

I remember," he proceeded," that quiet warm afternoon of summer long ago. Life with me then was young and full of those imaginings of the unseen world which, would, in uncommon measure, seem to be the portion of the Celt. I had just returned from school and from across my shoulders, as if it were the burden of the day, had flung my satchel of books into a corner of the big settle that lay near the hearth, wherein was kept warm for me the meal that I was thinking of and that was in my nostrils, if I may so speak, most of the way home from the chalky and ink spattered school room down there at Drumkellig. I had no sooner disposed of it than I was off to the stables,—there however to find that my favorite "Flowereen" and her grey son, the *capall glos*, were away to Caherneill, my elder brother Pierce and one of the ostlers having gone over there for two loads of straw to make bedding for those horses of Bianconi, for which stable accommodation had been rented from my father. Our own horses would not be back not until long after nightfall, so my expected canter on "Flowereen" with Denny Regan on the grey down to the bridge to water them in the quick, clear stream that flows under it to the sea had to be put off. But to Denny himself I went, well knowing that if there was any prank to play he would know. What a wonderful creature he was to be sure! Blind Denny, as we called him,—for in childhood an accident had deprived him of the priceless boon of sight,—knew all that was going on, and though young and afflicted as I have said, was the cheeriest gossip in all Rathealy. Did you want to know where the *dreoilin** nested or the green linnet, he could through defiles of rocks and the briery twists and turns that led from the highway to the stony fields of Larra, take you to the very spot which few of us even with the blessing of full sight could reach. But, as luck would have it, I was unable to find him although I tried his favorite haunts. Nor could I find another companion of mine, Bartly Sullivan, who when Denny was not to be had often came with me when a ride on horseback was in question. My object, as I need not tell you, in looking them up was to have one or the other with me on what threatened to be a late ride to the river. The afternoon wore on, and it looked as if I should have alone to face that