

lant for Freddy. She tried, mother like, to comfort him, while her own heart bled.

"My boy, look up—take this!" she forced some wine between his lips. "Surely it was an accident, however, terrible."

He only moaned out, "Oh, mother, mother!"

"Freddy, one word—you must answer me one word. Is he dead?"

He moaned the more. How *was* he to tell her.

Another ring summoned the frightened footman. He had heard all. Barns had sent on a messenger to tell the servants; and it was he, too, who had sent Freddy home. He could not bear to let the boy stay and look on the dead face: he thought he could break it best to Lady Elmsdale. No one had seen Harry, but Freddy had heard the fatal shot fired, and had been on the scene of the murder almost as soon as Barns. He had followed his master with a telegram, marked immediate, which had arrived not ten minutes after he had left the castle. He, too, had heard the shots—in fact, he had heard two shots in quick succession—and with a presentiment of evil, he ran rapidly along the road. Even at a distance he recognized the body of his master.

The body lay along the road, quite close to a thick hedge. It was still warm—indeed, Barns fancied he detected a slight movement of the eyes. At first there seemed no cause for death; it might have been a swoon. A moment more, and as he tried to raise his master in his arms, he noticed a thin line of blood trickling down through the hair from under the left temple. Barns felt the hands; they were quite warm; but it needed no medical skill to see that this was death. He determined at once to remain where he was until some one came by. The road was a public one, and it was never long before a cart, or carriage, or some country folks passed along it. He could not bear the idea of leaving the body—to stay by it was all he could do now, and his very fidelity prompted him to remain.

The telegram had fallen from his hand to the ground unnoticed. What matter about it now—there is no hurry in eternity. It was a message from a

lawyer in London, to say that a friend of Lord Elmsdale's had died very suddenly, that he had left him his executor; and begging he would set out at once for Norfolk to be present at the reading of the will. It was supposed, also, that Lord Elmsdale was to inherit a great part of the property, and the lawyer knew very well how acceptable such intelligence would be to his Lordship. What difference would it make to him now? The question was not how rich he might be in this world, but how rich he should be in the next—and so the telegram lay on the ground untouched. No one even cared to lift it up. It lay there, just as earthly wealth will lie at the Last Day—neglected, simply neglected, and the very neglect not even noticed.

Barns was praying—praying with the whole fervor of his heart.

Larry Murphy, the post-boy, came up the road, whistling. How could he whistle? The sound went through Barns like a knife! The boy certainly would not have whistled if he had known what he was coming to. He stopped abruptly—"O Lord!" He did not say it irreverently, but in the very depth of fear and amazement.

He did not ask a question; he knew the face too well. He was too terrified to ask how it happened, or even to think. He stood perfectly still and silent. Then he put his hand into his pocket to feel for a crucifix. The nuns had given him one the day before. He was a good lad, and supported his old, widowed mother by running with the mail bags to a cross country village. He went ten miles and came back ten miles the same day, winter and summer, cold and wet, heat and snow, all the same, and received the munificent remuneration of one shilling a day.\* He had put one half-penny in his pocket then, and his crucifix. The nuns and his old mother were his only friends. His only pleasure was to come up to the Convent to see one of the ladies, who used to lend him a book sometimes.

Larry Murphy took the crucifix and placed it in the dead man's hand. It was done so gently, so reverently, so tenderly, that poor old Barns nearly broke down; but he dashed back his

\* A fact; and yet people will dare to say the Irish are lazy, and will not work.