

**FICTION WITHOUT
ROMANCE; OR, THE
LOCKET-WATCH; VOL. II**

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Fiction without romance; or, The locket-watch; Vol. II by Mrs. Maria Polack

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MRS. MARIA POLACK

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OR

THE LOCKET-WATCH.

BY

MRS. MARIA POLACK,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON :

EFFINGHAM WILSON,

ROYAL EXCHANGE.

1830.

FICTION WITHOUT ROMANCE.

To describe Eliza's feelings during her perusal of the foregoing, would indeed be a difficult task; various were the sensations, which oppressed her, and equally various were their effects. At times, she was so completely blinded by tears, as to be incapable of deciphering the characters before her, while at others, the acuteness of her sorrow, deprived her of the power of weeping. One moment she longed for the presence of the friend in whose sympathizing bosom she could repose her griefs, and in the next, a feeling to which she had hitherto been a stranger, took possession of her breast and made her wish that she could have hidden herself from ail the world, even from Mrs. Wallace! Eliza felt herself an object for the finger of scorn to point at, and wished that the same grave had enclosed her mother and herself.

But if she felt on her own account, how much, how infinitely, more, did she feel on her uncle's.—Young, handsome, accomplished; had he not sacrificed his best prospects in

life for her? For her sake he had become a voluntary exile! and too probably a *murderer*! This last suggestion filled her soul with horror; not that she attached the smallest guilt to the transaction, as the circumstances under which it was done were sufficient to warrant anything, but to a man of her uncle's principles, it must be a perpetual torment, besides the danger to which he would always remain subject.

But Eliza's fears on this account would have been considerably lessened, had she known, that Courtney's wound was declared not to be mortal, and that he had, after many weeks suffering, ultimately recovered. But his fears, on his own account were sufficient to prevent his taking any steps for the apprehension of Desbro, as he was also amenable to the laws of his country, for having committed the crime of bigamy, he therefore made a virtue of necessity, and, leaving his enemy to his fate, quitted the kingdom, and had never since been heard of.

The preparation for their removal, which was to take place soon after her uncle's return, by occupying Eliza's mind, restored her to much of her wonted tranquillity, besides, Eliza was too grateful not to use her utmost exertions to benefit by the constant assiduity of Mrs. Wallace, in her efforts to enliven and amuse her. So well had she succeeded, that on the day Mr. Desbro was expected to return,

there was hardly a trace of sorrow to be seen on her blooming countenance; but when he did arrive,—when Eliza felt herself pressed to the bosom of this idolized uncle, after a fortnight's absence, it was with the greatest difficulty she could restrain her emotions; her face became alternately pale and red, and she trembled so, that her limbs could scarcely perform their office. Mr. Desbro, (who by letters from Mrs. Wallace had been apprized of all that had passed at home,) affected not to notice the unusual agitation of his niece: but placing her on the sofa, and seating himself next to her, began to deliver the many kind messages with which he had been charged by Henry Cooper, Mr. Morland, and some more good friends in London, as yet unknown, but to whom he hoped soon to have the pleasure of presenting her, and also her amiable governess.

He then proceeded to inform them, that he had taken a neat ready furnished house, in the vicinity of Paddington, a pleasant village contiguous to London, and not more than half an hour's ride from that Capital, of which they might avail themselves whenever they thought proper, by means of a stage coach, numbers of these conveyances being in the daily habit of passing to and fro. He then expressed his wish that they should be able to leave Greenwood in a week from the present, he having taken the house from the commencement of the quarter, and he wished to be settled

before chilly autumn had completed her sombre reign, as the days were becoming short and dreary.

Eliza had the pleasure before she left Devonshire, of seeing Peggy made happy with her dear William; and though it was not yet Christmas, still the bounty of Mr. Desbro, provided the noble sirloin and rich national pudding, which smoking on the board (with large libations from the foaming tankard) constituted the wedding feast.

Every thing being now in readiness, our trio, after having passed *one* more day at the beloved rectory of B—— actually found themselves in the vehicle which was to convey them to the metropolis of Great Britain,—Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton with the aged Sarah (whom they retained in quality of nurse) bearing in her arms the smiling Juliana, were at Greenwood to take a final leave of the *ci-divant* cottagers.

They were on the point of setting out, when their attention was attracted by the sight of two horsemen galloping hastily in the direction of the cottage. These proved to be no other than Mr. Selby and his son, who had taken an early ride for the express purpose of bidding adieu to Mr. Selby's respected tenant. After some little conversation on the subject of the house, which Mr. Selby promised to dispose of to the best advantage; the young gentleman begged to be allowed to present Miss Desbro with what he called a trifling *souvenir*, at the same time, putting into her

hands a mahogany box, of much larger dimensions than the word *trifling* seemed to imply.

She received it in a most grateful manner, and was preparing to express her thanks, when her surprise and pleasure prevented her giving them utterance; for on her uncle's opening the box, she beheld the identical microscope which had afforded her so much amusement on a former occasion. Mr. Desbro hesitated about allowing Eliza to accept it; but Mr. Selby would not hear of anything like an objection; "besides," said he, "George has set his heart upon it, and surely you will not deprive him of the pleasure this little act of gallantry will afford him." Mr. Desbro having replied with equal politeness, the parties took leave with much cordiality, and the Selbys slowly walked their horses towards the road leading to the park; poor George turning his head as long as it was possible to catch a glimpse of Eliza.

Mrs. Hamilton shed many tears at parting with her amiable neighbours, who evinced an equal degree of regret on their part; a promise of corresponding was mutually agreed on, and they at length took a solemn and final farewell.

But few words were spoken during the commencement of journey, (each individual being engaged in the indulgence of their own particular thoughts,) except when something new and beautiful came within their sight, which Mr. Desbro

pointed out to the observation of his companions ; who, as the hills of Devonshire receded from their view, seemed to look forward with a sort of pleasurable hope, to the scenes in which they were to become spectators, if not actors.

The first attempt at conversation, was made by Eliza, who now, for the first time, ventured to ask her uncle some questions, relative to the health and situation of Mr. Cooper.

“ He appeared much improved in his health,” said Mr. Desbro, “ and seems most eligibly situated ; Mr. Morland appears to feel for him the affection of a father, and lives in the hope of one day being so in reality, by the union of his lively Jessy, with this object of his high esteem.”

Eliza did not feel quite satisfied with this intelligence ; but why she was not, was a mystery, even to herself. Did she not wish Henry happy ? Certainly. Then why should she not wish to see him happy with Jessy Morland ? was another question she mentally asked herself ;—but was Miss Morland the being who could make him so ?—here she stopt, —Henry certainly must be the best judge of his feelings in this respect. While these reflections were passing in the mind of Eliza, the various changes of her countenance were noticed by both her companions, each had their surmises on the subject, but forbore to notice them, even to each other.

When our travellers stopt at ——, Mr. Desbro proposed to pass the night there, as it would be very late before they