

"There's nothing we can do but keep the bairn here till the morn. I daresay Mary and you between you will be able to take care o' it."

"She's makin' no a bad set at it," said Mrs. Middlemas with a humorous smile, as she pointed to Mary sitting close to the cheerful fire holding the baby on her lap as if to the manner born. His gaze was very tender as it fell on the picture, and presently she looked up with a smile.

"Come and see the bairn, John. Isn't he a beauty? He's nae common bairn either; look at his claes, mother; they are the finest money can buy."

"I canna understand for the life of me why it should have been left at my door," said Mrs. Middlemas. "I'm sure I've had my share o' them in my time."

"It's my belief she just saw John and me comin' along, and thought that we might notice the bairn and pick him up," said Mary. "We'll hae to keep him anyway until the morn. Maybe we'll hear something about her then."

A severe cold had prevented Mrs. Middlemas from going to the Music Hall to hear her somewhat distinguished son-in-law make his speech, but she was none the less proud of him, and eager to know how he had acquitted himself.

"Come now," she said, "the bairn's a'richt; how did you get on, John? I've been little use all this nicht except to sit and think about you. Did ye make a good speech?"

"Oh, mother, if you had only heard him!" cried Mary, looking up with adoring pride into her husband's face. "I couldna believe it was our John. He held them a' that quiet ye could hae heard a pin drop when he was talking."