

marry ye! If I clear this business of his father's up he's under an obligation."

"Oh," she cried, and wrung her hands, "that's just what tortures me! I want no man who's under an obligation, or might think he was!"

She flung from the room in a rage of indignation.

He went round to the Bailie's house. Æneas was out; he had spent the whole day calling upon men who had been friendly with his father to see if any one by chance had had a correspondence with his father after he had gone to France. His uncle went to a man who had been skipper of a barque and knew the port of Havre. MacIver was his name; he had sailed for twenty years with fish in their season to the place and knew what Scottish merchants lived there. In all his time he had never known of one Macfarlane; there had been no such Scottish merchant fourteen years ago in Havre.

"I knew it all along," said Ninian, when the Bailie told him this. "It was the lie of a desperate man, no more in it than there was in the charge that Paul was turncoat. Duncanson was lying right and left, enough to make the green rocks cry. He had your brother killed! And he lost no time about it either. Paul never spent a year in France—the thing's ridiculous! Do you think, Alan, the brother of your blood with a boy here waiting on him would not find some means to get a letter to you in a twelvemonth?"

"But Duncanson would burn them," said Annabel.

"Supposing he did? That might work for a month or two but no' for a year on end. When Paul got no reply from you to the letters he sent through Sandy, he would be a stupid man that didna jalouse something and try another post."

"That's true!" said the Bailie. "There was many a way he might have written us. There was, for one, MacIver."

"But he didna write ye. What way? Because he was dead! That flashed on me the other night when Æneas told me Sandy's story. There was never a penny of Drimdorran rents sent into France the