

When full consciousness that she was alone came, Clodagh, she let her hands drop from the back of the chair ; and, moving stiffly, crossed the room to the fire.

She made no attempt to touch the notes that lay on the table. Asshlin had placed them ; but she looked at them for a moment with a species of horror. And at last, as though the thought of them had begotten other thoughts, she raised her eyes to the picture hanging above them—the picture of Anthony Asshlin in his lace ruffles and black satin coat, with his powdered hair, his gallant bearing, and dark eyes.

The eyes of the picture seemed to look into hers with an almost human smile of satire. Time had passed since the gay, reckless presence had filled the old room ; dice and duelling were gone out of fashion ; but human nature was unchanged—there were still Asshlins of Orristown !

" O God——" she said aloud ; then she stopped. " There is no God ! " she added wildly—" there is no God ! "

At the sudden sound of her voice, Mick rose from the corner where he had been crouching. The sight of his face calmed her ; she passed her hand once or twice across his eyes, then walked quite steadily across the room.

The dog followed her closely ; but at the door she stopped and looked at him.

" No, Mick ! You cannot come ! "

By some extraordinary sagacity the animal whimpered and pressed closer to her skirt.

With an almost fierce impulse she stooped, kissed him on the forehead once ; then, holding him back, slipped through the door and closed it.

He gave a frantic bark of misery, but she did not pause. She did not even look back. Walking rapidly, she passed across the hall and out into the open.

Turning to the right, she skirted the stable-yard and the orchard, and, hurrying past the spot where years ago Milbanke had asked her to be his wife, took the path to the Orristown cliffs.

Her thoughts trooped up like living things as she stumbled forward along the uneven track. She was conscious of no fear, only of a desolating loneliness—an enormous sense of futility, of finality. Last night she had looked into the eyes of Fate, propounding the question of how she