

aroused by the girl's scorn, until his finer feelings toward her were burned out and blown abroad like ashes. His infatuation lost its fine, ennobling element of worship, and fell to a red glow of desire of possession. He forced his way to Flora's room, despite the protests of Mother Nolan.

"To-morrow ye'll be mine or ye'll be his," he said, staring fixedly at the frightened girl. "To-morrow mornin' him an' me bes a-goin' to fight for ye — an' the man what lives will have ye! Ye put the name o' coward on to me — but I bain't no coward! I fights fair — an' the best man wins. I could kill him now, if I was a coward."

Flora's face was as white as the pallid figure on the cross above the chimney.

"You *are* a coward! — and a beast!" she cried from dry lips. "If you kill him my curse shall be with you until your dying day — and afterwards — forever."

"Then ye can tell him to go away, an' I won't be killin' him," said the man.

"Tell him — to go — away?"

"Aye — that ye've no need o' him. Send him away. Tell him ye means to marry wid me."

"No," whispered the girl. And then, "Do you