

"Just a minute, Mr. Craig," protested McGonigal. "Just a minute. Ye'd betther be waiting a bit. Don't harry off. I think I have something for yerself."

Craig's perplexed gaze wandered from the smiling self-possessed Irishman to Flora McIntyre.

As she read the letters the curiosity in her face slowly deepened to utter amazement. Suddenly she raised her head and, looking McGonigal square in the eye, demanded sharply:

"How did you get these, Murty?"

"From Allan Dhu, Miss Flora," he said soberly.

Craig, his face like a thundercloud, turned to go. Murty's hand fell on his arm.

"Just a minute—hould yer horses, Mr. Craig."

Flora's wondering gaze was fixed on Murty.

"From Allan," she exclaimed. "But he is in Montreal."

Murty stepped backward, glanced to right and left, behind the bushes. Satisfied that there was no one within earshot, he motioned with wagging thumb for both to step nearer. Mystified by the man's behaviour, they complied.

For a moment Murty stood silent, his short legs apart, an elbow cupped in the hollow of one hand, the other tapping his pipe stem against his teeth reflectively.

"Mr. Craig and Miss Flora," he said in a whisper, "I want yer wurrud av honour that ye will never tell to anny livin' sowl what I'm goin' to be tellin' ye in a jiffy."

Impressed by the man's earnestness, they murmured assent.

"Allan Dhu is not in Montreal," he said in a low tone. "The man—is dead."

He made a warning motion to still their exclamations of astonishment.

"The poor lad lies two fathom deep, bound about with boom chains in the lake by the Arnprior wharf?"

Quickly he told the story of the midnight tragedy—his own determination to kill the Laird, the suddenness of Allan's assassination, and his own finding of the letters.