

**THE WYVERN MYSTERY: A  
NOVEL. IN  
THREE VOLUMES.  
VOL. II; PP. 1-275**

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The Wyvern Mystery: A Novel. In Three Volumes. Vol. II; pp. 1-275 by J. S. Le Fanu

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**J. S. LE FANU**

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**THE WYVERN MYSTERY.**

# THE WYVERN MYSTERY.

A Novel.

By J. S. LE FANU,

AUTHOR OF "UNCLE SILAS," "GUY DEVERELL," ETC., ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON :

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# THE WYVERN MYSTERY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE SUMMONS.

WHEN Charles Fairfield came into the wainscoted dining-room a few minutes later it looked very cosy. The sun had broken the pile of western clouds, and sent low and level a red light flecked with trembling leaves on the dark panels that faced the windows.

Outside in that farewell glory of the day the cawing crows were heard returning to the sombre woods of Carwell, and the small birds whistled and warbled pleasantly in the clear air, and chatty sparrows in the ivy round gossiped and fluttered merrily before

the little community betook themselves to their leafy nooks and couched their busy little heads for the night under their brown wings.

He looked through the window towards the gloriously-stained sky and darkening trees, and he thought,—

“A fellow like me, who has seen out his foolish days and got to value better things, who likes a pretty view, and a cigar, and a stroll by a trout-brook, and a song now and then, and a book, and a friendly guest, and a quiet glass of wine, and who has a creature like Alice to love and be loved by, might be devilish happy in this queer lonely corner, if only the load were off his heart.”

He sighed; but something of that load was for the moment removed; and as pretty Alice came in at the open door, he went to meet her, and drew her fondly to his heart.

“We must be very happy this evening, Alice. Somehow I feel that everything will go well with us yet. If just a few little

hitches and annoyances were got over, I should be the happiest fellow, I think, that ever bore the name of Fairfield ; and you, darling creature, are the light of that happiness. My crown and my life—my beautiful Alice, my joy and my glory—I wish you knew half how I love you, and how proud I am of you.”

“ Oh, Charlie, Charlie, this is delightful. Oh, Ry, my darling ! I’m too happy.”

And with these words, in the strain of her slender embrace, she clung to him as he held her locked to his heart.

The affection was there ; the love was true. In the indolent nature of Charles Fairfield capabilities of good were not wanting. That dreadful interval in the soul’s history, between the weak and comparatively noble state of childhood and that later period when experience saddens and illuminates and begins to turn our looks regretfully backward, was long past with him. The period when women “ come out ” and see the world, and men in