

## Of a Voice in the Eventide

"Oh, you have come back," she cried. "At last, and I have looked so long for you."

"Indeed, dear lass, I have come back, and by God's grace to go no more away."

Then leading my horse, I walked by her side down the broad path to the house. We spoke nothing, our hearts being too busy with the delights of each other's presence. The crowning stone was added to my palace of joy, and in that moment it seemed as if earth could contain no more of happiness, and that all the sorrows of the past were well worth encountering for the ecstasy of the present. To be once more in my own land, with my own solemn hills looking down upon me, and that fair river wandering by wood and heather, and my lady at my side, was not that sufficient for any man? The purple, airy dark, odorous with spring scents, clung around us, and in the pauses of silence the place was so still that our ears heard naught save the drawing of our breath.

At the lawn of Dawyck I stopped and took her hands in mine.

"Marjory," I said, "once, many years ago, you sang me a verse and made me a promise. I cannot tell how bravely you have fulfilled it. You have endured all my hardships, and borne me company where I bade you, and now all is done with and we are returned to peace and our own place. Now it is my turn for troth-plighting, and I give you it with all my heart. God bless you, my own dear maid." And I repeated softly: