

"If ye mean that I ran away from Girnigoe, that I did, and with right goodwill," said the smith.

"Then thine will be a right merry work this morn, my brave master armourer," answered the officer. "Old scores are sometimes repaid even to my lord earls, are they not?"

The armourer started at this, and looked at me wonderingly. But I spake not. Then, to my horror and astonishment, my one-time acquaintance said in stern tone to the keepers—

"Bring yon dog this way, that we may put his eye-holes out."

I could no longer hold myself, but said—

"Sirrah, hast thou no heart, no remembrance?" But he only laughed in my face, and said to the musical apprentice, who had stayed in his song to look at me in a kind of dull wonder—

"Heat thy searing iron, and heat it well! Mind thou gettest it hot as thou canst!" Even the officer was surprised at his brutal mood, for he said—

"It must be a deep grudge thou owest him."

"'Tis little else we poor get from his kind," said the armourer. "'Tis my turn now, fear not!" he said to the officer, but looking at me. "I will do my work well!"

The apprentice was now blowing at the forge all he was able; but the fierce armourer was not satisfied, but cried in anger, with many oaths—

"Heat it hot, to hell's hotness! Nothing short will do him!"