

## “LET THE ROOF FALL IN”

was the same room, but it was not quite the same girl who knocked with quick nervousness, stood a moment on the threshold, and then came swiftly over to where old Lady Ranmore sat, and flung herself on her knees, as she had flung herself that night.

The Dowager was in the easy-chair before the open window. It was past five o'clock on a November evening, but the sunset still lingered behind the mausoleum. It reddened that grey stone cairn where Terence lay sleeping. When his mother heard the quick, nervous knock, she sent Biddy away. Now it was coming; now the truth was coming. Her trembling limbs could not support her, and she had sunk into the easy-chair. Yes, there was his tomb; there, in the dim, shrouded distance, against the dying sunset. But here, here at her knees, lay the truth. It had lain there before her, long ago, in the dust, on the ground, and she had spurned it, turned it away, rebuffed it. Now there was no rebuff; now her trembling hands were laid on the girl's head. How cold it was in the room!

“Cease crying now; cease crying. Tell me.”

“I've come back . . .”

“Cease crying now. It's his—tell me it's his! I'm whispering to you—no one can hear us. It's his?”

“What'll you be thinking of me?”

“It isn't of you I'm thinking at all. Tell me. It is his son, my boy's son?”

“Yes.” Her voice was so low, but the mother heard it, and triumphed in hearing it.

“Terence's little son!”

“Terence's son.”

“Now my God be praised! His own son! My son's son!”

Rosaleen's sobs quieted down gradually; but still