

Looking over at the sly sideways smile which seemed to fill all the foreground opposite me, I could not help recalling old Lord Pentarry and his minion. "Tools must be tooled in the de Quincey sense," he had said, as he stood wiping the billhook on his smalls, over the welter that had once been so incomparable a lieutenant. I felt I could not do less. Maturity can always be depended on. Ripeness can be trusted. Young women are green : I spoke horticulturally. My metaphor was drawn from fruits. The scottish nobleman had also spoken of a green stick fracture. Green was the name of the victim. Those little golden escapes, those logical thoughts, came on me like stars upon some gloomy grove, as Henry said. And then arrived the blinding realisation that if I did not do the thing myself---and I am not that type---I would be merely robbing a whirlwind to reap a scorpion. I would have to think it over.

NOTES