Dorincourt in the wheel?"

"Until Cromwell and his men are entirely out of sight," she replied, firmly, without turning round.

"Who led him to the wheel?"

"I did, the moment I heard the clatter of the horse. You said yesterday it was a pity Englishmen should kill Englishmen, therefore I attempted to save one man."

"Oh, his life has never been in danger; we do not kill our prisoners."

"Very well, then, stop the mill and take him out. He is unarmed and wounded, so his capture will be safe enough. Take him out with you to the camp."

"Dorothy, you heard me say I was a miller."

"Yes, and I knew it was not true."

"I am willing to learn from you, Dorothy; but that is not the point. I am here by the General's orders as miller, not as soldier."

"What difference does that make?"

"The difference that if you are interested in Lord Dorincourt's life, or, rather, his liberty, I do not violate my oath as a soldier by leading him to safety across the moor."

The girl whirled round.

"Will you do that?" she cried.

"Yes, if you bid me."

"He is a poor, forlorn creature," she said, "even if he is a lord. Stop the mill, Standish, and I will release him."

She raised the trap-door, and descended, while he pushed in the lever and throttled the mill. It was indeed a forlorn object that appeared out of the darkness of the trap-door, a man drenched and dripping, but laughing nevertheless, though somewhat ruefully.

"I declare, Dorothy," he cried, as he came blinking into the daylight, "I shall never forget you, and I swear that you will never forget so comical a wretch as I. All I need now is an oven. First I was powdered with flour, then plastered with water, and thus the dough about me calls but for the baking, and I am a walking loaf."

"This young man," said Dorothy, somewhat breathlessly, "will lead you across the moor in safety."

"Egad," cried Lord Dorincourt, glancing without enthusiasm at Standish, "his uniform whispers that he is more likely to take me into Cromwell's camp."

Standish's fist had clenched angrily as he noted the familiarity with which the young lord spoke to Dorothy, and his lips closed into a firm line.

"I will answer for him, my lord," she said, "because he who risks his liberty in your service is my promised husband."

The dripping lord made his most profound bow.

"Young man, I congratulate you. You adore the Queen, even though you fight against the King."

But Standish heard him not; his face was aglow as he gazed at the blushing Dorothy.

### Quite Irish.

After tramping a long, weary way, an Irishman remarked that he did not see why they did not put the milestones nearer together.

In an Irish newspaper there once appeared the following announcement: "Owing to lack of space a number of deaths are unavoidably postponed."

Speaking of a serious illness, an Irishman said: "I lay speechless for six weeks, and all my cry was wather, wather!"

A certain Irishman, in speaking of his wife, said that she was most ungrateful, for when he married her she did not have a rag to her back, but in a little while she was covered with them.

When told that a certain stove would save half the fuel used in an ordinary one, an inhabitant of Cork declared that he would buy two and save all the fuel.

An Irish servant was told to tell a man that an engagement had been made to meet him at noon. "And what shall I tell him if I can't find him," answered Pat.

"It is a great comfort to be by yourself," said an Irish lover, "especially if your sweetheart is with you."

In sentencing a prisoner an Irish judge said: "You are to hang, and I hope it will be a warning to you."



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