

THE MANUSCRIPT OF FRANCIS SHACKERLEY

*(Being a True Account of the Most Noble Lady, the
Lady Millicent Campion.)*



SINCE that news has come this day of Sir Humphreville Campion—a death strangely caused by the bursting of an alembic—there is naught to hinder me from taking up my drowsy pen and writing a true history of certain matters that caused no small wonder in their day. True it is that I would liefer work in my garden amongst the simples and flowers, for since the last affairs to be narrated in my history, all thought has been painful to me, and the world a place rather to endure than to dwell in. There is a quiet joy in the breeding of small cattle and the growth of crops; but to one who has tasted of life's sweetness such pleasure is wondrously pitiable.

We met first in 1611. My father's coach, as

we were travelling to Sherenesse Manor. where dwelt my aunt Bargrave, broke down outside the village of Stratton—the left sling being overchafed. How it came about I know not, but in the scuffle, when my folks were hastening back to the inn, I stole unnoticed across the road to a mossy wall, and, filled with arrant mischief, leaped over and ran panting along the sward. Monstrous elms, with contorted boles, stood about: it was springtide and the leaves were freshly green; in the branches overhead squirrels played and squeaked.

Soon I heard two sounds, cuckoo and a child mocking cuckoo; turning abruptly past a high jetto, as thin in the lower part as a needle, but towards the top breaking into mist which the sun made orange and purple and blue, I reached a tennis-court, where a girl danced, an odd pretty creature, with a pale face and ringlets so deeply hued that they might have been washed in blood. She was all alone, tripping round and round in a ring, first on one foot, then on the other, and singing to herself in baby language. The cuckoo marked time: at every note little mistress drew herself upright, clasped her hands, and cried *cookoo*, then continued her dance. I stood by in silence, till, as she passed for the third time, she lifted her eyes, showing how they were hazel and big.

‘Ah,’ she said in a proud fashion, ‘tis not

Humphreville! Day after day have I thought to see him. They said last summer he had flown away with the cuckoo, and I know that with the cuckoo he must return. It is lonely here with no playmates. Who are you?’

‘Frank Shackerley. My father’s coach broke down, and I ran away.’

She held out a tapering brown hand, on whose marriage finger gleamed a golden ring. ‘And I am the most noble lady, the Lady Millicent Campion, wife to Sir Humphreville Campion.’

‘You tease me,’ I said vexedly. ‘You are not nearly as old as I, so you cannot be a wife.’

The Lady Millicent came nearer, tears gathering in her eyes; she put her arm around my neck. ‘Dear heart,’ she murmured, ‘’tis true. I know not how it came, but in the summer Humphreville stayed here with his parents, and I was wedded to him. At night when I was put to bed they brought him to kiss me, and when I awoke in the morning he had gone with the cuckoo. Why does not he stay with me and keep house like other husbands?’

At this moment an elderly woman came through the yew archway: she leaped almost off her feet with surprise. ‘Bless us!’ she cried, ‘an elvling!’ And she caught little Millicent in her arms; but the child laughed and patted her cheeks.

‘Nurse Granmodè,’ she said, ‘Master Shackerley

hath stole away from his friends to visit me. Put me down at once, for I must speak with him. At once, I say! Dear nurse, do!’

The woman obeyed, and Millicent came again to my side. ‘Now let us kiss, for you must go back to your people,’ she whispered. ‘Tis very good to meet you. I shall often think of you when you are gone.’

She brought her smooth lips to mine, and kissed with evident delight. The nurse separated us. ‘Madam, your mother will be uneasy if we do not return now,’ she said. ‘The bell has rung: we must go at once.’

Her charge took up the seams of her green skirt, and made a courtesy, then with a strange grace walked quietly away. In some manner she made me feel that I was utterly unpolished in comparison: her gait—her way of speaking—might have been copied in courts.

When she had passed out of sight I hurried back to the coach, where I found the men taking out the valuables. My parents and sisters had gone back to Stratton, imagining that I had preceded them; so I hastened along the road and soon reached the ‘Bull and Butcher,’ which we had left only an hour before.

In the inn-yard a set of mountebanks was playing ‘The Merriments of the Men of Gotham’; but though I loved these shows, I did not pause till I

entered the presence of my mother, who was in high unrest at my absence. My father stood conversing with the innkeeper, a comely, well-proportioned dame, who put me in mind of the portrait of Anne Bullen at Amnest. 'Twas more than strange—'twas wicked,' I heard him say, 'the lass to have no choice!'

Mistress Nappy-ale replied, 'A sweet child if ever there was any!' My mother's curiosity conquered. I was sitting on her knee—all fears were allayed. 'Pray, husband, what is the purport of your long conversation?' He took her hand lightly. 'A pitiful story, indeed!' he said. 'Mistress here is telling me of Lord Dorel's mad freak about his daughter's marriage. Will you not repeat it to my wife? Dorel's Park was where the sling broke.'

Our hostess then began an account of how the Earl of Dorel, who had lost much of his fortune at the court of Elizabeth, had slightly retrieved his position by selling his child as wife to Humphreville Campion, a lad of thirteen: his father, Sir Withers Campion, being desirous for him to interwed with one of the purest stock in England. The Earl was old and profligate: he desired to shine amongst the gallants of Scottish James. Lady Millicent was seven years old at the time: her mother, a simple creature, so brow-beaten that she dared not oppose any wish of her

lord. After the ceremony, which was performed by the Bishop of Exeter, Sir Withers took Humphreville away to dwell at Campion Court until both parties attained ripe years. The act had made Lord Dorel very unpopular in the country, and since that day, now eight months ago, he had not once appeared at Dorel's Park.

This story made a deep impression on me. I remember that I was silent about my meeting with the baby-wife, not even telling the truth to my mother. When the coach was repaired and we went on to Aunt Bargrave's, my quietness was construed by my sisters into a sense of shame because of my escapade. For some weeks I was dull and heavy: I desired a companionship that was not attainable, and was regarded for a time as wasting. Nature, however, took mistress-ship, and before midsummer the subtle influence of Millicent seemed to have worn away.

Then intervened seventeen years, which, since they have little or naught to do with the Lady Millicent, I may pass over without excess of detail. I was educated at Salisbury Grammar School, and in 1617 became gentleman commoner at Christchurch, where, in 1622, I took the degree of Master of Arts. My father dying about this time, left me the estate of Amnest. My three sisters were married, one to a French noble, the others to men of position in our own county. Unaccustomed

to the use of money, I set to squandering my fortune, and, being drawn into the vices of the court, kept wenches and horses both for myself and my less endowed friends. Time came when I discovered that half my money was dissipated : all my land mortgaged. I had some talent for writing : at Oxford I had composed many satires ; so, with some wild view of retrieval, I wrote a play, which was often acted with great applause by the High and Mighty Prince Charles's servants, at the private house in Salisbury Court. Three other comedies followed ; then a tragedy, then an epic of *Mars and Venus*, then *The Mother*, a tragi-comedy, on the presentation of which, before the king and queen, at the 'Red Bull' in Drury Lane, I first met Humphreville, now Sir Humphreville Champion.

His repute had often reached me, for he was accounted one of the maddest men in England. In his youth he had spent some years on the continent, and had there imbibed a love of occult things. 'Twas even said that he discovered the philosopher's stone. Darcy, my schoolfellow, who was murdered in Italy on his first tour, wrote once from Paris, where he had visited Sir Humphreville, who showed him a richly-coloured water, which he declared would turn any metal into gold. Then, doubtless by some sleight of hand, he performed an experiment whereby two ounces

of the great metal were found in a crucible where lead had been before. Darcy had begged for a piece, but had been denied on the plea that all was not perfected.

Seeing that I had often wondered about him, it will amaze none to find that I examined him from top to toe. He was very tall—of at least six feet; his frame was thin; his hands and feet were small, the former exquisitely kept; his face was speckled like a toad's belly; his eyes deep brown—the left one with a slight cast; his hair black and crisp; his lips ripe red, very full and voluptuous, and his teeth of dazzling purity.

He seemed to favour notorieties. Hearing that I was the playwright he came to me, and, on the next seat's being left unoccupied, sat there and watched. He dispersed a rich smell of violets—it was said that his skin by some artificial means had been impregnated lastingly with their odour. When the play was done I bade him to a supper I had made for the actors; and there, though his language savoured of the empiric, he discoursed most interestingly, particularly on antipathies: in France he said he had kept a mistress who fainted at the sight of velvet; and even if it were drawn over her face in sleep she would instantly fall into convulsions. This, and such like information, kept us together till late in the morning. On parting he entreated me to visit him at his house

at Hampstead, where, he told me, the Lady Millicent was lying. I kept my own counsel about our former meeting, thinking it might give him some displeasure.

On the morrow I went, to find Sir Humphreville away from home, but expected shortly. I was shown into his library, a spacious chamber, lighted by a louvre of many-coloured glass, and lined with a collection of books such as I had never seen before in the house of a private gentleman. It consisted chiefly of modern poets and dramatists, memoirs in divers foreign languages, works on witchcraft, chemistry, and astrology: on the whole being of more pretence than worth.

As I took up a new copy of Michael Scott's *Quaestio Curiosa de Natura Solis et Lunae*, I heard the rustling of a woman's gown, and turning, saw Lady Millicent gazing at me with a mirthful face. She was much changed. As a child she had seemed sad and fantastic, now at twenty-four she had developed into a woman of heavenly beauty. Her face was white as snow, an admirable oval; her grey eyes clearer than crystal; her hair, which had not, as hair is wont, changed with the passage of years, fell in heavy curls down her back and over her bosom, held from her brow by an ornament of pearls.

'So we meet again,' she said. 'You were my fairy prince. I almost doubted that you had ever

really existed. It is very sweet to find you here. When they brought your name to me, years seemed to roll away. Ay me, for those long past days at Dorel's Park!' she sighed.

Somehow her words brought back the hollowness of my manhood. Would that we two were children again! That once more I might run through the Park, where the jetto played and the squirrels squeaked, and the stately little maid kissed me. Lady Millicent noted my depression.

'Childhood is sweeter than barren knowledge,' she said in a low tone. 'For one year of unalloyed happiness I would sell all the rest of my life.'

As she spoke a curtain swung back, and one entered in the guise of a Saracen; turbaned and bedecked with many precious stones. He passed round the room by the wall; not until he reached the further door did I observe his face. It was the most terrible I had ever seen. Heavy brows leaned over green and yellow eyes: the skin was puckered in huge wrinkles: a few silver hairs swayed from his chin. His mouth was loathsome; by some preternatural means the lips had been drawn almost to the ears, and in the gulfed space lay a hedge of black teeth, which being opened—the jaw hanging loosely on his breast—showed me in that short space that the tongue was missing, and its place taken by some white snake-

like roots. At the door he made his obeisance, accompanying it with a hoarse, frightful sound.

‘It is Sir Humphreville’s mute eunuch,’ she said frowning. ‘He has the leave of the house. My lord bought him from the Soldan. He is reputed to have stores of forbidden knowledge—Sir Humphreville sets a high value on him: they work for hours in the laboratory together.’

When the creature had gone she laid her hand on my arm. ‘I have a fond belief that yonder gelding pollutes the air. Let us sit in my own chamber: there at least he is forbidden to enter.’

She accompanied me to a cabinet furnished in the richest, most extravagant fashion. The walls, where not hung with white satin, were of alabaster, fretted with moresks of finely-beaten gold; the ceiling, also of white, but pierced with a crescent moon and stars that by some arrangement of changing mirrors and lights glittered more brightly than the real firmament. Tripods of silver with smouldering spills sent out dainty clouds that massed beneath this mock sky and filtered through its orifices.

There we sat and discoursed of our lives. She had heard of my fame; had even seen one of my comedies at White Hall. She made no attempt to glose, but begged for information as simply as a begging child. When I had told her all, she began to relate her own history since her marriage.

Sir Humphreville (whom, as I had already noted, she spoke of in a constrained fashion) had returned from the Continent in her sixteenth year to take possession. The Earl of Dorel had died meanwhile; and her husband, after a year of quiet life, had been appointed ambassador to Naples. There she had passed three unhappy years, the women of Italy not being companionable, and Sir Humphreville overmuch engrossed in his philosophical researches. After that they had resided in England; at divers seats of the Campions; and now, Sir Humphreville being called to the Court, where he was in high favour because of his proposal to turn all the copper of the kingdom into gold, he had bought the house at Hampstead. Day by day, she said, he worked with the king in the royal laboratory.

When she had done, the noise of a coach in the yard made her rise. 'He has arrived. We will go back to the library,' she said timidly. So we returned thither, and almost before I could kiss her hand she retired. As I turned towards the window I caught sight of the mute, half hidden behind a heavy crimson curtain, with his foul face drawn into one most filthy grin. A curious fascination—as is felt of him that looks upon a cockatrice—took possession of me; and I stared until Campion's appearing, who came forward with a wry smile of welcome. I heard

afterwards that some most precious liquid had been spilled that morning by the king's carelessness.

When we had conversed for a while on the matters of playwriting—he himself was one of those discontented characters who aspire to everything, and he would ask much of me concerning the general make and conduct of a drama—the mute came forward, after sundry signs of impatience, and speaking as it were with his fingers, imparted some news to his master. From a motion of his head I understood that he was telling of my encounter with Lady Millicent; and my fears proved too well-founded; for Campion turned to me with a suspicious face, and, immediately, though with courteous words, he brought our interview to a conclusion, pleading that an important experiment would be destroyed if it were not viewed at once. He expressed no desire to see me again, whereat I was sorry; for my meeting with the woman whose memory I had cherished so long had filled me with a hope of many exquisite hours. But I went back to my house, and that same day gave Arbel Strype, my mistress, a small farm in Dorsetshire, and liberty to marry: then dismissed her, glad that it had lain in my power to make her becoming provision.

In the evening I went again to the play, and, as before, I saw Sir Humphreville Campion in

attendance on the royal party. I saluted him; but to my surprise had no acknowledgment. It seemed either that he had forgotten me altogether, or that some jealous fear had so blinded him that he could not force himself to be courteous. Next day the illness of my mother, who was living on her dower at Amnest, called me to her bedside, where I remained until the end, which took place a se'nnight afterwards. The arrangements for her obsequies and the winding up of her affairs so engaged me that I had little time to think of other matters: indeed, I had half resolved to withdraw altogether from town life when news came that Sir Humphreville Campion had been despatched on a secret mission to the Court of Spain, and in the hope of meeting his lady I repaired to my house in Gracious Street. Here, to my amaze, I found an epistle, with the Campion crest of a dragon on the seal. It was from Lady Millicent herself.

'Sir,' it read, 'if it be true there are reasons why you should not visit me, I pray you explain them. I am alone here: Campion at this moment is in Madrid. I have little to tell except that every available word of your writing I have perused, and won great pleasure therefrom; that I would willingly play student to your better intelligence: there are many things I would choose to learn from you. Write to me on your return

from the country, and tell me that we may meet, and that shortly. All my old friends are alienated: you alone are left to remind me of an innocent past. But of this no more.—MILLICENT CAMPION.'

I went: she received me in state. The old Dowager-Countess of Dorel, blind and deaf by reason of her years, sat with us through the interview, and we talked to our hearts' content. A pretty fable Lady Millicent told me; called by herself *The New Andromeda*, which she had writ for a fancy of her own. 'Twas of a young child tied to a rock for a warlock to devour—another Dragon of Wantley, forsooth. The babe, innocent of her fate, plays and frolics; Perseus—or More of More Hall, or what you will—comes by,—is too innocent to understand the danger—and little mistress is left for the warlock. I could see that she meant her own history: I was the useless hero—she, the victim. Old madam nodded in her chair the while. When the time came to depart Millicent said she was leaving London on the morrow by Sir Humphreville's command, to retire to a country seat in the Yorkshire fells until her master's return. Byland Grange was the place: if I would honour it with a visit, she would herself show me the riches of the hills and valleys. That there was little of the really happy in the world she made no doubt: let each choose

his own joy. When I took her hand she said, 'Tis the same ring I wore at Dorel's: as years passed it chafed and was enlarged: now it chafes again.'

Three days afterwards I started to follow her, half in hopes to come up with her equipage, but it seemed she had the advantage and ever kept a day in front. I rode the two hundred and forty miles in four days, and it was on a Sunday afternoon when I led my horse into the yard of the *Campion Arms*, and bespoke a chamber. My man followed by post with mails; but I did not wait for ceremony, and having eaten in haste, I passed through the stately gates of the park. A spacious wilderness lay before me, netted with undergrowth green in the spring's triumph. Rivulets leaped across the clean stoned path, and crags frowned, their feet laved in clear pools, where strange waterfowl swam, their sides almost hidden beneath mosses and tangles of dove's-foot. Here and there belvideres watched down vistas, terminated by fish-ponds or stairlike ranges of peaks.

So great was the loveliness that I paused: in my most lively dreams I had never imagined aught like so perfect. As I stood I heard the cry of *cuckoo*, then from the distance the laughing mockery of a voice. Years rolled away like a mist, I was a boy again, she a girl; vice and dishonesty and sadness had all disappeared, and life

was fresh and sweet as in those days of old. I ran clapping my hands to a coppice of firs, which, as firs are used, had caught about its trunks a golden mist, and there I found Millicent, knee-deep in bracken.

There is a certain tremulous joy whose remembrance pains me almost too much to describe. When I said before that we were boy and girl again I spoke rashly, though children we were in a sense. But we were weaker because of our age : children love for very joy of heart and innocence, men and women love for love's sake. There was no reticence in either, we gave ourselves to each other with freedom and without shame. Neither had lived so long as to be unconscious that true love—true passion—is the completion of existence. She loitered at my side through the open park, where stands a ruined abbey, and along glades to the terrace of the house. Byland Grange is one of the strangest mansions in our country, standing against an abruptly rising cliff which mountain ashes and silver birches cover with greenery. The building is of red brick, with two wings and a court garden, and so covered with ivy that from the distance it seems like a cluster of rare trees with ruddy trunks and branches. The sun had taken the windows, and the whole front was chequered with glittering lights.

The great door stood open : we went into a hall

where stood wooden knights in complete panoply. At the end were two flights of stairs, which joined to a corridor that pierced the house: in niches fountains fell with pleasing music from satyrs' heads and dolphins' mouths. In a chamber of faded colours we sat together on the same settee, silently, heedless of the hours. Through the window we saw the moon disentangle herself from the tree-tops, the stars twinkle out one by one. Not until candles were brought did I take my leave, and then I entreated my mistress to meet me early on the morrow.

At parting she looked at me long and earnestly. 'We are carried away by some hidden current,' she said. 'Passion has entrapped us; we must be happy and we must suffer! Thus!' And she stood tip-toe and kissed me; her warm sweet tresses falling on my shoulder. At my inn I tossed all night awake—a battlefield of hopes and fears; so that when I arose in the morning I was haggard and languid. Of that I took no heed; but hastily donning my clothes, I ate, and hurried to the meeting-place. I had not waited a minute before she swept down, tired-looking and big-eyed. She wore a royal gown, somewhat like one I had read of in a description of the Princess Elizabeth's wardrobe. It was of a pure satin, in colour betwixt apple green and rose; once it shone the one, again the other; and the skirt

was embroidered with eyes of amethyst and seed pearls.

In our talk we made no mention of Campion : 'twas as if each were in a little world some genius forbade him to enter. But as time passed we grew less and less masters of ourselves. This day our tongues were loosened, but neither rhyme nor reason came, and we babbled like hoyden and hobble-de-hoy. In a little arbour near the abbey she had ordered a collation of fruit and wine to be placed, and at noon we ate and drank together ; then strolled on amongst the giant beeches. The heat of the sun overpowered us, and we sat to rest ; she unlaced her bodice to breathe the freer, and, like me, weary for lack of sleep, let her head sink back to the green grass. With the movement the kerchief fell loosely from her throat, and showed me, lying upon her breast, a curious miniature of myself, wrought by some unknown hand and framed in rubies. My hand caught hers ; I grew drowsier and drowsier until we slept. We lay thus for three hours, when both were awakened rudely by the sound of a thunder-clap. We sat up and beheld the skies of a uniform blackness. Heavy drops of rain began to fall ; almost ere we had reached the open we felt water on our skin. But the sight of the storm was so terrible and tragical that we took no care for ourselves. My mistress was not frightened : the

gods were holding a chariot race, she said, and indeed the rumbling sounded as if it were so.

The forks leaped across the fells: when they passed over water, it seemed to hiss; avenues of flame opened from one end of the park to another. The strong wind caught the trees and made them kiss the ground; the evening was pregnant with inquietude. We sheltered in an archway of the abbey: in mortal peril there, for stones that steamed with the uncooled heat were cast about our heads. It was well-nigh dark before there came a lull; and Millicent was so outworn with the strife of the elements that she could scarce move. So I took her in my arms and stumbled across the wilderness to the Grange. There the servants, who were old and careless, had not so much as taken note of their lady's absence.

She hastened to her chamber, and sent dry clothes to me; some grandsire's garments taken from an ancient press and heavy with the odour of musk. I donned them, and saw myself a courtier of Henry's time in doublet and hose of slashed velvet. The storm did not abate; and when I descended from the place where I had shifted to a parlour on the ground floor, I had given to me a hasty note. 'I am tired,' it ran, 'to-night I cannot see you; a bedchamber is prepared; honour me by spending the night here.'

My heart sank now at the thought of times

apart from her ; but I strove to wile the hours with a lute I found ; and I made verses on my lady's beauty, which I wrote on some tablets that lay in the window-seat. At midnight I retired to bed, where, being still exhausted, I fell asleep immediately—to dream that terrible and most sweet day all over again. I woke in an hour. Outside the wind shrieked and howled : it shook the mullions ; strange things rattled across the panes. My candle, which I had forgotten to blow out, was guttering in the socket.

Suddenly I heard a woman's cry—it was repeated—it rang above the noise of tempest : '*Francis, O Francis, help me ! they are killing me !—they are killing me !*'

I sprang from bed and ran into the corridor, my feet clapping loudly on the plaster floor. At the further end was an open door, with a brilliant gleam. All indoors was quiet : on the threshold I paused, seeing a golden bedstead, hung with curtains of tissue, and the shape of a woman beneath the covering.

Again came that frightful cry—fainter and fainter, '*Francis, my Francis, help me !—help me !*'

Then I went to the bedside and tore aside the fabric ; to behold my mistress's face all contorted as with fear and pain. Forgetful of all save my desire to drive away her torturing fancies (for I

saw that she rode the wild mare), I leaped upon the pillow and caught her head to my lap, where the grey eyes opened in wonderment, and a flush spread over the cheeks. She gave one laughing sigh—a woman's whinny; then thrust out her arms and clasped my waist. . . .

At that moment came the sounds of bolts undrawn and doors banging; then followed a loud tumult in the hall below—then a quavering of voices hushed by one sharp and loud. I would have drawn away for her sake; but her hands were locked.

'It is he,' she whispered. 'How he comes I know not. Stay with me to the end.'

The clamping of shoes, the clinking of spurs moved along the gallery; then Sir Humphreville and the mute came through the open door. Jealous hatred flashed on us from the knight's eyes; he held his sword before him; I could see him tremble.

'ADULTERESS!' He spoke no more than the one word.

Lady Millicent smiled—still from my lap. 'Think you so?' she said.

At a motion from him the Saracen came forward, holding a knife. The garments of both dropped water on the floor. The mute pricked those white fingers till they unclasped, then dragged me away. I flung myself upon him,

naked as I was, but his long arms held me like serpents, so that hardly might I breathe. Then Campion tore down one of the curtains and bound me to a chair. He seemed to meditate. Millicent his wife gave no sign of fear, but lay watching from her disordered pillow. At last he locked the door and stood between us.

‘In all things I chose refinement,’ he said. ‘If I were a boor, both of you should die—both be sent into lasting damnation together. But as I hold that those who love meet in the next world, one of you shall go, the other be left, so that such joy you may not have. For my own easement, and the better that I may attend to my particular work, I think best that you, Madam Whore, should be the one to bleed.’

She stepped from the bed. ‘Wonderful man, wonderful genius,’ she said scornfully, ‘I am ready.’

Campion tore off her lawn smock, so that she stood before us in naked beauty. ‘Fie upon you!’ she said, ‘to treat a woman thus.’

He drew her towards a large silver bath that lay in an alcove, there he forced her to lie in the water. I began to struggle, but the gelding tied a kerchief round my neck, and offered the point of his knife at my heart. I tried to press forward on it, but he broke the skin, and then withdrew it. Again and again I strove, ever without success.

Then Sir Humphreville took from his breast an emerald pencil, which, being opened, revealed a tiny lancet. He knelt where Millicent lay, and breathed a vein in her lovely arm. A fountain of blood pulsed out, discolouring first the water around her shoulders, then circling in clouds to her feet.

She turned and brought her eyes to mine, they were laughing still.

‘When we come together again, Frank,’ she said faintly, ‘’twill be in God’s sight.’

Dimness overcame my eyes, and for a while I could scarce see, but on my brain was printing the form of a naked woman lying on a mattress of blood and silver. . . .

‘How we met boy and girl! how I loved you in my heart of hearts! Speak to me, Frank. Shall we . . . shall we be young again some day?’

I sought to answer, but my tongue forsook its office; at my side the mute made his horrid attempt at speech. Sir Humphreville drew himself upright and folded his arms waiting for the end. From the bath a steam began to rise, the smell of blood filled the room.

She made effort to turn on her side, but she could not. From her lips came the word *cuckoo*—just as she had mocked the bird at Dorel’s
Campion knelt again and clapped his hand over her mouth, thinking haply she was jeering him in

death. Moan came after moan : such a sound as a weeping angel might make. There was a faint splashing, then silence.

. . . . It is all told.

What spells and charms were worked on me, I cannot tell. When six months after I found myself at Amnest, brought by means I knew nothing of, all desire of vengeance as of life had gone. It seemed to me, while Sir Humphreville lived, I could not publish this history to the world : for—perhaps by some enchantment learned in his pursuit of hidden knowledge—he had gained a great power over me. No will was left : I was doomed to feebleness both of mind and body.

Yet this scripture must be done, for traduction hath been at work with a most noble lady, and before I go to her I would fain have the world to understand.