

## Night and Morning.

Book 1.  
(Continued.)

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

"It comes too late," sighed Caleb, heavily; and the letter fell from his hands. There was a long pause. "Close the shutters, and let the sick man, at last; if there I could sleep; and—*sick up the old letter!*

With a troublous but eager grieve he sifted the paper, as a miser would seize the sheels on an estate on which he has a mortgage. He smoothed the folds, looked complacently at the well-known hand-scribbles—ghostly and faint—of his dead predecessor, had come into office a little before Caleb's last illness, had a dim recollection of having taken the register up to Mr. Price at the time the house was searched; the cupboard, in his dead predecessor's had come into office a little before Caleb's last illness, had a dim recollection of having taken the register up to Mr. Price at the time his dead predecessor's had been explored. "Here it is!" he said, and laid it down, and poked about under his pillow, and sank down; they left him alone. He did not wake for some hours, and that good clergyman, poor as himself, was again at his post. The only friendships that are ready with him in the hour of need, are those which are created by faith and communion; and the soul of Caleb, in the hour of tribulation, by the voice of death, the rich and the poor are seen round by sides. Caleb was extremely much heavier; but he seemed clearer than it had been, and the instincts of his native kindness were the last that left him. "There's nothing I can do for you," he muttered.

"An' I remember, Jones, will you send to the parish register? It is—where the vestry room, I think—but nothing's kept properly. Better go yourself—it's important."

Mr. Jones nodded, and salled forth. That day was a day of quietude; the churchwardens knew nothing about it; the clerk—a new clerk, who was also the sexton, and rather a wild fellow—had gone ten miles off to a wedding; every place was searched; till at last, the book was found, amidst a heap of old magazines and papers, the last portion of Caleb's history; in the time it was brought to him, the searcher was fast declining, with some difficulty his dim eye discovered the place where, as odds the cumber pots hooks of the parishioners, the large clear heart of his old friend, and the treasured characters of the tried, looked forth distinguished.

"Extract this for me, will you?" said Caleb.

"Mr. Jones obeyed. "Now I will just write above the extract:—*—sighs—* By Mr. Price's desire I send you the extract. It is too difficult to write himself. But he is dead now, and has never been the same man since you left him; and if that, if he should not get well again, still your kind letter has made him easier in his mind."

Caleb stopped. "Go on."

"That is all I have to say; sign your name, and put the address—here it is. Ah, the letter (the ministered) must not lie about! If anything happen to me, it may get him into trouble."

And as Mr. Jones sent his communication, Caleb quickly stretched his wan hand, and held the letter which had passed his fingers, and which had been the cause of many a bitter pang; and then, with a heavy sigh, he laid it on the carpeted floor. Mr. Jones prudently set thereon the broad sole of his top-boot, and the maid-servant brushed the tinder into the grate.

"Ah, trumpet it out—hurry it along; the last, as the rest," said Caleb hoarsely. "Franchise, fortune, home, love; life—a little flame; and then—and then—"

"Don't be uneasy—it's quite out!" said Mr. Jones.

Caleb turned his face to the wall. He lingered for the next day, when he passed mercifully from sleep to death. As soon as the breath was out of his body, Mr. Jones felt that his duty was discharged, that other duties called him home. He promised to return to read the burial service over the deceased, gave some hasty orders about the plain funeral, and took his young son to the room, when he saw the letter he had written by Caleb's wish, still on the table. "I pass the post office—I'll put it in," said he to the weeping servant, "and just give me that scrap of paper." So he wrote on the scrap, "P.S.—I am leaving you at the post office—I'll put it in." And so it was, that the last act of Caleb's life was to put the letter in the post office, and then to die.

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to bear a great deal of solitude and suffering. Two loving couples had waited to be married till his return should arrive. The ceremony performed, where the gay cockerel was interrogated; the gay cockerel, who had come into office a little before Caleb's last illness, had a dim recollection of having taken the register up to Mr. Price at the time his dead predecessor had come into office. The gay cockerel was explored, and pounced upon a pale parchment volume. The thin clergyman opened it, and recoiled in dismay—more than three-fourths of the leaves had been torn out. "It is the moth, sir," said the gardener, who had not yet removed from the house.

The clergyman looked round; one of the children was trembling. "What have you done to this book, little one?"

"I took book—torn it—bit it—"

"Speak the truth, and you shan't be punished."

"I did not know it was my harm—hi! hi!"

"Well, an—"

"An' I did helped u—"

"And—an!—and—hi!—ut!—The tail o' the kite is the kite?"

"Alas! the kite and its tail were long ago gone to that unloved limb, where all things lost, broken, vanished, and destroyed; things that lost themselves—for servants are too honest to steal; things that break themselves—for servants are too honest to break."

"It does not signify a pin's head," said the clerk; "the parish must find a new 'un!"

"It's no fault of mine," said the pastor.

"I'm a shop ready?"

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"(To be continued.)

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