

A WINDOW IN THRUMS

"I saw 'im put up his hands to his face, an' he cried oot, 'Leeby tool' an' syne he kind o' fell agin the dyke. I never kent 'im nor nane o' his fowk, but I had heard aboot them, an' I saw 'at it would be the son frae London. It wasna for me to judge 'im, an' I said to 'im would he no come in by an' tak a rest. I was nearer 'im by that time, an' it's an awfu' haver to say 'at he had a face to frighten fowk. It was a rale guid face, but no ava what a body would like to see on a young man. I felt mair like greetin' mysel when I saw his face than drawin' awa frae 'im.

"But he wouldna come in. 'Rest,' he said, like ane speakin' to 'imsel, 'na, there's nae mair rest for me.' I didna weel ken what mair to say to 'im, for he aye stood on, an' I wasna even sure 'at he saw me. He raised his heid when he heard me tellin' the bairn no to tear my wrapper.

"'Dinna set yer heart ower muckle on that bairn,' he cried oot, sharp like. 'I was aince like her, an' I used to hing aboot my mother, too, in that very roady. Ay, I thocht I was fond o' her, an' she thocht it too. Tak a care, wuman, 'at that bairn doesna grow up to murder ye.'