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THE SHABBY SURTOUT.

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W^e had not left Uphall many miles behind us when the wind began to rise, and the gathering clouds indicated an approaching shower. The dandies began to prepare their umbrellas and the young gentleman in the surtout surveying the dress of the widow and perceiving that she was but indifferently provided against a change of weather, inquired of the guard if the coach was full inside. Being answered in the affirmative, he addressed the mourner in a tone of sympathy; told her there was every appearance of a smart shower, expressed his regret that she could not be taken into the coach and concluded by offering her the use of his cloak.

"It will protect you so far," said he, "and at all events it will protect the baby." The widow thanked him in a modest and respectful manner, and said for the sake of her infant, she should be glad to have the cloak, if he would not suffer from the want of it himself. He assured her that he should not, being accustomed to all kinds of weather. "His surtout won't spoil," said one of the dandies, in a voice of affected tenderness, "and besides, my dear,

the cloak will hold you both." The widow blushed; and the young gentleman turning quickly round, addressed the speaker in a tone of dignity which I never shall forget. "I am not naturally quarrelsome, Sir; but yet it is quite possible you may provoke me too far." Both of the exquisites immediately turned as pale as death; shrunk in spite of themselves into their natural insignificance, and scarcely opened their lips, even to each other, during the remainder of the journey.

In the meantime the young gentleman, with the same politeness and delicacy as if he had been assisting a lady of quality with her shawl, proceeded to wrap the widow and her baby in his cloak. He had hardly accomplished this when a smart shower of rain, mingled with hail, commenced. Being myself provided with a cloak, the cape of which was sufficiently large to envelope and protect my head, I offered the young gentleman my umbrella, which he readily accepted, but held it, as I remarked, in a manner better calculated to defend the widow than himself.

When we reached West Craig's Inn, the second stage from Edinburgh, the rain had ceased; and the young gentleman politely