

“LET THE ROOF FALL IN”

of going over there, and wresting information from him. The idea died in its birth.

Now it was only the farm at Tralee that lay between him and despair. He did not want to eat or drink or rest, he wanted only to get to Tralee.

Father Maguire made inquiries about trains and connections, but persuaded him to lie in his house that night, since he could neither walk nor fly, and there were no trains that left until to-morrow. There is no hospitality like the Irish hospitality. Father Maguire was delighted to have a guest, and the particular O'Toole that waited upon them, an ancient widow woman, who had her husband's pedigree at her gnarled old fingers' ends, was as good a cook as is to be found in the south of Ireland, although that may not be saying very much.

Derry was disheartened, and tired, and eager to be seeking further, although now he was depressed with misgiving, and no longer was sure that on the morrow he would hold Rosaleen in his arms, as the priest had predicted. Meanwhile, he was fed with bacon and potatoes, and cauliflower that came out of the garden and was just ripe for cutting; also biscuits, cheese and radishes. Later on, there was a glass of hot whisky and water, mixed by Father Maguire himself, to help Derry to sleep. All the time there had been kindly, comforting talk either addressed to him, or between his host and the relict of the four hundred and seventieth O'Toole, “in direct descent, mind you,” who discussed the position, and who were full of optimism. “Where should she have gone but to the farm; he would find her there for shure on the morrow, and wouldn't her heart lep to see him! . . .”

Father Maguire had a sense of humour, and drew his housekeeper out to amuse his guest. It was a king her departed husband would have been in his own rights, this