

Meadows's hand fell heavily on her shoulder as she crouched at his bedside.

"An' what do ye think ye do to me? Do ye think Oi'm reel contented an' comfortable knowin' what Dawson must think av ye? Ye've been brought up in a country av strong loves an' strong hates . . . ye've seen min commit murdher fer a woman they wanted; ye've seen wimen go to Hell fer a man . . . an' yet ye kape yer mouth shet . . . Goldie Meadows, tell me the truth, as if ye was talkin' direct to Saint Pather, do ye love Chris Kleath?"

The crimson wave which dyed her face and neck answered him. He groaned, "I suppose ye was all writ up in the papers?"

She did not deny it.

"Tell me this, now, would ye have cleared that bye before he left the dock or not? The truth, gur-rul . . ."

"Yes — yes! Oh, Dad, a thousand times yes! I did call out, but no one heard me. Besides, it was too late."

Meadows grunted. "Does he know that?"

"No one knows, not even Lizzie. They think me all you say . . . perhaps I am, only everything looked different at the time."