

mined to send for Donald, show him the frightful danger in which he stood, and then tear the note before his eyes, and leave its payment to his honour. He even realized the peace which would flow from such a deed. Nor were these feelings transitory, his better nature pleaded so hard with him that he walked his room hour after hour under their influence, and their power over him was such as delayed all action in the matter for nearly a week.

CHAPTER IV.

At length one morning David Cameron came into the bank, and having finished his business, walked up to James and said, "I feared ye were ill, James. Whatna for hae ye stayed awa sae lang? I wanted ye sairly last night to go o'er wi' me the points in this debate at our kirk. We are to hae anither session to-night; ye'll come the morn and talk it o'er wi' me?"

"I will, Mr. Cameron."

But James instantly determined to see Christine that night. Her father would be at the kirk session, and if Donald was there, he thought he knew how to whisper him away. He meant to have Christine all to himself for an hour or two, and if he saw any opportunity he would tell her all. When he got to David's the store was still open, but the clerk said, "David has just gone," and James, as was his wont, walked straight to the parlour.

Donald was there; he had guessed that, because a carriage was in waiting, and he knew it could belong to no other caller at David Cameron's. And never had Donald roused in him such an intense antagonism. He was going to some national celebration, and he stood beside Christine in all the splendid picturesque pomp of the McFarlane tartans. He was holding Christine's hand, and she stood as a white lily in the glow and colour of his dark beauty. Perhaps both of them felt James' presence inopportune. At any rate they received him coldly. Donald drew Christine a little apart, said a few whispered words to her, and lifting his bonnet slightly to James, he went away.

In the few minutes of this unfortunate meeting the devil entered into James' heart. Even Christine was struck with the new look on his face. It was haughty, malicious, and triumphant, and he leaned against the high oaken chimney-piece in a defiant way that annoyed Christine, though she could not analyze it.

"Sit down, James," she said with a touch of authority—for his attitude had unconsciously put her on the defensive. "Donald has gone to the Caledonian club; there is to be a grand gathering of Highland gentlemen there to-night."

"Gentlemen!"

"Well, yes, gentlemen! And there will be none more worthy the name than our Donald."

"The rest of them are much to be scorned at, then."