

"Not to what?" He asked, absently, taking the tobacco pouch from his side pocket, and pouring an even pipeful.

"Marry her,—if you do really care. You can throw me out now—heaven knows you could. That scar? You ought to remember that! But I can tell you one thing, Hil', she ought not to marry you."

The cynical amused smile came in his face. "Why, Kitty? You really please me!"

"Hil', you ain't so changed as I thought. You got it still 'n you'll never lose it till it's finished you—or someone else. It's—I don't know exactly how to say it, it's power I guess, fascination. You've lived, any way, a life that you've no right to ask a good—well never mind if it hurts. But it's power, eyes, cruelty, all in one,—you're stone down deep where others has a little warm sacred heart, I guess."

He laughed and tossed a spruce log on the fire to watch the flames enfold it, playing over the dark surface. "Haven't I any brain?"

"If all the world had your brain, everyone would be an unbeliever. That's it! We once said if we could only have a wish, each! I wished I could be awful ugly."

"You've been lucky in your wish," he interposed yawning.

"'N you said then, that all the saints in heaven couldn't make me ugly, 'n the devil wouldn't want to! Then you said you wished you could have six separate lives. You wouldn't be any genius with flowin' mane, you said, but first you'd like to marry a woman, 'n develop her soul with love. That was at your best. To give her a real heart beating in her." She coughed away a laugh. "Least that's the gist of it. Then you'd be a man who had no money,—that was a funny streak," she did not laugh, however. "You wanted to live from week to week, always livin' in hopes of the next week, 'n bein' one of the mass, 'n die from cryin' with joy at findin' a crust of bread."