

I have rarely known Harriet to be in quite such a reckless mood. She kept thinking of a new kind of sauce or jam for supper (I think there were seven, or were there twelve? on the table before I got through). And there was a new rhubarb pie such as only Harriet can make, just brown enough on top, and not too brown, with just the right sort of hills and hummocks in the crust, and here and there little sugary bubbles where a suggestion of the goodness came through — such a pie — ! and such an appetite to go with it!

"Harriet," I said, "you're spoiling me. Haven't you heard how dangerous it is to set such a supper as this before a man who is perishing with hunger? Have you no mercy for me?"

This remark produced the most extraordinary effect. Harriet was at that moment standing in the corner near the pump. Her shoulders suddenly began to shake convulsively.

"She's so glad I'm home that she can't help laughing," I thought, which shows how penetrating I really am.

She was crying.

"Why, Harriet!" I exclaimed.