

and colour lay still unchanged for all but him. The fir-tree was there to guide him, but on which side had he stood? He turned a straining face towards the dumb sky. He should be able, he thought, to feel the sun and know the eastern path, but the scorching pain across brow and eyes seemed to fence the sunlight from him. With a desperate laugh he released his hold and set forth across the moor.

How changed was the ground which his light stride had crossed so easily at dawn; it rose and sank abruptly beneath his hesitant tread. The eddying light, too, bewildered him; he could have felt his way more easily in the thick darkness he had dreaded; now he pushed on step by step against a wall of flame. The wind had risen and buffeted him; it swept a great purple curtain of shadow across the moor, dulling its gold to bronze, muffling the crimson of the heather. But Hugh Griffith in his own burning pain walked unaware of the cloud coolness. A sick faintness stole upon him and he stumbled on oblivious of all save the intolerable burden of each moment.

He had gone a long, long way, step by painful step, though still the fir-tree he had left showed a scant musket shot behind. The ground was rising, and now and again he came on great boulders, sometimes shocking rudely against them. In the top of one of these stones he found a film of moisture in which he laid the end of his scarf that he might press the cool silk across his eyes. And there he rested a moment, drawing his hand over the olive-hued lichen and wondering idly if it were orange or silver grey.

Something of strength came back to him after that and he went more steadfastly, through the whispering bracken, across clumps of ling which sometimes bore him firmly up, and again let his foot sink with a treacherous suddenness. And then came a huddle of rocks across which he must creep, testing with hand and knee, and feel himself a crawling thing, no man. His spurs caught in the tangle and when he groped to unfasten them, the rowels tore his bound hands. He cursed at it and then finding his words stumbling on without his will