

# The Tide on the Moaning Bar

by *Fannie Hodgson Burnett*

The story of a girl's love and a man's nature, and the wreck made by the combination on the Rocks of "The Moaning Bar."

I HAD never liked him. Much as I loved my lady, and long as I labored in her service, I cannot say that I ever knew the day when I had any affection for Mr. Jack, even the slightest. There was a hard look in his black eyes from the first, and the moment I saw him, as he lay, a day old baby, bundled up in lawn and laces, it seemed as if I saw into his future, and trembled. And as he grew older, the evil spirit grew with him.

He was cruel and selfish as a child, though his handsome face covered his faults, as handsome faces are apt to do; and even my lady, who was so gentle and kindly, could see no harm in him, and thought his wilful ways were only high spirit.

And perhaps she was the more blind to it, because his black eyes were so like his dead father's; and she had always clung to her husband's memory so tenderly. But Mr. Jack was not like his father, though my lady fancied he was. Mr. Lowther had never made an enemy in his life; and I am sure Mr. Jack never made a true friend.

People flattered and feared him, and pretended to admire his beauty and high handed ways, but no one ever liked him well enough to speak a good word for him behind his back. But, for my lady's sake, people bore with him, and for my lady's sake I bore with him among the rest; and when she lay upon her deathbed, it was me she gave the charge of caring for him, as I had cared for her.

"Don't leave Mr. Jack, Mallon," she said to me, when she could not say anything else. "Don't leave my boy. Take care of him,

for my sake. I know he will always take care of you, Mallon. His father would have done it, if he had lived; and I know Jack will."

But though I promised, I knew better than to expect anything like gratitude from Mr. Jack. I had watched him all his life, and never knew him to show a thoroughly unselfish impulse.

But for my sweet, dead lady's sake, I stayed with him as housekeeper, at the Manse, as the country house was called, and I tried my best to please him; so we had no disagreement, for he never interfered, so long as things were to his liking; and I may add, never even thought to give me the thanks his father and my lady had never spared.

However, I stayed and attended to the servants, and kept the house accounts; and when he came down from London with his friends, he never had to complain. And so matters went on, until the month after my lady's death, when he suddenly took a fancy that he wanted me to go with him to a little seaside town, where he had been staying for some whim or other; for, as he condescended to say then for the first time, he "liked my ways, and liked to have me about him."

So, remembering my promise to his dying mother, I went, without any words; though I must admit it was rather a trial, at my time of life, to make such a change all at once; and, moreover, I could scarcely see how it was that he could require me.

I found his chambers very fine and handsomely furnished; for it was just like Mr. Jack to have everything of the handsomest and

best. There was a large suite of them in a big house, in the principal square, and the rest of the establishment was let to an Irish officer, whose regiment was quartered in the town barracks.

Major Clangarthe, the gentleman's name was, and his family consisting of a wife and three or four children, was with him. His rooms were not so handsome as Mr. Jack's, I discovered; and even the best of them had a queer, untidy look. Mrs. Clangarthe had been a great beauty in her day, and came of a very fine, very poor Irish family; and on the strength of this she used to lie on the sofa, or sit in an easy chair all day, joking with the major, and letting the children run wild.

They had made away with plenty of money in their time, shabby as things seemed now; and they were as carelessly happy, good tempered a set as ever I saw in my life. When they had money, it flew right and left, and when they gave their gay little wine suppers, I am sure people never enjoyed themselves more than they did; and there was never more hearty laughing than I could hear among the officers, who crowded into their drawingrooms, as if they would rather be there than attend the finest entertainment in the West End. But they were queer people for all that.

The first I saw of them was two or three days after my arrival, when, as I was sitting at my work, there came a rap at my door, and in answer to my "come in," it opened and showed me a young lady standing there laughing.

"Do you mean 'come in' really?" she said, good naturedly. "If you don't, I can run away again."

She was a very pretty young lady, indeed, and very young; not more than seventeen; but to my mind she looked queer enough. She had big, round, lovely gray eyes, and crinkling, silky black hair, hanging to a bit of a waist; but the crinkling black hair looked

as if it actually needed brushing; and it was tied back with a purple velvet ribbon, which was anything but clean.

I had never seen a lovelier, more supple little figure; it was so lithe and soft and round; but her crimson cashmere morning robe was soiled and frayed; and the seam on one of her shoulders had come unstitched and showed the white skin through plainly.

Even her feet—such pretty feet—were not tidy. One of her slippers had burst out, and the other had lost its rosette. But she did not seem to care about her appearance, and drew up the chair I offered her close to mine, and began to talk with a careless freedom that made me almost catch my breath.

"I am Lina," she said, as unceremoniously as if she had known me for years. "Lina Clangarthe, from the rooms up stairs; and I thought I would come to see you. Mamma said I might, because we know Mr. Lowther so well. You have been housekeeper in his family ever since he was born, he says."

I told her that I had, and answered all her questions as well as I could, though she asked a great many. The fact was, she asked questions all the time, and seemed so sweet tempered about it that I could not help liking the poor, neglected child.

And she was as ready to answer questions as she was to ask them, and to my bewilderment, told me all about the family affairs, speaking just as gaily about their family troubles as if the whole affair was a joke.

"And so it is a joke," she said, "and fine fun we have of it sometimes. If it wasn't for Lady Medora and her lectures, and the tracts she sticks in the boxes of old finery she sends us, we shouldn't mind it a bit."

Lady Medora was her father's sister, I found out, and a very rigid person. She sent them boxes of her cast off finery two or three times a year, and when they came, they were sure to herald a new lecture on family

frivolity, and a new supply of tracts.

"I wore one in the toe of a slipper for a week," Lina said. "Her ladyship had stuffed it in, and I should never have seen it, but that Fergus' terrier was playing with the rosette and tore the kid and pulled it out."

I really thought I must be dreaming, it seemed so strange that the pretty, incomprehensible creature should be revealing the family secrets so frankly; but she rattled on as gaily as if there was nothing at all remarkable in her queer confidences.

"I am so glad you have come," she said. "I like old ladies, and you look so nice and good natured. I shall come in and see you often, if you don't mind. You won't mind, will you? Besides, I am glad for something else. As long as you are here, it won't be the least bit improper to talk to Mr. Jack when I come in to borrow things. I often come in to borrow things, and I can't help talking when he begins, though I suppose it is a tiny mite improper. And mamma says I must be discreet; but the fact is, my darling Mrs. Mallon, we are not a discreet family. I often think there must be the least taste of vagabond blood in our veins, if we are Clangarthes."

I was so sorry for her, so fearful of the danger her beauty and ignorance and high spirits might throw her into, that, even while she laughed, I felt heavy hearted.

What sort of a woman could she be, this mother, who let the pretty creature run in and out of a gentleman's private rooms to borrow things and listen to whatever flattering nonsense he chose to talk to her? In the liking I had taken to her I couldn't help speaking a word or two, which I thought might serve as a motherly hint.

"I am glad I have come, too, my dear," I said to her. "And I hope you won't take it hardly if I say I am glad for your sake. I hope you will come and see me often; and if you want to borrow anything, just run in here, right to me, because you are quite right in

thinking it is not quite proper to apply to Mr. Jack. You are too young and pretty for such things to be quite discreet, my love."

From the bottom of my old woman's heart I felt that she was too good and innocent to be trifled with, and I knew Mr. Jack too well to hope that he meant to act honorably by her. But I did not think of the worst then. God knows, I never believed his heart could be as black as it proved itself.

I thought it quite likely that he might talk nonsense, and flatter her with hopes he never meant to realize; but I never went so far as to think he could mean to bring misery and despair on this pretty, ignorant young thing, whose heart was so fresh and childish.

She sat and talked to me for more than an hour, and the more she talked, the more I liked her light hearted, affectionate ways, and the more I wished she had a better mother to guide her. It seemed a trifle curious, too, that I, with all my staid, old womanish notions, should have taken such a fancy; but somehow my heart warmed toward her, and she seemed to see it.

I knew that at first the innocent rattlebrain had only come to coax her way into my heart for Mr. Jack's sake, but I could see plainly enough in the end that she was quite honest in her liking for me, and would take any motherly counsel I gave her.

I could not help thinking about her when she was gone, and wishing that she was not so ready to admire Mr. Jack's fine ways and handsome face. He was handsome enough, it cannot be denied, and he was the very style of beauty to take a girl's fancy. He was slight and lithe limbed, and dark as a Spaniard.

Indeed, there had been, two or three centuries ago, a touch of Spanish blood in the Lowther family, and now and then it broke out again in a pair of dense black eyes, a slow, sweet smile, and a graceful languor of motion.

My lady's husband had possessed the

dark eyes, but the rest had come to Mr. Jack, and it was easy enough to see how a girl like Lina Clangarthe would passionately admire his beauty and careless haughtiness.

That night, for the first time since my arrival, Mr. Jack paid me a visit, and the moment I saw him I knew why he had come. And, after he had talked, about other things for a while, he spoke out, carelessly enough.

"You had a visitor this morning, Gorish tells me," he said.

The words were quiet sounding, to be sure, but I did not trust them, for bold and devil may care as he was by nature, he did not look me in the face when he spoke. He looked down at the half smoked cigar in his hand, so that his black lashes cast a curious shadow over his dark, half closed eyes.

"Yes, I had a visitor," I answered, as brief as possible.

He smiled languidly, as he smoothed a loose leaf round the cigar with his strong white fingers.

"A pretty one, too," he said. "However scandalized you may be with your recollection of lovely, untidy hair, and lovely, untidy figure, you will agree with me there, I am sure."

"Yes, sir," I replied gravely again. "A pretty one and a bright one. A bright, affectionate, loving one, with a fresh, true heart, I think."

He smiled again lightly, touching the ash of his cigar.

"Ah!" he said, in a low, half indifferent sort of tone; and then he put the cigar in his mouth again and went on smoking, as if he had forgotten all about what we had been saying. It was a way of his to pass things by and become indifferent to them in a moment. It had been so with his toys and pets as a child; and it was so even with his friends and his extravagant fancies.

He said nothing more to me about Miss Lina, and I was glad to find he didn't. It

gave me some hope that he had not taken any great fancy to her, as I had at first imagined he had. His fancies were not pleasant things to cope with; and I knew such a fancy as this could come to no good.

But before I had been in the house many days, I found that the major and he were great friends, and that Mrs. Clangarthe admired him as much as her daughter did. She had a great weakness for beauty, and Mr. Jack's dark eyes won her from the first.

He spent hours in their apartments, passing in and out in the queer, informal way everybody who had dealings with them seemed to adopt; and it was plain that he was always welcome, for the major made a great to do over him, and Mrs. Clangarthe would laugh and talk to him in the good natured, light headed fashion which seemed natural to her.

The major was pretty deeply in his debt, Mr. Jack's valet, Gorish, told me, and was continually borrowing fresh supplies; but for the matter of that, Gorish added, he was in debt over head and ears, and borrowed right and left wherever there was a chance.

As I have said before, there were plenty of visitors constantly coming to the house, most of them military men like the major, and all of them appeared to be of one opinion regarding Miss Lina. They all admired her, and all made love to her, and I must say that I believe some of the younger ones were really in earnest.

And no wonder. When she was dressed, as she was always of an evening, with her lovely figure, lovely face, lovely hair, and reckless high spirits, I am sure there was not a more beautiful creature in London. In spite of their untidy ways, the Clangarthes had a wonderful taste in dress; and what with Lady Medora's presents, and going into debt, they kept up in a way that was astonishing.

But with all the attention she received, and all the fine speeches that were poured into her pretty, ready ears, it was easy to see that

Miss Lina cared for none of them but Mr. Jack. She gave way to him in an innocent, open, girlish way, and she tried to amuse him.

She was just the generous young creature to be a tender, willing slave through bitter and sweet. If she loved her husband, he might be her tyrant, if he had the will; and the more I saw, the less I fancied Mr. Jack's winning her warm, loving heart to play the tyrant over.

I saw a great deal of the family, and had the chance to watch, because in a short time I found that I might be of service in several little ways, and finally, partly through my liking for the girl, and partly at Mr. Jack's request, I fell into the habit of superintending things here and there and helping the servants when they had company.

And so the friendship between Miss Lina and myself was strengthened. She began to make a confidante of me in more ways than one. She told me about her admirers, and laughed at them in a hearty, enjoyable way which had not a bit of deceit about it.

She showed me her dresses and came to me for help when they wanted mending or altering, and when I did anything for her she would kneel on the carpet at my side, with her big gray eyes all alight with wonder and gratitude.

I never helped her in the least without getting an affectionate burst of thanks and an impulsive caress. It was her nature to overflow with gratitude and pleasure about small things and I was the last person in the world to try to restrain her.

They were having one of their free and easy little suppers one night and I had noted among the guests a gentleman I had not seen before.

He was not an officer, but a civilian, and though he was well looking enough, there was a stiffness about his manner and a haughty, pretentiousness in his blond face that rendered him by no means as prepossessing as

the genial, finely made, epauletted men, who were so fond of thronging the rooms. "Sir Denis," I heard them call him, and I noticed that he seemed very much pleased with Miss Lina, and showed it pretty plainly in a certain stiffly polite fashion.

It appeared, too, that he was a favorite of Mrs. Clangarthe, for she took a great deal of trouble to draw him out, and evidently wished that Lina would be attentive. But I understood Miss Lina very well by this time and saw that she was rather uneasy. She was trying very hard to be obediently entertaining, but she was not getting along very well, and was not enjoying herself as she usually did. I had promised Mr. Jack to undertake the management of things that night, and in passing to and fro before the opened doors. I saw that as she danced with Sir Denis and talked to him, there was a restless look in her eyes and a queer, little eager color on her cheeks.

She looked uncomfortable, and I guessed the reason why. Sir Denis had taken Mr. Jack's place so completely that the two had hardly spoken a word to each other, and the poor child was troubling herself about it and fancying that he was troubled, too. But he was bearing it very well, I thought. He was making himself agreeable to a tall young lady with a fine figure and an amber satin dress, and seemed to be enjoying himself pretty well, to judge from his face and the young lady's rather loud laughs.

He did not take much notice of Miss Lina, and after a while, I think, she began to notice it, for the color in her cheeks died out and the uneasy look in her eyes deepened. For my part I felt almost angry. I knew what his indifference meant.

He knew his power over her, and meant to exercise it. He took the tall young lady in amber satin down to supper, and he hung over her and talked nonsense in a half joking way that was torture to the poor child

who sat opposite by the side of her ceremonious admirer, the uneasy color coming and going as she listened to the bursts of laughter from their side of the table.

But at last Mr. Jack got tired of the talkative young woman in amber, and handing her over to somebody else, made his way across the room as if he was going to leave it.

I was in a room on the other side of the hall and could see everything, and the hidden misery in Miss Lina's eyes told me that if she could not break from Sir Denis in one way she would in another.

And so she did, for in a minute more she was out in the hall and half way down the stair case after Mr. Jack, and was speaking to him all in a wild flutter, half frightened, half daring.

"Mr. Lowther!" she said. "Jack! Don't go."

I shall never forget how she looked just as she stood there at that minute, the troubled red on her cheeks, the eager girl's desperateness in her big eyes.

It is such girls as Lina Clangarthe who bear misery and shame because their hearts are tender and the chances are against them; it is such girls who need the world's pity and God's help when the worst comes to the worst. A woman less ignorant of the world's ways would have known better than to let Mr. Jack see she could not bear a shadow of neglect.

"Jack! Don't go!"

A little shiver ran over me as I heard her say it. I did not know before that they had gone so far as that, and my heart quickened forebodingly as he stopped and turned to look up at her. Cruel as it may seem, I was almost ready to pray that he might not hear her and would go on without answering.

She was so pretty—so pretty! The dazzling light seemed all to shine upon her full, soft, white shoulders and arms; even the shining white billows of her silk train could

not make her look; anything but a child. The light was so bright that the roses that drooped in her bosom and clung to her loose, soft hair, were as red as blood.

She was pretty enough to bring him back whether he cared for her or not, and he came, smiling, as if nothing had happened, and stood a few steps below her as she slipped into a sitting posture on the stairs, looking down at him with her soul in her eyes and her heart's blood in her cheeks, all in a flutter of joy at his coming and wonder at her own daring.

"Ah, Jack," she said, "you are not vexed, are you? Not vexed with me?"

They were so near me that I could hear every word they said and see every change in either face, and I saw the slow gleam of triumph grow into Mr. Jack's black eyes; the evil, handsome eyes he had inherited from that Spanish ancestor. It was only a small triumph, but it was one, and the least of triumphs pleased him. So he stood looking up at her and smiling a little, as he leaned on the balustrade.

"You seemed to be fully occupied," he said. "I thought perhaps Sir Denis could fill my place, but, of course, I am not vexed. A man's not apt to be when he sees himself thrown over for another—is he?"

All the color fell away from her face and she broke out upon him almost piteously.

"Oh, Jack! oh, Jack, don't! You know—you do know it wasn't my fault. I have been miserable all night. And, besides," turning on him with a swift little touch of pathetic reproach, "weren't you talking to Norah Delamore?"

Perhaps her prettiness and the eager appeal in her lovely eyes touched him. At all events, after an odd little pause, he spoke to her in another tone.

"Where is your cloak?" he said. "Go and put it on, Lina, and come here to me again. I want you."

She sprang up in a minute as bright as

could be and went without a word, and in less time than it takes me to write it she was back again with a bright rose pink opera cloak on, her eyes shining from under its hood like diamonds.

“Is it the garden?” she said to him, slipping her hand into his arm and laughing a happy little laugh. “Is it into the garden, Jack?”

“It is where we shall be out of the way,” he answered, softening his cruel voice. “Out of the way and together and happy.” And he slipped his treacherous arm about her little waist, and drawing her to his side, bent over and kissed her full on her blooming lips.

I knew there was little room for hope after that. Having gone so far, he would go farther, if the fancy held him, and as soon as he was tired he would fling her away without a pang of remorse. I could not help feeling a thought bitter against the heedless woman in the bright room near them.

I could hear her laughing and I could hear the Major laughing, too, and I could not resist an impulse of impatience at their blindness.

I never had children of my own, but I felt sure that no daughter of mine, if I had ever had one, would have been left thus helplessly to herself as Lina Clangarthe was.

And this was only one occasion out of a thousand such. Every day I saw more of an imprudence, which, to my mind, seemed actually terrible. The people who visited the house were as careless and easy going as the Clangarthes themselves, and Lina was wonderfully popular among both men and women.

She was pretty enough to have drawn the world after her, and her queer, bright, high spirits and reckless inclination for fun were the very things to please people who thought of nothing but how to enjoy life and amuse themselves.

“We take life easy,” said Lina to me

one day. “Where’s the use of taking it hard and fretting like Lady Medora. It only makes people ill natured. We can’t help being poor and in debt, but we can help fretting about it, can’t we. Mrs. Mallon?”

There never was a lighter hearted creature on earth than she was then. It appeared as though she was overrunning with fun and life. There was never a dull look on her bright face or a hard word on her lip.

She had a laugh and a jest for every one, and there was not a servant in the house among all the ill paid lot who was not ready to do anything for Miss Lina. It is my opinion that but for her there would scarcely have been a servant on the place. When there was money in the house she always remembered them, and when there was none she coaxed them into a good humor.

Her maid got her dresses before they were half worn and the cook borrowed her jewelry, quite secure in her good nature, even if she was found out. Ill regulated as everything was, there was something half comical about it all. They were so good natured and easy and life seemed such an enjoyable affair.

Even the ill used tradesmen, who dunned them from morning till night, went away somewhat pacified after an interview with Lina or the Major, though there is no doubt they afterward wondered at their own indiscretion in allowing themselves to be so soothed.

It is my impression that Lady Medora herself had a sense of her own unfitness to cope with them, for though she sent box after box of old finery and tracts enough to have converted a whole Fiji island, she never visited them.

“And all the better,” said Lina, tossing over the contents of one of said boxes on its arrival. “It would only make her uncomfortable, poor soul. She wouldn’t understand us, you know, and we shouldn’t

understand her. It's all the better, and we are very grateful to her, I am sure. It's a blessed thing for us, though, that there's one saint in the family to pray us all out of Purgatory. Lady Medora is a very good woman, Mrs. Mallon. Dear me! I wonder where she wore this rose colored satin dress. I am going to shake the tracts out of the trimmings and try it on."

I often thought that with a good mother she would have been far better than most girls. My pretty Miss Lina, she was better as it was, in spite of her wild ways. I never heard an ill natured word from her lips, queer as some of her speeches were, and she was generous and affectionate beyond measure.

The tribe of neglected children who tumbled about the rooms were fonder of her than they were of any living thing, and she would give up her own pleasure any day to romp with them when they asked her, which they were by no means chary of doing.

And through watching her and noticing little things, I saw that her feeling for Mr. Jack was love of the intensest kind, and I saw, too, that it grew stronger every day, and that he led her on. And just as far as he chose to lead, she followed and was ignorantly happy. He spent his evenings with her and the Major and Mrs. Clangarthe looked on in their usual amiable, irresponsible way. He rode out with her and the Major admired Lina's fine figure complacently as the two cantered away, while Mrs. Clangarthe nodded them a farewell from the drawingroom window.

"Lina is like Lady Anastasia Derry, my dear. Don't you think so?" Mrs. Clangarthe was fond of saying. "You remember Lady Anastasia Derry, Major, and she was Col. Enniskillen's daughter and her mother was a Wexford?"

The memory of her aristocratic antecedents was a great source of pleasure to Mrs. Clangarthe and she clung to it with whimsical pertinacity.

She was anxious that Lina should make a good marriage, though I often thought she went about managing the matter in a queer way. She forgot that gentlemen of position and title don't always choose their wives for a pretty face. They are a trifle more particular in these days than they were or else the old romantic stories have very little foundation.

But it was Mrs. Clangarthe's plans that cast the first shadow over Miss Lina's life. I do not think the girl had ever known a shadow before, but a cloud came at last and its darkness was too heavy for her.

It had first showed itself the night when the tall, stiff, young man they called Sir Denis followed her about and roused Mr. Jack to making love to the young woman in amber satin, and in the course of time this same shadow became the cloud.

The stiff young gentleman came to the house pretty often after the supper party and when he came he always fastened himself to Miss Lina and kept Mr. Jack in the shade. She bore it at first good humoredly, as she always bore disagreeable things, but after a while it began to trouble her.

Whether he cared for her or not, Mr. Jack did not care to have a rival, and when Sir Denis made himself unpleasant Lina always suffered for it. Mr. Jack did not quarrel with her, he was too wary for that; he simply let her alone and played indifference until the poor, warm hearted, impulsive girl was wretched and reckless enough for anything.

She was afraid of vexing him and afraid of vexing her mother, so between the two she grew desperate. She began to fret in secret and lost her reckless high spirits and was only gay by fits and starts.

Mr. Jack made it worse than it was. He knew how to manage her, and by a word dropped here and there, put it into her mind that her mother's foolish, blind persistence was unnatural cruelty and that she would be forced to make a sacrifice which would render



her wretched for life. The fact was, Mrs. Clangarthe's persistence was only weak ambition, and if Lina had been left alone, the matter would have come to its natural termination smoothly enough.

But just as Mr. Jack had tortured his pets in his childhood, he tortured this poor child now and the trouble was too much for her. She was not used to heart pain and at last it broke her down and made her desperate.

She came to my room almost wild one day after Sir Denis had left the house. He had been more than usually pretentiously officious and Mrs. Clangarthe had encouraged him.

"I think he will propose to you soon, Lina," she had said after he was gone. "You are so lucky. Now, if Annette and Lucia only marry as well when they grow up I shall be perfectly satisfied." And when, a few minutes later, Mr. Jack came in, she poured out to him her delight at Lina's success, considering that as the friend of the family he was the person most likely to sympathize with her.

There was a spot of flaming scarlet on Lina's cheek and a dangerous, wild look in her eyes when she came to me, and she had not been with me five minutes before she broke out, tortured with humiliation and pain and fear, telling me the whole story.

"She must be mad," she ended. "She is mad, and she is driving me mad, too. I shall do something desperate and wicked if they don't leave me alone. They cannot see that—that nothing on earth could buy me from my love."

She was sitting on a low stool at my feet and her long hair almost hid her face, but when she said that she tossed the hair back and looked up at me with an almost defiant daring in her eyes.

"It is not right to say that I suppose," she said. "It's not right to acknowledge that I have a true love. Women are not allowed to tell the truth about such things. But you are not blind, if all the rest are. You can see how the truth stands." And then she broke down all

in a sudden shame at herself and sobbed like a wronged child.

A strange alteration in her manner came about after this. She was not so frank, and even over her brightest moods there was a shadow. But her trouble only made her fonder of Mr. Jack than ever, and I noticed that she was feverishly anxious to please him.

I was sorry to see, too, that she put herself into his way a great deal more than was quite prudent, but she was too miserable and too ignorant of the ways of the world to be discreet, and so I could not blame her, though I knew she was working against herself.

She met him upon the stairs half a dozen times in a day and I knew very well that the solitary walks she took were taken only in the desperate hope of seeing or speaking to him.

"I should die if I didn't see him," she broke out once to me. "Don't tell me he'll like me the less for it, Mrs. Mallon; men can't be so cruel as that."

She had always been fond of walking on the beach, and from my window I had often watched, her strolling on the waste of sands that the fishermen called the Moaning Bar with the children and letting them pull her about as not one girl in a dozen would have done.

But she never took the children with her now. She walked out alone, though my old eyes were quite sharp enough to see she was not often alone long.

Day after day Mr. Jack would follow her down to their trysting place on the Bar and for hours I could see them as they sat sheltered by the rocks, Miss Lina's scarlet jacket, a bright bit of color, contrasted with sea and sand and sky.

And in her room up stairs Mrs. Clangarthe made herself comfortable over the success of her plans. She was fond of Lina, as every one else was; she was proud of her

beauty and wished to see her happy; and fancying a good marriage the boon most to be desired, she worked industriously in her behalf in her own easy natured, shiftless style.

Mr. Lowther was the Major's friend and had lent the Major money; accordingly, nothing could be more pleasantly desirable than that he should amuse Lina and Lina should amuse him.

"I like to see young people enjoy themselves, Mrs. Mallon," she said, sweetly, to me. "And Lina always enjoys herself when she is with Mr. Lowther. She wants brightening a little, too, now, though I am sure I don't see why she should when her prospects are so good, but she has not been in good spirits lately."

That evening Lina came in from her walk later than usual. It was so late, indeed, that the yellow fog curtained both sea and shore and the street lamps were beginning to twinkle here and there.

She did not go up stairs, but came into my room, and the moment she entered I saw that something was wrong. Her face was pale and haggard, but there was a spot on each cheek as bright as her scarlet jacket and in her hand she held a letter.

She sat down on a footstool as she always did. For a minute or so she did not speak, but all at once she began to tremble and cry and pull at the collar of her saccue as if it was hurting her.

"Oh, Mrs. Mallon," she cried. "Oh, Mrs. Mallon, just look here! What shall I do? Oh, what shall I do?" And then she tossed the letter into my lap and hid her face in her hands under her loose, fog damped hair.

"Do you mean that I must read it, my dear?" I asked, feeling faint at heart, for just at that moment a horrible thought flashed across my mind—a thought I had never even approached before.

She nodded her head without speaking, and so I opened it, and it was from no less a

person than Lady Medora Darrel herself.

Lady Medora had heard rumors of Sir Denis's attention to her niece, and was so far pleased as to wish to encourage them. Sir Denis was the son of a friend of hers, and, of course, unexceptionable; and she discussed the whole matter with a queer frankness, which somehow reminded me of the Clangarthes themselves.

"A marriage like this is more than I ever looked for," she wrote. "Living as you do, you could hardly expect to make such a match. I shall write to your mother at once, and in the meantime you may tell her that I will extend to her all the assistance in my power as regards your bridal trousseau when you need it. After your marriage, I shall be glad to receive you at my house, and hope that a change will be effected in your hitherto frivolous life."

A strange sound, half a choked sob, and half a bitter laugh startled me as I finished reading, and I looked up to find Lina in a white heat of scornful wrath.

"When I need it?" she said. "Good, that, isn't it, Mrs. Mallon? She forgets the old adage, 'first catch your hare.' Sir Denis isn't caught yet, and beside——" She stopped, and shut her white teeth together hard.

Then she broke out fiercely:

"Do you know what that letter will do?" she said. "It will drive me to despair. It was bad enough before, and now they will take that up, as if it was the best luck in the world. They laugh at her, all of them, but they are afraid of her, for all that."

I comforted her to the best of my ability, and she tried to listen, but I saw it was of no use. Before she went away I was in an agony of such doubt and fear as I had never known before in my life.

And this was not all. Just as she rose from her seat, I heard the hall door open and the sound of Mr. Jack's footsteps, and from the flash that leaped into her eye, I knew that as

she brushed out she was only hurrying to meet him. She was so excited and hurried that she forgot to close the door after her, and as it stood open, I saw her meet him at the foot of the staircase, with the letter in her hand.

“What is it, Lina?” I heard him say, half tenderly, half impatiently, as he caught sight of her standing in the bright light.

She glanced up at him with a troubled face, and then all at once the fire died out of it and left her as pale as death.

“Jack,” she whispered, almost breathlessly, “if you are going to save me, you must save me now.” And she dropped her head upon the hand she had laid on the balustrade without another word.

I shall never understand how it was possible that, through the long weeks that followed, a mother could be so carelessly blind as Mrs. Clangarthe showed herself. She seemed to enjoy life as much as ever; she was as sweet tempered and ready to be amused with trifles; she played hostess at the gay little suppers, and angled for Sir Denis in seeming unconsciousness of the change in the pretty, young face, hitherto so cloudlessly bright.

It made my heart ache to watch this change as it grew. It was no longer the face that had smiled down on Mr. Jack from the stair case. There was a feverish trouble in its eyes; its very smiles were feverish. I cannot describe the dumb pain and look of inward misery that took the place of the old light heartedness.

But the girl said very little, though she grew paler every day. She bore up against her trouble, almost defiantly, trying to make herself pretty in her lover’s eyes, pretending to be gay, and even trying to tolerate Sir Denis. But she could not deceive me.

My love for her had made my old eyes too quick. I think, too, that she understood this, for it was only before me that she ever gave in, and sometimes, when she was with me, she seemed to break down, though she

tried hard to make light of it, and always did it with a wretched ghost of a smile on her pale lips.

“Sir Denis was too much for me, tonight,” she would say sometimes. “And—and I have a headache. It makes me look pale, I dare say. Do I look pale, Mrs. Mallon?” trying to laugh. “I feel pale.”

But the time came when she ceased even trying to laugh, and would come to me looking as white as death, trembling and crying.

“Don’t tell,” she would say. “Don’t tell. I am not well, you know; and Lady Medora has been bothering again. Let me have my cry out and then I shall be better.”

I cannot put into words the horror of slow fear which grew upon me. I could not bear to think of it, and fought against it bitterly, trying to think it quite natural that her girlish troubles should make her hysterical and nervous; but at last I began to see a change in Mr. Jack, and this change crushed all my hopes.

I began to see that he was getting tired of his amusement; and I knew him so well that I recognized the alteration as soon as it came about; as soon as Miss Lina herself did. He began to try to avoid her, as if by accident at first, but more openly in the course of time. In the end, day after day passed by, in which he never entered their rooms.

I wakened earlier than usual one morning, and, after dressing, went to my window to look out, as I had a habit of doing. The fog was just clearing away, and, as my eyes became accustomed to the then floating mist, I glanced accidentally toward the Moaning Bar.

Two figures were standing near the rocks together. It did not need a second glance to tell me whose they were. I knew them in an instant; one by its attitude, the other by the scarlet jacket and long, falling hair. It was Lina Clangarthe and Mr. Jack!

He was lounging carelessly against a rock when I looked and she seemed to be speaking to him passionately, wildly, desperately. She was holding out her hands and clasping and wringing them as she talked, and he was listening without a gesture, simply listening and watching her.

My heart gave one fierce bound and fairly stood still. For a moment it seemed that I scarcely breathed, and then I drew back behind the curtain, praying aloud:

“Lord, have mercy upon her! Oh, Lord, have mercy upon her!” I cried.

It was all over when I looked again. Mr. Jack had sauntered away and Lina was walking rapidly along the beach toward the street. She was walking hurriedly and seemed to steady her slight, girlish figure with some difficulty. But she was not crying, and there was not a tear in her eyes, when, a few moments later, she came into the room.

“I have been out walking with Mr. Lowther,” she said, in a strange, steady voice. “And we have had a bit of a quarrel, Mrs. Mallon. Lovers always have their little quarrels, don’t they?”

She had seated herself at the window when she entered, and she was sitting there as she spoke, and the minute the words were out of her mouth, she turned suddenly and looked at me.

“If you had been at the window you might have seen us,” she said, watching me keenly. “I did not know before that any of these windows fronted the Moaning Bar so directly.”

“I think I did see you,” I answered, as calmly as possible. “But my old eyes are not as young as they used to be and I might be mistaken.”

That seemed to satisfy her, and for a while she sat silent, but at last she spoke again.

“I am rather low spirited this morning,” she said. “Quarrels always make

me miserable. I don’t think I am as strong as I used to be. I wish life wasn’t so long. I was thinking this morning it would be an easy sort of a way to end it out there on the Moaning Bar when the tide comes-in.”

She spoke so deliberately and meditatively that I was startled into making a slight exclamation:

“Why, Miss Lina!” I cried out.

She started a little, looked up at me, and laughed faintly.

“Why not?” she said. “It would be easy enough if one had the courage, and it wouldn’t need much. The tide sweeps round the Bar so suddenly. And then there is no help, and one wouldn’t need courage. Don’t be frightened, though, Mrs. Mallon! I am not going to drown myself. I am too fond of life for that; besides, I want to make up with Jack.” And she laughed again.

I was blind enough then to be deceived by her light manner, but I thought of her words afterward and remembered, too, her little shudder when she said: “And then there would be no help.”

After that came a change again, stranger and more deceptive than the last. She regained her spirits too rapidly to seem natural; she never said anything against Sir Denis, and was even extravagantly gay in his presence. Her mother was fairly delighted and exerted herself to her utmost in the matter of dressing her and making her appear to advantage.

They gave the little suppers two or three times a week, and at such times, from my room, I could hear Lina’s feverish laugh ringing out above everything. She had never seemed so reckless and light hearted, and as the guests passed out of the house I often caught snatches of conversation among the men, which showed me that even those who had known her the longest were dazzled afresh and puzzled a little.

But Mr. Jack’s attentions were

gradually falling off. His unceremonious visits were growing fewer and farther between. I was astonished to find that this did not seem to trouble Lina much, and was so far bewildered that I began to falter again.

She did not contrive plans to meet him any longer, and when by accident they encountered each other on the stairs, or in the hall, she would give him a careless little nod or a careless speech and pass on as coolly as she might have done in the first days of their acquaintance.

But one evening after she had passed him so and the hall door had closed upon him as he went out, I heard her feet flag somewhat in their passage up the stair case, and in a moment more there came to my listening ears the dull, dead thud of a heavy fall.

There was no other sound, nothing but the fall, and, strange to say, no one seemed to hear it but myself; and hurrying out, I found lying on the mat at the foot of the stairs, Lina Clangarthe in a dead faint, her white face like a stone.

I went to the kitchen door, and, calling one of the servants as quietly as possible, made her help me to carry the prostrate figure into my room and lay it on my sofa.

“Don’t say anything to the others,” I commanded the girl. “It is nothing but a faint and would only alarm Mrs. Clangarthe unnecessarily.”

I sent her away before the poor child’s eyes were open, and then I set myself to work to restore her alone. But before I began I closed the door. I think it must have been half an hour before she knew me, and when the great, speechful, gray eyes unclosed, they turned upon me in an agony, needing not a word to express itself. It seemed to me as if I could not bear it. I thought my heart would burst.

“You fell down stairs and fainted, my dear,” I said, as cheerfully as I could. “I suppose your foot slipped.”

She did not utter a sound, only looked at me and then all at once at the door as if she was frightened.

“Yes, my dear,” I answered, for I guessed what she was thinking of. “Yes, my dear, it’s locked. You see I thought there was no need to alarm the household and frighten your mamma. It was only a faint and you will be over it soon. You are almost over it now only, of course, you feel weak and tired and don’t want to talk. Take a little of this wine and then I will sit down beside you and you shall try to sleep.”

She took the wine, but her poor hands trembled so that I had to hold the glass to her lips. She did not speak even then, and, after she had swallowed it she slipped down on to the sofa cushion with her white, young face upon her arm and her long hair half hiding it as she lay.

As for me I set the wineglass aside and went back to my seat at the window, which faced the Moaning Bar.

For two long hours I sat there with my work looking out at the sea and now and then glancing round at the helpless young face on the sofa. During those two hours this figure never stirred, but lay there without a movement, the white face half hidden by the heavy, loose hair. The silence was so heavy and terrible and the time so long in its dull, dragging by that I could scarcely bear it.

If I could only have helped her; if I could only have said one word of motherly comfort to her I should have thanked God for it to the last day of my life. If this was only a girl’s heartache it was a bitter one indeed and one that called for tender words and comfort, but if it was worse there were no words that human tongue could utter that could be too full of pity and prayer for this young creature in her desolate strait.

I got up from my chair at last and went to her, kneeling down by her side and touching her hair softly.

"Are you asleep, Miss Lina?" I asked.

She stirred a little, but she did not look up as she answered:

"No."

"Do you feel better?" I said, falteringly. "Fainting fits are troublesome things, my dear; but there is not much danger in them, you know. I hope—"

I stopped there because I could say no more. It seemed as if the spell upon her was broken, for she was beginning to shiver and tremble and in a minute she was clinging to the cushion with both her little hands, sobbing in a wild, gasping, choking way.

"Oh, Mrs. Mallon!" she cried out again and again, "if you only knew what is in my heart tonight; if you only knew what is in my heart tonight! If you only—only—knew!"

I was trembling all over myself and crying, too, though I tried hard to speak quietly as I stroked her hair and patted her shoulder to soothe her.

"Tell me, my love." I said. "Tell me, if you can, and I will try to help you. I am an old woman, my dear, and the Lord may show me how I might help you best. The Lord never fails us, you know, my dear."

But she had lost all hope of controlling herself. She only sobbed and gasped and panted with her hand clenched hard against her heart.

"There is no help for me," she cried out. "There is no help. There is nothing but death! Nothing but death! Nothing but death and despair."

The tide had come in and gone down again into the darkness long before she was still, and then it was time for her to go up stairs, for Mrs. Clangarthe was inquiring for her. She got up from the sofa pale as death and with a strange, hollow look about her eyes. She had worn her wild grief out, but she had not uttered a word that might tell me surely whether my terrible fear had any foundation or not.

She gave a glance at herself as she passed the mirror and when she reached the door she turned all of a sudden in a wild, nervous way.

"You are not like other people," she said. "You are better some way. I wish you were my mother."

I wonder if the people who are used to reading stories can guess how this one of mine is going to end. I wonder, too, if the most experienced of them would not have started as I did that night on hearing Lina Clangarthe's laugh ring out among the voices in the room above.

I think they would, and yet I did hear it. I heard it threading through the bursts of merriment that came from the two or three of her father's fellow officers who were his guests for the evening, and as I heard it I trembled.

She was talking to them, and even rattling off gay little French songs for them, one after the other. She was filling the whole drawingroom with her mirth.

Sir Denis was there, too, one of the servants told me. and she was drawing him on and dazzling him with her daring flashes of wit. And toward the end of the evening Mr. Jack came in and went up stairs to join the party, and a few minutes later, to my bewilderment, I heard her laughing and jesting with him, too.

They were always gay enough and sometimes a trifle boisterous in that light hearted way of theirs, but I had never heard them so merry as they seemed to be this night. Peal after peal of laughter came down the stair case to my room.

"It's Miss Lina is making them laugh so," explained the major's man. "Sure it's in high spur'ts she is in this evenin'. The ould fell'ys is houldin' their sides wid the fun in her. It's beyutiful she looks, too, Misthress Mallon, wid a color like a rose and a light in her eye like foire, an' me Lady Medora's ould

dress lookin' new on her. Ah, but it's Sir Dinnis is the lost boy intirely."

Barregan was just like the rest of the servants; he fairly adored Miss Lina and noticed her every mood with as great an interest as if she had been a child of his own. The queer, careless ways of the family extended even to their free and easy intercourse with their servants.

It was later than usual when the company dispersed, perhaps because they had enjoyed themselves so well. I had sat in my room for hours listening and wondering and fearing by turns, and was just setting Mr. Jack's parlor to rights and bolting the shutters before going to bed, when I heard Sir Denis and Mr. Jack himself come out, Miss Lina following them on to the landing to have a last word. The parlor was quite dark and they could not see me, but I could see them plain enough, and you may be sure my first look was at Miss Lina.

She was standing on the stairs, just as she had stood the night Mr. Jack kissed her. Her soft hair was floating over her wide, white shoulders, down to her bit of a waist, as she had a girl's fashion of wearing it all loose and curly, and she had on the very dress Lady Medora had given her, the rose colored satin.

It was as Barregan had said, her eyes were like fire, but just at this moment as she looked down at the two men there was scarcely a bit of color in her face in spite of the light words she was speaking.

"And as you are going away," she was saying to Mr. Jack, "I suppose I may as well say good by to you and ask you to give my love to Lady Medora if you see her when you are in London. Don't tell any tales out of school though, or else she won't send me any more of her old dresses and what would I do without them."

"And you will try the sorrel mare with me tomorrow, Miss Clangarthe?" Sir Denis said, a sort of stiff confusion mixed with his

admiration of her. "She paces well, I can vouch, and we can ride past the Moaning Bar and on to the Shingle Road after the tide goes down."

I saw her look down at his face for one second with a strange expression just as if she had forgotten herself, but it was only for one moment; the next she answered him as gayly as ever, only with an odd, feverish, short laugh. "Yes," she said, "I'll remember. When the tide goes down—if nothing happens from now till then. And what could happen? After the tide goes down then. Good night." And she gave him a bright little nod.

"Good night, Miss Clangarthe," he answered and went down stairs with his thin face all in a glow of pleasure.

In his momentary excitement he had almost forgotten his companion, but Mr. Jack called after him the next minute.

"Wait a minute, Dermot," he said. Then he turned to the bright robed young figure on the stair above him, and as he looked into the white young face held out his hand.

"Good night, Lina," he said.

She never stirred. Just stood there, white and still, looking right into his evil, handsome black eyes without a word. She did not take his hand or even notice it.

"Good by," she said at last.

That was all. Not another word, and after taking another look at her he turned away as if she had puzzled him a little and he was too indifferent to care about translating her.

She watched him down the stair case, through the hall, out into the street, without stirring, and then she turned round and walked slowly up to her own room and the last glimpse I had of her in life showed me that queer, calm look in her girl's eyes and that queer steadiness on her white face.

I have often thought since then of the wild desperateness that must have been in that poor wronged young thing's mad heart that dreadful night. I have shuddered and cried like

a child over the picture that will sometimes force itself upon my mind—the picture of that steadfast face as it must have looked during the long hours that passed before daylight came.

I have fancied that I could see and understand the depth of despair and misery which this girl of seventeen years old must have struggled with in the silence of midnight.

There had never been a shadow on her life before and the blackness of death had fallen upon her almost in an hour. Did she pray one short, desperate prayer, or did she face her fate, remembering nothing but what she left behind and what life might have held for her?

I was sitting at my little parlor window just as I always did and the tide was sweeping back wave by wave over the sand and over the rocks and over the Moaning Bar. It had been a dull, gray morning and even now the sun was scarcely to be seen at all as it struggled through the banks of leaden clouds. I was feeling troubled and not very well.

I had not slept much during the night and losing rest always hurts me. But somehow this morning it was my mind that felt heavy and it was so heavy that I forgot my tired old limbs altogether. I was thinking of Miss Lina and had been thinking of her all night. I was beginning to fear something I had not thought of before, and the thought of it chilled me to the heart.

When first it struck me I turned to the sea with a quick, cold pulse beat and my eyes fell on the Moaning Bar in shrinking terror. The slow, creeping waves tossing over it now had such a cruel, hungry look in the gray light. The tide always crept round the low, barren stretch of sand just in a stealthy sort of way and no human being who chanced to linger there a moment too late need turn his face to the higher shore again, for he had met his doom.

It was a cruel place and I had always

felt a dread of it even when the tide was down. The coast people feared it with something like superstitious horror and told fearful stories of the maddened wails they had heard—and the stony, rigid forms that had been swept back to the shore once or twice at ebb of tide.

I could not bear to look at it this morning, but somehow it had a strange fascination for me, and I sat watching it until the tops of the rocks were bare.

The sea was not long in creeping backward then and before many minutes the water was falling rapidly and the rocks stood out bold and black in a little cluster that made a sheltered nook where the seaweed always lay in heaps tangled with white seashells.

There was a heap of such seaweed lying half out of the low water now. I could see it quite plainly as it lay caught among the rocks. After my first glance I found myself staring at it, fascinated—I could not say why—curiously. The little running waves were playing with it and lifting it lightly as they retreated.

A sound in the hall and a summons from outside roused me. I got up from my seat restlessly, opened the door and confronted the major's man, who stood upon the threshold making his stiff, military salute.

"It's Miss Lina I was ordered to ax about, Misthress Mallon," he said, a trifle uneasily. "The misthress sent me see if she was here. Sir Dinnis is waitin' for her and the misthress thought mebbe she had stepped into your room whin she kem in."

I stared at him blankly for a moment. Then my startled mind began to take in vaguely the strange expression on the poor fellow's face. There was actually a shade of pallor on his sunburnt skin and his eye met mine restlessly. Something was the matter I knew and he was afraid to speak of it.

"Barregan," I broke out all in a tremble, "what is the matter? You are trying to hide something from me. What is it you are



trying to hide?"

I saw him turn pale then in actual earnest, and when he answered me his voice shook.

"Might I step insoide, Misthress Mallon?" he said. "I'd like to have a wurred wid yez."

I motioned him in and shut the door.

"What is it?" I cried out sharply. "You are not afraid that——" And then I stopped short in spite of the terrible fear that rushed upon me.

"She—she went out early," he said, hoarsely, "an' she's not come in yet, though she promised to try Sir Dinnis' sorrel. There's a nasty bit of sand down on the Bar, ye know, and she always wint there. She was goin' there whin I met her, and someways she looked white and poorly, but she turned her purty, pale face to me and says: 'Good mornin' to ye, Barregan. I'm goin' for a little walk on the sands,' and then she looks over her shoulder at me two or three times before she was out of sight. I darn't say a wurred to the misthress. I darn't; I thought I'd come here first."

The sun had struggled through the clouds at last and as I turned to the window, shaken and strengthless, it burst forth in such sudden brightness that I could see nothing plainly. But little as I could distinguish my blinded eyes caught a glimpse of something—that made me drop into my chair with hardly voice to speak.

"Look out there," I said to the poor stricken fellow. "There is a heap of—of seaweed, I think, caught on the rocks on the Moaning Bar. There is not a bit of color caught among it, is there? The sun blinds me so that I cannot see. There isn't a bit of scarlet there, is there? Look well before you speak, for God's sake!"

He did not need to look a second time. Just one glance and he broke away with a cry of horror that roused the whole household and brought servants and master and mistress

hurrying out of the rooms with white, scared faces.

Just that one cry and a few wild terror stricken words and the cry was echoed again until the roof rang with its shrill horror as Mrs. Clangarthe fell prostrate upon the stair case landing with a face like the dead.

We raised her and carried her to her room, scarcely any one of us knew how, for the whole house was full of the cries of wailing, hurrying servants and wailing, terrified children. There was not one of them but had loved her; there was not one of them, from the best to the worst, who was not stricken as with the hand of death.

They were all crowded about the windows, weeping aloud as they watched the hurrying figures flying across the sands toward the bit of scarlet color caught in the nook of rocks.

Dozens of the coast people, men, women and children, catching a hint of the truth, left their work in boats and huts and ran, as it were, for dear life, through the shallow water the tide had left on the low beach, joining one another by twos and threes until a great crowd of strange figures stood about the rocks around Sir Denis and around the man who had first bent over the something which was not seaweed, but a dead girl's body.

Perhaps among all the crowd of rough watchers there was not one who had not a kindly remembrance of the bright, girlish face and light hearted ways; perhaps there was scarcely one of them to whom she had not at some time spoken a careless, sweet tempered word of greeting. She had been used to speak to the roughest of them when she met them, and in the most unresponsive of their half savage moods they had felt an odd sort of liking for her and her bright beauty.

It seemed almost like Fate that they should bring her into my little room and lay her upon the sofa, where she had lain through the long, silent, wretched hours only so few

days before.

But her face was not hidden now upon the cushion; it lay still and white, upturned to every eye, and the long hair that had veiled it was wet and dank with the salt sea and tangled with sea and sand and shells.

If she had died to keep a secret she had not died in vain, for no one but myself guessed that any secret existed. She must have forgotten the tide, until it had crept around the Bar, and it was too late to turn back, they said among themselves, and as they spoke I bent over her and smoothed her pretty, tangled hair, so that they could not see my face and guess that I had anything to hide from them.

But as I listened I understood quite plainly what the poor, desperate child had meant when she cried out to me: "Oh, if you only knew what is in my heart tonight!" I knew then, for her own dead lips told me, and I knew, too, what a terrible strength of resolution had kept the fire in her eye and the color in her cheek as she jested and laughed with the rest within the very sound of the waves which she knew would sweep over her dead body on the morrow.

"It would not take much courage when the tide came up," she had said, and I remembered the words, shuddering at the thought of how the waves must have looked as she watched them running up nearer and nearer until the gray, white line was all around her and it was too late to look back or repent.

But it was over now and it could not have taken long to hush her cries if she had uttered any; it could not have been many minutes at the most after the first gasp in the rush of surf before she was as quiet as she looked now lying on my sofa with the strange rest on her pretty face.

"She looks so calm, some way," poor Mrs. Clangarthe wailed. "And she was so pretty, too, and I was so proud of her. Oh, my poor, poor Lina! I don't think Sir Denis will ever get over it, Mrs. Mallon. He was going to

propose to her this morning and Lina had promised me she would accept him if he did."

When the dreadful day was over and the house was dark and quiet I sat in my little room again thinking sadly of the still chamber up stairs, where the slender, quiet figure lay on the bed. As I sat brooding over the fire I heard the door open and Mr. Jack came in and stood on the hearth with the stealthy, evil look in his handsome, bold, black eyes.

Whether he suspected me or not he did not care to meet my glance, and as he spoke he carelessly struck a match on the mantel to light a cigar he held.

"I am going to London tomorrow," he said, "and shall not need you any longer. You can go back to Marshlands as soon as you wish. I shall not return here again."

I looked at his wicked, handsome face steadily, and for the moment hated it as I had never hated anything human before.

"Sir," I said, "have you been up stairs?"

He nodded carelessly, but changed color a little, nevertheless.

"Yes," he answered.

"And you have seen—her?"

He nodded again, flinching, I could see.

I do not know what held me up, but I felt that I must speak now or die.

"Do you remember what we said about that dead girl once before in this very room?" I asked. "About her face? Do you remember what I said about its being a tender, innocent face which knew no wrong and held none? Do you remember?"

He started slightly and turned, staring wildly at me.

"What the deuce——" he began.

But I stopped him. I rose up from my chair and faced him, trembling in every limb and sobbing in a grief that was too much for me. I remembered the pretty young face as I saw it first, with the innocent light in its eye,

and then I thought of how the tide had gone down on the Moaning Bar, leaving the bit of bright color lying in the nook of rocks.

“Man!” I said, “you are a villain and God will never forgive you. The curse of a lost life will be upon you forever.”

He did not say a word, fierce as was the anger that flashed into his cruel face. He had not a word to say. He knew that his sin had found him out and that there was no defense for him if he cared to make one. For one moment he stood and tried to brave me with a sneer, the blood flushing his dark skin and the flare of passion in his eyes. The next

he faltered and turned upon his heel and so left me forever.

I did not see him again and was thankful that I did not. I knew that if my lady had been living she would have absolved me from my promise, and knowing this, I was not ashamed to break it myself. I had been his faithful servant and he had used me for an innocent creature's wrong, and so I could be faithful no longer. He went away, as he said he would, and I, returning to my home, carried in my own heart the secret which had been swept away and lost in the waves that went down with the tide on the Moaning Bar.