

## “LET THE ROOF FALL IN”

had her quiet word of gratitude for the home that had been given her without question, but Mrs. O'Brian brushed that aside. She talked endlessly about herself and Dan Maguire, and it was to that the man who drove the outside car wanted to listen. He would go back to Tralee primed with the very latest intelligence.

Derry controlled his impatience as well as he was able; but all he wanted to do was to get back quickly to the town, to send a telegram to Dunstons, and be alone with his wife.

They were too late for trains at Tralee, and they lay that night at the inn, where the innkeeper, and the boots, the ostler and the shock-headed boy, who was supposed to assist everybody, but was in everybody's way, took the deepest interest in them, though not more interest than they displayed in the Maguire-O'Brian feud. It was the one comedy of the country-side, all they had to amuse them. The rick-burning and the cattle-maiming were really imported melodrama, there was no evidence of either.

The innkeeper's wife wanted to tell the whole story over again whilst she was serving them with supper, but it was Rosaleen's story, and his own, Derry wanted to hear, and to tell, and he rid himself of her volubility as soon as was possible.

It was long and sweet in the telling, lasting through the night, far into the dawn of the morning.

“You thought it was out of pity I married you? It was only the pity made me dare to ask it. I'd loved you from the first moment my eyes fell upon you.”

“And how could I know?”

“But who could be seeing you without loving you? Lie close.”

“But it's me that's only a peasant . . .”

“And it's me that's only your lover. Put your heart against my heart and your lips to my lips. . . .”