

## “LET THE ROOF FALL IN”

found time to recapture it, burst into the room without knocking:

“Not dressed yet! what a sluggard you are! But it’s just what I expected! You’ll have to hurry up all you know. Look sharp, Marie, and put her ladyship into some waterproof togs . . .”

“Don’t be foolish, Bet! Of course I’m not going; it’s too wet. Ranmore isn’t going to ride, the ground will be nothing but a bog, there won’t be a soul there. . . .”

“Oh, don’t talk! you’ve got to come. Ranmore’s outside with the car. The horses will be there, won’t they? I’m going to see Montserrat win the Grand Military if it blows a blizzard. A little rain won’t hurt you, put on thick boots and leggings. There will be some ripping good racing, I can tell you, and it will be a near thing between Gabriel and Montserrat, anyway. Do hurry! I want to have a good look at them before lunch, and the first race is at one.”

Betty Brinmore had a house near Ascot, where Carrie always stayed for the week. She was also the possessor, through her husband, of a hunting-box at Melton, a grouse-moor, and a large amount of more-or-less-exclusive racing information. Carrie valued her friendship, and all that was to be had out of it. Betty would hardly have called their intercourse friendship, it was not a word that fitted Lady Carrie; but they were intimate enemies. Their tastes and pursuits were similar, and they hunted pastime in couples. Betty’s was the franker nature; she was also good-natured. Carrie had persuaded her that Lord Ranmore’s attentions were serious. Well, she had brought Ranmore, or Ranmore had brought her, to fetch Carrie for Sandown; and Carrie would have to come. She did not want to be alone with three or four men. Jim de la Roche