

gate, growing in volume as it advanced—the swish, of bare feet on soft ground. She turned from the view of the sleeping sea, to behold a small peasant child in dress and dirty apron speeding up the drive.

The child neared her; then swerved away as if in pain and continued her flight towards the house.

A sudden impulse seized Clodagh.

“Come here!” she called. “Where are you going?”

For an instant the child looked too frightened to speak then her lips parted.

“Misther Asshlin—beyant at Carrigmore!” she said inarticulately; and, turning, she fled onward to the house.

Clodagh stood still for a moment; then she also turned and recrossed the gravelled pathway.

She walked forward, scarcely feeling the ground beneath her feet. Her heart beat fast; a cold premonition passed through her, chilling her blood. Something was about to happen! The inertia that lay upon her mind was shattered! Something was about to happen!

As she reached the hall door, she saw the child vanishing into the stable-yard by the small latched door in the green wooden gate; and saw Mick, escaped from confinement, come careering towards her. But for once she took heed of his manifestations. Scarcely even noticing that he followed her, she passed into the hall, and from there to the dining-room. There she stood for a long time listening—listening intently. At last the sound she instinctively waited for reached her—the sound of a sharp wailing cry. With a frightened gesture she put her hand over her face; then let them drop to the back of a chair that stood beside the centre table.

She stood holding weakly to this chair, her limbs trembling, her face white, while the wailing sound drew nearer, growing more spasmodic as it approached. At last the door was thrust wide open, and Hannah burst into the room, her face blanched, tears streaming from her eyes, her whole air demoralised.

“Miss Clodagh, Masther Larry!” she muttered inarticulately—“Masther Larry!”

Clodagh held to the back of the chair.

“What is it?”

“Gone! Drowned!”