

Half way up the lane there was a silver maple, an old friend of his boyhood, and he leaned against it tremblingly, wondering if he would have strength to get to the fir tree which stood between it and the house. He had brought that fir tree from the woods, and had planted it with his own hands when he was ten; now it was a great tree."

"How will we fix it?" asked Barney in a half whisper, as they neared the house and noted that there were two or three vehicles in the yard and several men standing over by the barn.

"Why, we'll come up to it easy. I'll tell Mrs. MacMillan that there's somebody wants to see her. Of course, she'll ask who it is and we can say that it's a man she knew a long time ago; then if she asks his name, we'll say it's a fellow who knew her before he knew anybody else. She'd be sure to guess Donald then."

"Sure."

The door of the kitchen was partly open, and they were not a little amazed to see that there were several people inside. What was going on, anyway?

In answer to a faint knock, an elderly woman came to the door, whom they had never seen before. She looked at them disapprovingly, and Sandy asked in a choking voice if Mrs. MacMillan was in.

She shook her head sadly. "Don't trouble her now," she said in a mournful whisper. "She is with Mr. MacMillan, and the doctor says he may not live an hour."

"Oh, but I must see her then," cried Sandy.