

come, she smiled kindly and with a real welcome in her eyes.

When he rode up the stony path she was ready with her hands outstretched.

"Now, this is good, Neil!" she said, "for it is almost teatime, and somehow the heart of a woman seems to fail her when she has to drink tea by herself. I believe that is at the bottom of most of the tea-drinkings which from time immemorial, have been hurled in reproach at our heads!"

She spoke gaily, as if care and she had part of the company.

"I will walk with you to the stable, for I am with Diarmid and Margaret to-day. I will give you a hundred guesses to tell me where they are, sure that you will not come up with the right one."

He cast the reins over his arm, and, glancing at her smooth cheek and serene expression, he decided that he had never seen her look so well.

"I've never guessed anything in my life," he answered flatly. "It comes of being born without imagination."

"Nobody born in Balquhiddy is without imagination. The trouble with all the Glens is that there is imagination working under every heather bank and every birch bush. But surely you'll have a try at the Diarmid and Margaret problem? It would be quite worth while."

"Well, perhaps they've gone to get married," he said, speeding a bow at a venture.

She stood still, and looked at him, astonished.

"Somebody has let the cat out of the bag, Neil! You needn't pretend to the second sight."

He stood still.

"Isla, you don't mean that these old fossils have actually been and gone and done it!"

"They're doing it now, at this very moment, I believe in Mr. Macfadyen's study," she said with a glance at her watch bracelet; "and afterwards they are to catch the four o'clock train for Glasgow, and off to London to-morrow to pay a honeymoon visit to Agnes Fraser!"