

taps the other with it, to enforce nearer attention, and tells on, his voice husky with awe.

"As I cam' to the Nuek, where I'd left the Laird, d'ye mind, I heard a noise as of knuckles knockin' on a door, and then a voice.

"And at first I thought it would be his Honour talkin' to our man—and him never hearing word of it, poor mannie! But when I cam' nigher, I kenn't it," here he paused, "for a woman's voice, and her garring herself talk gruff and grumblesome like to a man; and through it a laugh running like the waters of a burn to show that she warnna what she secmed.

"And then," the old man tells on, hushed and low, "I kenn'd it for the voice of Missie, dead these nine years; just as she would talk when she was making believe to be his Honour to gar him laugh; and she was saying—and I heard her plain as I see you now—

"'Who's there?' gruff and grumbly.

"'Only me, Marjory,' said the Laird, and his voice was not as it was all the years I kenn'd him—all but That One—sour and dour and short; but just douce-like, as oftens I would hear him of summer evenings in That Year, when he thought none was by but her and the Lord God, walking, the three of them in the garden among the roses.

"Then Missie spoke again.