

crossed the ferry, he wad tak' my faither wi' him, for company just, maybe half a mile on his way out or hame. Weel, it was a'e nicht about the end o' May, — a bonny nicht, an hour or sae after sundown, — an' my faither was mooring his boat, afore going to bed, to an auld oak tree, whan wha does he see but the laird o' Fairburn coming down the bank? Od, thocht he, what can be takin' the laird frae hame sae late as this? I thocht he had been no weel. The laird cam' steppin' into the boat, but, instead o' speakin' frankly, as he used to do, he just waved his hand, as the proudest gentleman in the kintra nicht, an' pointed to the ither side. My faither rowed him across; but, oh! the boat felt unco dead an' heavy, an' the water stuck around the oars as gin it had been tar; an' he had just eneugh ado, though there was but little tide in the river, to mak' oot the ither side. The laird stepped oot, an' then stood, as he used to do, on the bank, to gie my faither time to fasten his boat, an' come along wi' him; an' were it no for that, the puir man wadna hae thocht o' going wi' him that nicht; but as it was, he just moored his boat an' went. At first he thocht the laird must hae got some bad news that made him sae dull, an' sae he spoke on to amuse him, aboot the weather an' the markets; but he found he could get very little to say, an' he felt as are an' eerie in passin' through the woods as gin he had been passin' alane through a kirkyard. He noticed, too, that there was a fearsome flichtering an' shriekin' amang the birds that lodged in the tree-taps aboon them; an' that, as they passed the *Talisoe*, there was a collie on the tap o' a hillock, that set up the awfulest yowling he had ever heard. He stood for a while in sheer consternation, but the laird beckoned him on, just as he had done at the riverside, an' sae he gaed a bittie further along the wild, rocky