

---

## OLD LETTERS

---

eye in the room. Gracia wept bitterly. It was the first time her heart had ever felt the pang of real suffering. Even the old Cardinal brushed aside a few sudden tears.

"I am sorry, my dear children," he said, "that the letter so far has not contained a cheery word."

Then straightening himself, he continued reading: "You had an only brother, Gracia. His name was Jerome. After your mother's death I inquired about him. I thought of bringing him to Kempton to spend his days with you, but learned from a friend in England that he had been adopted by a certain wealthy Sidney Chelsea, a retired widower, living at 15 Marlton House Terrace, London."

"15 Marlton House Terrace!" shrieked Jerome, his face reddening with surprise, "the very place where I spent my boyhood days. Sidney Chelsea was my adopted father. Great heavens!"

A thousand thoughts pierced Jerome's mind. The room swam before his eyes. Then Gracia's voice roused him from his sudden stupor.

"Finish the letter, your Eminence, please," gasped Jerome, almost wildly.

The Cardinal continued. The letter was unearthing strange developments, and loud and clear came the old man's touching voice: