

woman standing there in the house of God that day had it in her eyes and on her tongue, to my mind, and when she made this offer she had not."

"This is only your own idea. And have you forgotten that Natalie's wedding-ring—the ring with which I married her, at least—was certainly found on the dead woman's hand?"

"Ay; but what about the words she whispered in yer ear—the words ye said none but she could know?"

A dark flush rose to Biddulph's very brow.

"They were only some folly," he said, abruptly; "some stupid speech I made when I first placed it on Natalie's hand, which she no doubt had repeated to her sister."

"But ye did not think this that day in the kirk?"

"I do now, at all events; and I want you to go to her and, if you will be so good, to arrange about the money, and also about the time when she will make a solemn declaration—take an oath, in fact—that she is not my wife, before witnesses. I think of asking Mr. Fraser, of Airdlinn, to be present."

But the doctor shook his head.

"I'll ha' naught to do wi' it," he said; "it's unjust to the young leedy, whose soul is white as snaw."

"It's unjust to me that my whole life should be rendered wretched by a false claim!"

"But is it false?" said the doctor, fixing his small scrutinizing eyes on Biddulph's dark, agitated face. "Mr. Biddulph, doesn't a sma' voice within ye whisper that this sin—this folly of yer youth, we may call it—hangs round yer throat heavy as a millstane still?"

"I will throw it off, then," said Biddulph, flinging back his head with a passionate gesture; "I will see this woman if you will not; and if she will swear on the Bible she is no wife of mine——"

"She would sell her vera soul," interrupted the doctor.

"Let her sell it, then! I believe she's a vile impostress, who traded on her likeness to her dead sister. I wish you good morning, Dr. Alexander;" and, with a somewhat haughty bow, Biddulph took up his hat and went away.

Yet scarcely was he gone when his heart reproached him for being angry with a good man for speaking according to his conscience. The doctor thought differently to what Biddulph so earnestly wished; but, as he did think so, Biddulph knew that, for Nora Stewart's sake, he was justified in expressing his opinion. And

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