

To this question Peter replied dourly and with an air of offence that "there was no law to hinder Walter Grahame wandering about the shingle if he was minded that way."

Of course Peter was right, and Walter had a perfect right on the seashore, but Andrew felt vexed at him for claiming it. He was suspicious also, and had a premonition of wrong, though he could by no means fix its likelihoods. The little dispute dashed his sense of spiritual triumph, and he went back to the Lone House with a weight of apparently unnecessary care on his heart.

He found Ann knitting by the firelight as she waited for him. He was glad to see her, for there were some questions he wished to ask before he slept. Ann wanted to know all about the meeting, and she was astonished her father had so little to say concerning it. Indeed, she soon perceived that he was troubled; and when she asked "if aught was wrong?" he answered with the inquiry,—

"Was Walter Grahame here while I was in Edinbro'? Was he near here at all?"

"I havena seen the lad since you sent him awa' yonder night that he was in the byre with me. Your will has aye been my law, father. You ken that well."

"Yes, I ken that, Ann. Has Jeannie seen him, do you think?"

"Jeannie would have told me if Grahame had said this or that to her, or even come her road; and she hasna named him to me."

"Then what for is the lad hanging round about the Carrick cottages? Peter Lochrigg spoke of him in a very familiar-like, pleasant way indeed."

"I wouldn't wonder if he is speir- ing after Sarah Lochrigg. She is a very bonnie lass."

"Ay, that is like enou'. Weel, weel; Peter Lochrigg can guide his

ain boat and crew. I sall neither mak' nor meddle in that quarter. Peter has got to be vera proud and upsetting lately."

"Peter was aye fond o' authority. It sets him hard not to be first in all things."

"You are right, Ann. I must speak to Peter, for pride is an awfu' sin. Good-night, my bairn."

Then Ann went to her bedroom. Jeannie was apparently fast asleep; but Ann's suspicions were aroused by her father's report of Walter's visits to the cottages, and she awakened her sister and said,—

"Jeannie, speak to me a minute. I hae something to ask you."

"Whatever is it, Ann? You shouldn't wake folk at midnight for nothing."

"It isn't 'nothing.' Father says Walter Grahame goes a great deal down to 'Carricks,' and that Peter Lochrigg is set up with the lad. What will he be going there for, Jeannie? It is out of any road he would be like to take."

Jeannie yawned wearily and answered, "How can I tell what he he goes for?"

"Will it be to see Sarah Lochrigg? Do you think that?"

"You will have to ask Sarah herself the like o' that question. Are you jealous o' Sarah?"

"Me! Jealous?"

"Ay, I thought you liked Walter. Dinna bother me about him anyway. I'm sleepy, and I'm not heeding."

Jeannie's manner quite satisfied Ann. It was perfectly natural in its indifference and weariness. She reflected also that Sarah Lochrigg was a very handsome girl, and that it was very likely that Walter Grahame should be attracted to her. She was a trifle annoyed at the quick transference of Walter's attentions from herself to Sarah Lochrigg, but she had no suspicions of Jeannie; and she went to sleep without a doubt of her sister.