

"I will take none of Mr. Heriot's favours," said the dark woman proudly, and gathered herself to go.

"Except when they affect yourself," said the Laird.

"We will go forth," cried the widow, "Simon and me, like Hagar and Ishmael, into the wilderness, together there to die. And if ill comes to Simon through it, his blood be on your Honour's head," she cried, her hand upon the door, "as his father's was."

"And the insurance-money in your pocket," said the Laird, "as his father's was."

She turned and curtsied to him with trembling knees.

"May the Lord show mercy to your Honour as you have to me and mine," she said.

The widow crept forth.

Outside she leaned against the wall, one hand to her heart. Long she leaned so with shut eyes, until at length a creaking noise stirred her back to life.

She looked up. At the far end of the dim passage she beheld a gaunt-boned sentinel asleep; and on her knees one who stretched himself and yawned.

The widow took a step forward and peered. Danny saw her, jumped softly down, and came to her smiling, his soft eyes clouded still with sleep.

*(To be continued.)*