

THE FAIRY MINISTER

In the serene and tumultuous era of 1692, the tale of the Reverend Mr. Kirk of Aberfoyle, a peaceful man deeply loved by both his fellow men and the mystical Fairies, unfolds. Amidst the bloodshed of the Battle of Killiecrankie where the red blood of Dundee bled into the Garry, and political turmoil turned the world upside down, Mr. Kirk wandered his valley, untouched and attuned to the ethereal whispers and sightings from the otherworldly inhabitants of fairy knolls and enchanted hills. His profound understanding and the secrets he held of the Fairy folks led to his mysterious disappearance, taken by the very beings he understood so deeply, leaving him to wander between worlds, beyond the reach of heaven, hell, and human comprehension.

This enigmatic departure left many yearning for the stories he could tell, for the connection between humans and the Fairies has since dwindled. The taxes on corn and oil, the merry dances upon the heaths, and the laborious Brownies have all but vanished, alongside the enchanting encounters with Fairy maidens and their deadly kisses. There lies a sense of envy for Mr. Kirk, now adorned in the verdant garb of the Fairy Court, serving as the Chaplain to the Fairy Queen by the moonlit lochs and shadowy mountain crests.

The poem then transitions to an ode to Robert Louis Stevenson, linking him with Kirk through their shared fascination with the supernatural, despite Stevenson's physical distance from the lore-laden landscapes of Scotland. It humorously contrasts Stevenson's surroundings with the absence of Scottish heather, peat, trout-filled burns, and the distinct lack of Presbyterian churches, lamenting his separation from the tangible elements of Scottish folklore.

Yet, there is hope that Stevenson, through his writings and influence, might impart upon his new environment a sense of the Scottish Covenanting spirit, albeit in a land

unfamiliar with such historical and spiritual nuances. Through both the metaphorical feeding of "pagan wames" with wholesome Scottish fare and the sharing of Scotland's rich covenanting legacy, Stevenson might bridge the gap between two vastly different cultures, much like Kirk bridging the human and fairy worlds.

This chapter not only honors Mr. Kirk's mysterious legacy but also captures a moment of cultural reflection and the enduring allure of the unseen, suggesting that the fascination with folklore and fairy tales transcends time and place, much like the timeless wonder Stevenson brings to readers around the world.

