

mean to — give him a chance? — to fight him fair?"

"Aye, man to man — an' as sure as the devil fetched him to Chance Along I'll kill him wid these hands! An' then — an' then ye'll be mine — an' when Father McQueen comes in June 'twill be time for the weddin' — for that part o' it. Ye've put the names o' coward an' beast on to me — an' by Saint Peter, ye'll live to change them names or to know them!"

Some color came back to Flora's cheeks and her clear eyes shone to their depths.

"If you fight fair," she said, faintly but steadily, "he will give you what you deserve. I am not afraid. God will be with him — and he is the better man!"

The skipper laughed, then stooped suddenly, caught her in his arms and kissed her on the lips. Next moment he flung her aside and dashed from the room, almost overturning Mother Nolan in his flight. At the door of the kitchen he came face to face with Mary Kavanagh. He tried to pass her without pausing, but she stood firm on the threshold and held him for a moment or two with her strong arms. Her gray eyes were blazing.