

## MY LAST KICK

he remembering now ? That he must see me now as I see myself is disconcerting and—humiliating. Is it not, dear Médor ?

What you do not know is what happened after Austen saw you off at the station. He did not come straight to me. I suppose he wanted to plan how to handle that difficult, capricious girl-wife, whom he had just discovered. After hunting for him everywhere I ran for the wood as one runs for a mother's lap. You, Médor, a sensible male, full of years and wisdom, you cannot imagine the agony I went through on that day you went away. I had the fury of an animal and the sensibility of a woman—and there was no varnish of civilisation about me then, I assure you, except for my clothes. I had no self-control, no self-respect, no patience, no power of thought even, except that of wishing to hurt my body so that my mind should suffer less. I groaned, and I kicked, and beat the tree trunks with my fists, and rolled myself on the earth and bit the grass, and dug my toes in the ground and my teeth in the flesh of my arms. Médor, I was a real mad dog ! I thought of suicide, but I wanted to hurt others also—you, dear Médor, and Austen and Blaise (though he is the least to blame in all this, poor fellow !). And then, when I had exhausted my rage, my rebellion, my force, I went to sleep with my lips on the good earth as if to suck peace and strength and resignation from her.

Austen found me there. I heard his steps shuffling the leaves the heat had vanquished, and it woke me ; but I did not change my position. I pressed my body closer to the earth and prayed I might become one with