

don't know how. I can at least prevent your doing this dreadful deed."

He dared not seize her, lest some untoward movement should jar the machine and precipitate a catastrophe. Althea read the thought in his mind, and holding the box close to her breast, she eluded him and stepped carefully back to the other end of the barge. She balanced herself upon its flat ledge and looked anxiously from side to side. Her cloak fell from her shoulders, showing her slender grey figure outlined against the dark stream. Her gaze went wildly round the scene in a vain search for help.

During the next moment or two, time stood still for Althea. The dull, red lights on the shore receded. The dull, dark roof of heaven, sprinkled with pale stars, blotted out past and future. Life, she knew, with deep inward conviction, was one eternal Now, its deep abysses as well as its fairest dream-fields lit by love—that fire divine, that is as the breath of the soul. And the soul itself passing through phase to phase, from sphere to sphere, reproducing experiences in order to acquire perfection, is sublimely eternal—a flame of that greater Fire that never can be quenched.

She turned to O'Neill, full of spiritual exaltation. The vivid glimpse of wider issues had given her a sense of courage and enlightenment. Then she perceived the three dark figures hurriedly approaching the little landing-stage. Against it, the barge swaying with the tide tipped unsteadily and Althea had some difficulty in keeping her balance. She saw the gleam of three daggers bare in the starlight, and knew that the moment had come when there would be that change of which Ladislav had spoken, a change, but not the end—and it would not be for