

There had been silence in the hut since his last remark, but the ominous looks of the rest of the gang plainly said that he was not going to have his own way.

At this crisis the door was pushed open and the boy who had visited the priest stood in their midst. His face was very pale, and bore traces of tears. "Have any of you seen a priest passing this way?" he asked imploringly. Then catching sight of the burly form holding the revolver, and the priest who stood with his hands firmly clasped over his breast as if guarding the Blessed Sacrament from harm! "Father," burst from the lips of the boy, "what are you doing here? Let him go free! Poor Katie is dying."

"God, forgive me," exclaimed the man, "Katie dying! Oh, my child, my child!" Then Donovan turned to the others, saying, "You must let him go in peace! My child is dying!" Evidently they were somewhat afraid of him, for he turned to the priest and said "Go at once, I will defend you."

The Father needed no second bidding. He rushed out and mounted his horse, which was tethered outside. Donovan the while guarding the door. The horse his son had ridden was there also, and in a moment he was on its back with the boy on the saddle before him.

"Ride on now, for your life," he shouted. But the words had scarcely left his lips, when the report of a pistol shot was heard, and Donovan reeled in the saddle.

"Are you hurt?" anxiously shouted the priest.

"Never mind me," was the reply, "hasten on to the child."

When they reached the cottage they found the poor girl very ill, and suffering from want of proper care. Her father's remorse was pitiful to see. She was the creature that he loved best on earth, his affection for the girl who seemed far too fair and gentle to be the daughter of such a man.

But time passed. Poor and hasty were the preparations made for the Heavenly Visitor, but the sick girl's heart was comforted when on his knees by her bedside her father promised to return to God, who had, by a miracle of the Blessed Sacrament, subdued in a single moment a heart hardened by years of sin.