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#185 in our series by Edward Bulwer-Lytton

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FALKLAND

By Edward Bulwer-Lytton

BOOK II.

It is dangerous for women, however wise it be for men, "to commune with their own hearts, and to be still!" Continuing to pursue the follies of the world had been to Emily more prudent than to fly them; to pause, to separate herself from the herd, was to discover, to feel, to murmur at the vacuum of her being; and to occupy it with the feelings which it craved, could in her be but the hoarding a provision for despair.

Married, before she had begun the bitter knowledge of herself, to a man whom it was impossible to love, yet deriving from nature a tenderness of soul, which shed itself over everything around, her only escape from misery had been in the dormancy of feeling. The birth of her son had opened to her a new field of sensations, and she drew the best charm of her own existence from the life she had given to another. Had she not met Falkland, all the deeper sources of affection would have flowed into one only and legitimate channel; but those whom he wished to fascinate had never resisted his power, and the attachment he inspired was in proportion to the strength and ardour of his own nature.

It was not for Emily Mandeville to love such as Falkland without feeling that from that moment a separate and selfish existence had ceased to be. Our senses may captivate us with beauty; but in absence we forget, or by reason we can conquer, so superficial an impression. Our vanity may enamour us with rank; but the affections of vanity are traced in sand; but who can love Genius, and not feel that the sentiments it excites partake of its own intensesness and its own immortality? It arouses, concentrates, engrosses all our emotions, even to the most subtle and concealed. Love what is common, and ordinary objects can replace or destroy a sentiment which an ordinary object has awakened. Love what we shall not meet again amidst the littleness and insipidity which surround us, and where can we turn for a new object to replace that which has no parallel upon earth? The recovery from such a delirium is like return from a fairy land; and still fresh in the recollections of a bright and immortal clime, how can we endure the dulness of that human existence to which for the future we are condemned?

It was some weeks since Emily had written to Mrs. St. John; and her last letter, in mentioning Falkland, had spoken of him with a reserve which rather alarmed than deceived her friend. Mrs. St. John had indeed a strong and secret reason for fear. Falkland had been the object of her own and her earliest attachment, and she knew well the singular and mysterious power which he exercised at will over the mind. He had, it is true, never returned, nor even known of, her feelings towards him; and during the years which had elapsed since she last saw him, and in the new scenes which her marriage with Mr. St. John had opened, she had almost forgotten her early attachment, when Lady Emily's letter renewed its remembrance. She wrote in answer an impassioned and affectionate caution

to her friend. She spoke much (after complaining of Emily's late silence) in condemnation of the character of Falkland, and in warning of its fascinations; and she attempted to arouse alike the virtue and the pride which so often triumph in alliance, when separately they would so easily fail. In this Mrs. St. John probably imagined she was actuated solely by friendship; but in the best actions there is always some latent evil in the motive; and the selfishness of a jealousy, though hopeless not conquered, perhaps predominated over the less interested feelings which were all that she acknowledged to herself.

In this work it has been my object to portray the progress of the passions; to chronicle a history rather by thoughts and feelings than by incidents and events; and to lay open those minuter and more subtle mazes and secrets of the human heart, which in modern writings have been so sparingly exposed. It is with this view that I have from time to time broken the thread of narration, in order to bring forward more vividly the characters it contains; and in laying no claim to the ordinary ambition of tale-writers, I have deemed myself at liberty to deviate from the ordinary courses they pursue. Hence the motive and the excuse for the insertion of the following extracts, and of occasional letters. They portray the interior struggle when Narration would look only to the external event, and trace the lightning "home to its cloud," when History would only mark the spot where it scorched or destroyed.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

Tuesday.--More than seven years have passed since I began this journal! I have just been looking over it from the commencement. Many and various are the feelings which it attempts to describe--anger, pique, joy, sorrow, hope, pleasure, weariness, ennui; but never, never once, humiliation or remorse!--these were not doomed to be my portion in the bright years of my earliest youth. How shall I describe them now? I have received--I have read, as well as my tears would let me, a long letter from Julia. It is true that I have not dared to write to her: when shall I answer this? She has showed me the state of my heart; I more than suspected it before. Could I have dreamed two months--six weeks--since that I should have a single feeling of which I could be ashamed? He has just been here He--the only one in the world, for all the world seems concentred in him. He observed my distress, for I looked on him; and my lips quivered and my eyes were full of tears. He came to me--he sat next to me--he whispered his interest, his anxiety--and was this all? Have I loved before I even knew that I was beloved? No, no; the tongue was silent, but the eye, the cheek, the manner--alas! these have been but too eloquent!

Wednesday.--It was so sweet to listen to his low and tender voice; to watch the expression of his countenance--even to breathe the air that he inhaled. But now that I know its cause, I feel that this pleasure is a crime, and I am miserable even when he is with me. He has not been here to-day. It is past three. Will he come? I rise from my seat--I go to the window for breath--I am restless, agitated, disturbed. Lady Margaret

speaks to me--I scarcely answer her. My boy--yes, my dear, dear Henry comes, and I feel that I am again a mother. Never will I betray that duty, though I have forgotten one as sacred though less dear! Never shall my son have cause to blush for his parent! I will fly hence-- I will see him no more!

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ., TO THE HON. FREDERICK MONKTON.

Write to me, Monkton--exhort me, admonish me, or forsake me for ever. I am happy yet wretched: I wander in the delirium of a fatal fever, in which I see dreams of a brighter life, but every one of them only brings me nearer to death. Day after day I have lingered here, until weeks have flown--and for what? Emily is not like the women of the world--virtue, honour, faith, are not to her the mere _convenances_ of society. "There is no crime," said Lady A., "where there is concealment." Such can never be the creed of Emily Mandeville. She will not disguise guilt either in the levity of the world, or in the affectations of sentiment. She will be wretched, and for ever. I hold the destinies of her future life, and yet I am base enough to hesitate whether to save or destroy her. Oh, how fearful, how selfish, how degrading, is unlawful love!

You know my theoretical benevolence for everything that lives; you have often smiled at its vanity. I see now that you were right; for it seems to me almost superhuman virtue not to destroy the person who is dearest to me on earth.

I remember writing to you some weeks since that I would come to London. Little did I know of the weakness of my own mind. I told her that I intended to depart. She turned pale--she trembled--but she did not speak. Those signs which should have hastened my departure have taken away the strength even to think of it.

I am here still! I go to E----- every day. Sometimes we sit in silence; I dare not trust myself to speak. How dangerous are such moments! *_Ammutiscon lingue parlen l'alme_*.

Yesterday they left us alone. We had been conversing with Lady Margaret on indifferent subjects. There was a pause for some minutes. I looked up; Lady Margaret had left the room. The blood rushed into my cheek--my eyes met Emily's; I would have given worlds to have repeated with my lips what those eyes expressed. I could not even speak--I felt choked with contending emotions. There was not a breath stirring; I heard my very heart beat. A thunderbolt would have been a relief. Oh God! if there be a curse, it is to burn, swell, madden with feelings which you are doomed to conceal! This is, indeed, to be "a cannibal of one's own heart." [Bacon]

It was sunset. Emily was alone upon the lawn which sloped towards the lake, and the blue still waters beneath broke, at bright intervals, through the scattered and illuminated trees. She stood watching the sun sink with wistful and tearful eyes. Her soul was sad within her. The

ivy which love first wreathes around his work had already faded away, and she now only saw the desolation of the ruin it concealed. Never more for her was that freshness of unawakened feeling which invests all things with a perpetual daybreak of sunshine, and incense, and dew. The heart may survive the decay or rupture of an innocent and lawful affection-- "la marque reste, mais la blessure guerit"--but the love of darkness and guilt is branded in a character ineffaceable--eternal! The one is, like lightning, more likely to dazzle than to destroy, and, divine even in its danger, it makes holy what it sears; but the other is like that sure and deadly fire which fell upon the cities of old, graving in the barrenness of the desert it had wrought the record and perpetuation of a curse. A low and thrilling voice stole upon Emily's ear. She turned--Falkland stood beside her. "I felt restless and unhappy," he said, "and I came to seek you. If (writes one of the fathers) a guilty and wretched man could behold, though only for a few minutes, the countenance of an angel, the calm and glory which it wears would so sink into his heart, that he would pass at once over the gulf of gone years into his first unsullied state of purity and hope; perhaps I thought of that sentence when I came to you." "I know not," said Emily, with a deep blush at this address, which formed her only answer to the compliment it conveyed; "I know not why it is, but to me there is always something melancholy in this hour-- something mournful in seeing the beautiful day die with all its pomp and music, its sunshine, and songs of birds."

"And yet," replied Falkland, "if I remember the time when my feelings were more in unison with yours (for at present external objects have lost for me much of their influence and attraction), the melancholy you perceive has in it a vague and ineffable sweetness not to be exchanged for more exhilarated spirits. The melancholy which arises from no cause within ourselves is like music--it enchants us in proportion to its effect upon our feelings. Perhaps its chief charm (though this it requires the contamination of after years before we can fathom and define) is in the purity of the sources it springs from. Our feelings can be but little sullied and worn while they can yet respond to the passionless and primal sympathies of Nature; and the sadness you speak of is so void of bitterness, so allied to the best and most delicious sensations we enjoy, that I should imagine the very happiness of Heaven partook rather of melancholy than mirth."

There was a pause of some moments. It was rarely that Falkland alluded even so slightly to the futurity of another world; and when he did, it was never in a careless and commonplace manner, but in a tone which sank deep into Emily's heart. "Look," she said, at length, "at that beautiful star! the first and brightest! I have often thought it was like the promise of life beyond the tomb--a pledge to us that, even in the depths of midnight, the earth shall have a light, unquenched and unquenchable, from Heaven!"

Emily turned to Falkland as she said this, and her countenance sparkled with the enthusiasm she felt. But his face was deadly pale. There went over it, like a cloud, an expression of changeful and unutterable thought; and then, passing suddenly away, it left his features calm and bright in all their noble and intellectual beauty. Her soul yearned to

him, as she looked, with the tenderness of a sister.

They walked slowly towards the house. "I have frequently," said Emily, with some hesitation, "been surprised at the little enthusiasm you appear to possess even upon subjects where your conviction must be strong." "I have thought enthusiasm away!" replied Falkland; "it was the loss of hope which brought me reflection, and in reflection I forgot to feel. Would that I had not found it so easy to recall what I thought I had lost for ever!" Falkland's cheek changed as he said this, and Emily sighed faintly, for she felt his meaning. In him that allusion to his love had aroused a whole train of dangerous recollections; for Passion is the avalanche of the human heart--a single breath can dissolve it from its repose.

They remained silent; for Falkland would not trust himself to speak, till, when they reached the house, he faltered out his excuses for not entering, and departed. He turned towards his solitary home. The grounds at E----- had been laid out in a classical and costly manner which contrasted forcibly with the wild and simple nature of the surrounding scenery. Even the short distance between Mr. Mandeville's house and L----- wrought as distinct a change in the character of the country as any length of space could have effected. Falkland's ancient and ruinous abode, with its shattered arches and moss-grown parapets, was situated on a gentle declivity, and surrounded by dark elm and larch trees. It still retained some traces both of its former consequence, and of the perils to which that consequence had exposed it. A broad ditch, overgrown with weeds, indicated the remains of what once had been a moat; and huge rough stones, scattered around it, spoke of the outworks the fortification had anciently possessed, and the stout resistance they had made in "the Parliament Wars" to the sturdy followers of Ireton and Fairfax. The moon, that flatterer of decay, shed its rich and softening beauty over a spot which else had, indeed, been desolate and cheerless, and kissed into light the long and unwavering herbage which rose at intervals from the ruins, like the false parasites of fallen greatness. But for Falkland the scene had no interest or charm, and he turned with a careless and unheeding eye to his customary apartment. It was the only one in the house furnished with luxury, or even comfort. Large bookcases, inlaid with curious carvings in ivory; busts of the few public characters the world had ever produced worthy, in Falkland's estimation, of the homage of posterity; elaborately-wrought hangings from Flemish looms; and French fauteuils and sofas of rich damask, and massy gilding (relics of the magnificent days of Louis Quatorze), bespoke a costliness of design suited rather to Falkland's wealth than to the ordinary simplicity of his tastes.

A large writing-table was overspread with books in various languages, and upon the most opposite subjects. Letters and papers were scattered amongst them; Falkland turned carelessly over the latter. One of the epistolary communications was from Lord -----, the --. He smiled bitterly, as he read the exaggerated compliments it contained, and saw to the bottom of the shallow artifice they were meant to conceal. He tossed the letter from him, and opened the scattered volumes, one after another, with that languid and sated feeling common to all men who have read

deeply enough to feel how much they have learned, and how little they know. "We pass our lives," thought he, "in sowing what we are never to reap! We endeavour to erect a tower, which shall reach the heavens, in order to escape one curse, and lo! we are smitten by another! We would soar from a common evil, and from that moment we are divided by a separate language from our race! Learning, science, philosophy, the world of men and of imagination, I ransacked--and for what? I centred my happiness in wisdom. I looked upon the aims of others with a scornful and loathing eye. I held commune with those who have gone before me; I dwelt among the monuments of their minds, and made their records familiar to me as friends: I penetrated the womb of nature, and went with the secret elements to their home: I arraigned the stars before me, and learned the method and the mystery of their courses: I asked the tempest its bourn, and questioned the winds of their path. This was not sufficient to satisfy my thirst for knowledge, and I searched in this lower world of new sources to content it. Unseen and unsuspected, I saw and agitated the springs of the automaton that we call 'the Mind.' I found a clue for the labyrinth of human motives, and I surveyed the hearts of those around me as through a glass. Vanity of vanities! What have I acquired? I have separated myself from my kind, but not from those worst enemies, my passions! I have made a solitude of my soul, but I have not mocked it with the appellation of Peace.

"Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant."--TACITUS.

"They make a solitude, and call it peace."--BYRON.

"In flying the herd, I have not escaped from myself; like the wounded deer, the barb was within me, and that I could not fly!" With these thoughts he turned from his reverie, and once more endeavoured to charm his own reflections by those which ought to speak to us of quiet, for they are graven on the pages of the dead; but his attempts were as idle as before. His thoughts were still wandering and confused, and could neither be quieted nor collected: he read, but he scarcely distinguished one page from another: he wrote--the ideas refused to flow at his call; and the only effort at connecting his feelings which even partially succeeded, was in the verses which I am about to place before the reader. It is a common property of poetry, however imperfectly the gift be possessed, to speak to the hearts of others in proportion as the sentiments it would express are felt in our own; and I subjoin the lines which bear the date of that evening, in the hope that, more than many pages, they will show the morbid yet original character of the writer, and the particular sources of feeling from which they took the bitterness that pervades them.

KNOWLEDGE.

Ergo hominum genus incassum frustra que laborat
Semper, et in curis consumit inanibus aevum.--Lucret.

'Tis midnight! Round the lamp which o'er
My chamber sheds its lonely beam,
Is wisely spread the varied lore

Which feeds in youth our feverish dream

The dream--the thirst--the wild desire,
Delirious yet divine-to know;
Around to roam--above aspire
And drink the breath of Heaven below!

From Ocean-Earth-the Stars-the Sky
To lift mysterious Nature's pall;
And bare before the kindling eye
In MAN the darkest mist of all--

Alas! what boots the midnight oil?
The madness of the struggling mind?
Oh, vague the hope, and vain the toil,
Which only leave us doubly blind!

What learn we from the Past? the same
Dull course of glory, guilt, and gloom--
I ask'd the Future, and there came
No voice from its unfathom'd womb.

The Sun was silent, and the wave;
The air but answer'd with its breath
But Earth was kind; and from the grave
Arose the eternal answer--Death!

And this was all! We need no sage
To teach us Nature's only truth!
O fools! o'er Wisdom's idle page
To waste the hours of golden youth!

In Science wildly do we seek
What only withering years should bring
The languid pulse--the feverish cheek
The spirits drooping on their wing!

To think--is but to learn to groan
To scorn what all beside adore
To feel amid the world alone,
An alien on a desert shore;

To lose the only ties which seem
To idler gaze in mercy given!
To find love, faith, and hope, a dream,
And turn to dark despair from heaven!

I pass on to a wilder period of my history. The passion, as yet only revealed by the eye, was now to be recorded by the lip; and the scene which witnessed the first confession of the lovers was worthy of the last conclusion of their loves!

E----- was about twelve miles from a celebrated cliff on the seashore, and Lady Margaret had long proposed an excursion to a spot, curious alike for its natural scenery and the legends attached to it. A day was at length fixed for accomplishing this plan. Falkland was of the party. In searching for something in the pockets of the carriage, his hand met Emily's, and involuntarily pressed it. She withdrew it hastily, but he felt it tremble. He did not dare to look up: that single contact had given him a new life: intoxicated with the most delicious sensations, he leaned back in silence. A fever had entered his veins--the thrill of the touch had gone like fire into his system--all his frame seemed one nerve.

Lady Margaret talked of the weather and the prospect, wondered how far they had got, and animadverted on the roads, till at last, like a child, she talked herself to rest. Mrs. Dalton read "Guy Mannering;" but neither Emily nor her lover had any occupation or thought in common with their companions: silent and absorbed, they were only alive to the vivid existence of the present. Constantly engaged, as we are, in looking behind us or before, if there be one hour in which we feel only the time being--in which we feel sensibly that we live, and that those moments of the present are full of the enjoyment, the rapture of existence--it is when we are with the one person whose life and spirits have become the great part and principle of our own. They reached their destination--a small inn close by the shore. They rested there a short time, and then strolled along the sands towards the cliff. Since Falkland had known Emily, her character was much altered. Six weeks before the time I write of, and in playfulness and lightness of spirits she was almost a child: now those indications of an unawakened heart had mellowed into a tenderness full of that melancholy so touching and holy, even amid the voluptuous softness which it breathes and inspires. But this day, whether from that coquetry so common to all women, or from some cause more natural to her, she seemed gayer than Falkland ever remembered to have seen her. She ran over the sands, picking up shells, and tempting the waves with her small and fairy feet, not daring to look at him, and yet speaking to him at times with a quick tone of levity which hurt and offended him, even though he knew the depth of those feelings she could not disguise either from him or from herself. By degrees his answers and remarks grew cold and sarcastic. Emily affected pique; and when it was discovered that the cliff was still nearly two miles off, she refused to proceed any farther. Lady Margaret talked her at last into consent, and they walked on as sullenly as an English party of pleasure possibly could do, till they were within three quarters of a mile of the place, when Emily declared she was so tired that she really could not go on. Falkland looked at her, perhaps, with no very amiable expression of countenance, when he perceived that she seemed really pale and fatigued; and when she caught his eyes, tears rushed into her own.

"Indeed, indeed, Mr. Falkland," she said, eagerly, "this is not affectation. I am very tired; but rather than prevent your amusement, I will endeavour to go on." "Nonsense, child," said Lady Margaret, "you do seem tired. Mrs. Dalton and Falkland shall go to the rock, and I will stay here with you." This proposition, however, Lady Emily (who knew Lady Margaret's wish to see the rock) would not hear of; she insisted upon staying by herself. "Nobody will run away with me; and I can very

easily amuse myself with picking up shells till you come back." After along remonstrance, which produced no effect, this plan was at last acceded to. With great reluctance Falkland set off with his two companions; but after the first step, he turned to look back. He caught her eye, and felt from that moment that their reconciliation was sealed. They arrived, at last, at the cliff. Its height, its excavations, the romantic interest which the traditions respecting it had inspired, fully repaid the two women for the fatigue of their walk. As for Falkland, he was unconscious of everything around him; he was full of "sweet and bitter thoughts." In vain the man whom they found loitering there, in order to serve as a guide, kept dinning in his ear stories of the marvellous, and exclamations of the sublime. The first words which aroused him were these; "It's lucky, please your Honour, that you have just saved the tide. It is but last week that three poor people were drowned in attempting to come here; as it is, you will have to go home round the cliff." Falkland started: he felt his heart stand still. "Good God!" cried Lady Margaret, "what will become of Emily?"

They were--at that instant in one of the caverns, where they had already been loitering too long. Falkland rushed out to the sands. The tide was hurrying in with a deep sound, which came on his soul like a knell. He looked back towards the way they had come: not one hundred yards distant, and the waters had already covered the path! An eternity would scarcely atone for the horror of that moment! One great characteristic of Falkland was his presence of mind. He turned to the man who stood beside him--he gave him a cool and exact description of the spot where he had left Emily. He told him to repair with all possible speed to his home--to launch his boat--to row it to the place he had described. "Be quick," he added, "and you must be in time: if you are, you shall never know poverty again." The next moment he was already several yards from the spot. He ran, or rather flew, till he was stopped by the waters. He rushed in; they were over a hollow between two rocks--they were already up to his chest. "There is yet hope," thought he, when he had passed the spot, and saw the smooth sand before him. For some minutes he was scarcely sensible of existence; and then he found himself breathless at her feet. Beyond, towards T---- (the small inn I spoke of), the waves had already reached the foot of the rocks, and precluded all hope of return. Their only chance was the possibility that the waters had not yet rendered impassable the hollow through which Falkland had just waded. He scarcely spoke; at least he was totally unconscious of what he said. He hurried her on breathless and trembling, with the sound of the booming waters ringing in his ear, and their billows advancing to his very feet. They arrived at the hollow: a single glance sufficed to show him that their solitary hope was past! The waters, before up to his chest, had swelled considerably: he could not swim. He saw in that instant that they were girt with a hastening and terrible death. Can it be believed that with that certainty ceased his fear? He looked in the pale but calm countenance of her who clung to him, and a strange tranquillity, even mingled with joy, possessed him. Her breath was on his cheek--her form was reclining on his own--his hand clasped hers; if they were to die, it was thus. What would life afford to him more dear? "It is in this moment," said he, and he knelt as he spoke, "that I dare tell you what otherwise my lips never should have revealed. I love--I adore you! Turn

not away from me thus. In life our persons were severed; if our hearts are united in death, then death will be sweet." She turned--her cheek was no longer pale! He rose--he clasped her to his bosom: his lips pressed hers. Oh! that long, deep, burning pressure!--youth, love, life, soul, all concentrated in that one kiss! Yet the same cause which occasioned the avowal hallowed also the madness of his heart. What had the passion, declared only at the approach of death, with the more earthly desires of life? They looked to heaven--it was calm and unclouded: the evening lay there in its balm and perfume, and the air was less agitated than their sighs. They turned towards the beautiful sea which was to be their grave: the wild birds flew over it exultingly: the far vessels seemed "rejoicing to run their course." All was full of the breath, the glory, the life of nature; and in how many minutes was all to be as nothing! Their existence would resemble the ships that have gone down at sea in the very smile of the element that destroyed them. They looked into each other's eyes, and they drew still nearer together. Their hearts, in safety apart, mingled in peril and became one. Minutes rolled on, and the great waves came dashing round them. They stood on the loftiest eminence they could reach. The spray broke over their feet: the billows rose--rose--they were speechless. He thought he heard her heart beat, but her lip trembled not. A speck--a boat! "Look up, Emily! look up! See how it cuts the waters. Nearer--nearer! but a little longer, and we are safe. It is but a few yards off;--it approaches--it touches the rock!" Ah! what to them henceforth was the value of life, when the moment of discovering its charm became also the date of its misfortunes, and when the death they had escaped was the only method of cementing their--union without consummating their guilt?

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ., TO THE HON. FREDERICK MONKTON.

I will write to you at length to-morrow. Events have occurred to alter, perhaps, the whole complexion of the future. I am now going to Emily to propose to her to fly. We are not *_les gens du monde_*, who are ruined by the loss of public opinion. She has felt that I can be to her far more than the world; and as for me, what would I not forfeit for one touch of her hand?

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

Friday.--Since I wrote yesterday in these pages the narrative of our escape, I have done nothing but think over those moments, too dangerous because too dear; but at last I have steeled my heart--I have yielded to my own weakness too long--I shudder at the abyss from which I have escaped. I can yet fly. He will come here to-day--he shall receive my farewell.

Saturday morning, four o'clock.--I have sat in this room alone since eleven o'clock. I cannot give vent to my feelings; they seem as if crushed by some load from which it is impossible to rise. "He is gone,

and for ever!" I sit repeating those words to myself, scarcely conscious of their meaning. Alas! when to-morrow comes, and the next day, and the next, and yet I see him not, I shall awaken, indeed, to all the agony of my loss! He came here--he saw me alone--he implored me to fly. I did not dare to meet his eyes; I hardened my heart against his voice. I knew the part I was to take--I have adopted it; but what struggles, what misery, has it not occasioned me! Who could have thought it had been so hard to be virtuous! His eloquence drove me from one defence to another, and then I had none but his mercy. I opened my heart--I showed him its weakness--I implored his forbearance. My tears, my anguish, convinced him of my sincerity. We have parted in bitterness, but, thank Heaven, not in guilt! He has entreated permission to write to me. How could I refuse him? Yet I may not--cannot write to him again! How could, I indeed, suffer my heart to pour forth one of its feelings in reply? for would there be one word of regret, or one term of endearment, which my inmost soul would not echo?

Sunday.--Yes, that day--but I must not think of this; my very religion I dare not indulge. Oh God! how wretched I am! His visit was always the great aera in the clay; it employed all my hopes till he came, and all my memory when he was gone. I sit now and look at the place he used to fill, till I feel the tears rolling silently down my cheek: they come without an effort--they depart without relief.

Monday.--Henry asked me where Mr. Falkland was gone; I stooped down to hide my confusion. When shall I hear from him? To-morrow? Oh that it were come! I have placed the clock before me, and I actually count the minutes. He left a book here; it is a volume of "Melmoth." I have read over every word of it, and whenever I have come to a pencil-mark by him, I have paused to dream over that varying and eloquent countenance, the low soft tone of that tender voice, till the book has fallen from my hands, and I have started to find the utterness of my desolation!

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ., TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

----- Hotel, London.

For the first time in my life I write to you! How my hand trembles--how my cheek flushes! a thousand, thousand thoughts rush upon me, and almost suffocate me with the variety and confusion of the emotions they awaken! I am agitated alike with the rapture of writing to you, and with the impossibility of expressing the feelings which I cannot distinctly unravel even to myself. You love me, Emily, and yet I have fled from you, and at your command; but the thought that, though absent, I am not forgotten, supports me through all.

It was with a feverish sense of weariness and pain that I found myself entering this vast reservoir of human vices. I became at once sensible of the sterility of that polluted soil so incapable of nurturing affection, and I clasped your image the closer to my heart. It is you, who, when I was most weary of existence, gifted me with a new life. You

breathed into me a part of your own spirit; my soul feels that influence, and becomes more sacred. I have shut myself from the idlers who would molest me: I have built a temple in my heart: I have set within it a divinity; and the vanities of the world shall not profane the spot which has been consecrated to you. Our parting, Emily,--do you recall it? Your hand clasped in mine; your cheek resting, though but for an instant, on my bosom; and the tears which love called forth, but which virtue purified even at their source. Never were hearts so near, yet so divided; never was there an hour so tender, yet so unaccompanied with danger. Passion, grief, madness, all sank beneath your voice, and lay hushed like a deep sea within my soul! "Tu abbia veduto il leone ammansarsi alla sola tua voce."

'Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis.

I tore myself from you; I hurried through the wood; I stood by the lake, on whose banks I had so often wandered with you: I bared my breast to the winds; I bathed my temples with the waters. Fool that I was! the fever, the fever was within! But it is not thus, my adored and beautiful friend, that I should console and support you. Even as I write, passion melts into tenderness, and pours itself in softness over your remembrance. The virtue so gentle, yet so strong; the feelings so kind, yet so holy; the tears which wept over the decision your lips proclaimed--these are the recollections which come over me like dew. Let your own heart, my Emily, be your reward; and know that your lover only forgets that he adores, to remember that he respects you.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

----- Park.

I could not bear the tumult and noise of London. I sighed for solitude, that I might muse over your remembrance undisturbed. I came here yesterday. It is the home of my childhood. I am surrounded on all sides by the scenes and images consecrated by the fresh recollections of my unsullied years. They are not changed. The seasons which come and depart renew in them the havoc which they make. If the December destroys, the April revives; but man has but one spring, and the desolation of the heart but one winter! In this very room have I sat and brooded over dreams and hopes which--but no matter--those dreams could never show me a vision to equal you, or those hopes hold out to me a blessing so precious as your love.

Do you remember, or rather can you ever forget, that moment in which the great depths of our souls were revealed? Ah! not in the scene in which such vows should have been whispered to your ear and your tenderness have blushed its reply. The passion concealed in darkness was revealed in danger; and the love, which in life was forbidden, was our comfort amidst the terrors of death! And that long and holy kiss, the first, the only moment in which our lips shared the union of our souls!--do not tell me that it is wrong to recall it!--do not tell me that I sin, when I own to

you the hours I sit alone, and nurse the delirium of that voluptuous remembrance. The feelings you have excited may render me wretched, but not guilty; for the love of you can only hallow the heart--it is a fire which consecrates the altar on which it burns. I feel, even from the hour that I loved, that my soul has become more pure. I could not believe that I was capable of so unearthly an affection, or that the love of woman could possess that divinity of virtue which I worship in yours. The world is no fosterer of our young visions of purity and passion: embarked in its pursuits, and acquainted with its pleasures, while the latter sated me with what is evil, the former made me incredulous to what is pure. I considered your sex as a problem which my experience had already solved. Like the French philosophers, who lose truth by endeavouring to condense it, and who forfeit the moral from their regard to the maxim, I concentrated my knowledge of women into aphorism and antitheses; and I did not dream of the exceptions, if I did not find myself deceived in the general conclusion. I confess that I erred; I renounce from this moment the colder reflections of my manhood,--the fruits of a bitter experience,--the wisdom of an inquiring yet agitated life. I return with transport to my earliest visions of beauty and love; and I dedicate them upon the altar of my soul to you, who have embodied, and concentrated, and breathed them into life!

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

Monday.--This is the most joyless day in the whole week; for it can bring me no letter from him. I rise listlessly, and read over again and again the last letter I received from him--useless task! it is graven on my heart! I long only for the day to be over, because to-morrow I may, perhaps, hear from him again. When I wake at night from my disturbed and broken sleep, I look if the morning is near; not because it gives light and life, but because it may bring tidings of him. When his letter is brought to me, I keep it for minutes unopened--I feed my eyes on the handwriting--I examine the seal--I press it with my kisses, before I indulge myself in the luxury of reading it. I then place it in my bosom, and take it thence only to read it again and again,--to moisten it with my tears of gratitude and love, and, alas! of penitence and remorse! What can be the end of this affection? I dare neither to hope that it may continue or that it may cease; in either case I am wretched for ever!

Monday night, twelve o'clock.--They observe my paleness; the tears which tremble in my eyes; the listlessness and dejection of my manner. I think Mrs. Dalton guesses the cause. Humbled and debased in my own mind, I fly, Falkland, for refuge to you! Your affection cannot raise me to my former state, but it can reconcile--no--not reconcile, but support me in my present. This dear letter, I kiss it again--oh! that to-morrow were come!

Tuesday.--Another letter, so kind, so tender, so encouraging: would that I deserved his praises! alas! I sin even in reading them. I know that I ought to struggle more against my feelings--once I attempted it; I prayed to Heaven to support me; I put away from me everything that could recall

him to my mind--for three days I would not open his letters. I could then resist no longer; and my weakness became the more confirmed from the feebleness of the struggle. I remember one day that he told us of a beautiful passage in one of the ancients, in which the bitterest curse against the wicked is, that they may see virtue, but not be able to obtain it; [Persius]--that punishment is mine!

Wednesday.--My boy has been with me: I see him now from the windows gathering the field-flowers, and running after every butterfly which comes across him. Formerly he made all my delight and occupation; now he is even dearer to me than ever; but he no longer engrosses all my thoughts. I turn over the leaves of this journal; once it noted down the little occurrences of the day; it marks nothing now but the monotony of sadness. He is not here--he cannot come. What event then could I notice?

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ., TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

[Most of the letters from Falkland to Lady E. Mandeville
I have thought it expedient to suppress.]

----- Park.

If you knew how I long, how I thirst, for one word from you--one word to say you are well, and have not forgotten me!--but I will not distress you. You will guess my feelings, and do justice to the restraint I impose on them, when I make no effort to alter your resolution not to write. I know that it is just, and I bow to my sentence; but can you blame me if I am restless and if I repine? It is past twelve; I always write to you at night. It is then, my own love, that my imagination can be the more readily transport me to you: it is then that my spirit holds with you a more tender and undivided commune. In the day the world can force itself upon my thoughts, and its trifles usurp the place which "I love to keep for only thee and Heaven;" but in the night all things recall you the more vividly: the stillness of the gentle skies,--the blandness of the unbroken air,--the stars, so holy in their loveliness, all speak and breathe to me of you. I think your hand is clasped in mine; and I again drink the low music of your voice, and imbibe again in the air the breath which has been perfumed by your lips. You seem to stand in my lonely chamber in the light and stillness of a spirit, who has wandered on earth to teach us the love which is felt in Heaven.

I cannot, believe me, I cannot endure this separation long; it must be more or less. You must be mine for ever, or our parting must be without a mitigation, which is rather a cruelty than a relief. If you will not accompany me, I will leave this country alone. I must not wean myself from your image by degrees, but break from the enchantment at once. And when Emily, I am once more upon the world, when no tidings of my fate shall reach your ear, and all its power of alienation be left to the progress of time--then, when you will at last have forgotten me, when your peace of mind will be restored, and, having no struggles of

conscience to undergo, you will have no remorse to endure; then, Emily, when we are indeed divided, let the scene which has witnessed our passion, the letters which have recorded my vow, the evil we have suffered, and the temptation we have overcome; let these in our old age be remembered, and in declaring to Heaven that we were innocent, add also--that, we loved.

FROM DON ALPHONSO D'AQUILAR TO DON -----.

London.

Our cause gains ground daily. The great, indeed the only ostensible object of my mission is nearly fulfilled; but I have another charge and attraction which I am now about to explain to you. You know that my acquaintance with the English language and country arose from my sister's marriage with Mr. Falkland. After the birth of their only child I accompanied them to England: I remained with them for three years, and I still consider those days among the whitest in my restless and agitated career. I returned to Spain; I became engaged in the troubles and dissensions which distracted my unhappy country. Years rolled on, how I need not mention to you. One night they put a letter into my hands; it was from my sister; it was written on her death-bed. Her husband had died suddenly. She loved him as a Spanish woman loves, and she could not survive his loss. Her letter to me spoke of her country and her son. Amid the new ties she had formed in England, she had never forgotten the land of her fathers. "I have already," she said, "taught my boy to remember that he has two countries; that the one, prosperous and free; may afford him his pleasures; that the other, struggling and debased, demands from him his duties. If, when he has attained the age in which you can judge of his character, he is respectable only from his rank, and valuable only from his wealth; if neither his head nor his heart will make him useful to our cause, suffer him to remain undisturbed in his prosperity here; but if, as I presage, he becomes worthy of the blood which he bears in his veins, then I conjure you, my brother, to remind him that he has been sworn by me on my death-bed to the most sacred of earthly altars."

Some months since, when I arrived in England; before I ventured to find him out in person, I resolved to inquire into his character. Had he been as the young and the rich generally are--had dissipation become habitual to him, and frivolity grown around him as a second nature, then I should have acquiesced in the former injunction of my sister much more willingly than I shall now obey the latter. I find that he is perfectly acquainted with our language, that he has placed a large sum in our funds, and that from the, general liberality of his sentiments he is as likely to espouse, as (in that case) he would be certain, from his high reputation for talent, to serve our cause. I am, therefore, upon the eve of seeking him out. I understand that he is living in perfect retirement in the county of -----, in the immediate neighbourhood of Mr. Mandeville, an Englishman of considerable fortune, and warmly attached to our cause.

Mr. Mandeville has invited me to accompany him down to his estate for some days, and I am too anxious to see my nephew not to accept eagerly of the invitation. If I can persuade Falkland to aid us, it will be by the influence of his name, his talents, and his wealth. It is not of him that we can ask the stern and laborious devotion to which we have consecrated ourselves. The perfidy of friends, the vigilance of foes, the rashness of the bold, the cowardice of the wavering; strife in the closet, treachery in the senate, death in the field; these constitute the fate we have pledged ourselves to bear. Little can any, who do not endure it, imagine of the life to which those who share the contests of an agitated and distracted country are doomed; but if they know not our griefs, neither can they dream of our consolation. We move like the delineation of Faith, over a barren and desert soil; the rock, and the thorn, and the stings of the adder, are round our feet; but we clasp a crucifix to our hearts for our comfort, and we fix our eyes upon the heavens for our hope!

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

Wednesday.--His letters have taken a different tone: instead of soothing, they add to my distress; but I deserve all--all that can be inflicted upon me. I have had a letter from Mr. Mandeville. He is coming down here for a few days, and intends bringing some friends with him: he mentions particularly a Spaniard--the uncle of Mr Falkland, whom he asks if I have seen. The Spaniard is particularly anxious to meet his nephew--he does not then know that Falkland is gone. It will be some relief to see Mr. Mandeville alone; but even then how shall I meet him? What shall I say when he observes my paleness and alteration? I feel bowed to the very dust.

Thursday evening.--Mr. Mandeville has arrived: fortunately, it was late in the evening before he came, and the darkness prevented his observing my confusion and alteration. He was kinder than usual. Oh! how bitterly my heart avenged him! He brought with him the Spaniard, Don Alphonso d'Aguilar; I think there is a faint family likeness between him and Falkland. Mr. Mandeville brought also a letter from Julia. She will be here the day after to-morrow. The letter is short, but kind: she does not allude to him; it is some days since I heard from him.

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ., TO THE HON. FREDERICK MONKTON.

I have resolved, Monkton, to go to her again! I am sure that it will be better for both of us to meet once more; perhaps, to unite for ever! None who have once loved me can easily forget me. I do not say this from vanity, because I owe it not to my being superior to, but different from, others. I am sure that the remorse and affliction she feels now are far greater than she would experience, even were she more guilty, and with me. Then, at least, she would have some one to soothe and sympathise in whatever she might endure. To one so pure as Emily, the full crime is

already incurred. It is not the innocent who insist upon that nice line of morality between the thought and the action: such distinctions require reflection, experience, deliberation, prudence of head, or coldness of heart; these are the traits, not of the guileless, but of the worldly. It is the reflections, not the person, of a virtuous woman, which it is difficult to obtain: that difficulty is the safeguard to her chastity; that difficulty I have, in this instance, overcome. I have endeavoured to live without Emily, but in vain. Every moment of absence only taught me the impossibility. In twenty-four hours I shall see her again. I feel my pulse rise into fever at the very thought.

Farewell, Monkton. My next letter, I hope, will record my triumph.

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