

Ian's wife; but he must needs do the bandaging himself, and he did it in a smother of self-anger. As for the pain, he gave no sign of suffering; his mouth was tight, his face grimly set as if he dared the worst and were defiant. The binding done, he took to a back room, rumbling angrily like an incipient earthquake.

"Can I bring you anything to read, sir?" asked Janet, touched by the pathos of the disabled, desolate figure.

"Read!" he cried. "God's sake, woman, what do I want with reading? But if you bring me something to kick, I'll be obliged to you."

"I was thinking, sir, reading will be better than kicking," rejoined Janet, who was privileged and not afraid to take liberties.

"Oh, exactly so," he retorted in a tone half of banter, half of displeasure. "Exactly so. Spectacles, an arm-chair, and a meek spirit for the maimed and the halt. Add an old wife's posset, and be done with it. I'll tell you one thing you might do, Janet," he added, his eyes beginning to smile; "you might bring me my pipe. Tobacco's the only friend that's always the same." And when he was pulling like a philosopher—"So you'd set dislocated joints and mend damaged tendons with reading. That minds me of the fellow who recommended whistling as a cure for the toothache. Not long ago I saw it proved by a syllogism that books, like men and women, are not always what they're thought to be. But you'll never have heard of a syllogism, Janet."

"No, sir," answered Janet, as if ignorance were a crime.

"Don't fret," said the laird soothingly. "Thank God you know all about scones."

Janet's face brightened.

"And the pickling of salmon, sir."

"Especially when it's poached, you old jade; especially when it's poached. You've made hare soup in your time,