

portable, that made my heart ache with a swooning sickness, a wonder that looked blankly on to the end of it. How had it befallen? He might have won, he must have won. It is always the hero-knight who wins, and was not he just such as the heroes were, tall and slender and strong, quick with sword and spear? Did not all who knew him in battle call him brave? It would be but short work for him to overmaster the old Scotchman, whose rough face I dimly remembered. Surely, by this time, it was all over. He would soon be here. It was long after the noon. In a few minutes, he would come. Down in the courtyard would be a clatter of hoofs, and quick voices, then a noise of hurrying steps on the stairs, one spring to my side, and all would be right forever.

Then he would tell me about it all; how the grim old earl fought, how he swore when the sword blade sheared off his hand, and how the blood in his throat stopped his curses when the sword-point went through his neck. He would come soon. Geraldis said nothing. I thought I heard her sobbing; but I laughed, for I knew that he would come. Somehow I felt too strangely weak to stand, but I sat upright and listened.

At last came a clatter of hoofs, and the clash of spurred feet on the stairs, quick steps and glad, and about me the arms of—the Scotch Sir Rossness. One look in his face, and that was all; and the darkness leaped and struck me between the brows, the world reeled red with sparkles, the earth fell from under me, and all swooned headlong in a sick and sinking gulf.

It was not Geraldis who was with me when I awoke. It was a strange woman, old and witch-like. She sat by the window spinning, crooning some Scottish ballad, with her dark eyes gleaming strangely from under her shaggy brows, and her thin lips set fast. I looked out of the window behind her. It was not my window. Mine opened on low hills and broad fields. Here were rough mountains, crest on crest, half hidden

by the hanging folds of mist. On one side lay far off the gray sea, all scattered with widening flakes of white. I had never seen the sea, but I knew what it was, and feared it more than the great and desolate hills.

The room was also strange. The ceiling was high, with great, smoky oaken rafters, draped with shuddering tapestry of spiders' webs. The floor was carelessly strewn with unrenewed rushes. There was no sign of wealth, save in the furniture, whose gloomy magnificence rebuked the thought of comfort. The scant tapestry on the walls was dusty and moth-eaten. In many places shreds of it had fallen to the floor, where they lay un-gathered.

Was this another of the dreams of semi-unconscious delirium, or did they too have some meaning,—the headlong tossing as of a ship in rough waters, the smell of salt air, the noise of men marching, all these confused memories fugitive from a sealed oblivion? If this was a dream it was strangely real, so strange that I laughed, and the laugh sounded so weak that I laughed to hear it, and then wept that I should laugh at myself, till at last the old woman rose, and came and bent over me. She looked far kinder now, and I think the glistening in her eyes was of tears, but she only stroked back my hair, and said, "Poor child, poor child," and I lay still, and wondered why she spoke so sadly, and whether I was dead—why else should her face be so sorrowful, for as yet I might remember nothing? So I lay and stared at her, and she sat and spun, with strange ballads of love and hate and death, keeping time to the whirring throb of her wheel. Nothing more to see but the gloomy, great room, and, far away, the mountains and barren sea, ever cloudy, ever the same, till it seemed as if I should go mad.

But in a few days, I grew better, and once had a visit from my husband, for somehow, in my delirium, he had me married and, as I was too weak to hate him, or understand, we agreed well. It was not long before I could move about the room, and in a couple of weeks I might walk out into the little garden,