

NO MORE LOST:



Sp. 100



32 2/28

2000

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation









NO LOVE LOST:  
A Romance of Travel.

BY

W. D. Howells.



G. P. Putnam & Son N. Y.



# NO LOVE LOST

A ROMANCE OF TRAVEL

BY

W. D. HOWELLS

AUTHOR OF "VENETIAN LIFE," ETC.

NEW YORK

G. P. PUTNAM & SON 661 BROADWAY

1869



PS  
2031  
N6

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1869, by  
W. D. HOWELLS,  
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the  
Southern District of New York.

THE NEW YORK PRINTING COMPANY,  
81, 83, and 85 Centre Street,  
NEW YORK.



# NO LOVE LOST

A ROMANCE OF TRAVEL

---

BERTHA — *Writing from Venice.*

## I.

ON your heart I feign myself fallen —  
ah, heavier burden,  
Darling, of sorrow and pain than ever  
shall rest there! — I take you  
Into these friendless arms of mine, that you  
cannot escape me —

Closer and closer I fold you and tell you  
all, and you listen

Just as you used at home, and you let my  
sobs and my silence

Speak, when the words will not come — and  
you understand and forgive me.

— Ah! no, no! but I write, with the  
wretched bravado of distance,

What you must read unmoved by the pity  
too far for entreaty.

## II.

Well, I could never have loved him, but  
when he sought me and asked me, —  
When to the men that offered their lives,  
the love of a woman

Seemed so easy to give!— I promised the  
love that he asked me,  
Sent him to war with my kiss on his lips,  
and thought him my hero.  
Afterward came the doubt, and out of  
long question, self-knowledge;  
Came that great defeat, and the heart of  
the nation was withered, —  
Mine leaped high with the awful relief  
won of death. But the horror,  
Then, of the crime that was wrought in  
that guilty moment of rapture, —  
Guilty as if my will had winged the bullet  
that struck him —  
Clung to me day and night, and dreaming  
I saw him forever,  
Looking through battle-smoke with sor-  
rowful eyes of upbraiding,

Or, in the moonlight lying gray, or dimly  
approaching,  
Holding toward me his arms, that still  
held nearer and nearer,  
Folded about me at last . . . and I would  
I had died in the fever!—  
Better then than now, and better than ever  
hereafter!

### III.

Weary as some illusion of fever to me  
was the ocean—  
Storm-swept, scourged with bitter rains, and  
wandering always  
Onward from sky to sky with endless pro-  
cessions of surges,



Knowing not life nor death, but since the  
light was, the first day,  
Only enduring unrest till the darkness possess it, the last day.  
Over its desolate depths we voyaged away  
from all living:  
All the world behind us waned into vaguest  
remoteness;  
Names, and faces, and scenes recurred like  
that broken remembrance  
Of the anterior, bodiless life of the spirit  
—the trouble  
Of a bewildered brain, or the touch of  
the Hand that created;—  
And when the ocean ceased at last like  
a faded illusion,  
Europe itself seemed only a vision of eld  
and of sadness.

Naught but the dark in my soul remained  
to me constant and real,  
Growing and taking the thoughts bereft of  
happier uses,  
Blotting all sense of lapse from the days  
that with swift iteration  
Were and were not. They fable the bright  
days the fleetest:  
These that had nothing to give, that had  
nothing to bring or to promise,  
Went as one day alone. For me was no  
alternation  
Save from my dull despair to wild and  
reckless rebellion,  
When the regret for my sin was turned  
to ruthless self-pity—  
When I hated him whose love had made  
me its victim,

Through his faith and my falsehood yet  
claiming me. Then I was smitten  
With so great remorse, such grief for him,  
and compassion,  
That, if he could have come back to  
me, I had welcomed and loved him  
More than man ever was loved. Alas, for  
me that another  
Holds his place in my heart evermore !  
Alas, that I listened  
When the words, whose daring lured my  
spirit and lulled it,  
Seemed to take my blame away with my  
will of resistance !  
Do not make haste to condemn me: my  
will was a woman's  
Fain to be broken by love: yet unto the  
last I endeavored

What I could to be faithful still to the  
past and my penance ;  
And as we stood that night in the old  
Roman garden together —  
By the fountain whose passionate tears but  
now had implored me  
In his pleading voice — and he waited my  
answer, I told him  
All that had been before of delusion and  
guilt, and conjured him  
Not to darken his fate with me. The  
costly endeavor  
Only was subtler betrayal. O me, from  
the pang of confession,  
Sprang what strange delight, as I tore  
from its lurking that horror —  
Brooded upon so long — with the hope  
that at last I might see it

Through his eyes, unblurred by the tears  
that disordered my vision!

Oh, with what rapturous triumph I hum-  
bled my spirit before him,

That he might lift me and soothe me,  
and make that dreary remembrance,

All this confusèd present seem only some  
sickness of fancy,

Only a morbid folly, no certain and actual  
trouble!

If from that refuge I fled with words of  
too feeble denial—

Bade him hate me, with sobs that en-  
treated his tenderest pity,

Moved mute lips and left the meaningless  
farewell unuttered—

She that never has loved, alone can wholly  
condemn me.

## IV.

How could he other than follow? My  
heart had bidden him follow,  
Nor had my lips forbidden; and Rome  
yet glimmered behind me,  
When my soul yearned towards his from  
the sudden forlornness of absence.  
Everywhere his face looked from vanishing  
glimpses of faces,  
Everywhere his voice reached my senses  
in fugitive cadence.  
Sick, through the storied cities, with wretched  
hopes, and upbraidings  
Of my own heart for its hopes, I went  
from wonder to wonder,  
Blind to them all, or only beholding them  
wronged and related,

Through some trick of wayward thought,  
to myself and my trouble.

Not surprise nor regret, but a fierce, pre-  
cipitate gladness

Sent the blood to my throbbing heart  
when I found him in Venice.

“Waiting for you,” he whispered; “you  
would so.” I answered him nothing.

V.

Father, whose humor grows more silent  
and ever more absent,

(Changed in all but love for me since the  
death of my mother),

Willing to see me contented at last, and  
trusting us wholly,

Left us together alone in our world of  
love and of beauty.

So, by noon and by night, we two have  
wandered in Venice,

Where the beautiful lives in vivid and  
constant caprices,

Yet, where the charm is so perfect that  
nothing fantastic surprises

More than in dreams, and one's life with  
the life of the city is blended

In a luxurious calm, and the tumult with-  
out and beyond it

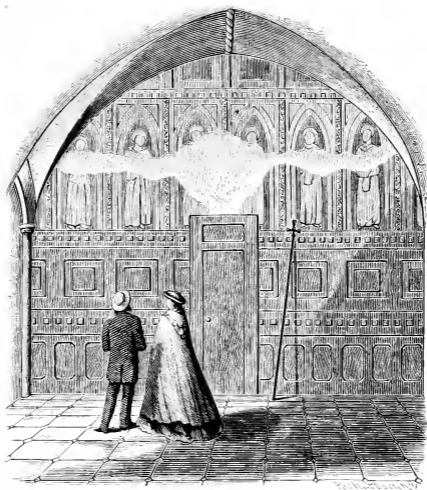
Seems but the emptiest fable of vain as-  
piration and labor.

Yes, from all that makes this Venice  
sole among cities,



Peerless forever — the still lagoons that  
sleep in the sunlight,  
Lulled by their island-bells — the night's  
mysterious waters  
Lit through their shadowy depths by stems  
of splendor that blossom  
Into the lamps that float, like flamy lo-  
tuses, over —  
Narrow and secret canals, that dimly gleam-  
ing and glooming  
Under palace-walls and numberless arches  
of bridges,  
List no sound but the dip of the gon-  
dolier's oar and his warning  
Cried from corner to corner — the sad, su-  
perb Canalazzo  
Mirroring marvellous grandeur and beauty,  
and dreaming of glory

Out of the empty homes of her lords  
    departed—the footways  
Wandering sunless between the walls of  
    the houses, and stealing  
Glimpses, through rusted cancelli, of lurk-  
    ing greenness of gardens,  
Wild-grown flowers and broken statues and  
    mouldering frescoes—  
Thoroughfares filled with traffic, and throngs  
    ever ebbing and flowing  
To and from the heart of the city, whose  
    pride and devotion,  
Lifting high the bells of St. Mark's like  
    prayers unto heaven,  
Stretch a marble embrace of palaces tow'rd  
    the cathedral  
Orient, gorgeous, and flushed with color  
    and light, like the morning!—





From the lingering waste that is not yet  
ruin in Venice,  
And her phantasmal show through all of  
being and doing—  
Came a strange joy to us, untouched by  
regret for the idle  
Days without yesterdays that died into  
nights without morrows.  
Here, in our paradise of love we reigned,  
new-created,  
As in the youth of the world, in the days  
before evil and conscience.  
Ah! in our fair, lost world was neither  
fearing nor doubting,  
Neither the sickness of old remorse, nor  
the gloom of foreboding,  
Only the glad surrender of all individual  
being

Unto him whom I loved, and in whose  
tender possession,  
Fate-free, my soul reposed from its an-  
guish.

— Of these things I write you  
As of another's experience — part of my  
own they no longer  
Seem to me now through the doom that  
darkens the past like the future.

## VI.

Golden the sunset gleamed, above the  
city behind us,  
Out of a city of clouds as fairy and lovely  
as Venice,

While we looked at the fishing-sails of  
purple and yellow  
Far on the rim of the sea, whose light  
and musical surges  
Broke along the sands with a faint, re-  
iterant sadness.  
But, when the sails had darkened into  
black wings, through the twilight  
Sweeping away into night — past the broken  
tombs of the Hebrews  
Homeward we sauntered slowly, through  
dew-sweet, blossomy alleys;  
So drew near the boat by errant and  
careless approaches,  
Entered, and left with indolent pulses the  
Lido behind us.

All the sunset had paled, and the campanili of Venice  
Rose like the masts of a mighty fleet  
moored there in the water.  
Lights flashed furtively to and fro through  
the deepening twilight.  
Massed in one thick shade lay the Gardens;  
the numberless islands  
Lay like shadows upon the lagoons. And  
on us as we loitered  
By their enchanted coasts, a spell of ineffable  
sweetness  
Fell and made us at one with them; and  
silent and blissful  
Shadows we seemed that drifted on through  
a being of shadow,  
Vague, indistinct to ourselves, unbounded  
by hope or remembrance.



Yet, we knew the beautiful night as it  
grew from the evening:—

Far beneath us and far above us the  
vault of the heavens

Glittered and darkened; and now the moon  
that had haunted the daylight

Thin and pallid, dimmed the stars with her  
fulness of splendor,

And over all the lagoons fell the silvery  
rain of the moonbeams

As in the chanson the young girls sang  
while their gondolas passed us—

Sang in the joy of love, or youth's desire  
of loving.

Balmy night of the South! Oh perfect  
night of the Summer!

Night of the distant dark, of the near  
and tender effulgence!—

How from my despair are thy peace and  
loveliness frightened!  
For, while our boat lay there at the will  
of the light undulations,  
Idle as if our mood imbued and controlled  
it, yet ever  
Seeming to bear us on athwart those  
shining expanses  
Out to shining seas beyond pursuit or  
returning—  
There, while we lingered, and lingered, and  
would not break from our rapture,  
Down the mirrored night another gondola  
drifted  
Nearer and slowly nearer our own, and  
moonlighted faces  
Stared. And that sweet trance grew a  
rigid and dreadful possession,

Which, if no dream indeed, yet mocked  
with such semblance of dreaming,  
That, as it happens in dreams, when a  
dear face, stooping to kiss us,  
Takes, ere the lips have touched, some  
malign and horrible aspect,  
*His* face faded away, and the face of the  
Dead—of that other—  
Flashed on mine, and writhing, through  
every change of emotion,—  
Wild amaze and scorn, accusation and  
pitiless mocking,—  
Vanished into the swoon whose blackness  
encompassed and hid me.



PHILIP — *To Bertha.*

I AM not sure, I own, that if first I  
had seen my delusion  
When I saw *you*, last night, I should be  
so ready to give you  
Now your promises back, and hold my-  
self nothing above you,  
That it is mine to offer a freedom you  
never could ask for.  
Yet, believe me, indeed, from no bitter  
heart I release you:  
You are as free of me now, as though  
I had died in the battle,

Or as I never had lived. Nay, if it is  
mine to forgive you,  
Go without share of the blame that could  
hardly be all upon your side.

Ghosts are not sensitive things; yet,  
after my death in the papers,  
Sometimes a harrowing doubt assailed this  
impalpable essence:  
Had I done so well to plead my cause  
at that moment,  
When your consent must be yielded less  
to the lover than soldier?  
“Not so well,” I was answered by that  
ethereal conscience  
Ghosts have about them, “and not so  
nobly or wisely as might be.”

— Truly, I loved you, then, as now I love  
you no longer.

I was a prisoner then, and this doubt  
in the languor of sickness  
Came; and it clung to my convalescence,  
and grew to the purpose,  
After my days of captivity ended, to seek  
you and solve it,  
And, if I haply had erred, to undo the  
wrong, and release you.

Well, you have solved me the doubt.  
I dare to trust that you wept me,  
Just a little, at first, when you heard of  
me dead in the battle?

For, we were plighted, you know, and  
even in this saintly humor,  
I would scarce like to believe that my  
loss had merely relieved you.  
Yet, I say, it was prudent and well not  
to wait for my coming  
Back from the dead. If it may be I  
sometimes had cherished the fancy  
That I had won some right to the palm  
with the pang of the martyr,  
Fondly intended, perhaps, some splendor  
of self-abnegation —  
Doubtless all that was a folly which mer-  
ciful chances have spared me.  
No, I am far from complaining that Cir-  
cumstance coolly has ordered  
Matters of tragic fate in such a common-  
place fashion.

How do I know, indeed, that the easiest  
isn't the best way?

Friendly adieux end this note, and our  
little comedy with it.







FANNY — *To Clara.*

I.

YES, I promised to write, but how  
shall I write to you, darling?

Venice we reached last Monday, wild for  
canals and for color,

Palaces, prisons, lagoons, and gondolas,  
bravoes, and moonlight,

All the mysterious, dreadful, beautiful  
things in existence.

Fred had joined us at Naples, insuff'rably  
knowing and travelled,

Wise in the prices of things and great  
at tempestuous bargains,

Rich in the costly nothing our youthful  
travellers buy here,  
At a prodigious outlay of time and money  
and trouble ;  
Utter confusion of facts, and talking the  
wildest of pictures,  
Pyramids, battle-fields, bills, and examina-  
tions of luggage,  
Passports, policemen, porters, and how he  
got through his tobacco —  
Ignorant, handsome, full-bearded, brown,  
and good-natured as ever :  
Annie thinks him perfect, and I well  
enough for a brother.  
Also, a friend of Fred's came with us  
from Naples to Venice ;  
And, altogether, I think, we are rather  
agreeable people,

For we've been taking our pleasure at all  
times in perfect good-humor, —  
Which is an excellent thing that you'll  
understand when you've travelled,  
Seen Recreation dead-beat and cross, and  
learnt what a burden  
Frescos, for instance, can be, and, in gen-  
eral, what an affliction  
Life is apt to become among the antiques  
and old masters.

Venice we've thoroughly done, and it's  
perfectly true of the pictures —  
Titians and Tintoretos, and Palmas and  
Paul Veroneses ;  
Neither are gondolas fictions, but verities,  
hearse-like and swan-like,

Quite as the heart could wish. And one  
finds, to one's infinite comfort,  
Venice just as unique as one's fondest  
visions have made it:  
Palaces and mosquitoes rise from the  
water together,  
And, in the city's streets, the salt-sea is  
ebbing and flowing  
Several inches or more.

— Ah! let me not wrong thee, O  
Venice!

Fairest, forlornest, and saddest of all the  
cities, and dearest!  
Dear, for my heart has won here deep  
peace from cruel confusion;  
And in this lucent air, whose night is but  
tenderer noon-day,

Fear is forever dead, and hope has put on  
the immortal!

— There! and you need not laugh. I'm  
coming to something directly.

One thing: I've bought you a chain of  
the famous fabric of Venice —

Something peculiar and quaint, and of  
such a delicate texture

That you must wear it embroidered upon  
a riband of velvet,

If you would have the effect of its exqui-  
site fineness and beauty.

“Isn't it very frail?” I asked of the work-  
man who made it.

“Strong enough, if you will, to bind a  
lover, signora,” —

With an expensive smile. 'Twas bought  
near the Bridge of Rialto.

(Shylock, you know.) In our shopping,  
Aunt May and Fred do the talking:  
Fred begins always in French, with the  
most delicious effront'ry,  
Only to end in profoundest humiliation  
and English.

Aunt, however, scorns to speak any tongue  
but Italian:

“Quanto per these ones here?” and  
“What did you say was the prezzo?”  
“Ah! troppo caro! *Too much!* No, no!  
Don't I *tell* you it's troppo?”

All the while insists that the gondolieri  
shall show us

What she calls Titian's palazzo, and pines  
for the house of Othello.

Annie, the dear little goose, believes in  
Fred and her mother

With an enchanting abandon. She doesn't  
at all understand them,  
But she has some twilight views of their  
cleverness. Father is quiet,  
Now and then ventures some French when  
he fancies that nobody hears him,  
In an aside to the valet-de-place — I never  
detect him —  
Buys things for mother and me with a  
quite supernatural sweetness,  
Tolerates all Fred's airs, and is indispen-  
sably pleasant.

## II.

Prattling on of these things, which I  
think cannot interest deeply,

So I hold back in my heart its dear and  
wonderful secret  
(Which I must tell you at last, however  
I falter to tell you),  
Fain to keep it all my own for a little  
while longer,—  
Doubting but it shall lose some part of  
its strangeness and sweetness,  
Shared with another, and fearful that even  
*you* may not find it  
Just the marvel that I do—and thus turn  
our friendship to hatred.

Sometimes it seems to me that this  
love, which I feel is eternal,  
Must have begun with my life, and that  
only an absence was ended



When we met and knew in our souls that  
we loved one another.  
For, from the first was no doubt. The  
earliest hints of the passion,  
Whispered to girlhood's tremulous dream,  
may be mixed with misgiving,  
But, when the very love comes, it bears  
no vagueness of meaning ;  
Touched by its truth (too fine to be felt  
by the ignorant senses,  
Knowing but looks and utterance), soul  
unto soul makes confession,  
Silence to silence speaks. And I think  
that this subtile assurance,  
Yet unconfirmed from without, is even  
sweeter and dearer  
Than the perfected bliss that comes when  
the words have been spoken.

— Not that I'd have them unsaid, now!  
But, 'twas delicious to ponder  
All the miracle over, and clasp it, and  
keep it, and hide it.  
While I beheld him, you know, with  
looks of indifferent languor,  
Talking of other things—and felt the di-  
vine contradiction  
Trouble my heart below!

And yet, if no doubt touched  
our passion,  
Do not believe for that, our love has been  
wholly unclouded.  
All best things are ours when pain and  
patience have won them:  
Peace itself would mean nothing but for  
the strife that preceded—

Triumph of love is greatest, when peril  
of love has been sorest.

(That's to say, I dare say. I'm only re-  
peating what *he* said.)

Well, then, of all wretched things in  
the world, a mystery, Clara,  
Lurked in this life dear to mine, and  
hopelessly held us asunder  
When we drew nearest together, and all  
but his speech said, "I love you."  
Fred had known him at college, and then  
had found him at Naples,  
After several years,—and called him a  
capital fellow.  
Thus far his knowledge went, and beyond  
this began to run shallow

Over troubled ways, and to break into  
brilliant conjecture,  
Harder by far to endure than the other's  
reticent absence —  
Absence wherein at times he seemed to  
walk like one troubled  
By an uneasy dream, whose spell is not  
broken with waking,  
And it returns all day with a vivid and  
sudden recurrence,  
As a remembered event. Of the past that  
was closest the present,  
This we knew from himself: He went at  
the earliest summons,  
When the Rebellion began, and falling,  
terribly wounded,  
Into the enemy's hands, after ages of  
sickness and prison,

Made his escape at last; and, returning,  
found all his virtues  
Grown out of recognition and shining in  
posthumous splendor, —  
Found all changed and estranged, and, he  
fancied, more wonder than welcome.  
So, somewhat heavy of heart, and dis-  
abled for war, he had wandered  
Hither to Europe for perfecter peace.  
Abruptly his silence,  
Full of suggestion and sadness, made here  
a chasm between us.  
But we spanned the chasm with conver-  
sational bridges,  
Else talked all around it, and feigned an  
ignorance of it,  
With that absurd pretence, which is always  
so painful or comic,

Just as you happen to make it or see  
it.

In spite of our fictions,  
Severed from his by that silence, my  
heart grew ever more anxious,  
Till last night when together we sat in  
Piazza San Marco  
(Then, when the morrow must bring us  
parting — forever, it might be),  
Taking our ices al fresco. Some stroll-  
ing minstrels were singing  
Airs from the *Trovatore*. I noted with  
painful observance,  
With the unwilling minuteness, at such  
times absolute torture,  
All that brilliant scene, for which I cared  
nothing, before me:

Dark-eyed Venetian leoni regarding the  
forestieri

With those compassionate looks of gentle  
and curious wonder

Home-keeping Italy's nations bend on the  
voyaging races,

Taciturn, indolent, sad, as their beautiful  
city itself is;

Groups of remotest English — not just the  
traditional English

(Lavish Milor is no more, and your trav-  
elling Briton is frugal),

English, though, after all, with the Channel  
always between them,

Islanded in themselves, and the Conti-  
nent's sociable races:

Country-people of ours — the New World's  
confident children,

Proud of America always, and even vain  
of the Troubles  
As of disaster laid out on a scale unequalled  
in Europe;  
Polyglot Russians that spoke all languages  
better than natives;  
White-coated Austrian officers, anglicised  
Austrian dandies,  
Gorgeous Levantine figures of Greek, and  
Turk, and Albanian —  
These, and the throngs that moved  
through the long arcades and Piazza,  
Shone on by numberless lamps that flamed  
round the perfect Piazza,  
Jewel-like set in the splendid frame of  
this beautiful picture,  
Full of such motley life, and so altogether  
Venetian.



Then, we rose and walked where the  
lamps were blanched by the moonlight  
Flooding the Piazzetta with splendor, and  
throwing in shadow.

All the façade of Saint Mark's, with its  
pillars, and horses, and arches;

But the sculptured frondage, that blossoms  
over the arches

Into the forms of saints, was touched  
with tenderest luence,

And the angel that stands on the crest  
of the vast campanile,

Bathed his golden vans in the liquid light  
of the moonbeams.

Black rose the granite pillars that lift the  
Saint and the Lion;

Black sank the island campanili from dis-  
tance to distance;

Over the charmèd scene there brooded a  
presence of music,  
Subtler than sound, and felt, unheard, in  
the depth of the spirit.

How can I gather and show you the  
airy threads of enchantment  
Woven that night round my life and for-  
ever wrought into my being,  
As in our boat we glided away from the  
glittering city?  
Dull at heart I felt, and I looked at the  
lights in the water,  
Blurring their brilliance with tears, while  
the tresses of eddying seaweed  
Whirled in the ebbing tide, like the tresses  
of sea-maidens drifting

Seaward from palace-haunts, in moonshine  
glistened and darkened.

Sad and vague were my thoughts, and  
full of fear was the silence,  
And, when he turned to speak at last, I  
trembled to hear him,  
Feeling he now must speak of his love,  
and his life and its secret,—  
Now that the narrowing chances had left  
but that cruel conclusion,  
Else the life-long ache of a love and a  
trouble unuttered.  
Better, my feebleness pleaded, the dreariest  
doubt that had vexed me,  
Than my life left nothing, not even a  
doubt to console it;

But, while I trembled and listened, his  
broken words crumbled to silence,  
And, as though some touch of fate had  
thrilled him with warning,  
Suddenly from me he turned. Our gon-  
dola slipped from the shadow  
Under a ship lying near, and glided into  
the moonlight,  
Where, in its brightest lustre, another gon-  
dola rested:  
*I* saw two lovers there, and he, in the  
face of the woman,  
Saw what has made him mine, my own  
belovèd, forever!  
Mine! — but through *what* tribulation, and  
awful confusion of spirit!  
Tears that I think of with smiles, and  
sighs I remember with laughter,

Agonies full of absurdity, keen, ridiculous  
anguish,  
Ending in depths of blissful shame, and  
heavenly transports!

## III.

White, and estranged as a man who  
has looked on a spectre, he mutely  
Sank to the place at my side, nor while  
we returned to the city  
Uttered a word of explaining, or comment,  
or comfort, but only,  
With his good-night, incoherently craved  
my forgiveness and patience,  
Parted, and left me to spend the night  
in hysterical vigils,

Tending to Annie's supreme dismay, and  
postponing our journey  
One day longer at least; for I went to  
bed in the morning,  
Firmly rejecting the pity of friends, and  
the pleasures of travel,  
Fixed in a dreadful purpose never to get  
any better.

Later, however, I rallied, when Fred,  
with a maddening prologue  
Touching the cause of my sickness, in-  
cluding his fever at Jaffa,  
Told me that some one was waiting; and  
could he see me a moment?  
See me? Certainly not. Or,—yes. But  
why did he want to?

So, in the dishabille of a morning-gown  
and an arm-chair,  
Languid, with eloquent wanness of eye  
and of cheek, I received him —  
Willing to touch and reproach, and half-  
melted myself by my pathos,  
Which, with a reprobate joy, I wholly  
forgot the next instant,  
As, with electric words, few, swift, and  
vivid, he brought me,  
Through a brief tempest of tears, to this  
heaven of sunshine and sweetness.

Yes, he had looked on a ghost — the  
phantom of love that was perished! —  
When, last night, he beheld the scene of  
which I have told you.

For to the woman he saw there, his troth  
had been solemnly plighted  
Ere he went to the war. His return from  
the dead found her absent  
In the belief of his death; and hither to  
Europe he followed, —  
Followed to seek her, and keep, if she  
would, the promise between them,  
Or, were a haunting doubt confirmed, to  
break it and free her.  
Then, at Naples we met, and the love  
that before he was conscious,  
Turned his life toward mine, laid tortur-  
ing stress to the purpose  
Whither it drove him forever, and whence  
forever it swerved him.  
How could he tell me his love, with this  
terrible burden upon him?



How could he linger near me, and still  
withhold the avowal?  
And what ruin were that, if the other  
were doubted unjustly,  
And should prove fatally true! With  
shame, he confessed he had faltered,  
Clinging to guilty delays, and to hopes  
that were bitter with treason,  
Up to the eve of our parting. And then  
the last anguish was spared him.  
*Her* love for him was dead. But the  
heart that leaped in his bosom  
With a great, dumb throb of joy and  
wonder and doubting,  
Still must yield to the spell of his si-  
lencing will till that phantom  
Proved an actual ghost by common-place  
tests of the daylight,

Such as speech with the lady's father.

And now, could I pardon —  
Nay, did I think I could love him? I  
sobbingly answered, I thought so.  
And we are all of us going to Lago di  
Como to-morrow,  
With an ulterior view at the first conve-  
nient Legation.

Patientest darling, good-by! Poor Fred,  
whose sense of what's proper  
Never was touched till now, is shocked  
at my glad self-betrayals,  
And I am pointed out as an awful ex-  
ample to Annie,  
Figuring all she must never be. But, O,  
if *he* loves me! —

POSTSCRIPT.

Since, he has shown me a letter in which he absolves and forgives her (Philip, of course, not Fred. And the *other*, of course, and not Annie). Don't you think him generous, noble, unselfish, heroic?

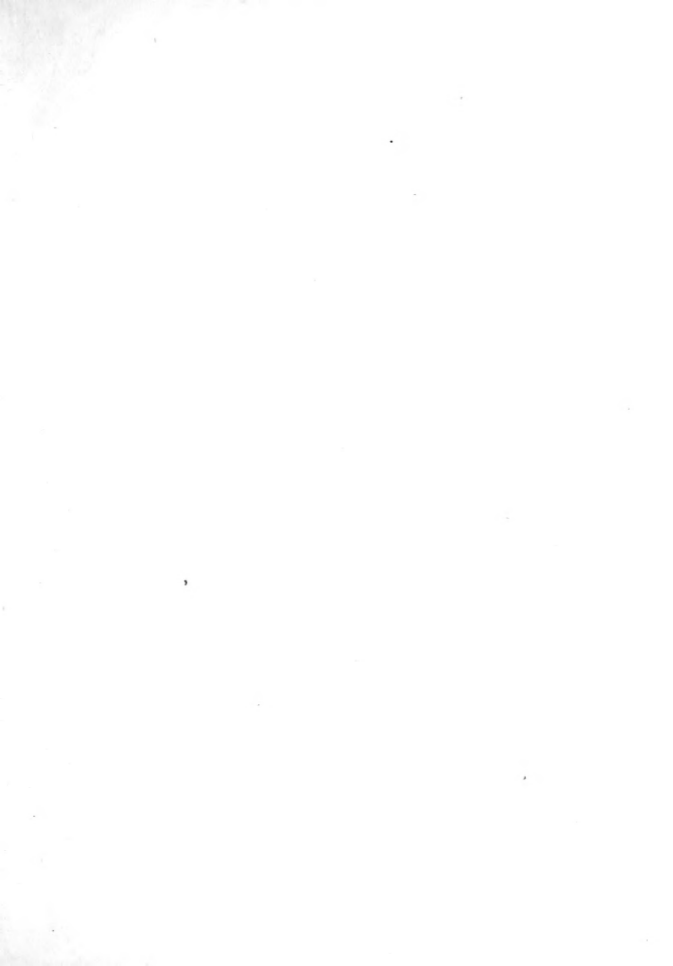
---

L'ENVOY. — *Clara's Comment.*

Well, I'm glad, I am sure, if Fanny supposes she's happy. I've no doubt her lover is good and noble — as men go.

But, as regards his release of a woman  
who'd wholly forgot him,  
And whom he loved no longer, for one  
whom he loves, and who loves him,  
*I* don't exactly see where the *heroism*  
commences.













PS  
2031  
N6

Howells, William Dean  
No love lost

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

---

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

---

