

words Japhra had said: "Mistress, beware lest thou betrayest him!"

He came swiftly to her and roughly caught her. "Are you mad? What is this?"

She recovered herself. "Do you know that box in your room?"

The locked box was an old joke of his. "What has that to do with it?"

"The proofs are there. You shall see."

"Show me," he said, his voice not to be recognised for any he had spoken with. "Show me!"

She steadied herself against a chair, and steadying herself by all her hand came against as she walked, went across the room to the stairs, he following. There came at that moment a loud knock upon the outer door. He went dazedly to it and stared with unattending eyes at one who stood there, the light shining on his heavy waterproof coat that streamed with rain. It was the strange man whom they had overtaken as the cart came out of Great Letham.

"The convict Hunt's been seen near by," said the man abruptly. "Me and my mates thought it right to tell the village."

Percival closed the door upon him without a word. "Show me," he repeated to Aunt Maggie, and followed her to her room.

II

He sat on the edge of her bed while she told him his story. He sat motionless and with his face immobile. There was only one action that betrayed he was under any emotion. His chin was forward on his hand, elbow on knee. His fingers came across his mouth, and in the