

superstition of the sailor? Substitute, my friend, for this — shall I call it unavoidable superstition? — this natural religion of the sea, the religion of the Bible. Since you must be a believer in the supernatural, let your belief be true; let your trust be on Him who faileth not, your anchor within the vail; and all shall be well, be your destiny for this world what it may.”

We parted for the night, and I saw him no more.

Next morning Robert accompanied me for several miles on my way. I saw, for the last half-hour, that he had something to communicate, and yet knew not how to set about it; and so I made a full stop.

“You have something to tell me, Mr. Burns,” I said. “Need I assure you I am one you are in no danger from trusting?” He blushed deeply, and I saw him, for the first time, hesitate and falter in his address.

“Forgive me,” he at length said; “believe me, Mr. Lindsay, I would be the last in the world to hurt the feelings of a friend, — a — a — but you have been left among us penniless, and I have a very little money which I have no use for, none in the least. Will you not favor me by accepting it as a loan?”

I felt the full and generous delicacy of the proposal, and, with moistened eyes and a swelling heart, availed myself of his kindness. The sum he tendered did not much exceed a guinea; but the yearly earnings of the peasant Burns fell, at this period of his life, rather below eight pounds.