

## “LET THE ROOF FALL IN”

bearing only a fine crop of stones. It was a cloudy November day, murky and lowering. Turkeys and scraggy fowls, with scraggier, scuttling chickens, made the foreground of what might have been a cattle-pen, but turned out to be a mean stone house, standing too high for its width, although of only two floors. The front was as flat as an Italian house in poor quarters, without any ornament at all of portico or verandah. There were weeds, or cabbages, about the front door, and lines with clothes hanging out to dry. Somewhere in the immediate vicinity there must have been pigs, there was a muck-heap close against the side of the house, its aroma reaching him where he stood. Was this where she had sheltered?

Rosaleen saw him coming, a mile away, it seemed. Who else was there who would drive up like that, and get down so quickly, and shout so lustily? Jim and John O'Moro, and the boys, and all of them, threw down what they were doing, and ran to see what the bother was about, expecting Dan Maguire, with a fine skirmish on the way. Rosaleen had been working in the field in her scant cotton dress, with the big, flapping bonnet, cotton too, that protected her head, and covered her white face. Derry had not seen her, for all his anxious, roving eyes; but she had seen him. He had come in pursuit of her. How her heart stopped beating, and then went racing!

At first she was for running away and hiding, then she was for running forward, and now for standing still. Her legs wouldn't carry her, and she could neither run nor stand. It seemed no time at all since she had first seen his figure in the distance, and her heart had leapt, and stopped beating, and started again at racing speed, yet here he was, already out here in the field. For a moment she neither saw nor heard anything: "And it's yourself!" she thought she heard him say. "Is it yourself? Oh, God!"