

"Wheesht, wheesht, lassie," said John. "I spoke but the truth, mother, according to my light; I think that whiles there is too much said in praise o' Burns, and sometimes too much o' blame. The right thing is to strike the middle course."

"Well, we'll get it a' in the papers the morn," said Mrs. Middlemas in tones of lively satisfaction. "That consoled me for no being able to get. It's a terrible nicht; ye'll never get hame the morn, the railway'll be a' drifted up."

"Oh, I think not," answered John; "the wind has changed. Weel, I'm tired; it's the excitement, I suppose. What's to be done with this bairn, then?"

"Oh, I'll take care o't till the morning," said Mrs. Middlemas. "Look at Mary, John; she would fain keep it. Maybe the Lord has sent the bairn to you to take care o'."

John smiled, and for the first time came close to his wife's side, and looked down into the child's smiling face.

"It's a bonnie bairn," he repeated. "We might do waur than keep it—eh, Mary? And seein' what nicht it is, we might ca' him Robbie Burns."



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