

while I knew I was lying on the floor, with a cold hand resting like lead on my face. I got up; the figure didn't move, and I supposed that like myself he was stunned by the shock. As I passed a mirror on my way to the window—I saw myself—for the lamp was burning bright. God had branded me a thief. Do you see here—drawn—paralyzed, oh, Gina! All these years I have worn the dark streak, and one eye was blind, one ear stone deaf. I was a walking shadow of my own sin; horrible to look upon—and I fled to avoid the gaze of my race. Somewhere, in Illinois I think, I heard two men on a train speak of a large reward offered for the recovery of Gen'l Darrington's will, which had been stolen by one of his heirs, whom the police were hunting. I was branded—and on my breast here was printed the face of the dead man—for he had torn my shirt open as he seized me with one hand, and struck me with the other. I hid in mines, crossed the plains, secreted myself in a bee ranche. Then the Canadian railroad was partly built, and I joined the grading party and worked—until the curse of my sin was more than I could bear. I heard of the holy Brothers here, made my last journey, confessed my theft, and entered on my penance. Gina, General Darrington was killed instantly by the lightning."

As the burden Beryl had long borne slipped suddenly from her heart, the joy of release from blood-stain was so unexpected, so intense, that her face blanched to a deadly pallor, and the glad eyes she lifted to her husband's shone as those of an angel.

"Bertie—Bertie—" Words failed her. She could only kiss the wasted cold hands that were innocent of bloodshed.

After some moments, the dying man said almost in a whisper: