

O'Toole's Waterloo

by Carewe-Carvel



SURE I could not help admirin' the magnificence of meself in me brand-new uniform. I was that pleased at the elegance of the fit of it.

"Faith now," thinks I, "I'll be bound to be cuttin' some figure upon the avenoo"; and bein' that uplifted in spirit, I could not help indulgin' in one of me native tunes.

Indeed, it is me nature to be easy-goin' at all times. It is that. And a little tune to meself on me beat this day I was havin' when the female shrieks in the near vicinity drove all the music from me soul completely.

Faith, I was that surprised, to be sure, I could not have been more so. I stood there petrified, I did, I know; the locomotion of me limbs froze entirely. Faith, I had not the imagination to imagine what might be happenin' at all, at all!

I just stood and—

"Police!" I heard in me ear, and then "Murder!" and I felt me brand-new uniform bein' tugged at by excited citizens in a manner both violent and disrespectful.

I was that indignant, I was indeed; but rememberin' me callin', I took to me heels, landin' exactly where I'd meant to and where I'd ought to; and may the divil claim the honest

soul of me if the excitement wasn't the worst within the history of me whole career.

Human nature it is to hesitate in moments of peril such as these, but I must admit, in me uniform, it's the brave man I am entirely.

To be brief, it was Patrick Murphy lit up and staggerin' disgraceful under the infloence. Himself returnin' was he from the annual picnic of the Dennis McCarthy Ward Association; and now, if you please, causin' was he all the commotion upon the avenoo.

Surprised I was at him, too, the weak inebrate.

A mania of destruction havin' seized him, he was amusin' himself by the violent dissection of no less than plate-glass windies with the bricks he carried concealed in a little black sack. And I'm tellin' yez, I was that ashamed of his stoopin' to select a form of diversion so disturbin' to the public peace.

Bow then, as I passes along in me flight to lay hands upon this destructor of peace and property, it was me misfortune to be stumblin' over the butcher, the baker, and the candy-stick maker, who, palefaced doubloons that they be, was sighin' and cussin' over the debris that his divilish capers had wrought, instead of havin' the presence of mind to tie up the demon from accomplishin' further demolition.

It was the shriek of the childer and the women's voices shrill with the fear and indignation, that caught me nimble ear.

I found him posin' in front of the beautiful five and ten cent store which is the pride of every citizen of Greensport. He had a brick in the fist of him as big as a pavin' stone—faith, I'll swear it was that—and the women a holdin' of their breaths with the expectations to see the bricky-bracky fallin' to the pavement any minute. 'Twas then that I steps in to curtail his activities. An act of Providence, too, I'm thinkin' it was that I had the recognized intelligence to jump upon the neck of him and avoid further calamity

“Drop the brick, Patrick Murphy,” I hissed, “and be subdued!”

'Twas but within two minutes, then, that we becomes surrounded by the clamorin' multitude. And from every angle of them comes terrific yells of “Hold him!” “Murder him!” “Assassinate him!”

I raised me club majestic then, I did.

“Whist!” says I. “Retreat, and be convinced you are in the presence of the law!” says I. “Have the due consideration for the fulfillment of the law; the decency to recognize the dignity of an officer of the law!”

The front ones, stunned at the magnificence of me presence, drops back considerable; but the rear ones yells language depictin' revenge and blood at any price—language beneath me dignity to repeat at all, at all.

But there was no fear within me soul whatever. No, not any. I walks through that crowd with me club upraised, I did indeed, a warnin' to the left of me and a warnin' to the right of me.

“A whack on the bean to the first man of yez that disturbs the public peace,” says I. “Let,” says I, “the law, with the elegant, easy way it has, be takin' its dignified course!”

This speech issuin' from the frame of me—the six feet three, two hundred and ninety

pounds of me, to be exact—takes effect accordin', and Patrick Murphy, which in the state of sobriety bein' a relation of meself (his wife bein' no less than me own cousin), staggers through the crowd unmolested, draggin' along the little black sack, from which comes spillin' the remainin' damagin' evidence.

I blinks, but still holds up me club.

When I had him alone I tries to discourse upon the ethics of the situation, but he was too drunk for any discourse whatever. So I hauls him, I did, over the tin cans and weeds of a dozen back lots to outwit the enraged mob, sneakin' him into the rear room of Durgan's saloon, where I drops him, helpless and exhausted, into a chair by the fire.

Then, when I gives the intimate whistle, in walks Durgan immediate with the usual bracer which I partakes of daily to adjust the ill-attuned moments of mortal existence.

“Durgan,” I says, pointin' to Pat Murphy, which, bein' succumbed to the heat of the fire, was snorin' as no gentleman drunk or sober should, “that inanimate mass of drunken humanity is none other than Pat Murphy, which has behaved badly this day upon the avenoo, havin' wrought wreckage to the extent of many windy-panes, to say nothin' of the eatables which has been spoiled in the disparagin' course of operations,” says I.

“Bad cess to him, the red-headed son of a cinnamon-drop!” hissed Durgan between his teeth.

“'Twas me own hand,” I continues, swallowin' another drink, “that saved his hide from willful and deliberate assault.”

“Ha!” echoes Durgan, pourin' me another drink; with the gulpin' of which I continues eloquent:

“There is a price upon the head of him, judgin' from the sentiments of the mob which dogged our heels,” says I. “Indeed, I may say a mob of extreme dimensions, which I, with me impressive regal manner, drove back,

intimidated entirely."

Durgan, not at all impressed with me elocution, was for scowlin' darkly, lookin' with contempt upon Pat Murphy by the fire.

"The divil take him," says he. "Put him in jail!"

With the liquor dancin' in me veins, I was feelin' fine and comfortable stimulated.

"What, Dennis Durgan," interrogates I majestic, ignorin' his late remark—"what, I ask you, shall be done with the likes of him?"

"I says I have no love for the man," repeats Durgan again. "Nor should he remain at large while there is jails for the protection of us."

"But," says I, pointin' me forefinger impressive, "'twas his first offense—his very first whatever," says I.

"Faith it may not be his last," says Durgan—unmoved, however. "Take no chances, Micky O'Toole," says he. "Do your dooty," says he. "Incarcerate," he says, "that inebriate son of a pumpkin-colored sea-cook, that cinnamon-headed nut!"

"He is me friend," says I, defendin' him strongly.

"He is not mine," cried Dennis Durgan, vindictive—"not mine at all!"

"Bein' drunk," says I, "he is not in mental fitness to judge the extent of his folly at all."

"Drunk, is he? Indeed!" says Durgan, blowin' with rage. "The villain. Drunk? And sure he did not get it here, the buffoon!" says he. "And why should I be wastin' the good sympathy upon the likes of him at all, at all," says he, "when never once in me place of business neither has he so much as spent sufficient upon me elegant supply of foreign and domestic stock to derive the results which has been his undoin' this day, and from the benefits of which he is at the present moment enjoyin' an elegant sleep, so he is, bad cess to him completely; and I'm tellin' yez," says Durgan, stoppin' for breath, "he has got the nerve, so he has, to snore out his contentment of such a jag

at the very fireside where it was not acquired. Faith, it is too much entirely, is that now!"

Says Dennis Durgan to me further, poundin' the table with his fist: "Indeed, Micky O'Toole, and do yez mind tellin' me now at all, at all, why it is then for any reason whatever that he should not be jailed?" the rage of him makin' him very red in the face.

I scratched me red head forlornly; then boldly says I to him:

"Jailin' me relation be marriage is beneath me dignity completely, it is indeed; and for another reason, too, there is his wife."

"Yes, and a beauty she is, too," snaps he, swingin' round suddint, as if he had the intentions to strike me for the mere mention of herself, who bein' no less than me own first cousin.

"Sure I don't deny that," says I, me Irish up. "Have I not eyes meself to see?"

"And for the life of me," goes on Dennis Durgan, quite unconcerned, "I can't understand indeed how she could have went and committed herself into the holy bonds of matrimony with that wheezened strawberry-colored shrimp; herself, magnificent, the picture of a saint, with the elegant form of an angel, the quintessence, to be sure, of sweetness, the acme of—"

"Whist!" says I, losin' me self-control. "Aisy, there, Dennis Durgan man, come to; and be introduced to the fact that yez have a wife."

"Indeed I am aware of it," says he, tossin' his head and settin' his jaw in the manner of fightin' men. "What of it? And when did yez suspect it might be news to me at all, Micky O'Toole?"

"Indeed," says I, "'tis not news I'm breakin' so much as a statement I'm makin', beggin' yer pardon," says I.

"A statement?" says he. "Beggin' your pardon, to be sure," says he, sarcastic.

"Of the facts," says I, "again beggin' yours also," says I fiercely, and me jaw snapped.

Faith I was disgusted with Dennis Durgan,

so I was. Him a married man a layin' on so thick of the virtues of me own relation's-be-marriage lawful wedded wife. It was not decent, and I was for tellin' him so.

Durgan was just as mad as meself—and tryin' to get me goat, too, was he, it seemed to me.

“O-ho!” laughs he right into me face—a thing I can't abide at all, at all, at no time whatever.

“O-ho!” says I, right back into his face. “And take it from me, I don't like your manner whatever.”

“Indeed,” then says he, “and would it be in the least askin' too much to have yez explain your dislike concernin' me manner?” says he, sarcastic.

“Not at all,” says I, sarcastic, too. “Tis this then: Concernin' the lady, there is a certain look within the eye of yez which for yourself's future domestic peace you would better be endeavorin' to be removin', I'm tellin' yez.”

“What d'ye mean, look?” says he, squintin' with the rage of him.

“Just exactly only what I says, me friend,” I returns, standin' me ground. He gives me one hard look then, and says he:

“Ah, sure now, yez may be likin' her yourself, you divil, for 'tis almost beyond belief, this kind, unselfish solicitude. Ha,” says he, “I'm from Missouri,” says he.

“You're from Ireland,” says I, “you pig-headed Mick, and yer impudence is terrific,” says I, sittin' fast upon me hands to subdue me natural inclination to wallop him with the mighty fists of me.

“Well,” says he, changin' his tone to me, “'twas not me fault at all, at all, that I was misfortunate enough to become a married man before I knew that upon this earth there could be such a beauty which is the unfortunate wife of that pink-headed shrimp in yonder chair. Such happenin's,” says Durgan with a sob in his speech, “may be termed to be the unrestricted

pranks of fate.”

“And in the mean time,” says I, bringin' him back to earth, “as yez seem to be slumberin' in that direction, yez may bear enlightenment upon the fact that Mrs. Norah Durgan has the divil's own temper and the divil's own tongue.”

Then Durgan leans against the billiard-table and laughs outright, answerin' me most philosophic.

“Tongue?” says he. “Of course, bein' a woman; and temper?” says he— “well, Micky O'Toole, we might put that down as only the natural outcome of the tie that binds.”

Me quick-trained ear registers a feminine rustle.

“Whist!” says I. “The ‘tie that binds’ is approachin' audible!”

“Wurra!” returns Durgan, slippin' into the bar; “I feel the need of a drink.”

'Twas then I was left alone to observe that Mrs. Norah Durgan was in no mood at all, at all, to go mad over. Faith, I could tell that by the ungentle rustle of the petticoats of her and the voice of her layin' down the law to the childer without.

I was just drainin' the last drop in me glass, which act catches her eye, and she swoops down upon me with the language which might be misleadin' any listenin' pessimist to be supposin' that I was indulgin' in the willful neglect of me dooty.

“What,” says she, standin' with arms akimbo in the saucy way of her, and emphasizin' every word with a jerk of her black head— “what, Micky O'Toole, with the avenoo filled with indignant citizens and you harborin' a criminal beneath me very roof, and absorbin' liquid nourishment in unlawful quantities, you are an elegant example, are you, of an officer of the law!”

Now, over this disrespectful reference to me conduct while in me uniform I didn't at all lose me temper, as most men indeed would have been riled concernin' such a statement

denouncin' themselves.

But good-natured says I to her:

"Come now, Norah Durgan dear, 'tis just this: That Patrick Murphy must not be jailed. He is a peaceful citizen betimes is he, and his offense to-day was merely due to unrestricted indulgence *via* the picnic of the Dennis McCarthy Ward Association, and—"

"What?" cries she, comin' round to the fire to look into the face of him. "Is it possible to be Patrick Murphy then, him the spirit of peace and harmony? Surprisin' it is, too; the fine little gentleman he always was, to be sure. Ah, 'tis misfortunate! Faith," says she, "he must be got home immediate, he must; and what with his beautiful angel of a wife sobbin' her eyes out—faith," says she, with the tear in her eye, "it would just be breakin' her heart entirely, so it would, if he went to the electric chair!"

It was a tender heart she had, after all. Heaven bless her!

And through the entire proceedin' Patrick Murphy snores along unconscious. What with the folks upon the avenoo itchin' to skin him alive, and Durgan and me gettin' into all kinds of argyments concernin' 'm, he sleeps on and on.

In the face of this, then, 'tis remarkable that folks will be tellin' yez how liquor is man's worst foe! Faith, I've yet to be convinced.

Mrs. Durgan was after dryin' her eyes upon the hem of her newly starched apron, when she suddint calls into the bar:

"Dennis, come here!"

Then says she to him:

"'Tis up to you now, Dennis me man, to see home Pat Murphy."

Immediate he was up in arms—not sparin' the language was he, neither.

"The divil a bit is it, then!" he bursts out. "And what d'ye take me for at all, at all? Me a politician of social eminence to be the escort of that snub-nosed, freckle-faced idiot, that nightmare of Satan, that entirely insignificant

slant-headed—"

"That will be quite sufficient now then, Dennis Durgan," says she, poundin' the billiard-table with the good, strong fist of her.

Dennis Durgan breathed hard.

"Am I to believe," says he— "am I, that you are that overcome with the beauty of the creature that you are blind to all reasoning?"

"Shame upon yez, Dennis Durgan," says she. "'Tis of the angel of a wife of his I am thinkin' this minute. Her that must be a cryin' out of her eyes for fear of him in danger of the electric chair because of the damage which he has this day committed through the instigations of Satan himself workin' through him!"

To all of which Durgan says nothin'—not one word at all.

"Now," says she, movin' toward the door, "I'll be after gettin' a calico wrapper of me own, and, what with a bonnet and a Paisley shawl, he'll be dressed in sufficient taste to disguise himself."

When she disappears Durgan was for fightin' me outright.

"I hope I may eat tacks upon the judgment day," says he, "if this is not an outrage! Behold me, Dennis Durgan," says he, "landowner and taxpayer, and the keeper of the best saloon in the town of Greensport," says he, "havin' to walk along the public thoroughfare with the unelegant form of that rusty-headed ragamuffin, swingin' drunkenly to me arm." says he, "and a holdin' up of him that's sure to be fallin' over every crack and straight line in the pavement!"

"'Twill not be far that ye'll have to be walkin'," I encourages, soothin'.

"'Tis not far that I will walk," snaps Durgan; "and, in fact," says he suddint, "'twill not be any walkin' at all that I will do this night with Patrick Murphy. 'Tis the buggy that will be hitched up, and him tucked within any way at all."

"I would take him home meself in the disguise, but me uniform prevents it. Besides, it

is now dark, and—”

“’Tis true,” sputters Durgan, madder than ever, “that yez have dumped him onto me; but for her sake I will endeavor to conduct meself with propriety.”

“Yer mean for his wife’s?” says I with scorn.

“Whist!” says he, as in comes Mrs. Durgan with the disguise.

“’Twas hard to locate the things,” says she. “And now, Dennis Durgan, you will please wake up Pat Murphy and help him into the things.”

There was no use to antagonize Durgan further, I was thinkin’, so I commences to undertake the job meself by shakin’ Mr. Murphy with the violence which naturally vibrates through the two hundred and ninety pounds of me—but to no avail; in fact, none whatever. Faith, it was stickin’ me club into the slattery ribs of him that finally coaxes him into semiconsciousness; semi, and that was all.

Then into the wrapper I sticks the unbeautiful bean-pole legs of him, and about the string-bean form of him I drapes the Paisley shawl, and what with the bonnet tied neatly beneath the chin he looks like his own grandmother, so he did, landed green and fresh from the County Cork.

’Twas not at all too gentle that Durgan jumps into the shay, draggin’ along Pat Murphy, the mainspring of the conveyance, shriekin’ its displeasure at the performance as meself and Mrs. Durgan t’gether sees them off.

I give them a good half-hour’s start, then meself starts up the avenoo to observe the atmosphere of things in general. Surprised I was to find things so calm.

Two urchins was sittin’ upon the curbstone. Says one:

“Sure he is to be hung o’ Monday if he is found guilty of murder. He is now in the jail, two of us havin’ been to his house to see, and he gone.”

“’Tis little ye know at all,” returns the other; “’tis to electrocution he will be sentenced if he is found guilty of murder. Faith, ’tis long ago that hangin’ has went out of date.”

Then it was that I saw all the pane-less shops had been well boarded over, and it comes to me then that the damage must be made good, and, thinks I to meself, I’ll just draw out a few of the dollars from the bank and have me cousin, Rose Murphy, to negotiate with the citizens to repay the damage, advisin’ her to keep under cover Pat Murphy until the public sentiments against him would be subsided.

So with this in mind, then I makes me way across to the Murphy estate, bein’ a cottage upon two lots, goin: through the back gate on account of me uniform to be less conspicuous. To me intense amazement the door was locked up completely, no sign of life stirrin’ within at all.

“What is the meanin’ of this?” thinks I. Presently I observes a letter, pinned right upon the door-panel it was, just like they does in them movin’-picture shows; and, bein’ unsealed, I takes the liberty of course, to peruse its contents meself, the act takin’ away me breath completely:

To PAT MURPHY, which has went to that Drinkin’ Picnic without me consent at all:

For my part, Pat Murphy, yez can drink up the Atlantic Ocean, and jump into the same with both feet (bad ‘cess to yez), for I have gone home to me mother indefinite.

Yours truly,
ROSE MURPHY.

I wipes the perspiration hard from me brow, I did. I was that perplexed. Me plans was quite upset, and it comes to me suddint: Where was Durgan with Pat Murphy?

I walks up and down frantic for some minutes, I did, gettin’ more panic-struck by the minute from the exercise. I feels the chill goin’

down me spine, wonderin' where in the divil was Durgan with Pat Murphy.

I runs to the front of the house; then to the back. No one in sight.

They should have got here this good while, thinks I, takin' out me watch to see; and, jumpin' Jehoshaphat, wasn't it twenty minutes to the hour when I reports nightly to headquarters!

Twenty minutes it was to eight; eight o'clock, the call of me uniform. At fifteen minutes to the hour me report must be in—it was the rule!

Runnin' hard, I could make it: and make it I must, says I to meself, for it would be the humiliation of me lifetime, me, the pride of the avenoo, to be late for me appearance before me superior officer at the precinct station-house. That would not do at all, at all, would that now?

I made it by the skin of me teeth, as the sayin' is. Puffin' and blowin' was I as I bounces acrost the threshold of headquarters.

Faith, I was overcome with the sight before me, for, leanin' up forninst the rail of justice, if you please, was Pat Murphy, still in the calico wrapper, although without the bonnet upon his head; and Durgan was there, too, scowlin' fiercer than usual; and also Jerry O'Grady, me assistant upon me beat—me Nemesis, in fact—a gossoon of fresh tendencies, who I can't abide at all, at all.

This last mentioned appeared to be holdin' the floor; indeed, pourin' into the ears of the "cap" was he concernin' the shortcoming of the pair of 'em. So this, thinks I, is the result of all me trouble. Wurra, wurra!

And O'Grady was sayin':

"Sure, yer honor, I found them engaged in a battle to the finish, I did. It starts within the buggy that the one was drivin', and I warns them sufficient, I did. But it had no effect whatever, it didn't. For out upon the sidewalk they needs must come to finish their argymint, makin' willful assault one upon the other, and—"

"He bit me in the leg!" yells Durgan, interruptin'.

"A tough leg entirely," says Pat Murphy, makin' a lurch at him.

The cap knocks for order, makin' threats as to contempt, *et cetera*.

Me bone-headed assistant continues:

"One is masqueradin' in women's clothes, as yer honor sees, and—"

"I was threw into it by force!" bursts out Pat Murphy. "'Twas Durgan!"

"'Tis a d——d lie!" shouts Durgan, shakin' his head.

At which point the cap warns them again, whereupon me brilliant assistant—which is too smart to be livin', anyway, and jealous, too, of me job—continues:

"I have all the witnesses here to prove that at 5 P.M. this day the regular officer upon the beat had in custody Pat Murphy."

Whereupon he calls the names, he did, of the keepers of the shops without no windy-panes to their front.

"And these witnesses," shouts he with an air of importance, which gets me goat completely, "can testify that this officer, who should have went and locked him up, has plotted to protect him on account bein' his relation."

I could restrain meself no longer. The beautiful nerve of him, anyway, plottin' me downfall! Bad 'cess to him. Anyway, I was for relying upon Durgan to protect me in this misfortunate affair. So I steps forward to try and fix things up. At the sight of me, however, Durgan yells, aimin' for me neck:

"Here is the scoundrel which got me into this!"

The two officers pulls him back unceremonious.

"Yer honor—" I begins.

"That will do," says the cap, curtailin' me plea. "I have all the facts, and do not need the assistance of yourself."

And, turnin' to Durgan, he says: "I find you

guilty of disturbin' the public peace, but will let you off this time with a warnin' against a repetition of the offense and a fine of ten dollars.

"But you, Pat Murphy, ten dollars for disorderly conduct, and ten dollars for masqueradin' in female make-up, and ten dollars and ten days at hard labor for willful and deliberate assault upon the leg of Dennis Durgan here—"

"It should be a lifetime; he bit me hard," interrupts Durgan.

"Faith, 'tis a hard leg to bite," says Pat Murphy. "'Tis meself should be paid for the attempt."

Somebody in the back laughs.

"Silence!" shouts the cap.

"And six months at hard labor for the willful destruction of property unless some one will go bail for yez in the sum of five hundred dollars in the mornin'."

"Wurra, wurra!" groans Pat Murphy, sinkin' hopeless against the rail. Mr. Durgan's expressive countenance lighted up with satisfaction.

"And," continues me superior officer, concentratin' his attention upon me exclusive,

"as for yerself, Micky O'Toole, if by the proof of these witnesses you be found guilty of the shieldin' of a criminal for the reason of relationship, then 'tis yerself, regardless of the fact you has been hitherto the pride of the avenoo, will be suspended immediate for ninety lays for willful and malicious neglect of dooty; after which you will report or dooty no more upon the avenoo, ait indeed you will please parade yer elegant self, you will, direct to the Third Precinct, which, as you know, bein' the backwoods of Greensport, where the rabbits runnin' acrost yer eet won't disturb yer high tendencies to moral decency."

Upon the conclusion of which it seems that all the Micks in that police-court room was beamin' with joy because of me downfall.

Meself, I was too limp with the disgrace I'm tellin' yez to protest. Faith, he blow could not have been more hard if I was hung then and there.

Then all at wunst the old clock upon the station-house tolls the hour.

"Eight o'clock," says the cap. "Court's adjourned."

"Eight o'clock," says I to meself— "eight o'clock, and me Waterloo!"