

**THE TWO FRIENDS; A
NOVEL. BY THE COUNTESS
OF BLESSINGTON; VOL. II**

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The two friends; a novel. By the countess of blessington; Vol. II by Marguerite Blessington

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MARGUERITE BLESSINGTON

**THE TWO FRIENDS; A
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THE TWO FRIENDS

A NOVEL.

BY

THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON
SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.
1835.

BLIT
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THE TWO FRIENDS.

CHAPTER I.

“ Perdre le bonheur par sa faute, est la peine la plus amère pour les personnes qui ont de l'imagination. Un événement que le sort leur envoie, si affreux qu'il soit ; un malheur désespéré a, par son excès même, quelque chose qui les calme ; mais un bien perdu par leur faute, leur apparaît sans cesse paré des plus brillantes images ; elles le resuscitent à chaque instant, pour le perdre encore avec plus d'amertume, et recomposent leurs doux rêves pour les voir s'avançoir encore.”

No sooner had the packet entered the port of Calais, than Lady Wahner appeared on deck,

and placed herself so close to the carriage of Arlington, that he could not quit it without coming in contact with her.

The moment he left it, she addressed him, and having stated that she wished to have half an hour's conversation with him, requested that he would give her his arm to the inn.

To refuse, was impossible, though he heartily wished himself a thousand miles away from her, and having disembarked, they proceeded to the hotel.

They were passed on their route to it, by Cecile and her father, which increased the moodiness and distaste already felt by Arlington, at being thus forced, as it were, to appear the protector of a woman, for whom he felt no sentiment allied to affection; and the certainty that it would confirm every evil report relative to them, and convey the most injurious impressions to the mind of Emily's friend,

Mademoiselle de Bethune, increased his discontent.

Lady Walmer perceived all that was passing in his mind; but vanity and selfishness silenced female delicacy and pride, and induced her to affect not to have observed his coldness.

Arrived at the hotel, she addressed Arlington as follows, who listened to her with dread, if not with disgust.

“ You appeared surprised when you saw me on board the packet, but, if you reflect for a moment on the terrible, the humiliating, position in which you have placed me, you must admit, that having lost all claim to the protection of my husband or relations, I must now seek it from you, and on you alone, I must also rely for comfort and consolation. Do not interrupt me, as I see you wish to do, by telling me, that it was *I*, and not *you*, that led to this catastrophe, by inviting you to

the interview which terminated so fatally. This defence however is but a mere sophistry; for, you must admit, I should never have sought that interview had you not, by a series of attentions and protestations, excited in my breast a passion to which it had before been a stranger. It is true, you fled from me, but you told me, it was the *excess* of your attachment that led you to make this sacrifice to my peace. Your prudence came too late, for my affections were irrecoverably your's, but they were not yielded unsought; and all the fearful results that have followed are to be attributed solely to your inconstancy, and my too great devotion. Judging of your heart by my own, I thought that your's could not fail to return to its allegiance, the moment we met, and that you should be assured of my undiminished attachment; indeed, your conduct, up to the last fatal evening at Lord Navasour's, confirmed me in

this illusion. Through my infatuated affection for you, I have forfeited my place in society, my home, my friends, and all that I most valued; and now, you would barbarously desert the woman you have ruined, and deprived of all natural and legitimate protection.'

A violent burst of tears interrupted the speaker; and Arlington, actuated by pity and remorse, endeavoured to mitigate her affliction.

Her reproaches,—her anger,—he might have borne; but her tears, and unprotected situation, appealed too strongly to his generous nature to be resisted.

To the few words of attempted consolation, which he tried to utter, she replied, by saying, "it now only remains for you, to tell me, that you love, and that you are engaged to wed another; but, remember, that no vows which you may have sworn to her, can be stronger than those which you plighted to me a few

short months ago, and which I, trusting in your honour, foolishly, fatally, believed. Has this new object of your love, sacrificed for you, station, reputation, home, and friends? Is she cast on the world, a dishonoured, desolate woman? No! Surrounded by friends, and supported by an approving conscience, she will soon forget you, while I,"—and here, another passionate burst of tears interrupted Lady Walmer, and achieved the conquest of the pity, though not the love, of Arlington; for this last, even at that moment, he felt was for ever fixed on Emily.

The tears,—the agitation of Lady Walmer,—the picture she had drawn of her own situation,—overcame all his better resolutions: and he pledged himself to protect her: but he shuddered while he made the vow, for a presentiment told him that he was sealing his own misery and ruin.