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*use 'Ctrl F' to search for a specific word or attribute.

1. Ellison himself began to get well-stomached, and he had a red face, big and sappy, and eyes like a cat, green eyes, and his mouser hung down each side of a fair bit mouth that was chokeful up of false teeth, awful expensive and bonny, lined with bits of gold.
2. He was a pretty man, well upstanding, with great shoulders on him and his hair was fair and fine and he had a broad brow and a gey bit coulter of a nose, and he twisted his mouser ends up with wax like that creature the German Kaiser, and he could stop a running stirk by the horns, so strong he was in the wrist-bones. And he was one of the handiest billies in Kinraddie, he would libb a calf or break in a horse or kill a pig, all in a jiffy, or tile your dairy or cut the bairns' hair or dig a well, and all the time he'd be telling you that socialism was coming or if it wasn't then an awful crash would come and we'd all go back to savagery, Dam't ay, man!
3. You saw their faces in firelight, father's and mother's and the neighbours', before the lamps lit up, tired and kind, faces dear and close to you, you wanted the words they'd known and used, forgotten in the far-off youngness of their lives, Scots words to tell to your heart, how they wrung it and held it, the toil of their days and unendingly their fight.
4. ...she tried some ham and a bit of the dumpling, sugared and fine, that Mistress Melon had made. And everybody praised it, as well they might, and cried for more helpings, and more cups of tea, and there were scones and pancakes and soda-cakes and cakes made with honey that everybody ate; and little Wat Strachan stopped eating of a sudden and cried *Mother, I'm not right in the belly!*
5. Then Mistress Mutch sang, that was hardly expected, and folk tittered a bit; but she had as good a voice as most and better than some, she sang The Bonnie House o' Airlie, and then the Auld Robin Grey that eye brought Chris near to weeping, and did now, and not her alone, with Rob's fiddle whispering it out, the sadness and the soreness of it, though it was long, long syne:

When the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye are a' at hame

And a' the weary world to its rest has gane,

The tears o' my sorrow fa' in shoosers frae my e'e

And Auld Robin Gray he lies sound by me.

6. And then it seemed to Chris that her world up Blawearie brae began to draw in, in and about her and the life she carried, that moved now often and often, turning slow under her heart in the early days, but jerking with suddenness, a moment at a stretch now, sometimes, so that she would sit and gasp with closed eyes. In, nearer and nearer round herself and the house the days seemed to creep, Will in Argentine was somebody she'd met in a dream of the night, Aberdeenshire far away, nothing living or moving but shadows in sunlight or night outside the circle of the hills and woods she saw from Blawearie's biggings.
7. And not feared at all he looked, Chae saw, he sat there in his kilt and shirt-sleeves, and he looked no more than a young lad still, his head between his hands, he didn't seem to be thinking at all of the morning so close. For he started to speak of Blawearie then and the parks that he would have drained, though he thought the land would go fair to hell without the woods to shelter it. And Chae said that he thought the same, there were sore changes waiting them when they went back; and then he minded that Ewan would never go back, and could near have bitten his tongue in half, but Ewan hadn't noticed, he'd been speaking of the horses he'd had, Clyde and old Bess, fine beasts, fine beasts--did Chae mind that night of lightning when they found Chris wandering the fields with those two horses?

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8. And if he went on a dander somewhere, along the road and he'd hear a car, toot-tooting behind him, would he get off the road? Not him, he'd walk on bang in the middle, dare any damn motorist try run him down. So sometimes he'd come back to Segget from a walk, step-stepping cannily along the bit road, with a two-three motorists hard at his heels, toot-tooting like mad, and the shovers red-faced.
9. Chris heard the door bang and she saw old Leslie, he was turning slow to go down the walk, crunching the shingle under his feet; and suddenly you saw the old man that he was, his back crooked into that queer-like shape, cruel and a shame to get rid of him so, suddenly you wanted to weep, but you didn't, biting your lips as you watched him go. Only a tiring old fool, as you knew, and he'd come on Robert in that mad, black mood.
10. Only with Ewan you'd never these glimpses into the shifting sands of life, bairn though he was there was something within him hard and shining and unbreaking as rock, something like a sliver of granite within him. Strange that his body had once come from yours in the days when you were a quean unthinking, so close to the earth and its smell and its feel that nearly he came from the earth itself!
11. Twas a great ley park with a fringe of trees, the hills up above, the Kaimies to the left; and early on the evening afore Segget Show there were folk down there marking out this and that, the lines of the tents and the marquees and such, the circle where the bairns would run their bit races and folk that thought they could throw the hammer could stand and show what their muscles were made of. Folk came to Segget Show far and about, from Fordoun and Laurencekirk, Skite and Arbuthnott, early on the Saturday Segget awoke to the rattle of farm carts up through East Wynd, down past the Manse, and so to the park, carts loaded with kail and

cabbage and cakes, and hens and ducks in their clean straw rees, and birns of bannocks and scones for show, and the Lord knows what that folk wouldn't bring to try for a prize at the Segget Show.

12. The bairns' races were the next things set. Ewan Chris watched line up with the others, Geddes the schoolmaster in charge of the lot, disgusted as ever he looked with the job. They'd marked out a track through the middle of the ring, John Muir stood down at the further end, the bairns had to run to him and then back. Chris watched Ewan, he was eating a sweetie, calm as you please, his back mop blue in the sun, his eyes on the Dominie, he didn't care a fig. But as soon as Geddes cried Run! he was off, he went like a deer, his short legs flying, the other bairns tailed off behind, and Ewan was first to reach Muir and go round him, swinging round gripping at John Muir's trousers; and as he went by the place where Chris stood, he looked at her and grinned calmly as ever, and shifted the sweetie to the other side of his mouth, and looked back, and slowed down, no need to race.
13. Some went further in business, if less in mileage. Near Skite a farmer went out to his barn, early next morning, and what did he see? Two childes and two lasses asleep in his hay. And he was sore shocked and went back for his wife, and she came and looked and was shocked as well, and if they'd had a camera they'd have taken photographs, they were so delighted and shocked to see two queans that they knew in such a like way, they'd be able to tell the story about them all the years that they lived on earth; and make it a tit-bit in hell forbye.
14. She saw herself tall, taller than of old, lithe and slim still with the brown V-shape down to the place between her breasts, she could follow the lines of the V with her finger. And she saw her face, high cheek-boned and bronze, quiet and still with the mask of the years, her mouth too wide but she liked her teeth, she saw them now as she smiled at the thought her mouth was too wide! She loosed the pins in her hair and it fell, down to her knees, tickling her shoulders, faith! it was worse than a mane, a blanket, she'd cut it one day, if Robert would let her.