

# LETTERS

Arundel Penruddock

to Colonel John Penruddock (1616–1655), her husband

3 May 1655

My Dear Heart,

My sad parting was so far from making me forget you that I scarce thought upon myself since, but wholly upon you. Those dear embraces which I yet feel, and shall never lose, being the faithful testimonies of an indulgent husband, have charmed my soul to such a reverence of your remembrance, that were it possible, I would, with my own blood, cement your dead limbs to live again and (with reverence) think it no sin to rob Heaven a little longer of a martyr. Oh my dear, you must now pardon my passion, this being my last (oh, fatal word!) that ever you will receive from me. And know that until the last minute that I can imagine you shall live, I shall sacrifice the prayers of a Christian and the groans of an afflicted wife. And when you are not (which sure by sympathy I shall know), I shall wish my own dissolution with you that so we may go hand-in-hand to Heaven. 'Tis too late to tell you what I have, or rather have not done for you; how being turned out of doors because I came to beg mercy. The Lord lay not your blood to their charge.

I would fain discourse longer with you, but dare not; passion begins to drown my reason and will rob me of my devoirs, which is all I have left to serve you. Adieu, therefore, ten thousand times, my dearest dear. And since I must never see you more, take this prayer—May your faith be so strengthened that your constancy may continue—and then I know Heaven will receive you; whither grief and love will in a short time (I hope) translate, my dear, your sad, but constant wife, even to love your ashes when dead.

Your children beg your blessing, and present their duties to you.

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Colonel John Penruddock (1616–1655)

to Arundel Penruddock, his wife

May 1655

I had taken leave of the world when I received yours. It did at once recall my fondness to life, and enable me to resign it. As I am sure I shall leave none behind me like you, which weakens my resolution to part from you, so when I reflect I am going to a place where there are none but such as you, I recover my courage. But fondness breaks in upon me and as I would not have my tears flow tomorrow, when your husband and the father of our dear babes, is a public spectacle, do not think meanly of me that I give way to grief now in private when I see my sand run so fast, and within a few hours I am to leave you helpless and exposed to the merciless and insolent that have wrongfully put me to a shameless death, and will object the shame to my poor children.

I thank you for all your goodness to me, and will endeavour so to die as to do nothing unworthy that virtue in which we have mutually supported each other and for which I desire you not to repine that I am first to be rewarded, since you ever preferred me to yourself in all other things. Afford me, with cheerfulness, the precedence of this. I desire your prayers in the article of death; for my own will then be offered for you and yours.