

“‘And how,’ asked my mother, whose curiosity was excited, ‘could you have thought of it so early?’

“‘I lived,’ rejoined the woman, ‘at the time of Donald’s birth, in a lonely shieling among the Sutherland hills, — a full day’s journey from the nearest church. It was a long, weary road, over moors and mosses. It was in the winter season, too, when the days are short; and so, in bringing Donald to be baptized, we had to remain a night by the way in the house of a friend. We there found an old woman of so peculiar an appearance that, when she asked me for the child, I at first declined giving it, fearing she was mad and might do it harm. The people of the house, however, assured me she was incapable of hurting it, and so I placed it on her lap. She took it up in her arms, and began to sing to it; but it was such a song as none of us had ever heard before.

“‘Poor little stranger!’ she said, ‘thou hast come into the world in an evil time. The mists are on the hills, gloomy and dark, and the rain lies chill on the heather; and thou, poor little thing, hast a long journey through the sharp, biting winds, and thou art helpless and cold. Oh, but thy long after-journey is as dreary and dark! A wanderer shalt thou be, over the land and the ocean; and in the ocean shalt thou lie at last. Poor little thing, I have waited for thee long. I saw thee in thy wanderings, and in thy shroud, ere thy mother brought thee to the door; and the sounds of the sea and of the deadly guns are still ringing in my ears. Go, poor little thing, to thy mother. Bitterly shall she yet weep for thee, and no wonder; but no one shall ever weep over thy grave, or mark where thou liest amid the deep green, with the shark and the seal.’

“‘From that evening,’ continued the mother of my friend, ‘I have tried to reconcile my mind to what was to