

sit entrusted to my care, to another. Yet listen to me for a few painful moments, before you condemn me. My cousin Godfrey came to me in great distress. He implored me to save him from ruin, by obtaining the loan of four hundred pounds, which he faithfully promised to restore by the next evening. Hurried away by my feelings, I imprudently granted his request, and gave him the money you left with me. Do not wholly despise me. He looked so like my uncle, that I could not deny him. The morning brought your letter—your dreadful letter. You ask for the money—I have it not to give—my sin has found me out. A thief—a swindler! Can it be possible that I have incurred such frightful guilt.

Night.—I have seen Godfrey. He has failed me—betrayed me. What shall I do? I must go to my father. Perhaps he will pity my distress. My heart is torn with distracting doubts. Oh, that I could pour into some faithful ear, my torturing situation. Clary is ill—and left to myself, I am lost.

Midnight.—I have seen my father. What a meeting. My brain aches while I try to recal it. At first he insulted my agony—taunted me with my misfortunes, and finally maddened me. I cannot describe to you what passed. Wound up to a pitch of fury, I threatened to obtain the money by violence, if he did not write an order upon his banker, for the sum required. Covering with fear, he complied—and I—I, in the fulness of my heart, implored his pardon for the violence I had used, and blessed him. Yes, blessed him, who only a few minutes before had spurned me from his feet! who mocked at my calamity and cursed me in the savage malevolence of his heart. Some feeling of remorse appeared to touch his cruel breast; as I left the house, he called after me: “Anthony, Anthony! Tomorrow night I will do you justice.” I will go to him no more. I feel that we have parted forever.

Thursday evening.—I have read your brief letter. You suspect me, and I yet live—I forgive you Frederick. But can you think so hardly of your friend! Alas! I deserve it. You are ignorant of the dreadful circumstances, or you would fly to save me from myself. The old man has deceived me. Has jested with my agony. I could curse him—but I have not done so. Tonight we shall have a fearful reckoning. Yes, tonight, he will be compelled to do me justice. Godfrey has been with me. He discovered the brutal trick which that unnatural wretch, who calls himself my father, had played me, and he laughed! How could he laugh at such an instance of infernal depravity? Godfrey should have been this man’s son—in some things they resemble each other. Yes, he laughed at the trick. Is the idea of goodness existing in the human heart, a mere dream? Are men all devils, only some have more tact to conceal their origin than others? I begin to suspect myself, and all mankind; I will go once more to that hard-

hearted man; and if he refuses to grant my request, I will die at his feet. Last night I attempted suicide, but my good angel prevailed. Tonight is my hour, and the power of darkness. Will he feel think you, no touch of remorse to see his neglected son—lost—bleeding—dying, at his feet.

Ah! that you were near me, to save me. An unseen power seems hurrying, drawing me to perdition. The voice of a friend would dissolve the charm, and set the prisoner of passion free. The clock strikes eight, I must go. Farewell, my friend, my brother. Forgive and pity the unfortunate

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He went—and the old man was found murdered. What more natural than such a consequence, after penning such a letter? The spectators looked from one to the other. On every brow rested a cloud—every head was nodded in token of agreement. Every one present but Frederick Wildegrave believed him guilty. Had he nothing to say in his own defence? He arose—every eye was fixed upon him. Men held their breath, wondering what sort of defence could issue from the lips of the parricide. His youth—his gentlemanly bearing—his sad expressive countenance, his thoughtful, mild eye, and high benevolent brow, excited admiration and surprise. Could this be the murderer?”

He spoke. The clear, rich, mellow, unimpassioned tones, rolled over that mass of human heads, penetrating every heart, and reaching every ear.

“My Lord, and you Gentlemen of the Jury—I rise not with the idea of saving my life by an avowal of my innocence, but merely to state the simple fact that I am not guilty of the crime laid to my charge, and to leave the rest with God, who is able to save me in a moment like this, if it seems right in his eyes. The evidence which has been brought against me is true. The circumstances which have been recorded really occurred. The letter just read, was penned by this right hand. Yet, in the face of this overwhelming evidence, I declare myself innocent. I know not in what manner my unhappy father came by his death. I am as ignorant as you are of the hand that dealt the blow. I sought his presence with the dreadful determination of committing murder. But the crime was against myself. For this I deserve punishment—for this I am content to die. To this charge, made by myself, I plead guilty. Of his death, I call God, who is my only witness, to prove me innocent. I look around me—in every face I see doubt and doom. I stand here, a mark and a scorn to the whole world. But though all unite in my condemnation, I will fearlessly proclaim my innocence. I am neither a parricide nor a murderer—and I now await my sentence with the calmness and fortitude which innocence alone can give.”