

"To kirk!" cried the Woman, near to tears—"to the kirk-garth."

"T'ane's on the way to t'ither," said the Laird, and stood before her gaunt and stark and grey, like one risen from the dead.

She came across to him pleading.

"But what need is there for your Honour to go?" she cried. "Your Honour's soul is safe. A kirk unkept will make little differ. Missie will put that right for you."

"Ye mistake," said the Laird, grey, tall, and shivering like an aspen-poplar in the dawn. "I do not go to keep my kirks."

"Is it to see the people keep theirs?"

"In part," said the Laird.

"But they will so," urged the other. "They will surely so. Your Honour need little fash for them. They will keep their kirks if only to pray it is your death-bed you are on."

"Though I am on my death-bed, yet will I rise from it to be among them; such," he said, "is my fondness for my people."

"You go to prove them right," sobbed the Woman, and surrendered.

When he was clothed and cloaked, she wound a plaid about his mouth and shoulders.

"And now," she cried with vindictive sarcasm, "how will you get? Will you walk? or will I order your coffin round to the door for you?"

The Laird, muffled in his plaid, tottered out of the room shakily and down the stairs, Danny solicitous before him.

In the hall the Woman, a bonnet now on her head, joined him, hurrying.

"I am for coming with you," she panted.

"You'll do nothing of the sort," said the Laird.

"Ye canna go your lane," cried the Woman, "Ye must have some one."

"I have."

"Who?"