

At the start the audience is often large, and growing less throughout, until by the time he finishes there is of wont but one left listening, and that one a deaf-mute from his birth.

To him, however, Robin tells the tale as fully, as faithfully, as though he could follow every word. He tells of his pilgrimage through the wood with his Honour upon that night; how they found him they sought, snow-lapped in the Nuek of the Brae; how they knelt in the night and snow; and how the Laird, ordering that Danny should be buried there where he had died, had despatched him, Robin, for mattock and the Book.

Night had fallen when Robin emerged again from the wood on to the naked moor. In one hand was the mattock and the Book, and from the other swung a lantern. A distance behind shuffled the Woman, laden with wraps and cordials for her master, and clean linen and his own home-basket for her dead.

Up there all now was silence and great darkness; and the flakes of snow drifted like gossamer stains across the yellow shaft of lantern light.

As Robin comes to this part of the tale, he shifts in the inglenook until he is knee to knee with the deaf-mute in the corner. He removes his cutty from his mouth, and leaning forward,