

and thanked him for his presence. Then I went back into my room, and, sitting down in my chair, closed my eyes, for their lids felt heavy and weary.

‘William, Betty wants you.’ The voice seemed far away. I rose hurriedly and rubbed my eyes. The sparrows were twittering in the lime-tree, and the gray light of a March morning was lying cold in the room. The doctor was standing with his hand on the handle of the half-open door. ‘Betty wants you, William,’ he said in a whisper; and I passed him without a word, and with a heavy, apprehensive heart.

On the little round table was an open Bible which I knew well, and a pair of spectacles lay across the flattened-out leaves. Betty was standing at the bedside, her dimmed eyes fixed on Nathan’s long, wan face. She didn’t turn her head when I came in, but she held out her hand to me, and together we watched. Suddenly he raised his head from the pillow and his sunken, sightless eyes turned toward the window. ‘Ay, imphm!—weel, Betty lass, it’s about time I was daunerin’. It—it’s a nice mornin’ for the road; the birds’ll be whusslin’ bonny in the Gillfit wood, an’—an’ the sunshine will be on the hawthorn. No,