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THE LAST LOOK.

'Tis the very lightness of childish impressions that makes them so dear and so lasting.

THE shade of the willow fell dark on the tide,
When the maid left her pillow to stand by its side ;
The wind, like a sweet voice, was heard in the tree,
And a soft lulling music swept in from the sea.

The land was in darkness, for mountain and tower
Flung before them the shadows of night's deepest hour ;
The moonlight unbroken lay white on the wave,
Till the wide sea was clear as the shield of the brave.

She flung from her forehead its curls of bright hair,—
Ere those ringlets fell round her, another was there ;
Red flushed her cheek's crimson, and dark drooped her eye,
A stranger had known 'twas her lover stood by.

One note on his sea call, the signal he gave,
And a boat, like a plaything, danced light on the wave ;
Her head on his shoulder, her hand in his hand,
Yet the maiden looked back as they rowed from the strand.

She wept not for parents, she wept not for friends,
Yet fast the bright rain through her white hand descends ;
The portionless orphan left nothing behind
But the green leaves—the wild flowers sown by the wind.

But how the heart clings to that earliest love,
Which haunts the lone garden, and hallows the grove ;
Which makes the old oak tree and primrose bank fair,
With the memories of childhood whose playtime was there.

'Tis our spirits which fling round the joy which they take,
The best of our pleasures are those which we make,
We look to the past, and remember the while,
Our own buoyant step, and our own sunny smile.

A pathway of silver was tracked on the wave,
The oars left behind them the light which they gave,
And the slight boat flew over the moonlighted brine,
Till the coast in the distance was one shadowy line.

They reached the proud ship, and the silken sails spread,
And the gallant flag shone like a meteor blood red ;
And forth from the scabbard flashed out each bright sword,
In fealty to her the young bride of their lord.

From a cup of pale gold she sipped the clear wine,
And clasped on her arm the green emeralds shine,
The silver lamps swinging with perfume were fed,
And the rich fur beneath her light footstep was spread.

From the small cabin window she looked to the shore,
Lost in night she could see its dim outline no more :
She sighed as she thought of her earlier hours,

“ Ah, who will now watch over my favourite flowers ?” L. E. L

“ GOOD NIGHT ! ”

Good night !—what a sudden shadow
 Has fallen upon the air,
 I look not around the chamber,
 I know he is not there.
 Sweetness has left the music,
 And gladness left the light ;
 My cheek has lost its colour,
 How could he say, Good night !
 And why should he take with him
 The happiness he brought ?
 Alas ! such fleeting pleasure
 Is all too dearly bought :
 If thus, my heart stop beating,
 My spirits lose their tone,
 And a gloom, like night, surround me,
 The moment he is gone.
 Like the false fruit of the lotos,
 Love alters every taste :—
 We loathe the life we 're leading,
 The spot where we are plac'd.
 We live upon to-morrow,
 Or, we dream the past again ;
 But what avails that knowledge ?
 It ever comes in vain.

L. E. L.

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THE CONVICT. BY L. E. L.

“ These are words that we should read like warnings,
 Meekly, as fearing, if we had been tried,
 We might have done the same, and thankfully
 That such temptation fell not to our lot :
 The human heart is evil in itself,
 And, like a child, requires restraint and care ;
 Restraint to keep from wrong, and care to soothe
 Its wilder beatings into peace and love.”

THE light of two or three pale stars
 Is dimly shining through the bars
 Of my lone cell, and the cool air
 Seems as it loath'd to enter there.
 Now are those wan and gloomy hours,
 When Night and Day, like struggling powers,
 Make the sky cheerless with their strife,
 Then most resembling human life :
 It suits with me !—ill could I brook
 Upon a cloudless heaven to look ;
 The calm blue air, the clear sunshine,
 Were mockery to gaze like mine ;
 To watch the sun look bright on me,
 Although the last that I shall see.
 —Ah ! even while I speak, the light
 Is breaking beautiful through night.
 'Tis all the same ! the earth, the sky,
 Nothing with me has sympathy !

—The clouds are breaking fast away—
 Oh ! why art thou so lovely, Day ?
 Oh ! for a morn of clouds and rain,
 To shroud and soothe my last of pain.
 No—faster the glad sunbeams break—
 They will not sorrow for my sake !
 —It has been—it will be my fate—
 I've lived—I shall die desolate !
 —Oh ! take your rosary away,
 For what are prayers of mine to pray ?
 For pardon ?—if the burning tears
 That fed upon my earlier years—
 If blasted hopes and ruin'd name,
 And all the venom Love lends Shame—
 The violent death, and rabble eye,
 To look upon its agony ;
 If these are not enough to win
 A pardon for Earth's deadliest sin,
 Words will not, cannot !—never dare
 Tell me it may be won by prayer !
 The coward prayer, the coward tear,
 Not from remorse wrung, but from fear !
 —Here still—then, yield my last relief—
 My woman's solace—hear my grief.
 Come nearer—thou a judge shalt be
 Between my misery and me !

“ I grew up a neglected child :
 The meanest floweret of the wild

The Convict.

Has far more culture and more care
 From summer sun and summer air.
 —My mother, she was laid to rest
 Within the green earth's quiet breast ;
 My father had another bride,
 And other children grew beside
 The orphan one—his love could be
 So much for them—'twas nought for me.
 I never mingled in their mirth,
 I saw their smiles, but shared them not ;
 And in the circle round the hearth
 My very being seem'd forgot.
 They call'd me sullen, said my heart
 In natural fondness had no part ;
 For that I sate apart from all,
 With cold cheek turn'd to the dark wall.
 I hid my face—I could not bear
 It should be seen, while tears were there.

“ I had a haunt, 'twas by the shade
 Wherein my mother's grave was made :
 It was a church-yard, small and lone,
 Without a monumental stone ;
 But flowers were planted by each grave,
 Sweet, like the thoughts they seem'd to save
 From Time's forgetfulness—but one,
 One only, mid the sods had none—
 Grown with tall weeds, as if the wind
 Were the sole mourner it could find,
 And in its careless course had brought
 Whatever seeds its wild wings caught.
 And marvel you I had no pride
 To make that tomb like those beside ?
 —Methought if there my hand should bring
 The sunny treasures of the spring,
 It would reproach my father's eye,
 That long had pass'd it careless by.

“ My melancholy childhood gone,
 Youth, with its dreamy time, came on ;
 Affections long repress'd and chill'd,
 Days with their own vain fancies fill'd,
 Which haunt the heart—what soil was here
 For Love's wild growth of hope and fear ?
 —It matters not my early tale,
 My heart was won, my will was frail ;
 I knew I was not Evelyn's bride,—
 But what to me the world beside ?
 One only voice was in my ear,
 I only sought to meet one eye—
 And if to me they ever changed,
 I knew that I could only die !

“ Terrible city!—London, thou
 Who liftest like a queen thy brow ;
 Stern, cold, and proud the night when first
 Thy mighty world upon me burst ;
 Houses, yet none of them my home ;
 Faces, of which I knew not one ;

The Convict.

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I felt more than I ever felt—
 A stranger—utterly alone ;
 My very heart within me died,
 And close I crouch'd to Evelyn's side ;
 His soothing words were soft and low,
 Such as Love's lip alone can know.
 He loved me—ay, loved *is* the word !
 So lightly said, so vainly heard—
 But I—the light of heaven was dim
 To eyes that only look'd on him ;
 I listen'd—'twas to hear his voice ;
 I spoke—it was to win his ear ;
 I watch'd—it was to meet his eye ;
 I only lived when he was near ;
 His absence seem'd a void as deep,
 As dark as is a dreamless sleep.
 And was I happy?—no ; still dread
 Hung like the sword above my head ;
 My thoughts to other hopes would roam—
 I knew his home was not my home ;
 I knew his name was not my name,
 And I felt insecure through shame.

“ Still less it recks how, day by day,
 I saw the life of love decay ;
 The absent look, the careless word,
 The anger by a trifle stirr'd,
 And found that Evelyn's brow could be
 Harsh, though that brow was bent on me.
 —Brief be my tale, as was his love—
 He, who had call'd on heaven above
 To witness every vow he spoke—
 May it record the vow he broke !
 He loved another—calm and cold,
 He wrote farewell!—and sent me gold.
 He came not—perhaps he could not bear
 To view what he had wrought—despair !

“ I thought that I would see his face—
 Secret I sought his dwelling-place,
 A villa, where the river strays—
 I had been there in happier days :
 There was one room, whose windows led
 To where the turf its carpet spread,
 And shrubs and flowers a labyrinth wrought
 Of bud and leaf—that room I sought :
 'Twas late—I scarce could find my path
 By the dim ray the starlight hath :
 A lamp was burning in the room,
 So faint it scarcely lit the gloom ;
 Yet lovely seem'd the light—it fell
 Upon the face I loved so well.
 He'd flung him on a couch to sleep—
 Ah ! how unequal seem'd our share,
 For I was left to watch and weep,
 And he lay calmly slumbering there.
 How beautiful!—the open brow
 Like morning, or like mountain snow ;

The Convict.

I leant mine, pale and cold, beside,
 And felt as if I could have died
 To save that sleeper from one pang—
 Ay, though the arch-fiend's summons rang.
 A murmur from his closed lip came ;
 I listen'd—it was not my name :
 Around his neck a ribbon clung,
 Close to his heart a picture hung :
 I saw the face—it was not mine ;
 I saw, too, a small dagger shine,
 A curious toy—you know the rest."

—Her forehead with her hand she press'd,
 As if to still the burning pain
 That throbb'd in every beating vein.
 He took the cross, that holy man,
 And kind and gentle words began ;
 She fiercely raised to his her eye,
 As if such soothing to defy.
 " I tell thee, father, 'tis in vain,
 His life, mine own is not so dear,
 Yet would I do that deed again,
 And be again a prisoner here,
 Rather than know that he could be
 Loving and loved, yet not by me.
 Begun in guilt and closed in gloom,
 Our love's fit altar is the tomb !"

She died as few can dare to die,
 With soul unquail'd and tearless eye :
 None soothed the culprit as she pass'd,
 With look grown kind, because the last,
 Or with affection's desperate tone—
 She died, unpitied and alone !
 And never told that priest her tale,
 But lip grew cold and cheek grew pale.
 The guilt of blood on one so young,
 Such haughty brow, such daring tongue,
 And such wild love ; and some would weep,
 Some bear the image to their sleep,
 And start from feverish dream to see
 The moonlight close their phantasie,
 And eager count their beads, and pray
 To keep such evil from their way ;
 Then while the warning in them wrought,
 Finding it food for serious thought,
 And marking how wild passions lead
 To wasted life and fearful deed,
 Pray, ere they sank to sleep again,
 Such tale might not be told in vain.
