

shirts—— Wake up, Rod; you haven't any quarrel with us. We're trying to make friends with you. Don't strike us."

His humor fell miserably flat upon the ears of Baird.

"Please don't be silly, Jimmy," he said.

"Silly? Because we've come down here to—well, what did we come down here for, Eileen? I know that I came to tell Rod that if I heard any more of this nonsense about his leaving Ladd & Company, I'd bust him one on the ear. What did you come down for, Eileen?"

She hesitated a moment. The blush that was in her cheeks spread to her forehead, her throat.

"To tell him," she said, with the least catch in her voice, "that if I heard any more of this nonsense about his leaving me, I'd bust him one on the ear."

"Right!" said Jimmy. "Eileen, go bust him. As for me, I've scruples. I can't stand by and watch a healthy young female mistreat a wounded male. I—just can't do it, so—be careful of his shoulder, Eileen."

He was through the door and it had closed behind him before they comprehended his intention. Eileen glanced at the closed door. Suddenly she trembled. She took a step after Jimmy. And then Baird was beside her.

"Eileen!" She turned. He was close to her. She put a hand against a chair to steady herself. "Eileen!" he said again.

Then she met his eyes, so close to hers that their