

"I sees the Black One a-ridin' on yer back!" she cried, in a voice of horror and disgust. "I sees his face over yer shoulder — aye, an' his arm around yer neck like a rope!"

He looked at her for a moment, and then quickly away as he forced her violently aside.

"An' the hell-fire in yer eyes!" she cried.

The skipper was free of her by then and out of the house; but he turned and stared at her with a haggard face and swiftly dulling eyes.

"The curse bes on me!" he whispered. "It bes in me vitals now — like I had kilt him already."

The expression of the girl's face changed in a flash and she sprang out and caught one of his hands in both of hers.

"Kill him? Ye bain't meanin' to kill him, Denny Nolan?" she whispered.

"Aye, but I bes, curse or no curse," he said, dully. "To-morrow mornin' I bes a-goin' to kill him — man to man, in fair fight."

"But for why, Denny?"

"For the girl."

"Bes ye lovin' her so desperate, Denny?"

"Nay, nay, lass, not now. But I wants her!"