

# Things as they are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams

1793

## People :

Author : William Godwin

**Tags :** falkland, mind, might, man, world, situation, life, manner, sir, lady.

## Sections (TOC) :

- Preface 451 Words; 2,877 Characters
- Godwin's Account of the Novel 4,449 Words; 26,311 Characters
- Volume 1, Chapter 1 4,449 Words; 26,311 Characters
- Volume 1, Chapter 2 2,652 Words; 15,872 Characters
- Volume 1, Chapter 3 3,053 Words; 18,377 Characters
- Volume 1, Chapter 4 3,790 Words; 21,621 Characters
- Volume 1, Chapter 5 2,598 Words; 14,983 Characters
- Volume 1, Chapter 6 4,095 Words; 24,458 Characters

## Sections (Content) :

- Preface

## PREFACE

The following narrative is intended to answer a purpose, more general and important than immediately appears upon the face of it. The question now afloat in the world respecting THINGS AS THEY ARE, is the most interesting that can be presented to the human mind. While one party pleads for reformation and change, the other extols, in the warmest terms, the existing constitution of society. It seemed as if something would be gained for the decision of this question, if that constitution were faithfully developed in its practical effects. What is now presented to the public, is no refined and abstract speculation; it is a study and delineation of things passing in the moral world. It is but of late that the inestimable importance

of political principles has been adequately apprehended. It is now known to philosophers, that the spirit and character of the government intrudes itself into every rank of society. But this is a truth, highly worthy to be communicated, to persons, whom books of philosophy and science are never likely to reach. Accordingly it was proposed, in the invention of the following work, to comprehend, as far as the progressive nature of a single story would allow, a general review of the modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism, by which man becomes the destroyer of man. If the author shall have taught a valuable lesson, without subtracting from the interest and passion, by which a performance of this sort ought to be characterized, he will have reason to congratulate himself upon the vehicle he has chosen.

*May 12, 1794.*

**This preface** was withdrawn in the original edition, in compliance with the alarms of booksellers. Caleb Williams made his first appearance in the world, in the same month in which the sanguinary

plot broke out against the liberties of Englishmen, which was happily terminated, by the acquittal of its first intended victims, in the close of the year. Terror was the order of the day; and it was feared that even the humble novelist might be shown to be constructively a traitor.

*October 29, 1795*

ADVERTISEMENT OF 1831

This novel was first published in May, 1794, thirty-seven years ago, "in the same month in which the sanguinary plot broke out against the liberties of Englishmen, which was happily terminated by the acquittal of its first intended victims [Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, Thomas Holcroft, &c.], in the close of that year." (See above, 1795 Preface). Every friend of the true interests of mankind will rejoice with the author, that the prospects of the cause of liberty and sound thinking have so greatly improved since that period.

*April, 1831.*

- Godwin's Account of the Novel

# WILLIAM GODWIN GODWIN'S OWN

# ACCOUNT OF *CALEB WILLIAMS*

As written for insertion in the edition of *FLEETWOOD* when that novel was reprinted in Bentley's "Standard Novels" as No. XXII (1832)

London, November 20, 1832    *CALEB WILLIAMS* has always been regarded by the public with an unusual degree of favor. The proprietor of "THE STANDARD NOVELS" has therefore imagined, that even an account of the concoction and mode of writing the work would be viewed with some interest.

I had always felt in myself some vocation towards the composition of a narrative of fictitious adventure; and among the things of obscure note, which I have above referred to, were two or three pieces of this nature. It is not therefore extraordinary that some project of the sort should have suggested itself on the present occasion [after the publication of *Political Justice*]

I formed a conception of a book of fictitious adventure, that should in some way be distinguished by a very powerful interest. Pursuing this idea, I invented first the third volume of my tale, then the second, and last of all the first. I bent myself to the conception of a series of adventures of flight and pursuit; the fugitive in perpetual apprehension of being overwhelmed with the worst calamities, and the pursuer, by his ingenuity and resources, keeping prevailed upon by the extreme importunity of an old and intimate friend to allow him the perusal of my manuscript. On the second day he returned it with a note to this purpose: "I return you your manuscript, because I promised to do so. If I had obeyed the impulse of my own mind, I should have thrust it in the fire. If you persist, the book will infallibly prove the grave of your literary fame."

I doubtless felt no implicit deference for the judgment of my friendly critic. Yet it cost me at least two days of deep anxiety, before I recovered the shock. Let the reader picture to himself my situation. I felt no implicit deference for the judgment of my friendly critic. But it was all I had for it. This was my first experiment of an unbiased decision. It stood in the place of all the world to me. I could not, and I did not feel disposed to, appeal any further. If I had, how could I tell that the second and third judgment would be more favorable than the first? Then what would have been the result? No; I had nothing for it but to wrap myself in my own integrity. By dint of resolution I became invulnerable. I resolved to go on to the end, trusting as I

could to my own anticipations of the whole, and bidding the world wait its time, before it should be admitted to the consult.

I began my narrative, as is the more usual way, in the third person. But I speedily became dissatisfied. I then assumed the first person, making the hero of my tale his own historian; and in this mode I have persisted in all my subsequent attempts at works of fiction. It was infinitely the best adapted, at least, to my vein of delineation, where the thing in which my imagination reveled the most freely, was the analysis of the private and internal operations of the mind, employing my metaphysical dissecting knife in tracing and laying bare the involutions of motive, and recording the gradually accumulating impulses, which led the personages I had to describe primarily to adopt the particular way of proceeding in which they afterwards embarked.

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When I had determined on the main purpose of my story, it was ever my method to get about me any productions of former authors that seemed to bear on my subject. I never entertained the fear, that in this way of proceeding I should be in danger of servilely copying my predecessors. I imagined that I had a vein of thinking that was properly my own, which would always preserve me from plagiarism. I read other authors, that I might see what they had done, or more properly, that I might forcibly hold my mind and occupy my thoughts in a particular train, I and my predecessors traveling in some sense to the same goal, at the same time that I struck out a path of my own, without ultimately heeding the direction they pursued, and disdaining to inquire whether by any chance it for a few steps coincided or did not coincide with mine.

Thus, in the instance of "Caleb Williams," I read over a little old book, entitled "The Adventures of Mademoiselle de St. Phale," a French Protestant in the times of the fiercest persecution of the Huguenots, who fled through France in the utmost terror, in the midst of eternal alarms and hair-breadth escapes, having her quarters perpetually beaten up, and by scarcely any chance finding a moment's interval of security. I turned over the pages of a tremendous compilation entitled "God's Revenge against Murder," where the beam of the eye of Omniscience was represented as perpetually pursuing the guilty, and laying open the most hidden retreats to the light of day. I was extremely conversant with the "Newgate

Calendar," and the "Lives of the Pirates." In the mean time no works of fiction came amiss to me, provided they were written with energy. The authors were still employed upon the same mine as myself, however different was the vein they pursued: we were all of us engaged in exploring the entrails of mind and motive, and in tracing the various reencounter and clashes that may occur between man and man in the diversified scene of human life.

I rather amused myself with tracing a certain similitude between the story of Caleb Williams and the tale of Blue Beard, than derived any hints from that admirable specimen of the terrific. Falkland was my Blue Beard, who had perpetrated atrocious crimes, which if discovered, he might expect to have all the world roused to revenge against him. Caleb Williams was the wife, who in spite of warning, persisted in his attempts to discover the forbidden secret; and, when he had succeeded, struggled as fruitlessly to escape the consequences, as the wife of Blue Beard in washing the key of the ensanguined chamber, who, as often as she cleared the stain of blood from the one side, found it showing itself with frightful distinctness on the other.

When I had proceeded as far as the early pages of my third volume, I found myself completely at a stand. I rested on my arms from the 2nd of January, 1794, to the 1st of April following, without getting forward in the smallest degree. It has ever been thus with me in works of any continuance. The bow will not be for ever bent. "Opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum."

I endeavored however to take my repose to myself in security, and not to inflict a set of crude and incoherent dreams upon my readers. In the mean time, when I revived, I revived in earnest, and in the course of that month carried on my work with unabated speed to the end.

Thus I have endeavored to give a true history of the concoction and mode of writing of this mighty trifle. When I had done, I soon became sensible that I had done in a manner nothing. How many flat and insipid parts does the book contain! How terribly unequal does it appear to me! From time to time the author plainly reels to and from like a drunken man. And, when I had done all, what had I done? Written a book to amuse boys and girls in their vacant hours, a story to be hastily gobbled up by them, swallowed in a pusillanimous and unanimated mood, without chewing and digestion. I was in this respect greatly impressed with the confession

of one of the most accomplished readers and excellent critics that my author could have fallen in with (the unfortunate Joseph Gerald). He told me that he had received my book late one evening, and had read through the three volumes before he closed his eyes. Thus, what had cost me twelve months' labor, ceaseless heart-aches and industry, now sinking in despair, and now roused and sustained in unusual energy, he went over in a few hours shut the book, laid himself on his pillow, slept and was refreshed, and cried,

"Tomorrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

# VOLUME ONE

## CHAPTER ONE

My life has for several years been a theater of calamity. I have been a mark for the vigilance of tyranny, and I could not escape. My fairest prospects have been blasted. My enemy has shown himself inaccessible to intreaties and untired in persecution. My fame, as well as my happiness, has become his victim. Every one, as far as my story has been known, has refused to assist me in my distress, and has execrated my name. I have not deserved this treatment. My own conscience witnesses in behalf of that innocence, my pretensions to which are regarded in the world as incredible. There is now, however, little hope that I shall escape from the toils that universally beset me. I am incited to the penning of these memoirs, only by a desire to divert my mind from the deplorableness of my situation, and a faint idea that posterity may by their means be induced to render me a justice, which my contemporaries refuse. My story will at least appear to have that consistency, which is seldom attendant but upon truth.

I was born of humble parents in a remote county of England. Their occupations were such as usually fall to the lot of peasants, and they had no portion to give me, but an education free from the usual sources of depravity, and the inheritance, long since lost by their unfortunate progeny! of an honest fame. I was taught the rudiments of no science, except reading, writing, and arithmetic. But I had an inquisitive mind, and neglected no means of information from conversation or books. My improvement was greater than my condition in life afforded room to

expect.

There are other circumstances deserving to be mentioned as having influenced the history of my future life. I was somewhat above the middle stature. Without being particularly athletic in appearance or large in my dimensions, I was uncommonly vigorous and active. My joints were supple, and I was formed to excel in youthful sports. The habits of my mind, however, were to a certain degree at war with the dictates of boyish vanity. I had considerable aversion to the boisterous gaiety of the village gallants, and contrived to satisfy my love of praise with an unfrequent apparition at their amusements. My excellence in these respects, however, gave a turn to my meditations. I delighted to read of feats of activity, and was particularly interested by tales in which corporeal ingenuity or strength are the means resorted to, for supplying resources and conquering difficulties. I inured myself to mechanical pursuits, and devoted much of my time to an endeavor after mechanical invention.

The spring of action which, perhaps more than any other, characterized the whole train of my life, was curiosity. It was this that gave me my mechanical turn; I was desirous of tracing the variety of effects which might be produced from given causes. It was this that made me a sort of natural philosopher; I could not rest until I had acquainted myself with the solutions that had been invented for the phenomena of the universe. In fine, this produced in me an invincible attachment to books of narrative and romance. I panted for the unraveling of an adventure, with an anxiety, perhaps almost equal to that of the man whose future happiness or misery depended on its issue. I read, I devoured compositions of this sort. They took possession of my soul; and the effects they produced, were frequently discernible in my external appearance and my health. My curiosity however was not entirely ignoble: village anecdotes and scandal had no charms for me: my imagination must be excited; and, when that was not done, my curiosity was dormant.

The residence of my parents was within the manor of Ferdinando Falkland, a country squire of considerable opulence. At an early age I attracted the favorable notice of Mr. Collins, this gentleman's steward, who used to call in occasionally at my father's. He observed the particulars of my progress with approbation, and made a favorable report to his master of my industry and genius.

In the summer of the year , Mr. Falkland visited his estate in our county after an absence of several months. This was a period of misfortune to me. I was then eighteen years of age. My father lay dead in our cottage. I had lost my mother some years before. In this forlorn situation I was surprised with a message from the squire, ordering me to repair to the mansion house the morning after my father's funeral.

Though I was not a stranger to books, I had no practical acquaintance with men. I had never had occasion to address a person of this elevated rank, and I felt no small uneasiness and awe on the present occasion. I found Mr. Falkland a man of small stature, with an extreme delicacy of form and appearance. In place of the hard-favored and inflexible visages I had been accustomed to observe, every muscle and petty line of his countenance seemed to be in an inconceivable degree pregnant with meaning. His manner was kind, attentive, and humane. His eye was full of animation, but there was a grave and sad solemnity in his air, which, for want of experience, I imagined was the inheritance of the great, and the instrument by which the distance between them and their inferiors was maintained. His look bespoke the unquietness of his mind, and frequently wandered with an expression of disconsolateness and anxiety.

My reception was as gracious and encouraging as I could possibly desire. Mr. Falkland questioned me respecting my learning and my conceptions of men and things, and listened to my answers with condescension and approbation. This kindness soon restored to me a considerable part of my self-possession, though I still felt restrained by the graceful, but unaltered dignity of his carriage. When Mr. Falkland had satisfied his curiosity, he proceeded to inform me that he was in want of a secretary, that I appeared to him sufficiently qualified for that office, and that, if, in my present change of situation occasioned by the death of my father, I approved of the employment, he would take me into his family.

I felt highly flattered by the proposal, and was warm in the expression of my acknowledgments. I set eagerly about the disposal of the little property my father had left, in which I was assisted by Mr. Collins. I had not now a relation in the world, upon whose kindness and interposition I had any direct claim. But, far from regarding this deserted situation with terror, I formed golden visions of the station I was about to occupy. I little suspected, that the gaiety and lightness of heart I had

hitherto enjoyed were upon the point of leaving me for ever, and that the rest of my days were devoted to misery and alarm.

My employment was easy and agreeable. It consisted partly in the transcribing and arranging certain papers, and partly in writing from my master's dictation letters of business, as well as sketches of literary composition. Many of these latter consisted of an analytical survey of the plans of different authors, and conjectural speculations upon hints they afforded, tending either to the detection of their errors, or the carrying forward their discoveries. All of them bore powerful marks of a profound and elegant mind, well stored with literature, and possessed of an uncommon share of activity and discrimination.

My station was in that part of the house which was appropriated for the reception of books, it being my duty to perform the functions of librarian as well as secretary. Here my hours would have glided in tranquility and peace, had not my situation included in it circumstances totally different from those which attended me in my father's cottage. In early life my mind had been much engrossed by reading and reflection. My intercourse with my fellow mortals was occasional and short. But, in my new residence, I was excited by every motive of interest and novelty to study my master's character, and I found it an ample field for speculation and conjecture.

His mode of living was in the utmost degree recluse and solitary. He had no inclination to scenes of revelry and mirth. He avoided the busy haunts of men; nor did he seem desirous to compensate for this privation by the confidence of friendship. He appeared a total stranger to every thing which usually bears the appellation of pleasure. His features were scarcely ever relaxed into a smile, nor did that air which spoke the unhappiness of his mind, at any time forsake them. Yet his manners were by no means such as denoted moroseness and misanthropy. He was compassionate and considerate for others, though the stateliness of his carriage and the reserve of his temper were at no time interrupted. His appearance and general behavior might have strongly interested all persons in his favor; but the coldness of his address, and the impenetrableness of his sentiments, seemed to forbid those demonstrations of kindness to which one might otherwise have been prompted.

Such was the general appearance of Mr. Falkland; but his disposition was

extremely unequal. The distemper which afflicted him with incessant gloom, had its paroxysms. Sometimes he was hasty, peevish and tyrannical; but this proceeded rather from the torment of his mind, than an unfeeling disposition; and when reflection recurred, he appeared willing that the weight of his misfortune should fall wholly upon himself. Sometimes he entirely lost his self-possession, and his behavior was changed into frenzy: he would strike his forehead, his brows became knit, his features distorted, and his teeth ground one against the other. When he felt the approach of these symptoms, he would suddenly rise, and, leaving the occupation, whatever it was, in which he was engaged, hasten into a solitude upon which no person dared to intrude.

It must not be supposed that the whole of what I am describing was visible to the persons about him; nor, indeed, was I acquainted with it in the extent here stated, but after a considerable time, and in gradual succession. With respect to the domestics in general, they saw but little of their master. None of them, except myself from the nature of my functions, and Mr. Collins, from the antiquity of his service and the respectableness of his character, approached Mr. Falkland, but at stated seasons and for a very short interval. They knew him only by the benevolence of his actions, and the principles of inflexible integrity by which he was ordinarily guided; and though they would sometimes indulge their conjectures respecting his singularities, they regarded him upon the whole with veneration, as a being of a superior order.

One day, when I had been about three months in the service of my patron, I went to a closet, or small apartment, which was separated from the library by a narrow gallery that was lighted by a small window near the roof. I had conceived that there was no person in the room, and intended only to put any thing in order that I might find out of its place. As I opened the door, I heard at the same instant a deep groan expressive of intolerable anguish. The sound of the door in opening seemed to alarm the person within; I heard the lid of a trunk hastily shut, and the noise as of fastening a lock. I conceived that Mr. Falkland was there, and was going instantly to retire; but at that moment a voice that seemed supernaturally tremendous, exclaimed, "Who is there?" The voice was Mr. Falkland's. The sound of it thrilled my very vitals. I endeavored to answer, but my speech failed, and being incapable of any other reply, I instinctively advanced within the door into the room.

Mr. Falkland was just risen from the floor upon which he had been sitting or kneeling. His face betrayed strong symptoms of confusion. With a violent effort however these symptoms vanished, and instantaneously gave place to a countenance sparkling with rage. "Villain!" cried he, "what has brought you here?" I hesitated a confused and irresolute answer. "Wretch!" interrupted Mr. Falkland, with uncontrollable impatience, "you want to ruin me. You set yourself as a spy upon my actions; but bitterly shall you repent your insolence. Do you think you shall watch my privacies with impunity?" I attempted to defend myself. "Begone, devill" rejoined he. "Quit the room, or I will trample you into atoms." Saying this, he advanced towards me. But I was already sufficiently terrified, and vanished in a moment. I heard the door shut after me with violence; and thus ended this extraordinary scene.

I saw him again in the evening, and he was then tolerably composed. His behavior, which was always kind, was now doubly attentive and soothing. He seemed to have something of which he wished to disburthen his mind, but to want words in which to convey it. I looked at him with anxiety and affection. He made two unsuccessful efforts, shook his head, and then, putting five guineas into my hand, pressed it in a manner that I could feel proceeded from a mind pregnant with various emotions, though I could **not** interpret them. Having done this, he seemed immediately to recollect himself, and to take refuge in the usual distance and solemnity of his manner.

I easily understood that secrecy was one of the things expected from me, and, indeed, my mind was too much disposed to meditate Upon what I had heard and seen, to make it a topic of indiscriminate communication. Mr. Collins, however, and myself happened to sup together that evening, which was but seldom the case, his avocations obliging him to be much abroad. He could not help observing an uncommon dejection and anxiety in my countenance, and affectionately inquired into the reason. I endeavored to evade his questions, but my youth and ignorance of the world gave me little advantage for that purpose. Beside this, I had been accustomed to view Mr. Collins with considerable attachment, and I conceived from the nature of his situation that there could be small impropriety in making him my confidant in the present instance. I repeated to him minutely every thing that had passed, and concluded with a solemn declaration that, though treated with caprice,

I was not anxious for myself; no inconvenience or danger should ever lead me to a pusillanimous behavior; and I felt only for my patron, who, with every advantage for happiness, and being in the highest degree worthy of it, seemed destined to undergo unmerited distress.

In answer to my communication Mr. Collins informed me that some incidents of a nature similar to that which I related, had fallen under his own knowledge, and that from the whole he could not help concluding that our unfortunate patron was at times disordered in his intellects. "Alas," continued he, "it was not always thus! Ferdinando Falkland was once the gayest of the gay. Not indeed of that frothy sort, who excite contempt instead of admiration, and whose levity argues thoughtlessness rather than felicity. His gaiety was always accompanied with dignity. It was the gaiety of the hero and the scholar. It was chastened with reflection and sensibility, and never lost sight either of good taste or humanity. Such as it was however, it denoted a genuine hilarity of heart, imparted an inconceivable brilliancy to his company and conversation, and rendered him the perpetual delight of the diversified circles he then willingly frequented. You see nothing of him, my dear Williams, but the ruin of that Falkland who was courted by sages, and adored by the fair. His youth, distinguished in its outset by the most unusual promise, is tarnished. His sensibility is shrunk up and withered by events the most disgusting to his feelings. His mind was fraught with all the rhapsodies of visionary honor; and, in his sense, nothing but the grosser part, the mere shell of Falkland, was capable of surviving the wound his pride has sustained."

These reflections of my friend Collins strongly tended to inflame my curiosity, and I requested him to enter into a more copious explanation. With this request he readily complied; as conceiving that whatever delicacy it became him to exercise in ordinary cases, it would be out of place in my situation; and thinking it not improbable that Mr. Falkland, but for the disturbance and inflammation of his mind, would be disposed to a similar communication. I shall interweave with Mr. Collins's story, various information which I afterwards received from other quarters, that I may give all possible perspicuity to the series of events. To avoid confusion in my narrative, I shall drop the person of Collins, and assume to be myself the historian of my patron. To the reader it may appear at first sight as if this detail of the preceding life of Mr. Falkland were foreign to my history. Alas! I know from bitter

experience that it is otherwise. My heart bleeds at the recollection of his misfortunes, as if they were my own. How can it fail to do so? To his story the whole fortune of my life was linked; because he was miserable, my happiness, my name, and my existence have been irretrievably blasted.

• Volume 1, Chapter 1

# WILLIAM GODWIN GODWIN'S OWN ACCOUNT OF *CALEB WILLIAMS*

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# **VOLUME ONE**

## **CHAPTER ONE**

My life has for several years been a theater of calamity. I have been a mark for the vigilance of tyranny, and I could not escape. My fairest prospects have been blasted. My enemy has shown himself inaccessible to intreaties and untired in persecution. My fame, as well as my happiness, has become his victim. Every one, as far as my story has been known, has refused to assist me in my distress, and has execrated my name. I have not deserved this treatment. My own conscience witnesses in behalf of that innocence, my pretensions to which are regarded in the world as incredible. There is now, however, little hope that I shall escape from the toils that universally beset me. I am incited to the penning of these memoirs, only by a desire to divert my mind from the deplorableness of my situation, and a faint idea that posterity may by their means be induced to render me a justice, which my contemporaries refuse. My story will at least appear to have that consistency, which is seldom attendant but upon truth.

I was born of humble parents in a remote county of England. Their occupations were such as usually fall to the lot of peasants, and they had no portion to give me, but an education free from the usual sources of depravity, and the inheritance, long since lost by their unfortunate progeny! of an honest fame. I was taught the rudiments of no science, except reading, writing, and arithmetic. But I had an inquisitive mind, and neglected no means of information from conversation or books. My improvement was greater than my condition in life afforded room to expect.

There are other circumstances deserving to be mentioned as having influenced the history of my future life. I was somewhat above the middle stature. Without being particularly athletic in appearance or large in my dimensions, I was uncommonly vigorous and active. My joints were supple, and I was formed to excel in youthful sports. The habits of my mind, however, were to a certain degree at war with the dictates of boyish vanity. I had considerable aversion to the boisterous gaiety of the village gallants, and contrived to satisfy my love of praise with an unfrequent apparition at their amusements. My excellence in these respects, however, gave a turn to my meditations. I delighted to read of feats of activity, and was particularly interested by tales in which corporeal ingenuity or strength are the means resorted to, for supplying resources and conquering difficulties. I inured myself to mechanical pursuits, and devoted much of my time to an endeavor after mechanical invention.

The spring of action which, perhaps more than any other, characterized the whole train of my life, was curiosity. It was this that gave me my mechanical turn; I was desirous of tracing the variety of effects which might be produced from given causes. It was this that made me a sort of natural philosopher; I could not rest until I had acquainted myself with the solutions that had been invented for the phenomena of the universe. In fine, this produced in me an invincible attachment to books of narrative and romance. I panted for the unraveling of an adventure, with an anxiety, perhaps almost equal to that of the man whose future happiness or misery depended on its issue. I read, I devoured compositions of this sort. They took possession of my soul; and the effects they produced, were frequently discernible in my external appearance and my health. My curiosity however was not entirely ignoble: village anecdotes and scandal had no charms for me: my

imagination must be excited; and, when that was not done, my curiosity was dormant.

The residence of my parents was within the manor of Ferdinando Falkland, a country squire of considerable opulence. At an early age I attracted the favorable notice of Mr. Collins, this gentleman's steward, who used to call in occasionally at my father's. He observed the particulars of my progress with approbation, and made a favorable report to his master of my industry and genius.

In the summer of the year , Mr. Falkland visited his estate in our county after an absence of several months. This was a period of misfortune to me. I was then eighteen years of age. My father lay dead in our cottage. I had lost my mother some years before. In this forlorn situation I was surprised with a message from the squire, ordering me to repair to the mansion house the morning after my father's funeral.

Though I was not a stranger to books, I had no practical acquaintance with men. I had never had occasion to address a person of this elevated rank, and I felt no small uneasiness and awe on the present occasion. I found Mr. Falkland a man of small stature, with an extreme delicacy of form and appearance. In place of the hard-favored and inflexible visages I had been accustomed to observe, every muscle and petty line of his countenance seemed to be in an inconceivable degree pregnant with meaning. His manner was kind, attentive, and humane. His eye was full of animation, but there was a grave and sad solemnity in his air, which, for want of experience, I imagined was the inheritance of the great, and the instrument by which the distance between them and their inferiors was maintained. His look bespoke the unquietness of his mind, and frequently wandered with an expression of disconsolateness and anxiety.

My reception was as gracious and encouraging as I could possibly desire. Mr. Falkland questioned me respecting my learning and my conceptions of men and things, and listened to my answers with condescension and approbation. This kindness soon restored to me a considerable part of my self-possession, though I still felt restrained by the graceful, but unaltered dignity of his carriage. When Mr. Falkland had satisfied his curiosity, he proceeded to inform me that he was in want of a secretary, that I appeared to him sufficiently qualified for that office, and that, if, in my present change of situation occasioned by the death of my father, I

approved of the employment, he would take me into his family.

I felt highly flattered by the proposal, and was warm in the expression of my acknowledgments. I set eagerly about the disposal of the little property my father had left, in which I was assisted by Mr. Collins. I had not now a relation in the world, upon whose kindness and interposition I had any direct claim. But, far from regarding this deserted situation with terror, I formed golden visions of the station I was about to occupy. I little suspected, that the gaiety and lightness of heart I had hitherto enjoyed were upon the point of leaving me for ever, and that the rest of my days were devoted to misery and alarm.

My employment was easy and agreeable. It consisted partly in the transcribing and arranging certain papers, and partly in writing from my master's dictation letters of business, as well as sketches of literary composition. Many of these latter consisted of an analytical survey of the plans of different authors, and conjectural speculations upon hints they afforded, tending either to the detection of their errors, or the carrying forward their discoveries. All of them bore powerful marks of a profound and elegant mind, well stored with literature, and possessed of an uncommon share of activity and discrimination.

My station was in that part of the house which was appropriated for the reception of books, it being my duty to perform the functions of librarian as well as secretary. Here my hours would have glided in tranquility and peace, had not my situation included in it circumstances totally different from those which attended me in my father's cottage. In early life my mind had been much engrossed by reading and reflection. My intercourse with my fellow mortals was occasional and short. But, in my new residence, I was excited by every motive of interest and novelty to study my master's character, and I found it an ample field for speculation and conjecture.

His mode of living was in the utmost degree recluse and solitary. He had no inclination to scenes of revelry and mirth. He avoided the busy haunts of men; nor did he seem desirous to compensate for this privation by the confidence of friendship. He appeared a total stranger to every thing which usually bears the appellation of pleasure. His features were scarcely ever relaxed into a smile, nor did that air which spoke the unhappiness of his mind, at any time forsake them. Yet his manners were by no means such as denoted moroseness and misanthropy. He

was compassionate and considerate for others, though the stateliness of his carriage and the reserve of his temper were at no time interrupted. His appearance and general behavior might have strongly interested all persons in his favor; but the coldness of his address, and the impenetrableness of his sentiments, seemed to forbid those demonstrations of kindness to which one might otherwise have been prompted.

Such was the general appearance of Mr. Falkland; but his disposition was extremely unequal. The distemper which afflicted him with incessant gloom, had its paroxysms. Sometimes he was hasty, peevish and tyrannical; but this proceeded rather from the torment of his mind, than an unfeeling disposition; and when reflection recurred, he appeared willing that the weight of his misfortune should fall wholly upon himself. Sometimes he entirely lost his self-possession, and his behavior was changed into frenzy: he would strike his forehead, his brows became knit, his features distorted, and his teeth ground one against the other. When he felt the approach of these symptoms, he would suddenly rise, and, leaving the occupation, whatever it was, in which he was engaged, hasten into a solitude upon which no person dared to intrude.

It must not be supposed that the whole of what I am describing was visible to the persons about him; nor, indeed, was I acquainted with it in the extent here stated, but after a considerable time, and in gradual succession. With respect to the domestics in general, they saw but little of their master. None of them, except myself from the nature of my functions, and Mr. Collins, from the antiquity of his service and the respectableness of his character, approached Mr. Falkland, but at stated seasons and for a very short interval. They knew him only by the benevolence of his actions, and the principles of inflexible integrity by which he was ordinarily guided; and though they would sometimes indulge their conjectures respecting his singularities, they regarded him upon the whole with veneration, as a being of a superior order.

One day, when I had been about three months in the service of my patron, I went to a closet, or small apartment, which was separated from the library by a narrow gallery that was lighted by a small window near the roof. I had conceived that there was no person in the room, and intended only to put any thing in order that I might find out of its place. As I opened the door, I heard at the same instant a

deep groan expressive of intolerable anguish. The sound of the door in opening seemed to alarm the person within; I heard the lid of a trunk hastily shut, and the noise as of fastening a lock. I conceived that Mr. Falkland was there, and was going instantly to retire; but at that moment a voice that seemed supernaturally tremendous, exclaimed, "Who is there?" The voice was Mr. Falkland's. The sound of it thrilled my very vitals. I endeavored to answer, but my speech failed, and being incapable of any other reply, I instinctively advanced within the door into the room. Mr. Falkland was just risen from the floor upon which he had been sitting or kneeling. His face betrayed strong symptoms of confusion. With a violent effort however these symptoms vanished, and instantaneously gave place to a countenance sparkling with rage. "Villain!" cried he, "what has brought you here?" I hesitated a confused and irresolute answer. "Wretch!" interrupted Mr. Falkland, with uncontrollable impatience, "you want to ruin me. You set yourself as a spy upon my actions; but bitterly shall you repent your insolence. Do you think you shall watch my privacies with impunity?" I attempted to defend myself. "Begone, devill" rejoined he. "Quit the room, or I will trample you into atoms." Saying this, he advanced towards me. But I was already sufficiently terrified, and vanished in a moment. I heard the door shut after me with violence; and thus ended this extraordinary scene.

I saw him again in the evening, and he was then tolerably composed. His behavior, which was always kind, was now doubly attentive and soothing. He seemed to have something of which he wished to disburthen his mind, but to want words in which to convey it. I looked at him with anxiety and affection. He made two unsuccessful efforts, shook his head, and then, putting five guineas into my hand, pressed it in a manner that I could feel proceeded from a mind pregnant with various emotions, though I could **not** interpret them. Having done this, he seemed immediately to recollect himself, and to take refuge in the usual distance and solemnity of his manner.

I easily understood that secrecy was one of the things expected from me, and, indeed, my mind was too much disposed to meditate Upon what I had heard and seen, to make it a topic of indiscriminate communication. Mr. Collins, however, and myself happened to sup together that evening, which was but seldom the case, his avocations obliging him to be much abroad. He could not help observing an

uncommon dejection and anxiety in my countenance, and affectionately inquired into the reason. I endeavored to evade his questions, but my youth and ignorance of the world gave me little advantage for that purpose. Beside this, I had been accustomed to view Mr. Collins with considerable attachment, and I conceived from the nature of his situation that there could be small impropriety in making him my confidant in the present instance. I repeated to him minutely every thing that had passed, and concluded with a solemn declaration that, though treated with caprice, I was not anxious for myself; no inconvenience or danger should ever lead me to a pusillanimous behavior; and I felt only for my patron, who, with every advantage for happiness, and being in the highest degree worthy of it, seemed destined to undergo unmerited distress.

In answer to my communication Mr. Collins informed me that some incidents of a nature similar to that which I related, had fallen under his own knowledge, and that from the whole he could not help concluding that our unfortunate patron was at times disordered in his intellects. "Alas," continued he, "it was not always thus! Ferdinando Falkland was once the gayest of the gay. Not indeed of that frothy sort, who excite contempt instead of admiration, and whose levity argues thoughtlessness rather than felicity. His gaiety was always accompanied with dignity. It was the gaiety of the hero and the scholar. It was chastened with reflection and sensibility, and never lost sight either of good taste or humanity. Such as it was however, it denoted a genuine hilarity of heart, imparted an inconceivable brilliancy to his company and conversation, and rendered him the perpetual delight of the diversified circles he then willingly frequented. You see nothing of him, my dear Williams, but the ruin of that Falkland who was courted by sages, and adored by the fair. His youth, distinguished in its outset by the most unusual promise, is tarnished. His sensibility is shrunk up and withered by events the most disgusting to his feelings. His mind was fraught with all the rhapsodies of visionary honor; and, in his sense, nothing but the grosser part, the mere shell of Falkland, was capable of surviving the wound his pride has sustained."

These reflections of my friend Collins strongly tended to inflame my curiosity, and I requested him to enter into a more copious explanation. With this request he readily complied; as conceiving that whatever delicacy it became him to exercise in ordinary cases, it would be out of place in my situation; and thinking it not

improbable that Mr. Falkland, but for the disturbance and inflammation of his mind, would be disposed to a similar communication. I shall interweave with Mr. Collins's story, various information which I afterwards received from other quarters, that I may give all possible perspicuity to the series of events. To avoid confusion in my narrative, I shall drop the person of Collins, and assume to be myself the historian of my patron. To the reader it may appear at first sight as if this detail of the preceding life of Mr. Falkland were foreign to my history. Alas! I know from bitter experience that it is otherwise. My heart bleeds at the recollection of his misfortunes, as if they were my own. How can it fail to do so? To his story the whole fortune of my life was linked; because he was miserable, my happiness, my name, and my existence have been irretrievably blasted.

- Volume 1, Chapter 2

# **THE ADVENTURES OF CALEB WILLIAMS OR *THINGS AS THEY ARE***

**BY WILLIAM GODWIN**

## **CHAPTER TWO**

Among the favorite authors of his early years were the heroic poets of Italy. From them he imbibed the love of chivalry and romance. He had too much good sense to regret the times of Charlemagne and Arthur. But while his imagination was purged by a certain infusion of philosophy, conceived that there was in the manners depicted by these celebrated poets, something to imitate, as well as something to avoid. He believed that nothing was so well calculated to make men delicate, gallant, and humane, as a temper perpetually alive to the sentiments of birth and honor. The opinions he entertained upon these topics were illustrated in his conduct, which was assiduously conformed to the model of heroism that his fancy suggested.

With these sentiments he set out upon his travels at the age at which the grand tour is usually made, and they were rather confirmed than shaken by the adventures that befell him. By inclination he was led to make his longest stay in Italy; and here he fell into company with several young noblemen whose studies and principles were congenial to his own. By them he was assiduously courted, and treated with the most distinguished applause. They were delighted to meet with a foreigner, who had imbibed all the peculiarities of the most liberal and honorable among themselves. Nor was he less favored and admired by the softer sex. Though his stature was small, his person had an air of common dignity. His dignity was then heightened by certain additions which were afterwards obliterated, an expression of frankness, ingenuity, and **unreserve, and a spirit of** the most ardent enthusiasm. Perhaps no Englishman was ever in an equal degree idolized by the inhabitants of Italy.

It was not possible for him to have drunk so deeply of the fountain of chivalry without being engaged occasionally in affairs of honor, all of which were terminated in a manner that would not have disgraced the Chevalier Bayard himself. In Italy, the young men of rank divide themselves into two classes, those who adhere to the pure principles of ancient gallantry, and those who, being actuated by the same acute sense of injury and insult, accustom themselves to the employment of hired bravoës as their instruments of vengeance. The whole difference, indeed, consists in the precarious application of a generally received distinction.

The most generous Italian conceives, that there are certain persons whom it would be contamination for him to call into the open field. He nevertheless believes that an indignity cannot be expiated but with blood, and is persuaded that the life of a man is a trifling consideration, in comparison of the indemnification to be made to his injured honor. There is, therefore, scarcely any Italian that would upon some occasions scruple assassination.

Men of spirit among them, notwithstanding the prejudices of their education, cannot fail to have a secret conviction of its baseness, and will be desirous of extending as far as possible the cartel of honor. Real or affected arrogance teaches others to regard almost the whole species as their inferiors, and of consequence incites them to gratify their vengeance without danger to their persons. Mr.

Falkland met with some of these. But his undaunted spirit and resolute temper gave him a decisive advantage even in such perilous reencounter. One instance, among many, of his manner of conducting himself among this proud and high-spirited people it may be proper to relate. Mr. Falkland is the principal agent in my history; and Mr. Falkland, in the autumn and decay of his vigor, such as I found him, cannot be completely understood, without a knowledge of his previous character, as it was in all the gloss of youth, yet unassailed by adversity, and unbroken in upon by anguish or remorse.

At Rome he was received with particular distinction at the house of Marquis Pisani, who had an only daughter, the heiress of his immense fortune, and the admiration of all the young nobility of that metropolis. Lady Lucretia Pisani was tall, of a dignified form and uncommonly beautiful. She was not deficient in amiable qualities, but her soul was haughty, and her carriage not infrequently contemptuous. Her pride was nourished by the consciousness of her charms, by her elevated rank, and the universal adoration she was accustomed to receive

Among her numerous lovers Count Malvesi was the individual most favored by her father, nor did his addresses seem indifferent to her. The count was a man of considerable accomplishments, and of great integrity and benevolence of disposition. But he was too ardent a lover, to be able always to preserve the affability of his temper. The admirers whose addresses were a source of gratification to his mistress, were a perpetual uneasiness to him. Placing his whole happiness in the possession of this imperious beauty, the most trifling circumstances were capable of alarming him for the security of his pretensions. But most of all he was jealous of the English cavalier. Marquis Pisani, who had spent many years in France, was by no means partial to the suspicious precautions of Italian fathers, and indulged his daughter in considerable freedoms. His house and his daughter, within certain judicious restraints, were open to the resort of male visitants. But above all Mr. Falkland, as a foreigner, and a person little likely to form pretensions to the hand of Lucretia, was received upon a footing of great familiarity. The lady herself, conscious of innocence, entertained no scruple about trifles, and acted with the confidence and frankness of one who is superior to suspicion.

Mr. Falkland, after a residence of several weeks at Rome, proceeded to Naples.

Meanwhile certain incidents occurred that delayed the intended nuptials of the heiress of Pisani. When he returned to Rome, Count Malvesi was absent. Lady Lucretia, who had been considerably amused before with the conversation of Mr. Falkland, and who had an active and inquiring mind, had conceived, in the interval between his first and second residence at Rome, a desire to be acquainted with the English language, inspired by the lively and ardent encomiums of our best authors that she had heard from their countryman. She had provided herself with the usual materials for that purpose, and had made some progress during his absence. But upon his return she was forward to make use of the opportunity, which, if missed, might never occur again with equal advantage, of reading select passages of our poets with an Englishman of uncommon taste and capacity.

This proposal necessarily led to a more frequent intercourse. When Count Malvesi returned, he found Mr. Falkland established almost as an intimate of the Pisani palace. His mind could not fail to be struck with the criticalness of the situation. He was perhaps secretly conscious that the qualifications of the Englishman were superior to his own, and he trembled for the progress that each party might have made in the affection of the other, even before they were aware of the danger. He believed that the match was in every respect such as to flatter the ambition of Mr. Falkland; and he was stung even to madness by the idea of being deprived of the object dearest to his heart by this tramontane upstart.

He had, however, sufficient discretion first to demand an explanation of Lady Lucretia. She, in the gaiety of her heart, trifled with his anxiety. His patience was already exhausted, and he proceeded in his expostulation, in language that she was by no means prepared to endure with apathy. Lady Lucretia had always been accustomed to deference and submission; and, having got over something like terror, that was at first inspired by the imperious manner in which she was now catechized, her next feeling was that of the warmest resentment. She disdained to satisfy so insolent a questioner, and even indulged herself in certain oblique hints calculated to strengthen his suspicions. For some time she described his folly and presumption in terms of the most ludicrous sarcasm, and then, suddenly changing her style, bid him never let her see him more except upon a footing of the most distant acquaintance, as she was determined never again to subject herself to so unworthy a treatment. She was happy that he had at length disclosed to her his

true character, and would know how to profit of her present experience to avoid a repetition of the same danger. All this passed in the full career of passion on both sides, and Lady Lucretia had no time to reflect upon what might be the consequence of thus exasperating her lover.

Count Malvesi left her in all the torments of frenzy. He believed that this was a premeditated scene, to find a presence for breaking off an engagement that was already all but concluded; or, rather, his mind was racked with a thousand conjectures; he alternately thought that the injustice might be hers or his own; and he quarreled with Lady Lucretia, himself and the whole world. In this temper he hastened to the hotel of the English cavalier. The season of expostulation was now over, and he found himself irresistibly impelled to justify his precipitation with the lady, by taking for granted that the subject of his suspicion was beyond the reach of doubt.

Mr. Falkland was at home. The first words of the count were, an abrupt accusation of duplicity in the affair of Lady Lucretia, and a challenge. The Englishman had an unaffected esteem for Malvesi, who was in reality a man of considerable merit, and who had been one of Mr. Falkland's earliest Italian acquaintance, they having originally met at Milan. But more than this, the possible consequence of a duel in the present instance burst upon his mind. He had the warmest admiration for Lady Lucretia, though his feelings were not those of a lover: and he knew that, however her haughtiness might endeavor to disguise it, she was impressed with a tender regard for Count Malvesi. He could not bear to think that any misconduct of his should interrupt the prospects of so deserving a pair. Guided by these sentiments, he endeavored to expostulate with the Italian. But his attempts were ineffectual. His antagonist was drunk with choler, and would not listen to a word that tended to check the impetuosity of his thoughts. He traversed the room with perturbed steps, and even foamed with anguish and fury. Mr. Falkland, finding that all was to no purpose, told the count that, if he would return tomorrow at the same hour, he would attend him to any scene of action he should think proper to select.

From Count Malvesi Mr. Falkland immediately proceeded to the palace of Pisani. Here he found considerable difficulty in appeasing the indignation of Lady Lucretia. His ideas of honor would by no means allow him to win her to his purpose by

disclosing the cartel he had received; otherwise that disclosure would immediately have operated as the strongest motive that could have been offered to this disdainful beauty. But, though she dreaded such an event, the vague apprehension was not strong enough to induce her instantly to surrender all the stateliness of her resentment. Mr. Falkland, however, drew so interesting a picture of the disturbance of Count Malvesi's mind, and accounted in so flattering a manner for the abruptness of his conduct, that this, together with the arguments he adduced, completed the conquest of Lady Lucretia's resentment. Having thus far accomplished his purpose, he proceeded to disclose to her every thing that had passed.

The next day Count Malvesi appeared, punctual to his appointment, at Mr. Falkland's hotel. Mr. Falkland came to the door to receive him, but requested him to enter the house for a moment, as he had still an affair of three minutes to dispatch. They proceeded to a parlor. Here Mr. Falkland left him, and presently returned leading in Lady Lucretia herself, adorned in all her charms, and those charms heightened upon the present occasion by a consciousness of the spirited and generous condescension that she was exerting. Mr. Falkland led her up to the astonished count; and she' gently laying her hand upon the arm of her lover, exclaimed with the most attractive grace, "Will you allow me to retract the precipitate haughtiness into which I was betrayed?" The enraptured count, scarcely able to believe his senses, threw himself upon his knees before her, and stammered out his reply, signifying that the precipitation had been all his own, that he only had any forgiveness to demand, and, though they might pardon, he could never pardon himself for the sacrilege he had committed against her and this god-like Englishman. As soon as the first tumults of his joy had subsided, Mr. Falkland addressed him thus:

"Count Malvesi, I feel the utmost pleasure in having thus by peaceful means disarmed your resentment, and effected your happiness. But I must confess you put me to a severe trial. My temper is not less impetuous and fiery than your own, and it is not at all times that I should have been thus able to subdue it. But I considered that in reality the original blame was mine. Though your suspicion was groundless, it was not absurd. We have been trifling too much in the face of danger. I ought not, under the present weakness of our nature and forms of society,

to have been so assiduous in my attendance upon this enchanting woman. It would have been little wonder if, having so many opportunities, and playing the preceptor with her as I have done, I had been entangled before I was aware, and harbored a wish which I might not afterwards have had courage to subdue. I owed you an atonement for this imprudence.

"But the laws of honor are in the utmost degree rigid, and there was reason to fear that, however anxious I were to be your friend, I might be obliged to be your murderer. Fortunately the reputation of my courage is sufficiently established, not to expose it to any impeachment by my declining your present defiance. It was lucky, however, that in our interview of yesterday you found me alone, and that accident by that means threw the management of the affair into my disposal. If the transaction should become known, the conclusion will now become known along with the provocation, and I am satisfied. But if the challenge had been public, the proofs I had formerly given of courage would not have excused my present moderation; and, though desirous to have avoided the combat, it would not have been in my power. Let us hence each of us learn to avoid haste and indiscretion, the consequences of which may be inexpiable but with blood; and may heaven bless you in a consort of whom I deem you every way worthy!"

I have already said that this was by no means the only instance in the course of his travels, in which Mr. Falkland acquitted himself in the most brilliant manner as a man of gallantry and virtue. He continued abroad during several years, every one of which brought some fresh accession to the estimation in which he was held, as well as to his own impatience of stain or dishonor. At length he thought proper to return to England, with the intention of spending the rest of his days at the residence of his ancestors.

- Volume 1, Chapter 3

# **THE ADVENTURES OF CALEB WILLIAMS OR**

# THINGS AS THEY ARE

BY WILLIAM GODWIN

## CHAPTER 3

From the moment he entered upon the execution of this purpose, dictated as it probably was, by an unaffected principle of duty, his misfortunes took their commencement. All I have further to state of his history is the uninterrupted persecution of a malignant destiny, a series of adventures that seemed to take their rise in various accidents, but pointing to one termination. Him they overwhelmed with an anguish he was of all others least qualified to bear; and these waters of bitterness, extending beyond him, poured the deadly venom upon others, I being myself the most unfortunate of their victims.

The person in whom these calamities originated, was Mr. Falkland's nearest neighbor, a man of estate equal to his own, by name, Barnabas Tyrrel. This man one might at first have supposed of all others least qualified from instruction, or inclined by the habits of his life, to disturb the enjoyments of a mind so richly endowed as that of Mr. Falkland, Mr. Tyrrel might have passed for a true model of the English squire. He was early left under the tuition of his mother, a woman of narrow capacity, and who had no other child. The only remaining member of the family it may be necessary to notice, was Miss Emily Melville, the orphan daughter of Mr. Tyrrel's paternal aunt; who now resided in the family mansion, and was wholly dependent on the benevolence of its proprietors.

Mrs. Tyrrel appeared to think that there was nothing in the world so precious, as her hopeful Barnabas. Every thing must give way to his accommodation and advantage; every one must yield the most servile obedience to his commands. He must not be teased or restricted by any forms of instruction; and of consequence his proficiency, even in the arts of writing and reading, was extremely slender. From his birth he was muscular and sturdy; and, confined to the *ruelle* of his mother, he made much such a figure as the whelp lion that a barbarian might have given for a lap-dog to his mistress,)

But he soon broke loose from these trammels, and formed an acquaintance

with the groom and the game-keeper. Under their instruction he proved as ready a scholar, as he had been indocile and restive to the pedant who held the office of his tutor. It was now evident that his small proficiency in literature was by no means to be ascribed to want of capacity. He discovered no contemptible sagacity and quick-wittedness in the science of horseflesh, and was eminently expert in the arts of shooting, fishing and hunting. Nor did he confine himself to these, but added the theory and practice of boxing, cudgel play, and quarter-staff. These exercises added tenfold robustness and vigor to his former qualifications.

His stature, when grown, was somewhat more than five feet ten inches in height, and his form might have been selected by a painter as a model for that hero of antiquity, whose prowess consisted in felling an ox with his fist, and devouring him at a meal. Conscious of his advantage in this respect, he was insupportably arrogant, tyrannical to his inferiors, and insolent to his equals. The activity of his mind being diverted from the genuine field of utility and distinction, showed itself in the rude tricks of an overgrown lubber. Here, as in all his other qualifications, he rose above his competitors; and if it had been possible to overlook the callous and unrelenting disposition which they manifested, one could scarcely have denied his applause to the invention these freaks displayed and the rough, sarcastic wit with which they were accompanied.

Mr. Tyrrel was by no means inclined to permit these extraordinary merits to rust in oblivion. There was a weekly assembly at the nearest market-town, the resort of all the rural gentry. Here he had hitherto figured to the greatest advantage, as grand master of the *coterie*, no one having an equal share of opulence, and the majority, though still pretending to the rank of gentry, greatly his inferiors in this essential article. The young men in this circle looked up to this insolent bashaw with timid respect, conscious of the comparative eminence that unquestionably belonged to the powers of his mind; and he well knew how to maintain his rank with an inflexible hand. Frequently indeed he relaxed his features, and assumed a temporary appearance of affableness and familiarity; but they found by experience that if any one, encouraged by his condescension, forgot the deference which Mr. Tyrrel considered his due, he was soon taught to repent his presumption.

It was a tiger that thought proper to toy with a mouse, the little animal at every moment in danger of being crushed by the fangs of his ferocious associate. As Mr.

Tyrrel had considerable copiousness of speech, and a rich' but undisciplined imagination, he was always sure of an audience. His neighbors crowded round, and joined in the ready laugh, partly from obsequiousness, and partly from unfeigned admiration. It frequently happened, however, that, in the midst of his good humor, a characteristic refinement of tyranny would suggest itself to his mind. When his subjects, encouraged by his familiarity, had discarded their precaution, the wayward fit would seize him, a sudden cloud overspread his brow, his voice transform from the pleasant to the terrible, and a quarrel of a straw immediately ensue with the first man whose face he did not like.

The pleasure that resulted to others from the exuberant sallies of his imagination was, therefore, not unalloyed with sudden qualms of apprehension and terror. It may be believed that this despotism did not gain its final ascendancy without being contested in the outset. But all opposition was quelled with a high hand by this rural Antaeus. By the ascendancy of his fortune, and his character among his neighbors, he always reduced his adversary to the necessity of encountering him at his own weapons, and did not dismiss him without making him feel his presumption through every joint in his frame. The tyranny of Mr. Tyrrel would not have been so patiently endured, had not his colloquial accomplishments perpetually come in aid of that authority which his rank and prowess originally obtained. The situation of our squire with the fair, was still more enviable than that which he maintained among persons of his own sex. Every mother taught her daughter to consider the hand of Mr. Tyrrel as the highest object of her ambition. Every daughter regarded his athletic form and his acknowledged prowess with a favorable eye. A form eminently athletic is perhaps always well proportioned; and one of the qualifications that women are early taught to look for in the male sex, is that of a protector. As no man was adventurous enough to contest his superiority, so scarcely any woman in this provincial circle would have scrupled to prefer his address to those of any other admirer. His boisterous wit had peculiar charms for them; and there was no spectacle more flattering to their vanity. than the seeing this Hercules exchange his club for a distaff. It was pleasing to them to consider, that the fangs of this wild beast, the very idea of which inspired trepidation into the boldest hearts, might be played with by them with the utmost security.

Such was the rival that fortune in her caprice had reserved for the

accomplished Falkland. This untamed, though not undiscerning brute, was found capable of destroying the prospects of a man, the most eminently qualified to enjoy and to communicate happiness. The feud that sprung up between them was nourished by concurring circumstances, till it attained a magnitude difficult to be paralleled; and, because they regarded each other with a deadly hatred, I have become an object of misery and abhorrence.

The arrival of Mr. Falkland gave an alarming shock to the authority of Mr. Tyrrel in the village assembly, and in all scenes of indiscriminate resort. His disposition by no means inclined him to withhold himself from scenes of fashionable amusement, and he and his competitor were like two stars fated never to appear at once above the horizon. The advantages Mr. Falkland possessed in the comparison are palpable; and, had it been otherwise, the subjects of his rural neighbor were sufficiently disposed to revolt against his merciless dominion. They had hitherto submitted from fear, and not from love; and if they had not rebelled, it was only for want of a leader. Even the ladies regarded Mr. Falkland with particular complacency. His polished manners were peculiarly in harmony with feminine delicacy. The sallies of his wit were far beyond those of Mr. Tyrrel in variety and vigor; in addition to which they had the advantage of having their spontaneous exuberance guided and restrained by the sagacity of a cultivated mind. The graces of his person were enhanced by the elegance of his deportment; and the benevolence and liberality of his temper were upon all occasions conspicuous. It was common indeed to Mr. Tyrrel, together with Mr. Falkland, to be little accessible to sentiments of awkwardness and confusion. But for this Mr. Tyrrel was indebted to a self-satisfied effrontery and a boisterous and overbearing elocution by which he was accustomed to discomfit his assailants; while Mr. Falkland, with great ingenuity and candor of mind, was enabled, by his extensive knowledge of the world and acquaintance with his own resources, to perceive almost instantaneously the proceeding it most became him to adopt.

Mr. Tyrrel contemplated the progress of his rival with uneasiness and aversion. He then commented upon it to his particular confidants as a thing altogether inconceivable. Mr. Falkland he described as an animal that was beneath contempt. Diminutive and dwarfish in his form, he wanted to set up a new standard of human nature adapted to his miserable condition. He wished to persuade people that the

human species were made to be nailed to a chair, and to pore over books. He would have them exchange those robust exercises which make us joyous in the performance and vigorous in the consequences, for the wise labor of scratching our heads for a rhyme and counting our fingers for a verse. Monkeys were as good men as these. A nation of such animals would have no chance with a single regiment of the old English votaries of beef and pudding. He never saw anything come of learning but to make people foppish and impertinent; and a sensible man would not wish a worse calamity to the enemies of his nation, than to see them run mad after such pernicious absurdities. It was impossible that people could seriously feel any liking for such a ridiculous piece of goods as this outlandish, foreign-made Englishman. But he knew very well how it was: it was a miserable piece of mummery that was only played in spite to him. But God for ever blast his soul, if he were not bitterly revenged upon them all!

If such were the sentiments of Mr. Tyrrel, his patience found ample exercise in the language which was held by the rest of his neighbors on the same subject. While he saw nothing in Mr. Falkland but matter for contempt, they appeared to be never weary of recounting his praises. Such dignity, such affability, so perpetual an attention to the happiness of others, such delicacy of sentiment and expression! Learned without ostentation, refined without foppery, elegant without eminacy! Perpetually anxious to prevent his superiority from being painfully felt, it was so much the more certainly felt to be real; and excited congratulation instead of envy in the spectator. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the revolution of sentiment in this rural vicinity, belongs to one of the most obvious features of the human mind. The rudest exhibition of art is at first admired, till a nobler is presented, and we are taught to wonder at the facility with which before we had been satisfied. Mr. Tyrrel thought there would be no end to the commendation; and expected when their common acquaintance would fall down and adore the intruder. The most inadvertent expression of applause indicated upon him the torment of demons. He writhed with agony his features became distorted, and his looks inspired terror. Such suffering would probably have soured the kindest temper, what must have been its effect upon Mr. Tyrrel's, always fierce, unrelenting and abrupt.

The advantages of Mr. Falkland seemed by no means to diminish with their novelty. Every new sufferer from Mr. Tyrrel's tyranny immediately went over to the

standard of his adversary. The ladies though treated by their rustic swain with more gentleness than the men, were occasionally exposed to his capriciousness and insolence. They could not help remarking the contrast between these two leaders in the fields of chivalry, the one of whom paid no attention to any one's pleasure but his own, while the other seemed all good humor and benevolence. It was in vain that Mr. Tyrrel endeavored to restrain the ruggedness of his character. His motive was impatience, his thoughts were gloomy, and his courtship was like the pawings of an elephant. It appeared as if his temper had been more human while he indulged it in its free bent, than now that he sullenly endeavored to put fetters upon its excesses.

Among the ladies of the village assembly already mentioned, there was none that seemed to engage more of the kindness of Mr. Tyrrel than Miss Hardingham. She was also one of the few that had not yet gone over to the enemy, either because she really preferred the gentleman who was her oldest acquaintance, or that she conceived from calculation this conduct best adapted to insure her success in a husband. One day however she thought proper, probably only by way of experiment, to show Mr. Tyrrel that she could engage in hostilities, if he should at any time give her sufficient provocation. She so adjusted her maneuvers as to be engaged by Mr. Falkland as his partner for the dance of the evening, though without the smallest intention on the part of that gentleman (who was unpardonably deficient in the sciences of anecdote and matchmaking) of giving offense to his country neighbor. Though the manners of Mr. Falkland were condescending and attentive, his hours of retirement were principally occupied in contemplations too dignified for scandal, and too large for the altercations of a vestry, or the politics of an election-borough.

A short time before the dances began, Mr. Tyrrel went up to his fair inamorata and entered into some trifling conversation with her to fill up the time, as intending in a few minutes to lead her forward to the field. He had accustomed himself to neglect the ceremony of soliciting beforehand a promise in his favor, as not supposing it possible that anyone would dare dispute his behests; and, had it been otherwise, he would have thought the formality unnecessary in this case, his general preference to Miss Hardingham being notorious.

While he was thus engaged, Mr. Falkland came up. Mr. Tyrrel always regarded

him with aversion and loathing. Mr. Falkland, however, slid in a graceful and unaffected manner into the conversation already begun, and the animated ingeniousness of his manner was such, as might for the time have disarmed the devil of his malice. Mr. Tyrrel probably conceived that his accosting Miss Hardingham was an accidental piece of general ceremony, and expected every moment when he would withdraw to another part of the room.

The company now began to be in motion for the dance, and Mr. Falkland signified as much to Miss Hardingham. "Sir," interrupted Mr. Tyrrel abruptly, "that lady is my partner." "I believe not, sir; that lady has been so obliging as to accept my invitation." "I tell you, sir, no. Sir, I have an interest in that lady's affections, and I will suffer no man to intrude upon my claims." "The lady's affections are not the subject of the present question." "Sir, it is to no purpose to parley. Make room, sir" Mr. Falkland gently repelled his antagonist. "Mr. Tyrrel!" returned he with some firmness, "let us have no altercation in this business: the master of the ceremonies is the proper person to decide in a difference of this sort, if we cannot adjust it: we can neither of us intend to exhibit our valour before the ladies, and shall therefore cheerfully submit to his verdict." "Damn me, sir, if I understand" "Softly, Mr. Tyrrel; I intended you no offense. But, sir, no man shall prevent my asserting that, to which I have once acquired a claim!"

Mr. Falkland uttered these words with the most unruffled temper in the world. The tone in which he spoke had acquired elevation, but neither roughness nor impatience. There was a fascination in his manner, that made the ferociousness of his antagonist subside into impotence. Miss Hardingham had begun to repent of her experiment but her alarm was speedily quieted by the dignified composure of her new partner. Mr. Tyrrel walked away without answering a word. He muttered curses as he went, which the laws of honor did not oblige Mr. Falkland to overhear, and which indeed it would have been no easy task to have overheard with accuracy. Mr. Tyrrel would not perhaps so easily have given up his point, had not his own good sense presently taught him that, however eager he might be for revenge, this was not the ground he should desire to occupy. But, though he could not openly resent this rebellion against his authority, he brooded over it in the recesses of a malignant mind; and it was evident enough that he was accumulating materials for a bitter account, to which he trusted his adversary should one day be brought.

# **THE ADVENTURES OF CALEB WILLIAMS OR *THINGS AS THEY ARE***

**BY WILLIAM GODWIN**

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

This was only one out of innumerable instances that every day seemed to multiply, of petty mortifications which Mr. Tyrrel was destined to endure on the part of Mr. Falkland. In all of them Mr. Falkland conducted himself with such unaffected propriety, as perpetually to add to the stock of his reputation. The more Mr. Tyrrel struggled with his misfortune, the more conspicuous and inveterate it became. A thousand times he cursed his stars, which took, as he apprehended, a malicious pleasure in making Mr. Falkland at every turn the instrument of his humiliation. Smarting under a succession of untoward events, he appeared to feel in the most exquisite manner the distinctions paid to his adversary, even in those points in which he had not the slightest pretensions. An instance of this now occurred.

Mr. Clare, a poet whose works have done immortal honor to the country that produced him, had lately retired, after a life spent in the sublimes" efforts of genius, to enjoy the produce of his economy and the reputation he had acquired, in this very neighborhood. Such an inmate was looked up to by the country-gentlemen with a degree of adoration. They felt a conscious pride in recollecting that the boast of England was a native of their vicinity; and they were by no means deficient in gratitude, when they saw him, who had left them an adventurer, return into the midst of them in the close of his days, crowned with honors and opulence. The reader is acquainted with his works: he has, probably, dwelt upon them with transport; and I need not remind him of their excellence. But he is, perhaps, a stranger to his personal qualifications; he does not know that his

productions were scarcely more admirable than his conversation. In company he seemed to be the only person ignorant of the greatness of his fame. To the world his writings will long remain a kind of specimen of what the human mind is capable of performing; but no man perceived their defects so acutely as he, or saw so distinctly how much yet remained to be effected: he alone appeared to look upon his works with superiority and indifference. One of the features that most eminently distinguished him was a perpetual suavity of manners, a comprehensiveness of mind, that regarded the errors of others without a particle of resentment, and made it impossible for any one to be his enemy. He pointed out to men their mistakes with frankness and unreserve: his remonstrances produced astonishment and conviction, but without uneasiness, in the party to whom they were addressed: they felt the instrument that was employed to correct their irregularities, but never mangled what it was intended to heal. Such were the moral qualities that distinguished him among his acquaintance. The intellectual accomplishments he exhibited were, principally, a tranquil and mild enthusiasm, and a richness of conception which dictated spontaneously to his tongue and flowed with so much ease, that it was only by retrospect you could be made aware of the amazing variety of ideas that had been presented.

Mr. Clare certainly found few men in this remote situation that were capable of participating in his ideas and amusements. It has been among the weaknesses of great men to fly to solitude, and converse with woods and groves, rather than with a circle of strong and comprehensive minds like their own. From the moment of Mr. Falkland's arrival in the neighborhood, Mr. Clare distinguished him in the most flattering manner. To so penetrating a genius there was no need of long experience and patient observation, to discover the merits and defects of any character that presented itself. The materials of his judgment had long since been accumulated; and, at the close of so illustrious a life, he might almost be said to see through nature at a glance. What wonder that he took some interest in a mind in a certain degree congenial with his own? But to Mr. Tyrrel's diseased imagination, every distinction bestowed on in-is neighbor seemed to be expressly intended as an insult to him. On the other hand Mr. Clare, though gentle and benevolent in his remonstrances to a degree that made the taking offense impossible, was by no means parsimonious of praise, or slow to make use of the deference that was paid

him, for the purpose of procuring justice to merit.

It happened at one of those public meetings at which Mr. Falkland and Mr. Tyrrel were present, that the conversation, in one of the most numerous sets into which the company was broken, turned upon the poetical talents of the former. A lady, who was present, and was distinguished for the acuteness of her understanding, said, she had been favored with a sight of a poem he had just written, entitled an Ode to the Genius of Chivalry, which appeared to her of exquisite merit. The curiosity of the company was immediately excited, and the lady added, she had a copy in her pocket, which was much at their service, provided its being thus produced would not be disagreeable to the author. The whole circle immediately entreated Mr. Falkland to comply with their wishes, and Mr. Clare, who was one of the company, enforced their petition. Nothing gave this gentleman so much pleasure, as to have an opportunity of witnessing and doing justice to the exhibition of intellectual excellence. Mr. Falkland had no false modesty or affection, and therefore readily yielded his consent.

Mr. Tyrrel accidentally sat at the extremity of this circle. It cannot be supposed that the turn the conversation had taken was by any means agreeable to him. He appeared to wish to withdraw himself, but there seemed to be some unknown power that, as it were, by enchantment, retained him in his place, and made him consent to drink to the dregs the bitter potion which envy had prepared for him.

The poem was read to the rest of the company by Mr. Clare, whose elocution was scarcely inferior to his other accomplishments. Simplicity, discrimination and energy constantly attended him in the act of reading, and it is not easy to conceive a more refined delight than fell to the lot of those who had the good fortune to be his auditors. The beauties of Mr. Falkland's poem were accordingly exhibited with every advantage. The successive passions of the author were communicated to the hearer. What was impetuous and what was solemn, were delivered with a responsive feeling, and a flowing and unlabored tone. The pictures conjured up by the creative fancy of the poet were placed full to view, at one time overwhelming the soul with superstitious awe, and at another transporting it with luxuriant beauty.

The character of the hearers upon this occasion has already been described. They were for the most part plain, unlettered, and of little refinement. Poetry in

general they read, when read at all from the mere force of imitation, and with few sensations of pleasure; but this poem had a peculiar vein of glowing inspiration. This very poem would probably have been seen by many of them with little effect; but the accents of Mr. Clare carried it home to the heart. He ended: and, as the countenances of his auditors had before sympathized with the passions of the composition, so now they emulated each other in declaring their approbation. Their sensations were of a sort to which they were little accustomed. One spoke, and another followed by a sort of uncontrollable impulse; and the rude and broken manner of their commendations rendered them the more singular and remarkable. But what was least to be endured was the behavior of Mr. Clare. He returned the manuscript to the lady from whom he had received it, and then, addressing Mr. Falkland, said with emphasis and animation: "Ha! this is as it should be. It is of the right stamp. I have seen too many hard essays strained from the labor of a pedant, and pastoral ditties distressed in lack of a meaning. They are such as you, sir, that we want. Do not forget however, that the Muse was not given to add refinements to idleness, but for the highest and most invaluable purposes. Act up to the magnitude of your destiny."

A moment after, Mr. Clare quitted his seat, and with Mr. Falkland and two or three more withdrew. As soon as they were gone, Mr. Tyrrel edged further into the circle. He had sat silent so long that he seemed ready to burst with gall and indignation. "Mighty pretty verses," said he, half talking to himself, and not addressing any particular person: "why, aye, the verses are well enough. Damnation! I should like to know what a ship-load of such stuff is good for."

"Why, surely," said the lady who had introduced Mr. Falkland's Ode on the present occasion, "you must allow that poetry is an agreeable and elegant amusement."

"Elegant, quote! Why, look at this Falkland! A puny bit of a thing! In the devil's name, madam, do you think he would write poetry if he could do any thing better?"

The conversation did not stop here. The lady expostulated. Several other persons fresh from the sensation they had felt, contributed their share. Mr. Tyrrel grew more violent in his invectives, and found ease in uttering them. The persons who were able in any degree to check his vehemence were withdrawn. One speaker after another shrunk back into silence, too timid to oppose, or too indolent

to contend with, the fierceness of his passion. He found the appearance of his old ascendancy; but he felt its deceitfulness and uncertainty, and was gloomily dissatisfied.

In his return from this assembly he was accompanied by a young man, whom similitude of manners had rendered one of his principal confidants, and whose road home was in part the same as his own. One might have thought that Mr. Tyrrel had sufficiently vented his spleen in the dialogue he had just been holding. But he was unable to dismiss from his recollection the anguish he had endured. "Damn Falkland!" said he. "What a pitiful scoundrel is here to make all this bussle about! But women-and fools always will be fools; there is no help for that! Those that set them on have most to answer for; and most of all Mr. Clare. He is a man that ought to know something of the world, and past being duped by gewgaws and tinsel. He seemed too to have some notion of things: I should not have suspected him of hallooing to a cry of mongrels without honesty or reason. But the world is all alike. Those that seem better than their neighbors are only more artful. They mean the same thing, though they take a different road. He deceived me for a while, but it is all out now. They are the makers of the mischief. Fools might blunder, but they would not persist, if people that ought to set them right, did not encourage them to go wrong."

A few days after this adventure Mr. Tyrrel was surprised to receive a visit from Mr. Falkland. Mr. Falkland proceeded without ceremony to explain the motive of his coming.

"Mr. Tyrrel," said he, "I am come to have an amicable explanation with you."

"Explanation! What is my offense?"

"None in the world, sir; and for that reason I conceive this the fittest time to come to a right understanding."

"You are in a devil of a hurry, sir. Are you clear that haste will not mar, instead of make an understanding?"

"I think I am, sir. I have great faith in the purity of my intentions, and I will not doubt, when you perceive the view with which I come, that you will willingly co-operate with it."

"Mayhap, Mr. Falkland, we may not agree about that. One man thinks one way, and another man thinks another. Mayhap I do not think I have any great reason to

be pleased with you already."

"It may be so. I cannot, however, charge myself with having given you reason to be displeased."

"Well, sir, you have no right to put me out of humor with myself. If you come to play upon me, and try what sort of a fellow you shall have to deal with, damn me, if you shall have any reason to hug yourself upon the experiment."

"Nothing, sir, is more easy for us than to quarrel. If you desire that, there is no fear that you will find opportunities."

"Damn me, sir, if I do not believe you are come to bully me."

"Mr. Tyrrel! sir have a care!"

"Of what, sir? Do you threaten me? Damn my soul! who are you? what have you come here for?"

The fieriness of Mr. Tyrrel brought Mr. Falkland to his recollection.

"I am wrong," said he. "I confess it. I came for purposes of peace. With that view I have taken the liberty to visit you. Whatever therefore might be my feelings upon another occasion, I am bound to suppress them now."

"Ho! Well, sir; and what have you further to offer?"

"Mr. Tyrrel," proceeded Mr. Falkland, "you will readily imagine that the cause that brought me was not a slight one. I would not have troubled you with a visit but for important reasons. My coming is a pledge how deeply I am myself impressed with what I have to communicate.

"We are in a critical situation. We are upon the brink of a whirlpool once it get hold of us, will render all further deliberation impotent. An unfortunate jealousy seems to have insinuated itself between us, which could willingly remove; and I come to ask your assistance. We are both of us nice of temper; we are both apt to kindle, and warm of resentment. Precaution in this stage can be dishonorable to neither; the time may come when we shall wish we had employed it, and find it too late. Why should we be enemies? Our tastes are different; our pursuits need not interfere. We both of us amply possess the means of happiness; we may be respected by all, and spend a long life of tranquility and enjoyment. Will it be wise in us to exchange this prospect for the fruits of strife? A strife between persons with our peculiarities and our weaknesses, includes consequences that I shudder to think of. I fear, sir, that it is pregnant with death at least to one of us, and with

misfortune and remorse to the survivor."

"Upon my soul, you are a strange man! Why trouble me with your prophecies and forebodings?"

"Because it is necessary to your happiness! Because it becomes me to tell you of our danger now, rather than wait till my character will allow this tranquility no longer!

"By quarreling we shall but imitate the great mass of mankind, who could easily quarrel in our place. Let us do better. Let us show that we have the magnanimity to condemn petty misunderstandings. By thus judging we shall do ourselves most substantial honor. By a contrary conduct we shall merely present a comedy for the amusement of our acquaintance."

"Do you think so? there may be something in that. Damn me, if I consent to be the jest of any man living."

"You are right, Mr. Tyrrel. Let us each act in the manner best calculated to excite respect. We neither of us wish to change roads let us each suffer the other to pursue his own track unmolested. Be this our compact; and by mutual forbearance let us preserve mutual peace."

Saying this, Mr. Falkland offered his hand to Mr. Tyrrel in token of fellowship. But the gesture was too significant. The wayward rustic, who seemed to have been somewhat impressed by what had preceded, taken as he now was by surprise, shrunk back. Mr. Falkland was again ready to take fire upon this new slight, but he checked himself.

"All this is very unaccountable," cried Mr. Tyrrel. "What the devil can have made you so forward, if you had not some sly purpose to answer by which I am to be overreached?"

"My purpose," replied Mr. Falkland, "is a manly and an honest purpose. Why should you refuse a proposition dictated by reason and an equal regard to the interest of each?" Mr. Tyrrel had had an opportunity for pause, and fell back into his habitual character.

Well, sir, in all this I must own there is some frankness. Now I will return you like for like. It is no matter how I came by it, my temper is rough, and will not be controlled. Mayhap you may think it is a weakness, but I do not desire to see it altered. Till you came I found myself very well; I liked my neighbors, and my

neighbors humored me. But now the case is entirely altered ; and, as long as I cannot stir abroad without meeting with some mortification in which you are directly or remotely concerned, I am determined to hate you. Now, sir, if you will only go out of the county or the kingdom, to the devil if you please, so as I may never hear of you any more, I will promise never to quarrel with you as long as I live. Your rhymes and your rebusses, your quirks and your conundrums, may then be every thing that is grand for what I care."

"Mr. Tyrrel, be reasonable! Might not I as well desire you to leave the county, as you desire me? I come to you, not as a master, but an equal. In the society of men we must have something to endure, as well as to enjoy. No man must think that the world was made for him. Let us take things as we find them; and accommodate ourselves as we can to unavoidable circumstances."

"True, sir, all that is fine talking. But I return to my text; we are as God made us. I am neither a philosopher nor a poet, to set out upon a wild-goose chase of making myself a different man from what you find me. As for consequences, what must be must be. As we brew, we must bake. And so do you see? I shall not trouble myself about what is to be, but stand up to it with a stout heart when it comes. Only this I can tell you, that as long as I find you thrust into my dish every day, I shall hate you as bad as senna and valerian. And damn me, if I do not think I hate you the more for coming to-day in this pragmatical way when nobody sent for you, In purpose to show how much wiser you are than all the world besides."

"Mr. Tyrrel I have done. I foresaw consequences, and came as friend. I had hoped that, by mutual explanation, we should have one to a better understanding. I am disappointed; but perhaps when you coolly reject on what has passed, you will give me credit or my intentions, and think that my proposal was not an unreasonable one."

Having said this, Mr. Falkland departed. Through the interview he, no doubt, conducted himself in a manner that did him peculiar credit. Yet the warmth of his temper could not be entirely suppress and even when he was most exemplary, there was an apparent loftiness in his manner that was calculated to irritate; and the very grandeur with which he suppressed his passions, operated indirectly as a taunt to his opponent. The interview was prompted by the noblest sentiments; but it unquestionably served to widen the breach it was intended to heal.

For Mr. Tyrrel, he had recourse to his old expedient, and unburthened the tumult of his thoughts to his confidential friend. "This," cried he, is a new artifice of the fellow, to prove his imagined superiority. We knew well enough that he had the gift of gab. To be sure, if the world were to be governed by words, he would be in the right box. Oh, yes, he had it all hollow! But what signifies prating? Business must be done in another guess way than that. I wonder what possessed me that I did not kick him! But that is all to come. This is only a new debt added to the score, which he shall one day richly pay. This Falkland haunts me like a demon. I cannot wake, but I think of him. I cannot sleep, but I see him. He poisons all my pleasures. I should be glad to see him torn with tenter-hooks, and to grind his heart-strings with my teeth. I shall know no joy, till I see him ruined. There may be some things right about him; but he is my perpetual torment. The thought of him hangs like a dead weight upon my heart, and I have a right to shake it off. Does he think I will feel all that I endure for nothing?"

In spite of the acerbity of Mr. Tyrrel's feelings, it is probable however, he did some justice to his rival. He regarded him, indeed, with added dislike; but he no longer regarded him as a despicable foe. He avoided his encounter; he forbore to treat him with random hostility; he seemed to lie in wait for his victim. and to collect his us nom for a mortal assault.

- Volume 1, Chapter 5

# **THE ADVENTURES OF CALEB WILLIAMS OR *THINGS AS THEY ARE***

**BY WILLIAM GODWIN**

**CHAPTER FIVE**

It was not long after that a malignant distemper broke out in the neighborhood, which proved fatal to many of the inhabitants, and was of unexampled rapidity in

its effects. One of the first persons that was seized with it, was Mr. Clare. It may be conceived, what grief and alarm this incident spread through the vicinity. Mr. Clare was considered by them as something more than mortal. The equanimity of his behavior, his unassuming carriage, his exuberant benevolence and goodness of heart, joined with his talents, his inoffensive wit, and the comprehensiveness of his intelligence, made him the idol of all that knew him. In the scene of his rural retreat, at least, he had no enemy. All mourned the danger that now threatened him. He appeared to have had the prospect of long life, and of going down to his grave full of years and of honor. Perhaps these appearances were deceitful. Perhaps the intellectual efforts he had made, which were occasionally more sudden, violent, and unintermitted, than a strict regard to health would have dictated, had laid the seeds of future disease. But a sanguine observer would infallibly have predicted, that his temperate habits, activity of mind, and unabated cheerfulness, would be able even to keep death at bay for a time, and baffle the attacks of distemper, provided their approach were not uncommonly rapid and violent. The general affliction therefore was doubly pungent upon the present occasion.

But no one was so much affected as Mr. Falkland. Perhaps no man so well understood the value of the life that was now at stake. He immediately hastened to the spot; but he found some difficulty in gaining admission. Mr. Clare, aware of the infectious nature of his disease, had given directions that as few persons as possible should approach him. Mr. Falkland sent up his name. He was told that he was included in the general orders. He was not however after a temper to be easily repulsed; he persisted with obstinacy, and at length carried his point, being only reminded in the first instance, to employ those precautions which experience has proved most effectual in counteracting infection.

He found Mr. Clare in his bedchamber, but not in bed. He was sitting in his night-gown at a bureau near the window. His appearance was composed and cheerful, but death was in his countenance. "I had a great inclination, Falkland," said he, "not to have suffered you to come in; and yet there is not a person in the world it could give me more pleasure to see. But upon second thoughts I believe there are few people that could run a danger of this kind with a better prospect of escaping. In your case, at least the garrison will not, I trust, be taken through the

treachery of the commander. I cannot tell how it is that I, who can preach wisdom to you, have myself been caught. But do not be discouraged by my example. I had no notice of my danger, or I would have acquitted myself better."

Mr. Falkland, having once established himself in the apartment of his friend, would upon no terms consent to retire. Mr. Clare considered that there was perhaps less danger in this choice, than in a frequent change from the extremes of a pure to a tainted air, and desisted from expostulation. "Falkland," said he, "when you came in, I had just finished making my will. I was not pleased with what I had formerly drawn up upon that subject, and I did not choose in my present situation to call in an attorney. In fact, it would be strange, if a man of sense with pure and direct intentions, should not be able to perform such a function for himself."

Mr. Clare continued to act in the same easy and disengaged manner as in perfect health. To judge from the cheerfulness of his tone and the firmness of his manner, the thought would never once have occurred that he was dying. He walked, he reasoned, he jested, in a way that argued the most perfect self-possession. But his appearance changed perceptibly for the worse every quarter of an hour. Mr. Falkland kept his eye perpetually fixed upon him with mingled sentiments of anxiety and admiration. Falkland," said he, after having appeared for a short period absorbed in thought, "I feel that I am dying. This is a strange distemper of mine. Yesterday I seemed in perfect health, and to-morrow I shall be an insensible corpse. How curious is the line that separates life and death to mortal men. To be at one moment active, gay' penetrating, with stores of knowledge at one's command, capable of delighting, instructing and animating mankind, and the next lifeless and loathsome, an encumbrance upon the face of the earth! Such is the history of many men, and such will be mine.

"I feel as if I had yet much to do in the world; but it will not be. I must be contented with what is past. It is in vain that I muster all my spirits to my heart. The enemy is too mighty and too merciless for me; he will not give me time so much as to breathe. These things are not yet at least in our power. They are parts of a great series that is perpetually flowing. The general welfare, the great business of the universe, will go on, though I bear no further share in promoting it. That task is reserved for younger strengths, for you, Falkland, and such as you. We should be contemptible indeed if the prospect of human improvement did not yield us a pure

and perfect delight, independently of the question of our existing to partake of it. Mankind would have little to envy to future ages, if they had all enjoyed a serenity as perfect as mine has been for the latter half of my existence."

Mr. Clare sat up through the whole day, indulging himself in easy and cheerful exertions, which were perhaps better calculated to refresh and invigorate the frame, than if he had sought repose in its direct form. Now and then he was visited with a sudden pang; but it was no sooner felt, than he seemed to rise above it, and smiled at the impotence of these attacks. They might destroy him, but they could not disturb. Three or four times he was bedewed with profuse sweats, and these again were succeeded by an extreme dryness and burning heat of the skin. He was next covered with small livid spots. Symptoms of shivering followed, but these he drove away with a determined resolution. He then became tranquil and composed, and after some time decided to go to bed, it being already night. "Falkland," said he, pressing his hand, "the task of dying is not so difficult as some imagine. When one looks back from the brink of it, one wonders that so total a subversion can take place at so easy a price."

He had now been sometime in bed, and, as every thing was still, Mr. Falkland hoped that he slept. But in that he was mistaken. Presently Mr. Clare threw back the curtain, and looked in the countenance of his friend. "I cannot sleep," said he. "No, if I could sleep, it would be the same thing as to recover; and I am destined to have the worst in this battle.

"Falkland, I have been thinking about you. I do not know any one whose future usefulness I contemplate with greater hope. Take care of yourself. Do not let the world be defrauded of your virtues. I am acquainted with your weakness as well as your strength. You have impetuosity, and an impatience of imagined dishonor, that if once set wrong, may make you as eminently mischievous, as you will otherwise be useful. Think seriously of exterminating this error!

"But, if I cannot, in the brief expostulation my present situation will allow, produce this desirable change in you, there is at least one thing I can do. I can put you upon your guard against a mischief I foresee to be imminent. Beware of Mr. Tyrrel. Do not commit the mistake of despising him as an unequal opponent. Petty causes may produce great mischiefs. Mr. Tyrrel is boisterous, rugged and unfeeling; and you are too passionate, too acutely sensible of injury. It would be truly to be

lamented, if a man so inferior, so utterly unworthy to be compared with you, should be capable of changing your whole history into misery and guilt. I have a painful presentiment upon my heart, as if something dreadful would reach you from that quarter. Think of this. I exact no promise from you. I would not shackle you with the fetters of superstition, I would have you governed by justice and reason."

Mr. Falkland was deeply affected with this expostulation. His sense of the generous attention of Mr. Clare at such a moment, was so great as almost to deprive him of utterance. He spoke in short sentences and with visible effort. "I will behave better," replied he.

"Never fear me! Your admonitions shall not be thrown away upon me."

Mr. Clare adverted to another subject. "I have made you my executor; you will not refuse me this last office of friendship. It is but a short time that I have had the happiness of knowing you; but in that short time I have examined you well, and seen you thoroughly. Do not disappoint the sanguine hope I have entertained!

"I have left some legacies. My former connections, while I lived amid the busy haunts of men, as many of them as were intimate, are all of them dear to me. I have not had time to summon them about me upon the present occasion, nor did I desire it. The remembrances of me will, I hope, answer a better purpose than such as are usually thought of on similar occasions."

Mr. Clare, having thus unburdened his mind, spoke no more for several hours. Towards morning Mr. Falkland quietly withdrew the curtain, and looked at the dying man. His eyes were open, and were now gently turned towards his young friend. His countenance was sunk, and of a death-like appearance. "I hope you are better," said Falkland in a half-whisper, as if afraid of disturbing him. Mr. Clare drew his hand from the bed-clothes, and stretched it forward; Mr. Falkland advanced, and took hold of it. "Much better," said Mr. Clare in a voice inward and hardly articulate; "the struggle is now over; I have finished my part; farewell; remember!" These were his last words. He lived still a few hours; his lips were sometimes seen to move; he expired without a groan.

Mr. Falkland had witnessed the scene with much anxiety. His hopes of a favorable crisis, and his fear of disturbing the last moments of his friend, had held him dumb. For the last half hour he had stood up, with his eyes intently fixed upon Mr. Clare. He witnessed the last gasp, the little convulsive motion of the frame. He

continued to look; he sometimes imagined that he saw life renewed. At length he could deceive himself no longer, and exclaimed with a distracted accent, "And is this all?" He would have thrown himself upon the body of his friend; the attendants withheld, and would have forced him into another apartment. But he struggled from them, and hung fondly over the bed. "Is this the end of genius, virtue, and excellence? Is the luminary of the world thus forever gone? Oh, yesterday! yesterday! Clare, why could not I have died in your stead? Dreadful moment! Irreparable loss! Lost in the very maturity and vigor of his mind! Cut off from a usefulness ten thousand times greater than any he had already exhibited! Oh, his was - a mind to have instructed sages, and guided the moral world! This is all we have left of him! The eloquence of those lips is gone! The incessant activity of that heart is still! The best and wisest of men is gone, and the world is insensible of its loss!"

Mr. Tyrrel heard the intelligence of Mr. Clare's death with emotion, but of a different kind. He avowed that he had not forgiven him his partial attachment to Falkland, and therefore could not recall his remembrance with kindness. But, if he could have overlooked his past injustice, sufficient care, it seems, was taken to keep alive his resentment. "Falkland, forsooth, attended him on his deathbed, as if nobody else were worthy of his confidential communications." But what was worst of all was this executorship. "In every thing this pragmatistical rascal throws me behind. Contemptible wretch, that has nothing of the man about him! Must he perpetually trample on his betters? Is every body incapable of saying what kind of stuff a man is made of? caught with mere outside? choosing the flimsy before the substantial? And upon his death-bed tool [Mr. Tyrrel with his uncultivated brutality mixed, as usually happens, certain rude notions of religion.] Sure the sense of his situation might have shamed him. Poor wretch! his soul has a great deal to answer for. He has made my pillow uneasy; and, whatever may be the consequences, it is he we have to thank for them."

The death of Mr. Clare removed the person who could most effectually have moderated the animosities of the contending parties, and took away the great operative check upon the excesses of Mr. Tyrrel. This rustic tyrant had been held in involuntary restraint by the intellectual ascendancy of his celebrated neighbor; and, notwithstanding the general ferocity of his temper, he did not appear till lately to

have entertained a hatred against him. In the short time that had elapsed, from the period in which Mr. Clare had fixed his residence in the neighborhood to that of the arrival of Mr. Falkland from the Continent, the conduct of Mr. Tyrrel had even shown tokens of improvement. He would indeed have been better satisfied not to have even this intruder into a circle where he had been accustomed to reign. But with Mr. Clare he could have no rivalship; the venerable character of Mr. Clare disposed him to submission; this great man seemed to have survived all the acrimony of contention, and all the jealous subtleties of a mistaken honor.

The effects of Mr. Clare's suavity however, so far as related to Mr. Tyrrel, had been in a certain degree suspended by considerations of rivalship between this gentleman and Mr. Falkland. And now that the influence of Mr. Clare's presence and virtues was entirely removed, Mr. Tyrrel's temper broke out into more criminal excesses than ever. The added gloom which Mr. Falkland's neighborhood inspired, overflowed upon all his connections; and the new examples of his sullenness and tyranny which every day afforded, reflected back upon this accumulated and portentous feud.

- Volume 1, Chapter 6

# **THE ADVENTURES OF CALEB WILLIAMS OR *THINGS AS THEY ARE***

**BY WILLIAM GODWIN**

## **CHAPTER SIX**

The consequences of all this speedily manifested themselves. The very next incident in the story was in some degree decisive of the catastrophe. Hitherto I have spoken only of preliminary matters, seemingly unconnected with each other, though leading to that state of mind in both parties which had such fatal effects. But all that remains is rapid and tremendous. The death-dealing mischief advances

with an accelerated motion, appearing to defy human wisdom and strength to obstruct its operation.

The vices of Mr. Tyrrel, in their present state of augmentation, were peculiarly exercised upon his domestics and dependents. But the principal sufferer was the young lady mentioned on a former occasion, the orphan daughter of his father's sister. Miss Melville's mother had married imprudently, or rather unfortunately, against the consent of her relations, all of whom had agreed to withdraw their countenance from her in consequence of that precipitate step. Her husband had turned out to be no better than an adventurer; had spent her fortune, which in consequence of the irreconcilableness of her family was less than he expected, and broken her heart. Her infant daughter was left without any resource. In this situation the representations of the people with whom she happened to be placed, prevailed upon Mrs. Tyrrel, the mother of the squire, to receive her into her family. In equity perhaps she was entitled to that portion of fortune which her mother had forfeited by her imprudence, and which had gone to swell the property of the male representative. But this idea had never entered into the conceptions of either mother or son. Mrs. Tyrrel conceived that she performed an act of the most exalted benevolence in admitting Miss Emily into a sort of equivocal situation, which was neither precisely that of a domestic, nor yet marked with the treatment that might seem due to one of the family.

She had not, however, at first been sensible of all the mortifications that might have been expected from her condition. Mrs. Tyrrel, though proud and imperious, was not ill natured. The female, who lived in the family in the capacity of housekeeper, was a person who had seen better days, and whose disposition was extremely upright and amiable. She early contracted a friendship for the little Emily, who was indeed for the most part committed to her care. Emily, on her side, fully repaid the affection of her instructress, and learned with great docility the few accomplishments Mrs. Jakeman was able to communicate. But most of all she imbibed her cheerful and artless temper, that extracted the agreeable and encouraging from all events, and prompted her to communicate her sentiments, which were never of the cynical cast, without modification or disguise. Besides the advantages Emily derived from Mrs.

Jakeman, she was permitted to take lessons from the masters who were

employed at Tyrrel Place for the instruction of her cousin; and indeed, as the young gentleman was most frequently indisposed to attend to them, they would commonly have had nothing to do, had it not been for the fortunate presence of Miss Melville. Mrs. Tyrrel therefore encouraged the studies of Emily on chat score; in addition to which she imagined that this living exhibition of instruction might operate as an indirect allurements to her darling Barnabas, the only species of motive she would suffer to be presented. Force she absolutely forbade; and of the intrinsic allurements of literature and knowledge she had no conception.

Emily, as she grew up, displayed an uncommon degree of sensibility, which under her circumstances would have been a source of perpetual dissatisfaction, had it not been qualified with an extreme sweetness and easiness of temper. She was far from being entitled to the appellation of a beauty. Her person was *petite* and trivial; her complexion savored of the *brunet*; and her face was marked with the small pox, sufficiency to destroy its evenness and polish, though not enough to destroy its expression. But, though her appearance was not beautiful, it did not fail to be in a high degree engaging. Her complexion was at once healthful and delicate; her long dark eye-brows adapted themselves with facility to the various conceptions of her mind; and her looks bore the united impression of an active discernment and a good-humored frankness. The instruction she had received, as it was entirely of a casual nature, exempted her from the evils of untutored ignorance, but not from a sort of native wildness, arguing a mind incapable of guile itself, or of suspecting it in others. She amused, without seeming conscious of the refined sense which her observations contained: or rather, having never been debauched wild, applause, she set light by her own qualifications, and talked from the pure gaiety of a youthful heart acting upon the stores of a just understanding, and not with any expectation of being distinguished and admired.

The death of her aunt made very little change in her situation. This prudent lady, who would have thought it little less than sacrilege to have considered Miss Melville as a branch of the stock of the Tyrrels, took no other notice of her in her will, than barely putting her down for a hundred pounds in a catalog of legacies to her servants. She had never been admitted into the intimacy and confidence of Mrs. Tyrrel; and the young squire, now that she was under his sole protection, seemed inclined to treat her with even more liberality than his mother had done.

He has seen her grow up under his eye, and therefore, though there were but six years difference in their ages, he felt a kind of paternal interest in her welfare. Habit had rendered her in a manner necessary to him, and, in every recess from the occupations of the field and the pleasures of the table, he found himself solitary and forlorn without the society of Miss Melville. Nearness of kindred, and Emily's want of personal beauty, prevented him from ever looking on her with the eyes of desire. Her accomplishments were chiefly of the customary and superficial kind, dancing and music. Her skill in the first led him sometimes to indulge her with a vacant corner in his carriage, when he went to the neighboring assembly; and, in whatever light he might himself think proper to regard her, he would have imagined his chambermaid, introduced by him, enticed to an undoubted place in the most splendid circle. Her musical talents were frequently employed for his amusement. She had the honor occasionally of playing him to sleep after the fatigues of the chase; and, as he had some relish for harmonious sounds, she was frequently able to soothe him by their means from the perturbations of which his gloomy disposition was so eminently a slave. Upon the whole she might be considered as in some sort his favorite. She was the mediator to whom his tenants and domestics, when they had incurred his displeasure, were accustomed to apply; the privileged companion that could approach this lion with impunity in the midst of his roaring. She spoke to him without fear; her solicitations were always good-natured and disinterested; and, when he repulsed her, he disarmed himself of half his terrors, and was contented to smile at her presumption.

Such had been for some years the situation of Miss Melville.

Its precariousness had been beguiled, by the cheerfulness of her own temper, and the uncommon forbearance with which she was treated by her savage protector. But his disposition, always brutal, had acquired a gradual accession of ferocity since the settlement of Mr. Falkland in his neighborhood. He now frequently forgot the gentleness with which he had been accustomed to treat his good-natured cousin. Her little playful arts were not always successful in softening his rage; and he would sometimes turn upon her blandishments with an impatient sternness that made her tremble. The careless ease of her disposition however soon effaced these impressions, and she fell without variation into her old habits.

A circumstance occurred about this time, which gave peculiar strength to the

acrimony of Mr. Tyrrel, and ultimately brought to its close the felicity that Miss Melville, in spite of the frowns of fortune, had hitherto enjoyed. Emily was exactly seventeen, when Mr. Falkland returned from the continent. At this age she was peculiarly susceptible to the charms of beauty, grace, and moral excellence, when united in a person of the other sex. She was imprudent, precisely because her own heart was incapable of guile. She had never yet felt the sting of the poverty to which she was condemned, and had not reflected on the insuperable distance that custom has placed between the opulent and the poorer classes of the community. She beheld Mr. Falkland, whenever he was thrown in her way at any of the public meetings, with admiration; and, without having precisely explained to herself the segments she indulged, her eyes followed him through all the changes of the scene, with eagerness and impatience. She did not see him, as the rest of the assembly did, born to one of the amplest estates in the county, and qualified to assert his title to the richest heiress. She thought only of Falkland, with those advantages which were most intimately his own, and of which no persecution of adverse fortune had the ability to deprive him. In a word she was transported when he was present; he was the perpetual subject of her reveries and her dreams; but his image excited no sentiment in her mind beyond that of the immediate pleasure she took in his idea.

The notice Mr. Falkland bestowed on her in return appeared sufficiently encouraging to a mind so full of prepossession as that of Emily. There was a particular complacency in his looks when directed towards her. He had said in a company, of which one of the persons present repeated his remarks to Miss Melville, that she appeared to him amiable and interesting, that he felt for her unprovided and destitute situation, and that he should have been glad to be more particular in his attention to her, had he not been apprehensive of doing her a prejudice in the suspicious mind of Mr. Tyrrel. All this she considered as the ravishing condescension of a superior nature; for, if she did not recollect with sufficient assiduity his gifts of fortune, she was, on the other hand, filled with reverence for his unrivaled accomplishments. But, while she thus seemingly disclaimed all comparison between Mr. Falkland and herself, she probably cherished a confused feeling as if some event, that was yet in the womb of fate, might reconcile things apparently the most compatible. Fraught with these

prepossessions, the civilities that had once or twice occurred in the bustle of a public circle, the restoring her fan which she had dropped, or the disembarassing her of an empty tea-cup, made her heart palpitate, and gave birth to the wildest chimeras in her deluded imagination.

About this time an event happened that helped to give a precise determination to the fluctuations of Miss Melville's mind. One evening, a short time after the death of Mr. Clare, Mr. Falkland had been at the house of his deceased friend in his quality of executor, and, by some accidents of little intrinsic importance, had been detained three or four hours later than he expected. He did not set out upon his return till two o'clock in the morning. At this time, in a situation so remote from the metropolis, every thing is as silent as it would be in a region wholly uninhabited. The moon shown bright; and the objects around being marked with strong variations of light and shade, gave a kind of sacred solemnity to the scene. Mr. Falkland had taken Collins with him, the business to be settled at Mr. Clare's being in some respects similar to that to which this faithful domestic had been accustomed in the routine of his ordinary service. They had entered into some conversation, for Mr. Falkland was not then in the habit of obliging the persons about him by formality and reserve to recollect who he was. The attractive solemnity of the scene made him break off the talk somewhat abruptly, that he might enjoy it without interruption. They had not ridden far, before a hollow wind seemed to rise at a distance, and they could hear the hoarse roaring of the sea. Presently the sky on one side assumed the appearance of a reddish brown, and a sudden angle in the road placed the phenomenon directly before them. As they proceeded, it became more distinct, and it was at length sufficiently visible that it was occasioned by a fire. Mr. Falkland put spurs to his horse; and, as they approached, the object presented every instant a more alarming appearance. The flames ascended with fierceness; they embraced a large portion of the horizon; and, as they carried up with them numerous little fragments of the materials that fed them, impregnated with fire, and of an extremely bright and luminous color, they presented some feeble image of the tremendous eruption of a volcano.

The flames proceeded from a village directly in their road. There were eight or ten houses already on fire, and the whole seemed to be threatened with immediate destruction. The inhabitants were in the utmost consternation, having had no

experience of a similar calamity. They conveyed with haste their movable and furniture into the adjoining fields. When any of them had effected this as far as it could be attempted with safety, they were unable to conceive any further remedy, but stood wringing their hands and contemplating the ravages of the fire in an agony of powerless despair. The water that could be procured, in any mode practiced in that place, was but as a drop contending with an element in arms. The wind in the mean time was rising, and the flames spread with more and more rapidity.

Mr. Falkland contemplated this scene for a few moments, as if ruminating with himself as to what could be done. He then directed some of the country people about him to pull down a house, next to one that was wholly on fire, but which itself was yet untouched.

They seemed astonished at a direction which implied a voluntary destruction of property, and considered the task as too much in the heart of the danger to be undertaken. Observing that they were motionless he dismounted from his horse, and called upon them in an authoritative voice to follow him. He ascended the house in an instant, and presently appeared upon the top of it, as if in the midst of the flames. Having, with the assistance of two or three persons that followed him most closely, and who by this time had supplied themselves with whatever tools came next to hand, loosened the support of a stack of chimneys, he pushed them headlong into the midst of the fire. He passed and repassed along the roof; and having set people to work in all parts, descended in order to see what could be done in any other quarter.

At this moment an elderly woman burst from the midst of a house in flames. The utmost consternation was painted in her looks and, as soon as she could recollect herself enough to have a proper idea of her situation, the subject of her anxiety seemed in an instant to be totally changed. "Where is my child?" cried she, and cast an anxious and piercing look among the surrounding crowd. "Oh, she is lost! she is in the midst of flames Save her! save her my child!" She filled the air with heart-rending shrieks. She turned towards the house. The people that were near, endeavored to prevent her, but she shook them off in a moment. She entered the passage; viewed the hideous ruin; and was then going to plunge into the blazing staircase. Mr. Falkland saw, pursued, and seized her by the arm; it was Mrs.

Jakeman. "Stop!" he cried, with a voice of grand, yet benevolent, authority.

"Remain you in the street! I will seek, and will save her!" Mrs. Jakeman obeyed. He charged the persons who were near to detain her; he inquired which was the apartment of Emily. Mrs. Jakeman was upon a visit to a sister who lived in the village, and had brought Emily along with her. Mr. Falkland ascended a neighboring house, and entered that in which Emily was, by a window in the roof.

He found her already awaked from her sleep; and, becoming sensible of her danger, she had that instant wrapped a loose gown round her. Such is the almost irresistible result of feminine habits; but having done this, she examined the surrounding objects with the wildness of despair. Mr. Falkland entered the chamber. She flew into his arms with the rapidity of lightning. She embraced and clung to him, with an impulse that did not wait to consult the dictates of her understanding. Her emotions were indescribable. In a few short moments she had lived an age in love. In two minutes Mr. Falkland was again in the street with his lovely, half-naked burden in his arms. Having restored her to her affectionate protector, snatched from the immediate grasp of death, from which, if he **had not**, none would have delivered her, he returned to his former task. By his presence of mind, by his indefatigable humanity and incessant exertions, he saved three-fourths of the village from destruction.

The conflagration being at length abated, he sought again Mrs. Jakeman and Emily, who by this time had obtained a substitute for the garments she had lost in the fire. He displayed the tenderest solicitude for the young lady's safety, and directed Collins to go with as much speed as he could, and send his chariot to attend her. More than an hour elapsed in this interval. Miss Melville had never seen so much of Mr. Falkland upon any former occasion, and the spectacle of such humanity, delicacy, firmness, and justice in the form of man, as he crowded into this small space, was altogether new to her, and in the highest degree fascinating. She had a confused feeling as if there had been something indecorous in her behavior or appearance when Mr. Falkland had appeared to her relief; and this combined with her other emotions to render the whole critical and intoxicating.

Emily no sooner arrived at the family mansion, than Mr. Tyrrel ran out to receive her. He had just heard of the melancholy accident that had taken place at the village, and was terrified for the safety of his good-humored cousin. He displayed

chose unpremeditated emotions, which are common to almost every individual of the human race. He was greedy shocked at the suspicion that Emily might possibly have become the victim of a catastrophe, which had thus broken out in the dead of night. His sensations were of the most pleasing sort, when he folded her in his arms, and fearful apprehension was instantaneously converted into joyous certainty. Emily no sooner entered under the well-known roof, than her spirits were brisk, and her tongue incessant in describing her danger and her deliverance. Mr. Tyrrel had formerly been tortured with the innocent eulogies she pronounced of Mr. Falkland. But these were tameness itself, compared with the rich and various eloquence that now howled from her lips. Love had not the same effect upon her, especially at the present moment, which it would have had upon a person, instructed to feign a blush, and inured to a consciousness of wrong. She described his activity and his resources the promptitude with which every thing was conceived, and the cautious but daring wisdom with which it was executed. All was fairy-land and enchantment in the tenor of her artless tale, you saw a beneficent genius surveying and controlling the whole, but could have no notion of any human means by which his purposes were effected.

Mr. Tyrrel listened for a while to these innocent effusions with patience; he could even bear to hear the man applauded, by whom he had just obtained so considerable a benefit. But the theme by amplification became nauseous, and he at length with some roughness put an end to the tale. Probably upon recollection it appeared still more insolent and intolerable than while it was passing; the sensation of gratitude wore off, but the hyperbolical praise that had been bestowed, still haunted his memory, and sounded in his ear: Emily had entered into the confederacy that disturbed his repose. For herself she was wholly unconscious of offense, and upon every occasion quoted Mr. Falkland as the model of elegant manners and true wisdom. She was a total stranger to dissimulation, and she could not conceive that any one beheld the subject of her admiration with less partiality than herself. Her artless love became more fervent than ever. She flattered herself that nothing less than a reciprocal passion, could have prompted Mr. Falkland to the desperate attempt of saving her from the flames; and she trusted that this passion would speedily declare itself, as well as induce the object of her adoration to overlook her comparative unworthiness.

Mr. Tyrrel endeavored at first with some moderation to check Miss Melville in her applauses, and to convince her by various tokens that the subject was disagreeable to him. He was accustomed to treat her with kindness. Emily, on her part, was disposed to yield an unreluctant obedience, and therefore it was not difficult to restrain her. But upon the very next occasion her favorite topic would force its way to her lips. Her obedience was the acquiescence of a frank and benevolent heart; but it was the most difficult thing in the world to inspire her with fear. Conscious herself that she would not hurt a worm, she could not conceive that any one would harbor cruelty and rancor against her. Her temper had preserved her from obstinate contention with the persons under whose protection she was placed; and, as her compliance was unhesitating, she had had no experience of a severe and rigorous treatment. As Mr. Tyrrel's objection to the very name of Falkland became more palpable and uniform, Miss Melville increased in her precaution. She would stop herself in the half-pronounced sentences that were meant to his praise. This circumstance had necessarily an ungracious effect; it was a cutting satire upon the imbecility of her kinsman. Upon these occasions she would sometimes venture upon a good-humored expostulation: "Dear sir well, I wonder how you can be so ill-natured! I am sure Mr. Falkland would do you any good office in the world" till she was checked by some gesture of impatience and fierceness.

At length she wholly conquered her heedlessness and inattention. But it was too late. Mr. Tyrrel already suspected the existence of that passion which she had thoughtlessly imbibed. His imagination, ingenious in torment, suggested to him all the different openings in conversation, in which she would have introduced the praise of Mr. Falkland, had she not been placed under this unnatural restraint. Her present reserve upon the subject was even more insufferable than her former loquacity. All his kindness for this unhappy orphan gradually subsided. Her partiality for the man who was the object of his unbounded abhorrence, appeared to him as the last persecution of a malicious destiny. He figured himself, as about to be deserted by every creature in human form; all men, under the influence of a fatal enchantment, approving only what was sophisticated and artificial, and holding the rude and genuine offspring of nature in mortal antipathy. Impressed with these gloomy presages, he saw Miss Melville with no sentiments but those of

rancorous aversion; and, accustomed as he was to the uncontrolled indulgence of his propensities, he determined to wreak upon her a signal revenge.

**Chronology :**

**November 30, 1792 :** Things as they are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams -- Publication.

**January 27, 2017 :** Things as they are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams -- Added to <http://www.RevoltLib.com>.

**April 07, 2019 :** Things as they are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams -- Last Updated on <http://www.RevoltLib.com>.

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