

rested on a high pillow of herbs, and her delicately rosy face was turned up to the vault of the cave; her half closed lips moved gently, and now she moved her bent arm and her white hand, on which the light of the lamp fell, and which rested half on her forehead and half on her shining hair. is she saying anything asked paulus of himself, and he pressed his brow against a projection of the rock as tightly as if he would stem the rapid rush of his blood that it might not overwhelm his bewildered brain. again she moved her lips. had she indeed spoken had she perhaps called him that could not be, for she still slept; but he wished to believe it and he would believe it, and he stole nearer to her and nearer, and bent over her, and listened while his own strength failed him even to draw a breath listened to the soft regular breathing that heaved her bosom. no longer master of himself he touched her white arm with his bearded lips and she drew it back in her sleep, then his gaze fell on her parted lips and the pearly teeth that shone between them, and a mad longing to kiss them came irresistibly over him. he bent trembling over her, and was on the point of gratifying his impulse when, as if startled by a sudden apparition, he drew back, and raised his eyes from the rosy lips to the hand that rested on the sleepers brow. the lamplight played on a golden ring on sironas finger, and shone brightly on an onyx on which was engraved an image of tyche, the tutelary goddess of antioch, with a sphere upon her head, and bearing amalthreas horn in her hand. a new and strange emotion took possession of the anchorite at the sight of this stone. with trembling hands he felt in the breast of his torn garment, and presently drew forth a small iron crucifix and the ring that he had taken from the cold hand of hermas out a strip of a brown velvet coat, and even one mother of pearl button of a brown velvet waistcoat. he stared at the flowers, he held a candle close to them in the hope of being able to trace some outline, to discover something of what lay behind. but the colour had been laid on with no sparing hand, the veil was impenetrable. even the green caterpillar seemed to mock him, for as he looked at it closely, he saw that sophia in her wantonness had put some minute touches of colour, which gave its head two eyes and a grinning mouth. he sat down again at the table where the certificate still lay open before him. that entry of martins birth must be in the handwriting of sophia flannery, of faithless, irresponsible sophia flannery, flaunting as her own flowers, mocking as the face of her own caterpillar. there was a dead silence over all, the utter blank silence that falls upon a country town in the early morning hours. only the loud ticking clock on the mantelpiece kept telling of times passage till the carillon of saint sepulchres woke the silence with new sabbath. it was three oclock, and the room was deadly cold, but that chill was nothing to the chill that was rising to his own heart. he knew it all now, he said to himself he knew the secret of anastasias marriage, and of sharnalls death, and of martins death. twenty one. the foreman of the masons at work in the under pinning of the south east pier came to see westray at nine oclock the next morning. he was anxious that the architect should go down to the church at once, for the workmen, on reaching the tower shortly after daybreak, found traces of a fresh movement which had taken place during the night. but westray was from home, having left cullerne for london by the first train. about ten of the same forenoon, the architect was in the shop of a small and made something flutter that lay on the floor close to the broken frame. westray stooped to pick it up, and found that he had in his hand a piece of folded paper. he felt a curious reluctance in handling it. those fantastic scruples to which he was so often a prey assailed him. he asked himself had he any right to examine this piece of paper it might be a letter; he did not know whence it had come, nor whose it was, and he certainly did not wish to be guilty of opening someone elses letter. he even went so far as to put it solemnly on the table, like a skipper on whose deck the phantom whale boat of the flying dutchman has deposited a packet of mails. after a few minutes, however, he appreciated the absurdity of the situation, and with an effort unfolded the mysterious missive. it was a long narrow piece of paper, yellowed with years, and lined with the creases of a generation; and had on it both printed and written characters. he recognised it instantly for a certificate of marriage those marriage lines on which so often hang both the law and the prophets. there it was with all the little pigeon