

Literature.org:

[Authors](#)
[Contact](#)

[The Tenant of Wildfell Hall](#)

[Anne Bronte](#)

This Book:

[Contents](#)
[Previous Chapter](#)
[Next Chapter](#)

Chapter 22

October 5th. - My cup of sweets is not unmingled: it is dashed with a bitterness that I cannot hide from myself, disguise it as I will. I may try to persuade myself that the sweetness overpowers it; I may call it a pleasant aromatic flavour; but say what I will, it is still there, and I cannot but taste it. I cannot shut my eyes to Arthur's faults; and the more I love him the more they trouble me. His very heart, that I trusted so, is, I fear, less warm and generous than I thought it. At least, he gave me a specimen of his character to-day that seemed to merit a harder name than thoughtlessness. He and Lord Lowborough were accompanying Annabella and me in a long, delightful ride; he was riding by my side, as usual, and Annabella and Lord Lowborough were a little before us, the latter bending towards his companion as if in tender and confidential discourse.

'Those two will get the start of us, Helen, if we don't look sharp,' observed Huntingdon. 'They'll make a match of it, as sure as can be. That Lowborough's fairly besotted. But he'll find himself in a fix when he's got her, I doubt.'

'And she'll find herself in a fix when she's got him,' said I, 'if what I've heard of him is true.'

'Not a bit of it. She knows what she's about; but he, poor fool, deludes himself with the notion that she'll make him a good wife, and because she has amused him with somerodomontade about despising rank and wealth in matters of love and marriage, he flatters himself that she's devotedly attached to him; that she will not refuse him for his poverty, and does not court him for his rank, but loves him for himself alone.'

'But is not he courting her for her fortune?'

'No, not he. That was the first attraction, certainly; but now he has quite lost sight of it: it never enters his calculations, except merely as an essential without which, for the lady's own sake, he could not think of marrying her. No; he's fairly in love. He thought he never could be again, but he's in for it once more. He was to have been married before, some two or three years ago; but he lost his bride by losing his fortune. He got into a bad way among us in London: he had an unfortunate taste for gambling; and surely the fellow was born under an unlucky star, for he always lost thrice where he gained once. That's a mode of self-torment I never was much addicted to. When I spend my money I like to enjoy the full value of it: I see no fun in wasting it on thieves and blacklegs; and as for gaining money, hitherto I have always had sufficient; it's time enough to be clutching for more, I think, when you begin to see the end of what you have. But I have sometimes frequented the gaming-houses just to watch the on-goings of those mad votaries of chance - a very interesting study, I assure you, Helen, and sometimes very diverting: I've had many a laugh at the boobies and bedlamites. Lowborough was quite infatuated - not willingly, but of necessity, - he was always resolving to give it up, and always breaking his resolutions. Every venture was the 'just once more: if he gained a little, he hoped to gain a little more next time, and if he lost, it would not do to leave off at that juncture; he must go on till he had retrieved that last misfortune, at least: bad luck could not last for ever; and every lucky hit was looked upon as the dawn of better times, till experience proved the contrary. At length he grew desperate, and we were daily on the look-out for a case of FELLO-DE-SE - no great matter, some of us whispered, as his existence had ceased to be an acquisition to our club. At last, however, he came to a check. He made a large stake, which he determined should be the last, whether he lost or won. He had often so determined before, to be sure, and as often broken his determination; and so it was this time. He lost; and while his antagonist smilingly swept away the stakes, he turned chalky white, drew back in silence, and wiped his forehead. I was present at the time; and while he stood with folded arms and eyes fixed on the ground, I knew well enough what was passing in his mind.

"Is it to be the last, Lowborough?" said I, stepping up to him.

"The last but one," he answered, with a grim smile; and then, rushing back to the table, he struck his hand upon it, and, raising his voice high above all the confusion of jingling coins and muttered oaths and curses in the room, he swore a deep and solemn oath that, come what would, this trial should be the last, and imprecated unspeakable curses on his head if ever he should shuffle a card or rattle a dice-box again. He then doubled his former stake, and challenged any one present to play against him. Grimsby instantly presented himself. Lowborough glared fiercely at him, for Grimsby was almost as celebrated for his luck as he was for his ill-fortune. However, they fell to work. But Grimsby had much skill and little scruple, and whether he took advantage of the other's trembling, blinded eagerness to deal unfairly by him, I cannot undertake to say; but Lowborough lost again, and fell dead sick.

"You'd better try once more," said Grimsby, leaning across the table. And then he winked at me.

"I've nothing to try with," said the poor devil, with a ghastly smile.

"Oh, Huntingdon will lend you what you want," said the other.

"No; you heard my oath," answered Lowborough, turning away in quiet despair. And I took him by the arm and led him out.

"Is it to be the last, Lowborough?" I asked, when I got him into the street.

"The last," he answered, somewhat against my expectation. And I took him home - that is, to our club - for he was as submissive as a child - and plied him with brandy-and-water till he began to look rather brighter - rather more alive, at least.

"Huntingdon, I'm ruined!" said he, taking the third glass from my hand - he had drunk the others in dead silence.

"Not you," said I. "You'll find a man can live without his money as merrily as a tortoise without its head, or a wasp without its body."

"But I'm in debt," said he - "deep in debt. And I can never, never get out of it."

"Well, what of that? Many a better man than you has lived and died in debt; and they can't put you in prison, you know, because you're a peer." And I handed him his fourth tumbler.

"But I hate to be in debt!" he shouted. "I wasn't born for it, and I cannot bear it."

"What can't be cured must be endured," said I, beginning to mix the fifth.

"And then, I've lost my Caroline." And he began to snivel then, for the brandy had softened his heart.

"No matter," I answered, "there are more Carolines in the world than one."

"There's only one for me," he replied, with a dolorous sigh. "And if there were fifty more, who's to get them, I wonder, without money?"

"Oh, somebody will take you for your title; and then you've your family estate yet; that's entailed, you know."

"I wish to God I could sell it to pay my debts," he muttered.

"And then," said Grimsby, who had just come in, "you can try again, you know. I would have more than one chance, if I were you. I'd never stop here."

"I won't, I tell you!" shouted he. And he started up, and left the room - walking rather unsteadily, for the liquor had got into his head. He was not so much used to it then, but after that he took to it kindly to solace his cares.

'He kept his oath about gambling (not a little to the surprise of us all), though Grimsby did his utmost to tempt him to break it, but now he had got hold of another habit that bothered him nearly as much, for he soon discovered that the demon of drink was as black as the demon of play, and nearly as hard to get rid of - especially as his kind friends did all they could to second the promptings of his own insatiable cravings.'

'Then, they were demons themselves,' cried I, unable to contain my indignation. 'And you, Mr. Huntingdon, it seems, were the first to tempt him.'

'Well, what could we do?' replied he, deprecatingly. - 'We meant it in kindness - we couldn't bear to see the poor fellow so miserable:- and besides, he was such a damper upon us, sitting there silent and glum, when he was under the threefold influence - of the loss of his sweetheart, the loss of his fortune, and the reaction of the lost night's debauch; whereas, when he had something in him, if he was not merry himself, he was an unfailing source of merriment to us. Even Grimsby could chuckle over his odd sayings: they delighted him far more than my merry jests, or Hattersley's riotous mirth. But one evening, when we were sitting over our wine, after one of our club dinners, and all had been hearty together, - Lowborough giving us mad toasts, and hearing our wild songs, and bearing a hand in the applause, if he did not help us to sing them himself, - he suddenly relapsed into silence, sinking his head on his hand, and never lifting his glass to his lips; - but this was nothing new; so we let him alone, and went on with our jollification, till, suddenly raising his head, he interrupted us in the middle of a roar of laughter by exclaiming, - 'Gentlemen, where is all this to end? - Will you just tell me that now? - Where is it all to end?' He rose.

"A speech, a speech!" shouted we. "Hear, hear! Lowborough's going to give us a speech!"

'He waited calmly till the thunders of applause and jingling of glasses had ceased, and then proceeded, - "It's only this, gentlemen, - that I think we'd better go no further. We'd better stop while we can."

"Just so!" cried Hattersley -

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think Before you further go, No longer sport upon the brink Of everlasting woe."

"Exactly!" replied his lordship, with the utmost gravity. "And if you choose to visit the bottomless pit, I won't go with you - we must part company, for I swear I'll not move another step towards it! - What's this?" he said, taking up his glass of wine.

"Taste it," suggested I.

"This is hell broth!" he exclaimed. "I renounce it for ever!" And he threw it out into the middle of the table.

"Fill again!" said I, handing him the bottle - "and let us drink to your renunciation."

"It's rank poison," said he, grasping the bottle by the neck, "and I forswear it! I've given up gambling, and I'll give up this too." He was on the point of deliberately pouring the whole contents of the bottle on to the table, but Hargrave wrested it from him. "On you be the curse, then!" said he. And, backing from the room, he shouted, "Farewell, ye tempters!" and vanished amid shouts of laughter and applause.

'We expected him back among us the next day; but, to our surprise, the place remained vacant: we saw nothing of him for a whole week; and we really began to think he was going to keep his word. At last, one evening, when we were most of us assembled together again, he entered, silent and grim as a ghost, and would have quietly slipped into his usual seat at my elbow, but we all rose to welcome him, and several voices were raised to ask what he would have, and several hands were busy with bottle and glass to serve him; but I knew a smoking tumbler of brandy-and-water would comfort him best, and had nearly prepared it, when he peevishly pushed it away, saying, -

"Do let me alone, Huntingdon! Do be quiet, all of you! I'm not come to join you: I'm only come to be with you awhile, because I can't bear my own thoughts." And he folded his arms, and leant back in his chair; so we let him be. But I left the glass by him; and, after awhile, Grimsby directed my attention towards it, by a significant wink; and, on turning my head, I saw it was drained to the bottom. He made me a sign to replenish, and quietly pushed up the bottle. I willingly complied; but Lowborough detected the pantomime, and, nettled at the intelligent grins that were passing between us, snatched the glass from my hand, dashed the contents of it in Grimsby's face, threw the empty tumbler at me, and then bolted from the room.'

'I hope he broke your head,' said I.

'No, love,' replied he, laughing immoderately at the recollection of the whole affair; 'he would have done so, - and perhaps, spoilt my face, too, but, providentially, this forest of curls' (taking off his hat, and showing his luxuriant chestnut locks) 'saved my skull, and prevented the glass from breaking, till it reached the table.'

'After that,' he continued, 'Lowborough kept aloof from us a week or two longer. I used to meet him occasionally in the town; and then, as I was too good-natured to resent his unmannerly conduct, and he bore no malice against me, - he was never unwilling to talk to me; on the contrary, he would cling to me, and follow me anywhere but to the club, and the gaming-houses, and such-like dangerous places of resort - he was so weary of his own moping, melancholy mind. At last, I got him to come in with me to the club, on condition that I would not tempt him to drink; and, for some time, he continued to look in upon us pretty regularly of an evening, - still abstaining, with wonderful perseverance, from the "rank poison" he had so bravely forsworn. But some of our members protested against this conduct. They did not like to have him sitting there like a skeleton at a feast, instead of contributing his quota to the general amusement, casting a cloud over all, and watching, with greedy eyes, every drop they

carried to their lips - they vowed it was not fair; and some maintained that he should either be compelled to do as others did, or expelled from the society; and swore that, next time he showed himself, they would tell him as much, and, if he did not take the warning, proceed to active measures. However, I befriended him on this occasion, and recommended them to let him be for a while, intimating that, with a little patience on our parts, he would soon come round again. But, to be sure, it was rather provoking; for, though he refused to drink like an honest Christian, it was well known to me that he kept a private bottle of laudanum about him, which he was continually soaking at - or rather, holding off and on with, abstaining one day and exceeding the next - just like the spirits.

'One night, however, during one of our orgies - one of our high festivals, I mean - he glided in, like the ghost in "Macbeth," and seated himself, as usual, a little back from the table, in the chair we always placed for "the spectre," whether it chose to fill it or not. I saw by his face that he was suffering from the effects of an overdose of his insidious comforter; but nobody spoke to him, and he spoke to nobody. A few sidelong glances, and a whispered observation, that "the ghost was come," was all the notice he drew by his appearance, and we went on with our merry carousals as before, till he startled us all by suddenly drawing in his chair, and leaning forward with his elbows on the table, and exclaiming with portentous solemnity, - "Well! it puzzles me what you can find to be so merry about. What you see in life I don't know - I see only the blackness of darkness, and a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation!"

'All the company simultaneously pushed up their glasses to him, and I set them before him in a semicircle, and, tenderly patting him on the back, bid him drink, and he would soon see as bright a prospect as any of us; but he pushed them back, muttering, -

"Take them away! I won't taste it, I tell you. I won't - I won't!" So I handed them down again to the owners; but I saw that he followed them with a glare of hungry regret as they departed. Then he clasped his hands before his eyes to shut out the sight, and two minutes after lifted his head again, and said, in a hoarse but vehement whisper, -

"And yet I must! Huntingdon, get me a glass!"

"Take the bottle, man!" said I, thrusting the brandy-bottle into his hand - but stop, I'm telling too much,' muttered the narrator, startled at the look I turned upon him. 'But no matter,' he recklessly added, and thus continued his relation: 'In his desperate eagerness, he seized the bottle and sucked away, till he suddenly dropped from his chair, disappearing under the table amid a tempest of applause. The consequence of this imprudence was something like an apoplectic fit, followed by a rather severe brain fever -'

'And what did you think of yourself, sir?' said I, quickly.

'Of course, I was very penitent,' he replied. 'I went to see him once or twice - nay, twice or thrice - or by'r lady, some four times - and when he got better, I tenderly brought him back to the fold.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean, I restored him to the bosom of the club, and compassionating the feebleness of his health and extreme lowness of his spirits, I recommended him to "take a little wine for his stomach's sake," and, when he was sufficiently re-established, to embrace the media-via, ni-jamais-ni-toujours plan - not to kill himself like a fool, and not to abstain like a ninny - in a word, to enjoy himself like a rational creature, and do as I did; for, don't think, Helen, that I'm a tippler; I'm nothing at all of the kind, and never was, and never shall be. I value my comfort far too much. I see that a man cannot give himself up to drinking without being miserable one-half his days and mad the other; besides, I like to enjoy my life at all sides and ends, which cannot be done by one that suffers himself to be the slave of a single propensity - and, moreover, drinking spoils one's good looks,' he concluded, with a most conceited smile that ought to have provoked me more than it did.

'And did Lord Lowborough profit by your advice?' I asked.

'Why, yes, in a manner. For a while he managed very well; indeed, he was a model of moderation and prudence - something too much so for the tastes of our wild community; but, somehow, Lowborough had not the gift of moderation: if he stumbled a little to one side, he must go down before he could right himself: if he overshot the mark one night, the effects of it rendered him so miserable the next day that he must repeat the offence to mend it; and so on from day to day, till his clamorous conscience brought him to a stand. And then, in his sober moments, he so bothered his friends with his remorse, and his terrors and woes, that they were obliged, in self-defence, to get him to drown his sorrows in wine, or any more potent beverage that came to hand; and when his first scruples of conscience were overcome, he would need no more persuading, he would often grow desperate, and be as great a blackguard as any of them could desire - but only to lament his own unutterable wickedness and degradation the more when the fit was over.

'At last, one day when he and I were alone together, after pondering awhile in one of his gloomy, abstracted moods, with his arms folded and his head sunk on his breast, he suddenly woke up, and vehemently grasping my arm, said, -

"Huntingdon, this won't do! I'm resolved to have done with it."

"What, are you going to shoot yourself?" said I.

"No; I'm going to reform."

"Oh, that's nothing new! You've been going to reform these twelve months and more."

"Yes, but you wouldn't let me; and I was such a fool I couldn't live without you. But now I see what it is that keeps me back, and what's wanted to save me; and I'd compass sea and land to get it - only I'm afraid there's no chance." And he sighed as if his heart would break.

"What is it, Lowborough?" said I, thinking he was fairly cracked at last.

"A wife," he answered; "for I can't live alone, because my own mind distracts me, and I can't live with you, because you take the devil's part against me."

"Who - I?"

"Yes - all of you do - and you more than any of them, you know. But if I could get a wife, with fortune enough to pay off my debts and set me straight in the world - "

"To be sure," said I.

"And sweetness and goodness enough," he continued, "to make home tolerable, and to reconcile me to myself, I think I should do yet. I shall never be in love again, that's certain; but perhaps that would be no great matter, it would enable me to choose with my eyes open - and I should make a good husband in spite of it; but could any one be in love with me? - that's the question. With your good looks and powers of fascination" (he was pleased to say), "I might hope; but as it is, Huntingdon, do you think anybody would take me - ruined and wretched as I am?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Who?"

"Why, any neglected old maid, fast sinking in despair, would be delighted to - "

"No, no," said he - "it must be somebody that I can love."

"Why, you just said you never could be in love again!"

"Well, love is not the word - but somebody that I can like. I'll search all England through, at all events!" he cried, with a sudden burst of hope, or desperation. "Succeed or fail, it will be better than rushing headlong to destruction at that d-d club: so farewell to it and you. Whenever I meet you on honest ground or under a Christian roof, I shall be glad to see you; but never more shall you entice me to that devil's den!"

"This was shameful language, but I shook hands with him, and we parted. He kept his word; and from that time forward he has been a pattern of propriety, as far as I can tell; but till lately I have not had very much to do with him. He occasionally sought my company, but as frequently shrunk from it, fearing lest I should wile him back to destruction, and I found his not very entertaining, especially as he sometimes attempted to awaken my conscience and draw me from the perdition he considered himself to have escaped; but when I did happen to meet him, I seldom failed to ask after the progress of his matrimonial efforts and researches, and, in general, he could give me but a poor account. The mothers were repelled by his empty coffers and his reputation for gambling, and the daughters by his cloudy brow and melancholy temper - besides, he didn't understand them; he wanted the spirit and assurance to carry his point.

'I left him at it when I went to the continent; and on my return, at the year's end, I found him still a disconsolate bachelor - though, certainly, looking somewhat less like an unblest exile from the tomb than before. The young ladies had ceased to be afraid of him, and were beginning to think him quite interesting; but the mammas were still unrelenting. It was about this time, Helen, that my good angel brought me into conjunction with you; and then I had eyes and ears for nobody else. But, meantime, Lowborough became acquainted with our charming friend, Miss Wilmot - through the intervention of his good angel, no doubt he would tell you, though he did not dare to fix his hopes on one so courted and admired, till after they were brought into closer contact here at Staningley, and she, in the absence of her other admirers, indubitably courted his notice and held out every encouragement to his timid advances. Then, indeed, he began to hope for a dawn of brighter days; and if, for a while, I darkened his prospects by standing between him and his sun - and so nearly plunged him again into the abyss of despair - it only intensified his ardour and strengthened his hopes when I chose to abandon the field in the pursuit of a brighter treasure. In a word, as I told you, he is fairly besotted. At first, he could dimly perceive her faults, and they gave him considerable uneasiness; but now his passion and her art together have blinded him to everything but her perfections and his amazing good fortune. Last night he came to me brimful of his new-found felicity:

"Huntingdon, I am not a castaway!" said he, seizing my hand and squeezing it like a vice. "There is happiness in store for me yet - even in this life - she loves me!"

"Indeed!" said I. "Has she told you so?"

"No, but I can no longer doubt it. Do you not see how pointedly kind and affectionate she is? And she knows the utmost extent of my poverty, and cares nothing about it! She knows all the folly and all the wickedness of my former life, and is not afraid to trust me - and my rank and title are no allurements to her; for them she utterly disregards. She is the most generous, high-minded being that can be conceived of. She will save me, body and soul, from destruction. Already, she has ennobled me in my own estimation, and made me three times better, wiser, greater than I was. Oh! if I had but known her before, how much degradation and misery I should have been spared! But what have I done to deserve so magnificent a creature?"

'And the cream of the jest,' continued Mr. Huntingdon, laughing, 'is, that the artful minx loves nothing about him but his title and pedigree, and "that delightful old family seat."

'How do you know?' said I.

'She told me so herself; she said, "As for the man himself, I thoroughly despise him; but then, I suppose, it is time to be making my choice, and if I waited for some one capable of eliciting my esteem and affection, I should have to pass my life in single blessedness, for I detest you all!" Ha, ha! I suspect she was wrong there; but, however, it is evident she has no love for him, poor fellow.'

'Then you ought to tell him so.'

'What! and spoil all her plans and prospects, poor girl? No, no: that would be a breach of confidence, wouldn't it, Helen? Ha, ha! Besides, it would break his heart.' And he laughed again.

'Well, Mr. Huntingdon, I don't know what you see so amazingly diverting in the matter; I see nothing to laugh at.'

'I'm laughing at you, just now, love,' said he, redoubling his machinations.

And leaving him to enjoy his merriment alone, I touched Ruby with the whip, and cantered on to rejoin our companions; for we had been walking our horses all this time, and were consequently a long way behind. Arthur was soon at my side again; but not disposed to talk to him, I broke into a gallop. He did the same; and we did not slacken our pace till we came up with Miss Wilmot and Lord Lowborough, which was within half a mile of the park-gates. I avoided all further conversation with him till we came to the end of our ride, when I meant to jump off my horse and vanish into the house, before he could offer his assistance; but while I was disengaging my habit from the crutch, he lifted me off, and held me by both hands, asserting that he would not let me go till I had forgiven him.

'I have nothing to forgive,' said I. 'You have not injured me.'

'No, darling - God forbid that I should! but you are angry because it was to me that Annabella confessed her lack of esteem for her lover.'

'No, Arthur, it is not that that displeases me: it is the whole system of your conduct towards your friend, and if you wish me to forget it, go now, and tell him what sort of a woman it is that he adores so madly, and on whom he has hung his hopes of future happiness.'

'I tell you, Helen, it would break his heart - it would be the death of him - besides being a scandalous trick to poor Annabella. There is no help for him now; he is past praying for. Besides, she may keep up the deception to the end of the chapter; and then he will be just as happy in the illusion as if it were reality; or perhaps he will only discover his mistake when he has ceased to love her; and if not, it is much better that the truth should dawn gradually upon him. So now, my angel, I hope I have made out a clear case, and fully convinced you that I cannot make the atonement you require. What other requisition have you to make? Speak, and I will gladly obey.'

'I will do my utmost,' said I, 'as gravely as before: 'that, in future, you will never make a jest of the sufferings of others, and always use your influence with your friends for their own advantage against their evil propensities, instead of seconding their evil propensities against themselves.'

'I will do my utmost,' said he, 'to remember and perform the injunctions of my angel mistress;' and after kissing both my gloved hands, he let me go.

When I entered my room, I was surprised to see Annabella Wilmot standing before my toilet-table, composedly surveying her features in the glass, with one hand flirting her gold-mounted whip, and the other holding up her long habit.

'She certainly is a magnificent creature!' thought I, as I beheld that tall, finely developed figure, and the reflection of the handsome face in the mirror before me, with the glossy dark hair, slightly and not ungracefully disordered by the breezy ride, the rich brown complexion glowing with exercise, and the black eyes sparkling with unwonted brilliance. On perceiving me, she turned round, exclaiming, with a laugh that savoured more of malice than of mirth, - 'Why, Helen! what have you been doing so long? I came to tell you my good fortune,' she continued, regardless of Rachel's presence. 'Lord Lowborough has proposed, and I have been graciously pleased to accept him. Don't you envy me, dear?'

'No, love,' said I - 'or him either,' I mentally added. 'And do you like him, Annabella?'

'Like him! yes, to be sure - over head and ears in love!'

'Well, I hope you'll make him a good wife.'

'Thank you, my dear! And what besides do you hope?'

'I hope you will both love each other, and both be happy.'

'Thanks; and I hope you will make a very good wife to Mr. Huntingdon!' said she, with a queenly bow, and retired.

'Oh, Miss! how could you say so to her!' cried Rachel.

'Say what?' replied I.

'Why, that you hoped she would make him a good wife. I never heard such a thing!'

'Because I do hope it, or rather, I wish it; she's almost past hope.'

'Well,' said she, 'I'm sure I hope he'll make her a good husband. They tell queer things about him downstairs. They were saying - '

'I know, Rachel. I've heard all about him; but he's reformed now. And they have no business to tell tales about their masters.'

'No, mum - or else, they have said some things about Mr. Huntingdon too.'

'I won't hear them, Rachel; they tell lies.'

'Yes, mum,' said she, quietly, as she went on arranging my hair.

'Do you believe them, Rachel?' I asked, after a short pause.

'No, Miss, not all. You know when a lot of servants gets together they like to talk about their betters; and some, for a bit of swagger, likes to make it appear as though they knew more than they do, and to throw out hints and things just to astonish the others. But I think, if I was you, Miss Helen, I'd look very well before I leaped. I do believe a young lady can't be too careful who she marries.'

'Of course not,' said I; 'but be quick, will you, Rachel? I want to be dressed.'

And, indeed, I was anxious to be rid of the good woman, for I was in such a melancholy frame I could hardly keep the tears out of my eyes while she dressed me. It was not for Lord Lowborough - it was not for Annabella - it was not for myself - it was for Arthur Huntingdon that they rose.

* * * * *

13th. - They are gone, and he is gone. We are to be parted for more than two months, above ten weeks! a long, long time to live and not to see him. But he has promised to write often, and made me promise to write still oftener, because he will be busy settling his affairs, and I shall have nothing better to do. Well, I think I shall always have plenty to say. But oh! for the time when we shall be always together, and can exchange our thoughts without the intervention of these cold go-betweens, pen, ink, and paper!

22nd. - I have had several letters from Arthur already. They are not long, but passing sweet, and just like himself, full of ardent affection, and playful lively humour; but there is always a 'but' in this imperfect world, and I do wish he would sometimes be serious. I cannot get him to write or speak in real, solid earnest. I don't much mind it now, but if it be always so, what shall I do with the serious part of myself?