The Meaning of Night

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Extract

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Editor's Preface

The following work, printed here for the first time, is one of the lost curiosities of nineteenth-century literature. It is a strange concoction, being a kind of confession, often shocking in its frank, conscienceless brutality and explicit sexuality, that also has a strongly novelistic flavour; indeed, it appears in the hand-list that accompanies the Duport papers in the Cambridge University Library with the annotation '(Fiction?)'. Many of the presented facts – names, places, events (including the unprovoked murder of Lucas Trendle) – that I have been able to check are verifiable; others appear dubious at best or have been deliberately falsified, distorted, or simply invented. Real people move briefly in and out of the narrative, others remain unidentified – or unidentifiable – or are perhaps pseudonymous. As the author himself says, 'The boundaries of this world are forever shifting – from day to night, joy to sorrow, love to hate, and from life itself to death.' And, he might have added, from fact to fiction.

As to the author, despite his desire to confess all to posterity, his own identity remains a tantalizing mystery. His name as given here, Edward Charles Glyver, does not appear in the Eton Lists of the period, and I have been unable to trace it or any of his pseudonyms in any other source, including the London Post-office Directories for the relevant years. Perhaps, after we have read these confessions, this should not surprise us; yet it is strange that someone who wished to lay his soul bare to posterity in this way chose not to reveal his real name. I simply do not know how to account for this, but note the

anomaly in the hope that further research, perhaps by other scholars, may unravel the mystery.

His adversary Phoebus Daunt, on the other hand, is real enough. The main events of his life may be traced in various contemporary sources. He may be found, for instance, in both the Eton Lists and in Venn's *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, and is mentioned in several literary memoirs of the period – though on his supposed criminal career the historical record is silent. On the other hand, his now (deservedly) forgotten literary works, consisting principally of turgid historical and mythological epics and a few slight volumes of poems and poetic translations, once enjoyed a fleeting popularity. They may still be sought out by the curious in specialist libraries and booksellers' catalogues (as can his father's edition of Catullus, mentioned in the text), and perhaps may yet furnish some industrious PhD student with a dissertation subject.

The text has been transcribed, more or less verbatim, from the unique holograph manuscript now held in the Cambridge University Library. The manuscript came to the CUL in 1948 as part of an anonymous bequest, with other papers and books relating to the Duport family of Evenwood in Northamptonshire. It is written, for the most part, in a clear and confident hand on large-quarto lined sheets, the whole being bound in dark-red morocco (by R. Riviere, Great Queen Street) with the Duport arms blocked in gold on the front. Despite a few passages where the author's hand deteriorates, apparently under psychological duress, or perhaps as a result of his opium habit, there are relatively few deletions, additions, or other amendments. In addition to the author's narrative there are several interpolated documents and extracts by other hands.

I have made a number of silent emendments in matters of orthography, punctuation, and so on; and because the MS lacks a title, I have used a phrase from one of the prefatory quotations, the source of which is a poem, appropriately enough, from the pen of P. Rainsford Daunt himself. I have also supplied titles for each of the five parts, and for the five sections of the so-called Intermezzo.

The sometimes enigmatic Latin titles to the forty-seven sections or chapters have been retained (their idiosyncrasy seemed typical of the author), though I have provided translations. On the first leaf of

the manuscript are a dozen or so quotations from Owen Felltham's *Resolves*, some of which I have used as epigraphs to each of the five parts. Throughout the text, my own editorial interpolations and footnotes are given within square brackets.

J.J. Antrobus
Professor of Post-Authentic Victorian Fiction
University of Cambridge

The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

Psalm 55: 21

I find, to him that the tale is told, belief only makes the difference betwixt a truth, and a lie.

Owen Felltham, *Resolves or, Excogitations. A Second Centurie* (1628), iv ('Of Lies and Untruths')

For Death is the meaning of night;
The eternal shadow
Into which all lives must fall,
All hopes expire.

P. Rainsford Daunt, 'From the Persian', *Rosa Mundi; and Other Poems* (1854)

To My Unknown Reader

Ask not Pilate's question. For I have sought,
not truth, but meaning.

E.G.

PART THE FIRST

Death of a Stranger
October – November 1854

What a skein of ruffled silk is the uncomposed man.

Owen Felltham, *Resolves* (1623), ii, 'Of Resolution'

I

Exordium*

After killing the red-haired man, I took myself off to Quinn's† for an oyster supper.

It had been surprisingly – almost laughably – easy. I had followed him for some distance, after first observing him in Threadneedle-street. I cannot say why I decided it should be him, and not one of the others on whom my searching eye had alighted that evening. I had been walking for an hour or more in the vicinity with one purpose: to find someone to kill. Then I saw him, outside the entrance to the Bank, amongst a huddle of pedestrians waiting for the crossing-sweeper to do his work. Somehow he seemed to stand out from the crowd of identically dressed clerks and City men streaming forth from the premises. He stood regarding the milling scene around him, as if turning something over in his mind. I thought for a moment that he was about to retrace his steps; instead, he pulled on his gloves, moved away from the crossing point, and set off briskly. A few seconds later, I began to follow him.

We proceeded steadily westwards through the raw October cold and the thickening mist. After descending Ludgate-hill and crossing over into Fleet-street, we continued on our course for some distance until, at length, and after having refreshed himself at a coffee-house, my man turned into a narrow court that cut through to the Strand, not much

* ['An introduction to a treatise or discourse'. *Ed.*]

† [A shell fishmonger and supper-house at 40, Haymarket. *Ed.*]

more than a passage, flanked on either side by high windowless walls. I glanced up at the discoloured sign – 'Cain-court' – then stopped for a moment, to remove my gloves, and take out the long-bladed knife from the inside pocket of my great-coat.

My victim, all unsuspecting, continued on his way; but before he had time to reach the steps at the far end, I had caught up with him noiselessly and had sunk my weapon deep into his neck.

I had expected him to fall instantly forwards with the force of the blow; but, curiously, he dropped to his knees, with a soft gasp, his arms by his side, his stick clattering to the floor, and remained in that position for some seconds, like an enraptured devotee before a shrine.

As I withdrew the knife, I moved forwards slightly. It was then I noticed for the first time that his hair, where it showed beneath his hat, was, like his neatly trimmed whiskers, a distinct shade of red. For a brief moment, before he gently collapsed sideways, he looked at me; not only looked at me, but – I swear – smiled, though in truth I now suppose it was the consequence of some involuntary spasm brought about by the withdrawal of the blade.

He lay, illuminated by a narrow shaft of pale yellow light flung out by the gas-lamp at the top of the passage steps, in a slowly widening pool of dark blood that contrasted oddly with the carroty hue of his hair and whiskers. He was dead for certain.

I stood for a moment, looking about me. A sound, perhaps, somewhere behind me in the dark recesses of the court? Had I been observed? No; all was still. Putting on my gloves once more, I dropped the knife down a grating, and walked smartly away, down the dimly lit steps, and into the enfolding, anonymous bustle of the Strand.

Now I knew that I could do it; but it gave me no pleasure. The poor fellow had done me no harm. Luck had simply been against him – together with the colour of his hair, which, I now saw, had been his fatal distinction. His way that night, inauspiciously coinciding with mine in Threadneedle-street, had made him the unwitting object of my irrevocable intention to kill someone; but had it not been him, it must have been someone else.

Until the very moment in which the blow had been struck, I had not known definitively that I was capable of such a terrible act, and it was absolutely necessary to put the matter beyond all doubt. For the despatching of the red-haired man was in the nature of a trial, or experiment, to prove to myself that I could indeed take another human life, and escape the consequences. When I next raised my hand in anger, it must be with the same swift and sure determination; but this time it would be directed, not at a stranger, but at the man I call my enemy.

And I must not fail.

The first word I ever heard used to describe myself was: 'resourceful'.

It was said by Tom Grexby, my dear old schoolmaster, to my mother. They were standing beneath the ancient chestnut-tree that shaded the little path that led up to our house. I was tucked away out of view above them, nestled snugly in a cradle of branches I called my crow's-nest. From here I could look out across the cliff-top to the sea beyond, dreaming for long hours of sailing away one day to find out what lay beyond the great arc of the horizon.

On this particular day – hot, still, and silent – I watched my mother as she walked down the path towards the gate, a little lace parasol laid open against her shoulder. Tom was panting up the hill from the church as she reached the gate. I had not long commenced under his tutelage, and supposed that my mother had seen him from the house, and had come out expressly to speak to him about my progress.

'He is,' I heard him say, in reply to her enquiry, 'a most resourceful young man.'

Later, I asked her what 'resourceful' meant.

'It means you know how to get things done,' she said, and I felt pleased that this appeared to be a quality approved of in the adult world.

'Was Papa resourceful?' I asked.

She did not reply, but instead told me to run along and play, as she must return to her work.

When I was very young, I was often told – gently but firmly – by my mother to 'run along', and consequently spent many hours amusing myself. In summer, I would dream amongst the branches of

the chestnut-tree or, accompanied by Beth, our maid-of-all-work, explore along the shore-line beneath the cliff; in winter, wrapped up in an old tartan shawl on the window-seat in my bedroom, I would dream over Wanley's *Wonders of the Little World*,* *Gulliver's Travels*, or *Pilgrim's Progress* (for which I cherished an inordinate fondness and fascination) until my head ached, looking out betimes across the drear waters, and wondering how far beyond the horizon, and in which direction, lay the Country of the Houyhnhnms, or the City of Destruction, and whether it would be possible to take a packet boat from Weymouth to see them for myself. Why the City of Destruction should have sounded so enticing to me, I cannot imagine, for I was terrified by Christian's premonition that it was about to be burned with fire from heaven, and often imagined that the same fate might befall our little village. I was also haunted throughout my childhood, though again I could not say why, by the Pilgrim's words to Evangelist: 'I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment; and I find that I am not willing to do the first, nor able to do the second.' Puzzling though they were, I knew that the words expressed a terrible truth, and I would repeat them to myself over and again, like some occult incantation, as I lay in my cradle of branches or in my bed, or as I wandered the windy shore beneath the cliff-top.

I dreamed, too, of another place, equally fantastic and beyond possession, and yet – strangely – having the distinctness of somewhere experienced and remembered, like a taste that stays on the tongue. I would find myself standing before a great building, part castle and part palace, the home of some ancient race, as I thought, bristling with ornamented spires and battlemented turrets, and wondrous grey towers, topped with curious dome-like structures, that soared into the sky – so high that they seemed to pierce the very vault of heaven. And in my dreams it was always summer – perfect, endless

* [Nathaniel Wanley (1634–80). The book was first published in 1678. The subtitle reads: 'A general history of man: In six books. Wherein by many thousands of examples is shewed what man hath been from the first ages of the world to these times . . . Collected from the writings of the most approved historians, philosophers, physicians, philologists and others.' *Ed.*]

summer, and there were white birds, and a great dark fish-pond surrounded by high walls. This magical place had no name, and no location, real or imagined. I had not found it described in any book, or in any story told to me. Who lived there – whether some king or caliph – I knew not. Yet I was sure that it existed somewhere on the earth, and that one day I would see it with my own eyes.

My mother was constantly working, for her literary efforts were our only means of support, my father having died soon after I was born. The picture that always comes to mind, when thinking of her, is of spindles of grey-flecked dark hair escaping from beneath her cap and falling over her cheek, as she sat bent over the large square work-table that was set before the parlour window. There she would sit for hours at a time, sometimes well into the night, furiously scratching away. As soon as one tottering pile of paper was complete and despatched to the publisher, she would immediately begin to lay down another. Her works (beginning with *Edith; or, The Last of the Fitzalans*, of 1826) are now quite unremembered – it would be disloyal to her memory if I say deservedly so; but in their day they enjoyed a certain vogue; at least they found sufficient readers for Mr Colburn* to continue accepting her productions (mostly issued anonymously, or sometimes under the *nom de plume* 'A Lady of the West') year in and year out until her death.

Yet though she worked so long, and so hard, she would always break off to be with me for a while, before I went to sleep. Sitting on the end of my bed, with a tired smile on her sweet elfin face, she would listen while I solemnly read out some favourite passages from my precious translation of Monsieur Galland's *Les mille et une nuits*;† or she might tell me little stories that she had made up, or

* [Henry Colburn (d. 1855), the publisher and founder of the *Literary Gazette*. *Ed.*]

† [The French orientalist Antoine Galland (1646–1715) made the first Western translation of *The Thousand and One Nights*, published in twelve volumes between 1704 and 1717 as *Les mille et une nuits*. It was a great success and was followed by several other European translations, including the first English rendering of Galland's text, published anonymously 1706–8 and known as the 'Grub Street version'. This is undoubtedly the version referred to by the narrator. The translation was both defective and dull, but it inspired successive generations of English readers, up to and including the Romantic poets. *Ed.*]

perhaps recount memories of her own childhood in the West Country, which I especially loved to hear. Sometimes, on fine summer nights, we would walk, hand in hand, out onto the cliff-top to watch the sunset; and then we would stand together in silence, listening to the lonely cry of the gulls and the soft murmur of the waves below, and gaze out across the glowing waters to the mysterious far horizon.

'Over there is France, Eddie,' I remember her saying once. 'It is a large and beautiful country.'

'And are there Houyhnhnms there, Mamma?' I asked.

She gave a little laugh.

'No, dear,' she said. 'Only people, like you and me.'

'And have you been to France ever?' was my next question.

'I have been there once,' came the reply. Then she sighed. 'And I shall never go there again.'

When I looked up at her, I saw to my astonishment that she was crying, which I had never seen her do before; but then she clapped her hands and, saying it was time that I was in my bed, bundled me back into the house. At the bottom of the stairs, she kissed me, and told me I would always be her best boy. Then she turned away, leaving me on the bottom stair, and I watched her go back into the parlour, sit down at her work-table, and dip her pen into the ink once more.

The memory of that evening was awakened many years later, and has ever since remained strong. I thought of it now, as I puffed slowly on my cigar in Quinn's, musing on the strange connectedness of things; on the thin, but unbreakable, threads of causality that linked – for they did so link – my mother labouring at her writing all those years ago with the red-haired man who now lay dead not half a mile away in Cain-court.

Walking down towards the river, I felt intoxicated by the thought that I had escaped discovery. But then, whilst paying my half-penny to the toll-keeper on Waterloo Bridge, I noticed that my hands were shaking and that, despite my recent refreshment at Quinn's, my mouth was dry as tinder. Beneath a flickering gas-lamp, I leaned against the parapet for a moment, feeling suddenly dizzy. The fog lay heavy on the black water below, which lapped and slopped against the piers of the great echoing arches, making a most dismal music. Then, out of the swirling

fog, a thin young woman appeared, carrying a baby. She stood for a few moments, obliviously staring down into the blackness. I clearly saw the blank despair on her face, and instantly sensed that she was about to make a jump of it; but as I moved towards her, she looked at me wildly, clutched the child tightly to her breast, and ran off, leaving me to watch her poor phantom figure dissolve into the fog once more.* A life saved, I hoped, if only for a time; but something, perhaps, to set against what I had done that night.

For you must understand that I am not a murderer by nature, only by temporary design and necessity – a justified sinner. There was no need to repeat this experimental act of killing. I had proved what I had set out to prove: the capacity of my will to carry out such a deed. The blameless red-haired stranger had fulfilled his purpose, and I was ready for what now lay ahead.

I walked to the Surrey side of the bridge, turned round, and walked back again. Then, on a sudden impulse, as I passed once more through the turnstile, I decided to retrace my steps along the Strand instead of returning to my rooms. At the foot of the steps leading down from Cain-court, which I had descended not two hours earlier, a crowd of people had gathered. I enquired of a flower-seller concerning the cause of the commotion.

'Murder, sir,' she replied. 'A poor gentleman has been most viciously done to death. They say the head was almost severed from the body.'

'Good heavens!' said I, with every expression of sudden shock. 'What a world we live in! Is anyone apprehended?'

My informant was uncertain on this point. A Chinese sailor had been seen running from the court a little time before the body had been discovered; but others had said that a woman carrying a bloody axe had been found standing in a daze a few streets away, and had been taken off by the officers.

I shook my head sadly, and continued on my way.

Of course it was most convenient that ignorant rumour was already weaving nets of obscurity and falsehood around the truth.

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*[Waterloo Bridge was known as the 'Bridge of Sighs' because of the number of suicides who had leaped to their deaths from it. *Ed.*]

For all I cared, either the Chinese sailor or the woman with the bloody axe, if, indeed, they existed, could swing for my deed and be damned. I was armoured against all suspicion. Certainly no one had observed me entering or leaving the dark and deserted court; I had been most particular on that point. The knife had been of a common type, purloined for the purpose from an inn across the river in Borough High-street, where I had never been before, and to which I would never return again. My nameless victim had been entirely unknown to me; nothing but cold Fate connected us. My clothes appeared to be unmarked by his blood; and night, villainy's true friend, had thrown its accomplice's cloak over all.

By the time I reached Chancery-lane, the clocks were striking eleven. Still feeling unwilling to return to my own solitary bed, I swung northwards, to Blithe Lodge, St John's Wood, with the intention of paying my compliments to Miss Isabella Gallini, of blessed memory.

Ah, Bella! Bellissima Bella! She welcomed me in her customary way at the door of the respectable tree-fronted villa, cupping my face in her long-fingered, many-ringed hands and whispering, 'Eddie, darling Eddie, how wonderful,' as she kissed me gently on both cheeks.

'Is all quiet?' I asked.

'Perfectly. The last one went an hour ago, Charlie is asleep, and Mrs D has not yet returned. We have the house to ourselves.'

Upstairs I lay back on her bed watching her disrobe, as I had done so many times before. I knew every inch of her body, every warm and secret place. Yet watching the last piece of clothing fall to the floor, and seeing her standing proudly before me, was like experiencing her for the first time in all her untasted glory.

'Say it,' she said.

I frowned in pretended ignorance.

'Say what?'

'You know very well, you tease. Say it.'

She walked towards me, her hair now released and flowing over her shoulders and down her back. Then, reaching the bed, she once again clasped my face in her hands and let that dark torrent of tresses tumble around me.

'Oh, my America,' I declaimed theatrically, 'my new-found land!'*

'Oh, Eddie,' she cooed delightedly, 'it does so thrill me when you say that! Am I really your America?'

'My America and more. You are my world.'

At which she threw herself upon me with a will and kissed me so hard that I could scarcely breathe.

The establishment of which Bella was the leading light was several cuts above the usual introducing house, so much so that it was known to the *cognoscenti* simply as 'The Academy', the definite article proclaiming that it was set apart from all other rival establishments, and alluding proudly to the superiority of its inmates, as well as to the services they offered. It was run along the lines of a highly select club – a Boodle's or White's of the flesh† – and catered for the amorous needs of the most discerning patrons of means. Like its counterparts in St James's, it had strict rules on admission and behaviour. No person was allowed entry to this choice coterie without the unequivocal recommendation of an existing member, followed by a vote; blackballing was not infrequent, and if a recommendation proved wanting in any way, both applicant and proposer faced summary ejection, sometimes worse.

Mrs Kitty Daley, known to the members as Mrs D, was the *entrepreneuse* of this celebrated and highly profitable Cyprian‡ resort. She went to great lengths to maintain standards of social decency: no swearing, profanity, or drunkenness was tolerated, and any disrespect towards, or ill-treatment of, the young ladies themselves was punished with the utmost severity. Not only would the perpetrator find himself immediately barred and exposed to public scandal; he would also receive a call from Mr Herbert Braithwaite, a former pugilist of distinction, who had his own highly effective

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* [From John Donne, 'Elegie XIX: To his Mistris Going to Bed'. *Ed.*]

† [Boodle's, a gentleman's club of a semi-political character at 28 St James's Street; White's (originally White's Chocolate House, established towards the end of the seventeenth century) was another celebrated club-house at 37 and 38 St James's Street. *Ed.*]

‡ [An adjective carrying the meaning of licentious or lewd, deriving from Cyprus, an island famed for the worship of Aphrodite. *Ed.*]

way of making delinquent patrons understand the error of their ways.

Signor Prospero Gallini, Bella's father, the impoverished scion of a noble Italian family, having fallen on hard times, had fled his creditors in his native land in the year 1830, and had made his way to England, where he set himself up as a fencing-master in London. He was now a widower, and an exile; but he was determined to give his only daughter every advantage that his limited means permitted, with the result that she could converse fluently in several European languages, played exceptionally well on the piano-forte, had a delightful singing voice, and was, in short, as accomplished as she was beautiful.

I had lodged briefly with Signor Gallini and his alluring daughter when I first came to London. After his death I maintained an occasional, but friendly, correspondence with Bella, feeling that it was my duty to watch over her, in a brotherly sort of way, in gratitude for the kindness that her father had shown to me. Signor Gallini had left her little enough, and it became necessary for her to leave the house in Camberwell, to which her father had retired, and take employment as companion to a lady in St John's Wood, whose acquaintance we have already made. She had answered an advertisement for this position, which was Mrs D's way of recruiting new blood for her stable of thoroughbreds. Very few who applied found favour in Mrs D's discerning eye; but Bella had instantly charmed her, and was not in the least shocked when the true nature of her employment was revealed to her. Although she began her career as the most junior citizen in The Academy's little state, she quickly rose through the ranks, being exceptionally beautiful, talented, discreet, and as accommodating as any gentleman could wish. If there is such a thing as a vocation in this line of work, then Bella Gallini may be said to have possessed one.

Our intermittent correspondence continued for some years after she took up residence at Blithe Lodge. I would send a brief note every few months, to enquire how she did, and whether she was in need of anything, and she would always reply that she was going on very well, that her employer was kindness itself, and that she wanted for nothing. Then one day, in the early months of 1853, I happened to be in the vicinity of St John's Wood and thought I would call on her, to

see for myself that all was well, and (I confess) to satisfy my curiosity that she was still as beautiful as I remembered her.

I was admitted to an elegant drawing-room, displaying both taste and means. The door opened; but it was not Bella. Two giggling young ladies, unaware that a visitor was within, burst into the room. On seeing me, they halted, looked me up and down, and then looked at each other. They were a most ravishing pair, one blonde, the other dark; and both had an unmistakable look about them. I had seen it a hundred times, though rarely in such sumptuous surroundings.

They begged my pardon (unnecessarily: I would have forgiven them any liberty they chose to take), and were about to withdraw when another figure appeared in the doorway.

She *was* as beautiful as I remembered her; dressed to the highest point of fashion, coiffured and bejewelled, but still possessed of a natural grace of carriage, and displaying that warm and open expression with which she had greeted me when I had first come to her father's house. After her fair companions had departed, we walked out into the garden and talked away, like the old friends we were, until a female servant came across from the house to tell Bella that she had another visitor.

'Will you call again?' she asked. 'I seem to have spoken only of myself, and would so like to hear more about what you have been doing with your life, and what you intend to do in the future.'

I needed no further hint, and said that I would come again the following day, if it was convenient.

Neither of us had said anything concerning the true character of Blithe Lodge; there was no need. She saw, by my look and tone of voice, that I was not in the least shocked or disgusted by what she had chosen to become; and for my part, I could see that – as she had told me so often – she wanted for nothing, and that her professed contentment with her lot was unfeigned.

I returned the next day, when I was introduced to Mrs D herself; and the following week attended a soirée, at which were assembled some of the most eminent and well-placed of the capital's fast men. Gradually, my visits increased in frequency, and soon brotherly solicitation began to transform into something more intimate. By special dispensation, I was not required to make any contribution to the

domestic oeconomy of the house. 'You're most welcome here any time, my dear,' said Mrs D, with whom I had quickly become a great favourite, 'just as long as Bella ain't distracted from her professional duties.'

Mrs D being a widow with no dependants, it had long been settled that Bella, who had become like a daughter to her, would in the course of time assume the reins of power in this thriving carnal kingdom. On this account, I would call her my little heiress, and she would smile contentedly as I pictured to her the days of ease that lay ahead once the inevitable mortal release of Mrs D, now in her sixty-first year, delivered the succession into her hands.

'I don't like to think of it too much,' she said, as we lay together in the dark, after the incident in Cain-court, talking of Mrs D's impending retirement, 'seeing how fond I am of Kitty, and how kind she's always been to me. But, you know, I can't help feeling – well, a little satisfied at the prospect, though I'm sure I don't deserve it.'

I rebuked her gently for her scruples, telling her that it was folly – and worse – to believe that we do not merit our good fortune, especially if it is ours by right. She kissed me and pulled me close; but I felt suddenly abandoned and alone. For was I not also an heir, and to a far greater kingdom than hers? Yet *my* inheritance had been taken from me, and could never now be reclaimed. This was hard enough to bear; but, through a considered act of betrayal, I had sustained an even greater loss, which had left me bereft of all hope of recovery. It is trite to speak of a broken heart. Hearts are not broken; they continue to beat, the blood still courses, even in the bitter after-days of betrayal. But something *is* broken when pain beyond words is suffered; some connexion that formerly existed with light and hope and bright mornings is severed, and can never be restored.

I longed to throw off the habit of deceit, and this smiling mask of carelessness I wore to conceal the rage that foamed and boiled beneath. But I could not tell Bella the truth about myself, nor why I had been driven to kill a stranger that night in Cain-court. For she had become the one sweet constant in my life through a storm of trouble and danger of which she had been unaware; yet she, too, had been betrayed, though she did not know it. I had already lost her;

but still I could not let her go – not quite yet – nor confess to her what I am now confessing to you, my unknown reader.

Yet there is one person who knows what I cannot tell Bella. And soon he will also come to know how resourceful I can be.