

had gone his rounds and put the captives out of pain ; but never had they caught Her ; and the old man at heart was harassed exceedingly.

For he knew it was truth what the Woman said that the folk in the village were mocking him. Worse ! it sometimes almost seemed as if with devilish laughter She herself was making sport of him. Only last night he had tethered a young bird as bait in a lonely likely spot beneath the wall on Lammermore, where passes and repasses in the night the traffic of the moors ; had set around an array of traps cunningly earthed over, while Danny sat by and approved ; and that very morning, in the dripping dawn, had hurried, he and Danny, to inspect, and, lo ! the bird was dead, and all around, in grim, ironic circle, the traps lay naked, sprung, grinning with clenched teeth up at the mocking heavens—and in the middle of them the bird stone-dead.

Danny had looked up into the old man's face with dear innocent eyes, moved to much laughter by the humour of it : but Robin in childish passion had seized the dead bird by the legs and bashed its unoffending head against the ground.

“ I'll learn ye to be killed by Her when I put ye to catch Her ! ” he had screamed, bashing furiously. “ I'll gar Her make sport o' me ! ” and bashed and bashed till the bird's poor head was flat as a farthing ; while Danny sat apart upon his hunkers with grave eyes, trying not to laugh.

An hour later, Robin, hurrying forth through the great gates, stumbled against the Laird, all in black, returning from the funeral.

“ I thought I forbad ye to go down the street, ” said the Laird.

“ Till after the funeral, Mr. Heriot said, ” Robin reminded him. “ The funeral is over this hour past. Your Honour is coming from it now. ”

The Laird paused in thought.

“ What ye after ? ” asked the Laird.