

# YOUNG MUSGRAVE.

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"No man can redeem his brother."—Ps. XLIX. 7.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *An Early Meeting.*

GEOFF left the cottage when the sun had just risen. He was half-giddy, half-stunned by the strange new light, unexpected up to the last moment, which had been thrown upon the whole question which he had undertaken to solve. He was giddy too with fatigue, the night's watch, the long walk, the want of sleep. Besides all these confusing influences there is something in the atmosphere of the very early morning, the active stillness, the absence of human life, the pre-occupation of Nature with a hundred small (as it were) domestic cares, such as she never exhibits to the eye of man, that moves the mind of an unaccustomed observer to a kind of rapture, bewildering in its solemn influence. To come out from the lonely little house folded among the hills, with all its miseries past and present, its sad story, its secret, the atmosphere of human suffering in it, to all the still glory of the summer morning, was of itself a bewilderment. The same world, and only a step between them: but one all pain and darkness, mortal anguish, and confusion—the other all so clear, so sweet, so still, solemn with the serious beginning of the new day, and in-