

**CHEAP TRACTS, NO. III.**

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**DREAMS AND APPARITIONS.**

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**CONTAINING**

**TIBBY HYSLOP'S  
DREAM AND THE SEQUEL.**

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**PART SECOND.**

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## TIBBY HYSLOP'S DREAM.

### *Part Second.*

Tibby Hyslop dreamed, that on a certain spot which she had never seen before, between a stone-dyke and the verge of a woody precipice, a little, sequestered, inaccessible corner, of a triangular shape,—or, as she called it to the minister, “a three neukit crook o’ the linn,” she saw Mr Forret lying without his hat, with his throat slightly wounded, and blood running from it; but he neither appeared to be dead, nor yet dying, but in excellent spirits. He was clothed in a fine new black suit, had full boots on, which appeared likewise to be new, and yellow spurs gilt. A great number of rooks and hooded crows were making free with his person;—some picking out his eyes, some his tongue, and some tearing out his bowels. But in place of being distressed by their verocity, he appeared much delighted, encouraging them on all he could, and there was a perfectly good understanding between the parties. In the midst of this horrible feast, down came a majestic raven from a dark cloud close above this scene, and, driving away all the meaner birds, fell a feasting himself;

—opened the breast of his victim, who was still alive, and encouraging him on; and after preying on his vitals for some time, at last picked out his heart, and devoured it; and then the mangled wretch, after writhing for a short time in convulsive agonies, groaned his last.

This was precisely Tibby's dream as it was told to me, first by my friend Mr Cunningham of Dalswinton, and afterwards by the clergyman to whom she herself related it next day. But there was something in it not so distinctly defined, for though the birds which she saw devouring her master, were rooks, blood-crows and a raven, still each individual of the number had a likeness by itself, distinguishing it from all the rest; a certain character as it were, to support; and these particular likenesses were so engraven on the dreamer's mind, that she never forgot them, and she could not help looking for them both among "birds and bodies," as she expressed it, but never could distinguish any of them again, and the dream, like many other dis-tempered visions, was forgotten, or only remembered now and then with a certain tremor of antecedent knowledge.



Days and seasons passed over, and with them the changes incident to humanity. The virtuous and indefatigable Tibby Hyslop was assisted by the benevolent, who had heard of her exertions and patient-sufferings; and the venerable Douglas Hervey had gone in peace to the house appointed for all living, when one evening in June, John Jardine, the cooper, chanced to come to Knowe-back, in the course of his girding and hooping peregrinations. John was a living and walking chronicle of the events of the day, all the way from the head of Glen-breck to the bridge of Stoney-lee. He knew every man, and every man's affairs—every woman, and every woman's failings; and his information was not like that of many others, for it was generally to be depended on. How he got his information so correctly, was a mystery to many, but whatever John the cooper told as a fact, was never disputed, and any woman, at least, might have ventured to tell it over again.

“These are hard times for poor folks, Tibby. How are you and auld granny coming on?”

“Joost fighting on as we hae done this

mony a year. She's ay contentit, poor body, an' thankfu', whether I hae little to gie her or muckle. This life's naething but a fight, Johnie, frae beginning to end."

"It's a' true ye say, Tibby," said the cooper, interrupting her, for he was afraid she was going to begin on religion, a species of conversation that did not accord with John's talents or dispositions, "It's a' true ye say, Tibby; but your master will soon be sic a rich man now, that we'll a' be made up, and you amang the lave will be made a lady."

"If he get his riches honestly, n' the blessing o' the almighty wi' them, John, I shall rejoice in his prosperity, but neither me nor ony ither poor body will ever be muckle the better o' them. What way is he gaun to get sickan great riches? If a' be true that I hear, he is gaun to the wraneg part to seek them?"

"Aha, lass, that's a' that ye ken about it. Did ye no hear that he had won the law-plea on his laird, whilk has been afore the Lords for mair than seven years? An' did ye no hear he had won ten pleas afore the courts o' Dumfries, a' rising out o' ane

anither, like ash girderings out o' ae root; and that he's to get, on the hale, about twenty thousand pund's worth o' damages?"

"That's an unco sight o' siller! John Howmuckle is that?"

"Aha, lass, ye fixed me now; but they say it will come to as muckle goud as six men can carry on their backs. And we're a to get twenties, and thirties and forties o' pund's for bribes, to gar us gie faithfu' and true evidences at the great concluding trial afore the Lords; and you are to be bribit amang the rest, to gar ye tell the hale truth, and nothing but the truth."

"There needs nae waste o' siller to gar me do that. But, Johnie, I wad like to ken whether that mode o' taking oaths, solemn and sacred oaths, about the miserable trash o' this warld, be according to the tenor o' gospel revelation, and the third o' the commands?"

"Aha, lass, ye hac fixed me now! That's rather a kittle point, but I believe it's a true that ye say, However, ye'll get the offer o' a great bribe afore-hand; for if ye slippen to your master's promises, you will neveringer a bodle after the job's

done."

"I'm but a poor simple body, Johnie, an' canna manage ony sickan things. But I shall need nae fee to tell the truth, an' I winna tell an untruth for a' my master's estate, an' his six backfus' o' goud into the bargain. If the sin o' the soul Johnie——

"Ay, ay, that's very true, Tibby! very true, indeed, about the sin o' the soul! But as ye were saying about being a simple body—What wad ye think if I were to cast up that day Gledging Gibby came here to gie you your lesson—I could maybe help you on a wee bit—What wad ye gie me if I did?"

"Alack, I hae naething to gie you but my blessing, but I shall pray for the blessing o' God on ye."

"Ay, ay, as ye say. I daresay there might be waur things. But could ye think o' naething to gie a body wha likes as weel to be paid aff hand as to gie credit? That's the very thing I'm cautioning you against."

"I dinna expect ony siller frae that fountain-head, Johnie: It's a dry ane to the puir and needy, and an ucco sma' matter wad gar me make over my rights to a



pose that I hae neither faith nor hope in. But ye're kend for an auld farrent man; if ye can bring a little honestly this way, I shall gie you the half o't; for weel I ken it will never come this way by ony art or shift o' mine."

"Ay, ay, that's spoken like a sensible and reasonable woman, Tibby Hyslop, as ye are and hae always been. But think you, could there be nae way contrived"—and here the cooper gave two winks with his left eye—"by the whilk ye could gie me it a', and yet no rob yoursel o' a farthing?"

"Na, na, Johnie Jardine, that's clean aboon my comprehension; But ye're a cunning draughty man, and I leave the hale matter to your guidance."

"Very weel, Tibby, very weel. I'll try to ca' a gayan substantial gird round your succes, if I can hit the width o' the chance, and the girth o' the gear. Gude day to you the day, an think about the plan o' equal-aqual that I spak o'."

Old maids are in general very easily courted, and very apt to take a hint. I have indeed known a great many instances in which they took hints very seriously, before



ever they were given. Not so with Tibby Hyslop. There had such a heavy charge lain upon her the greater part of her life, that she had never turned her thoughts to any earthly thing beside, and she knew no more what the cooper was aiming at, than if the words had not been spoken. When he went away, her grandmother called her to the bed-side, and asked if the cooper was gone away. Tibby answered in the affirmative; on which granny said, "What has he been hawering about sae lang the day? I thought I heard him courting ye."

"Courting me! Dear granny, he was courting nane o' me; he was telling me how Mr Forret had won as muckle siller as sax men can carry on their backs, and how we are a' to get a part of it."

"Dinna believe him, hinny; the man that can win siller at the law, will lose it naewhere. But Tibby, I heard the cooper courting you, and I thought I heard you gie him your consent to manage the matter as he likit. Now you hae been a great blessing to me. I thought you were sent to me in wrath, as a punishment of my sins, but I have found that you were indeed sent

to me in love and in kindness. You have been the sole support of my old age, and of hers, wha is now in the grave, and it is natural that I should like to see you put up afore I leave you. But Tibby Hyslop, John Jardine is not the man to lead a Christian life with. He has nae mair religion than the beasts that perish—he is frighted for it, and shuns it as a body would do a loathsome or poisonous draught: And besides it is weel kend how sair he neglected his first wife. Hae naething to do wi' him my dear bairn, but rather live as you are.— There is neither sin nor shame in being unwedded, but there may be baith in joining yourself to an unbeliever.”

Tibby wondered at this information. She did not know how she had been courted, and she found that she rather thought the better of the cooper for what it appeared he had done. Accordingly, she made no promises to her grandmother, but only remarked, that “it was a pity no to gie the cooper a chance o’ conversion, honest man.”

The cooper kept watch about Drumlochic and the hinds’ houses, and easily found out all the sly Gibby’s movements,

and even the exact remuneration he could be urged to give to such as were pleased to remember aright. Indeed it was believed that the most part of the hinds and labouring people remembered nothing of the matter farther than he was pleased to inform them, and that in fact they gave evidence to the best of their knowledge or remembrance, although that evidence might be decidedly wrong.

One day Gibby took his gun, and went out towards Knowe-back. The cooper, also guessing what was in his head, went thither by a circuitous rout, so as to come in as it were by chance; but ere he arrived, Mr Forret had begun his queries and instructions to Tibby.—The two could not agree by any means; Tibby either could not recollect the yearly crops on each field on the farm of Drumlochic, or recollected wrong.—But at length, in comes the cooper, when the calculations were at the keenest, and at every turn he took Mr Forret's side with the most strenuous asseverations, abusing Tibby for her stupidity and want of recollection.

“Hear me speak, Jolmie Jardine, afore ye condemn me aff-foot: Mr Forr e says

that the crooked holm was peas in the 96 and corn in the 97; I say it was corn baith the years. How do ye say about that?"

"Mr Forret's right—perfectly right. It grew pease in the 96, and aits, good Angus aits, in the 97. Poor gouk! dinna ye think that he has a' these things merkit down in black an' white, and what good could it do to him to mislead you? Depend on't he's right there."

"Could ye tak your oath on that, Johnie Jardine?"

"Ay, this meenint,—sax times repeated, if it were necessary."

"Then I yield—I am but a poor silly woman an' liable to mony errors and shortcomings—my recollection is playing at hide-an'-seek wi me—I maun be wrang, and I yield that it is sae. But I'm sure, John, you cannot but remember this sae short a while syne, for ye shore wi' us that har'st. Was the langfieldniest Robbie Johnston's farm growing corn in the dear year, or no? I say it was."

"It was the next year, Tibby, my woman," said Mr Forret; "you are confounding one year with another again; and I see what is the reason. It was oats in 99,



grass in 1800, and oats again in 1801; now you never remember any of the intermediate years, but only those that you sown on these fields. I cannot be mistaken in a rule I never break."

The cooper had now got his cue. He perceived that the plea ultimately depended on proof relating to the proper cropping of the land throughout the lease; and he supported the farmer so strenuously, that Tibby, in her simplicity, fairly yielded, although hardly convinced; but the cooper assured the farmer that he would put her all to rights, provided she received a handsome acknowledgement, for there was not the least doubt that Mr Forret was right in every particular.

This speech of the cooper's gratified the farmer exceedingly, as his whole fortune now depended upon the evidence to be elicited in the court at Dumfries, on a day that was fast approaching, and he was willing to give anything to secure the evidence on his side; so he made a long set speech to Tibby, telling her how necessary it was that she should adhere strictly to the truth—that, as it would be an awful thing to make oath to that which was false, he had

merely paid her that visit to instruct her remembrance a little in that which was the truth, it being impossible, on account of his jottings, that he could be mistaken; and finally it was settled, for thus telling the truth, and nothing but the truth, Tibby Hyslop, a most deserving woman, was to receive a present of L.15, as wages, for time bygone. This was all managed in a very sly way by the cooper, who assured Forret that all should go right, as far as related to Tibby Hyslop and himself, which pleased the farmer exceedingly; for the spirit of litigation had of late possessed him to such a degree, and he had ventured such a stake on this issue, that if he had been master of the realm, he would have parted with the half of it to beat his opponents.

The day of the trial arrived, and council attended from Edinburgh for both parties, to take full evidence before the two Circuit Lords and Sheriff. The evidence was said to have been unsatisfactory to the Judges, but upon the whole in Mr Forret's favour, the cooper's was decidedly so, and the farmer's counsel were crowing and bustling in a moderate way, when at length Tibby Hyslop was called to the witness box. At the first sight of her master's council, and the Dumfries writers and notaries that were hanging a-

out him, Tibby was struck dumb with amazement, and almost bereaved of sense. She at once recognised them, all and severally, as the birds that she saw, in her dream, devouring her master, and picking the flesh from his bones; while the great lawyer from Edinburgh was, in feature, eye and beak, the identical raven which at last devoured his vitals and heart.

This singular coincidence brought reminiscencies of such a nature over her spirit, that, on the first questions being put, she could not answer a word. She knew from henceforward that her master was a ruin-man, and her heart failed, on thinking of her kind mistress and his family. The council then went, and whispering Mr Forster inquired what sort of a woman she was, and if her evidence was likely to be of any avail. As the cooper had behaved so well, and had likewise answered for Tibby, the lawyer was intent on not losing her evidence, and answered his council that she was a worthy honest woman, who would not swear to a lie for the king's dominions, and that he must not lose her evidence. In this intelligence the lawyer announced to the bench with great consequence and composure, and the witness was allowed a

little time to reecover her spirits.

Isabella Hyslop, spinster, was again called, answered to her name, and took the oath distinctly, and without hesitation, until the offisical qnerist came to the usual question, "Now, has no one instructed you what to say, or what you are to answer?" When Tibby replied, with a steady countenance, "Nobody except my master!" The council and client stared at one another, while the Court could hardly maintain their gravity of deportment. The querist went on—

"What? Do you say your master instructed you what to say?"

"Yes."

And did he promise or give you any reward for what you were to say?

Yes.

"How much did he give or promise you for answering as he directed you?"

"He gave me fifteen pound notes."

Here Mr Forret and his council, losing all patience, interrupted the proceedings the latter addressing the Judges, with pompous vehemence, to the following purport:—

"My Lords, in my client's name, an



in the name of justice and reason, I protest against proceeding with this woman's evidence, it being manifest that she is talking through a total derangement of intellect. At first she is dumb, she cannot answer nor speak a word, and now she is answering in total disregard of all truth and propriety. I appeal to your Lordships if such a farrago as this can be at all inferential or relevant?"

"Sir, it was but the other minute," said the junior Judge, "that you announced to us with great importance, that this woman was a person noted for honesty and worth, and one who would not tell a lie for the king's dominions. Why not then hear her evidence to the end? For my own part, I perceive no tokens of discrepancy in it, but rather a scrupulous conscientiousness. Of that, however, we will be better able to judge when we have heard her out, I conceive that, for the sake of both parties, this woman should be strictly examined."

"Proceed with the evidence, Mr Wood," said the senior Lord, bowing to his assistant.

Tibby was reminded she was on her great oath, and examined over again; but she adhered strictly to her former answers.

"Can you repeat anything to the Court that he desired you to say?"

"Yes; he desired me over and over again to tell the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

And, in order that you should do this he paid you down fifteen pounds sterling

"Yes."

"This is a very singular transaction: I cannot perceive the meaning of it. You certainly must be sensible that you made an advantageous bargain?"

"Yes."

"But you depone that he charged you to tell only the truth?"

"Yes, he did, and before witnesses, too."

Here Mr Forret's counsel began to cry out again, as if the victory had been his own; but the junior Judge again took him side by saying, "Have patience, sir, the woman may be right, and your client in the wrong; at least I think I can perceive as much. Now, my goodwoman, I esteem your principals and plain simplicity very highly. We want only to ascertain the truth, and you say your master then charged you to tell that only. Tell this, then—did he not inform you what that truth was?"

"Yes. it was for that purpose he came over to see me, to help my memory to what was the truth; for fear I should hae sworn wrang, which wad hae hae been a great sin, ye ken."

"Yes, it would so. I thought that would be the way. You may now go on with your questions regularly, Mr Wood."

"Are you quite conscious, now, that those things he brought to your remembrance were actually the truth?"

"No."

"Are you conscious they were not the truth?"

Yes, at least some of them I'm sure were not.

"Please to condescend on one instance".

He says he has markit on his buik, that the crookit houn, that lies at he back of the wood, ye ken grew peas in the 96 and corn in the 97; now it is unco queer that he should hae setten't down wrang, for the houn was really and traly aits bothr the years."

"It is a long time since; perhaps your memory may be at fault?"

"If my master had not chanced to mention it I could not have been sure, but he set me a-calculating & comparing, my mother & me have been consuking abuoit & have fairly settled it.

"And you are quite positive it was

oat, both years?"

"Yes."

"Can you mention any circumstance on which you rest your conclusions?"

"Yes; there came a great wind ae Sabbath day, in the ninety-sax, and that raised the sheares' wages, at Dumfries, to three shillings the day. We began to the crookit houm on a Monandy's morning, at three shillings-a-day, and that very day twalmonth, we began till't at tenpence. We had a good deal of speaking about it; and I said to John Edie, What need we grumble! I made sue muckel at shearing the last year, that it's no a' done yet. And he said, Ah Tibby, Tibby, but wha can hain like you?"

Were there any others that you think your master had marked down wrong?

There was ane at any rate, the lang-field niest Robie Johnston's march: He says it wa clover in the drouthy dear year, and aits the niest, but that's a year I canna forget; it wa aits baith years. I lost a week's shearing on it the first year, waiting on my auntie, and the neist, year she was dead; and I shore the lang field niest Robbie Johnston's wi' he sickle heuk, and black ribbons on my mutch.

The whole of Tibby's evidence went against Mr Forret's interest most conclu



ively, and the Judges at last dismissed her, with high compliments on her truth and integrity. The cause was again remitted to the Court of Session for revisal after this evidence taken, and the word spread over all the country that Mr Forret had won. Tibby never contradicted this nor disputed it, but she was thoroughly convinced, that in case of winning he would be a ruined man.

About a month after the examination at Dumfries, he received a letter from his agents in Edinburgh, buoying him up with hopes of great and instant success, and urging the utility of his presence in town at the final decision of the cause on which all the minor ones rested. Accordingly he quipped himself, and rode into Dumfries, the evening, to be ready for the coach the following morning, saying to his wife, he went away, that he would send home his mare with the carrier, and as that he could not possibly name the day on which he would be home, she was to give herself no uneasiness. The mare was returned the following night, and put up in her own stall, nobody knew by whom; but servants are such sleepy, careless fellows that few regarded the circumstance. This was on

a Tuesday night; and a whole week pass-  
 over, and still Mrs Forret had no word from  
 her husband, which kept her very uneas-  
 as their whole fortune, being, and subsi-  
 ence, now depended on the issue of the  
 great law-suit, and she suspected that the  
 case still continued dubious, or was found  
 to be going against him.

But, behold, on the arrival of the Ed-  
 burgh papers next week, the whole case  
 so important to farmers; was detail'd  
 and it was there stated, that the great far-  
 mer and improver, Mr Forret of Drumlo-  
 ic, had not only forfeited his whole fortune  
 by improper husbandry and manifest bre-  
 aches of the conditions on which he held  
 lease, but that criminal letters had been  
 sued against him for attempts to pervert  
 justice, and rewards offered for his det-  
 tion or seizure. This was terrible news  
 to the family at Drumlochic, but there was  
 still sanguine hopes entertained that  
 circumstances were mistated, or at all  
 events that the husband and father would  
 make his escape; and as there was no word  
 from him day after day, this latter sen-  
 timent began to be cherished by the whole  
 family as their only remaining and forlorn  
 hope.

But one day, as poor Tibby Hyslop

going over to the Cat Linn, to gather a burden of sticks for firewood, she was surprised, on looking over the dike, to see a great body of crows collected, all of which were so intent on their prey, that they seemed scarcely to regard her presence as a sufficient cause for their desisting; she waved her burden-ropes at them over the dike, but they refused to move. Her heart nearly failed her, for she remembered of having before seen something of the same scene, with some fearful concomitants. But pure and unfeigned religion, the first principle of which teaches a firm reliance on divine protection, can give courage to the weakest of humane beings. Tibby climbed over the dike, drove the vermin away, and there lay the corpse of her late unfortunate master, wofully defaced by these voracious birds of prey. He had bled himself to death in the Jugular vein, was lying without the hat, and clothed in a fine new black suit of clothes, top boots, which appeared likewise to be new, and gilt spurs; and the place where he lay was a little three-cornered sequestered spot, between the dike and the precipice, and inaccessible by any other way than through the field. It was a spot that Tibby had never seen before.

A city dream is nothing but the fumes of a distempered frame, and a more distempered imagination; but let no man despise the circumstantial and impressive visions of a secluded Christian; for who can set bounds to the intelligence existing between the soul and its Creator?

The only thing more I have to add is, that the Lord President, having made the remark that he paid more regard to that poor woman, Isabella Hyslop's evidence, than to all the rest elicited at Dumfries, the gainers of the great plea became sensible that it was principally owing to her candour, and invincible veracity that they were successful, and sent her a present of twenty pounds. She was living comfortably at Know-back when I saw her, a contented and happy old maiden. The letter was found in Mr Forret's pocket, which had blasted all his hopes and driven him to utter distraction; he had received it at Dumfries, returned home, and put his mare carefully in the stable, but not having courage to face his ruined family, he had hurried to that sequestered spot, and perpetrated the woeful deed of self destruction.

FINIS.