



# **DANIEL DERONDA**

**GEORGE ELIOT**

Global Grey ebooks

# DANIEL DERONDA

BY  
GEORGE ELIOT

1876

Daniel Deronda By George Eliot.

This edition was created and published by Global Grey

©GlobalGrey 2018



[globalgreyebooks.com](http://globalgreyebooks.com)

# CONTENTS

## BOOK 1. THE SPOILED CHILD

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

Chapter 7

Chapter 8

Chapter 9

Chapter 10

## BOOK 2. MEETING STREAMS

Chapter 11

Chapter 12

Chapter 13

Chapter 14

Chapter 15

Chapter 16

Chapter 17

Chapter 18

## BOOK 3. MAIDENS CHOOSING

Chapter 19

Chapter 20

Chapter 21

Chapter 22

Chapter 23

Chapter 24

Chapter 25

Chapter 26

Chapter 27

BOOK 4. GWENDOLEN GETS HER CHOICE

Chapter 28

Chapter 29

Chapter 30

Chapter 31

Chapter 32

Chapter 33

Chapter 34

BOOK 5. MORDECAI

Chapter 35

Chapter 36

Chapter 37

Chapter 38

Chapter 39

Chapter 40

BOOK 6. REVELATIONS

Chapter 41

Chapter 42

Chapter 43

Chapter 44

Chapter 45

Chapter 46

Chapter 47

Chapter 48

Chapter 49

BOOK 7. THE MOTHER AND THE SON

Chapter 50

Chapter 51

Chapter 52

Chapter 53

Chapter 54

Chapter 55

Chapter 56

Chapter 57

**BOOK 8. FRUIT AND SEED**

Chapter 58

Chapter 59

Chapter 60

Chapter 61

Chapter 62

Chapter 63

Chapter 64

Chapter 65

Chapter 66

Chapter 67

Chapter 68

Chapter 69

Chapter 70























































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































If she could not return it, I should have embittered her best comfort; for neither she nor I can be parted from her brother, and we should have to meet continually. If I were to cause her that sort of pain by an unwilling betrayal of my feeling, I should be no better than a mischievous animal."

"I don't know that I have ever betrayed *my* feeling to her," said Hans, as if he were vindicating himself.

"You mean that we are on a level, then; you have no reason to envy me."

"Oh, not the slightest," said Hans, with bitter irony. "You have measured my conceit and know that it out-tops all your advantages."

"I am a nuisance to you, Meyrick. I am sorry, but I can't help it," said Deronda, rising. "After what passed between us before, I wished to have this explanation; and I don't see that any pretensions of mine have made a real difference to you. They are not likely to make any pleasant difference to myself under present circumstances. Now the father is there—did you know that the father is there?"

"Yes. If he were not a Jew I would permit myself to damn him—with faint praise, I mean," said Hans, but with no smile.

"She and I meet under greater constraint than ever. Things might go on in this way for two years without my getting any insight into her feeling toward me. That is the whole state of affairs, Hans. Neither you nor I have injured the other, that I can see. We must put up with this sort of rivalry in a hope that is likely enough to come to nothing. Our friendship can bear that strain, surely."

"No, it can't," said Hans, impetuously, throwing down his tools, thrusting his hands into his coat-pockets, and turning round to face Deronda, who drew back a little and looked at him with amazement. Hans went on in the same tone—

"Our friendship—my friendship—can't bear the strain of behaving to you like an ungrateful dastard and grudging you your happiness. For you *are* the happiest dog in the world. If Mirah loves anybody better than her brother, *you are the man.*"

Hans turned on his heel and threw himself into his chair, looking up at Deronda with an expression the reverse of tender. Something like a shock passed through Deronda, and, after an instant, he said—

"It is a good-natured fiction of yours, Hans."

"I am not in a good-natured mood. I assure you I found the fact disagreeable when it was thrust on me—all the more, or perhaps all the less, because I believed then that your heart was pledged to the duchess. But now, confound you! you turn out to be in love in the right place—a Jew—and everything eligible."

"Tell me what convinced you—there's a good fellow," said Deronda, distrusting a delight that he was unused to.

"Don't ask. Little mother was witness. The upshot is, that Mirah is jealous of the duchess, and the sooner you relieve your mind the better. There! I've cleared off a score or two, and may be allowed to swear at you for getting what you deserve—which is just the very best luck I know of."

"God bless you, Hans!" said Deronda, putting out his hand, which the other took and wrung in silence.

---



## CHAPTER 68

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
 All are but ministers of Love,  
 And feed his sacred flame."

—COLERIDGE.

Deronda's eagerness to confess his love could hardly have had a stronger stimulus than Hans had given it in his assurance that Mirah needed relief from jealousy. He went on his next visit to Ezra with the determination to be resolute in using—nay, in requesting—an opportunity of private conversation with her. If she accepted his love, he felt courageous about all other consequences, and as her betrothed husband he would gain a protective authority which might be a desirable defense for her in future difficulties with her father. Deronda had not observed any signs of growing restlessness in Lapidoth, or of diminished desire to recommend himself; but he had forebodings of some future struggle, some mortification, or some intolerable increase of domestic disquietude in which he might save Ezra and Mirah from being helpless victims.

His forebodings would have been strengthened if he had known what was going on in the father's mind. That amount of restlessness, that desultoriness of attention, which made a small torture to Ezra, was to Lapidoth an irksome submission to restraint, only made bearable by his thinking of it as a means of by-and-by securing a well-conditioned freedom. He began with the intention of awaiting some really good chance, such as an opening for getting a considerable sum from Deronda; but all the while he was looking about curiously, and trying to discover where Mirah deposited her money and her keys. The imperious gambling desire within him, which carried on its activity through every other occupation, and made a continuous web of imagination that held all else in its meshes, would hardly have been under the control of a contracted purpose, if he had been able to lay his hands on any sum worth capturing. But Mirah, with her practical clear-sightedness, guarded against any frustration of the promise she had given to Ezra, by confiding all money, except what she was immediately in want of, to Mrs.

Meyrick's care, and Lapidoth felt himself under an irritating completeness of supply in kind as in a lunatic asylum where everything was made safe against him. To have opened a desk or drawer of Mirah's, and pocketed any bank-notes found there, would have been to his mind a sort of domestic appropriation which had no disgrace in it; the degrees of liberty a man allows himself with other people's property being often delicately drawn, even beyond the boundary where the law begins to lay its hold—which is the reason why spoons are a safer investment than mining shares. Lapidoth really felt himself injuriously treated by his daughter, and thought that he ought to have had what he wanted of her other earnings as he had of her apple-tart. But he remained submissive; indeed, the indiscretion that most tempted him, was not any insistence with Mirah, but some kind of appeal to Deronda. Clever persons who have nothing else to sell can often put a good price on their absence, and Lapidoth's difficult search for devices forced upon him the idea that his family would find themselves happier without him, and that Deronda would be willing to advance a considerable sum for the sake of getting rid of him. But, in spite of well-practiced hardihood, Lapidoth was still in some awe of Ezra's imposing friend, and deferred his purpose indefinitely.

On this day, when Deronda had come full of a gladdened consciousness, which inevitably showed itself in his air and speech, Lapidoth was at a crisis of discontent and longing that made his mind busy with schemes of freedom, and Deronda's new amenity encouraged them. This pre-occupation was at last so strong as to interfere with his usual show of interest in what went forward, and his persistence in sitting by even when there was reading which he could not follow. After sitting a little while, he went out to smoke and walk in the square, and the two friends were all the easier. Mirah was not at home, but she was sure to be in again before Deronda left, and his eyes glowed with a secret anticipation: he thought that when he saw her again he should see some sweetness of recognition for himself to which his eyes had been sealed before. There was an additional playful affectionateness in his manner toward Ezra.

"This little room is too close for you, Ezra," he said, breaking off his reading. "The week's heat we sometimes get here is worse than the heat in Genoa, where one sits in the shaded coolness of large rooms. You must

have a better home now. I shall do as I like with you, being the stronger half." He smiled toward Ezra, who said—

"I am straitened for nothing except breath. But you, who might be in a spacious palace, with the wide green country around you, find this a narrow prison. Nevertheless, I cannot say, 'Go.'"

"Oh, the country would be a banishment while you are here," said Deronda, rising and walking round the double room, which yet offered no long promenade, while he made a great fan of his handkerchief. "This is the happiest room in the world to me. Besides, I will imagine myself in the East, since I am getting ready to go there some day. Only I will not wear a cravat and a heavy ring there," he ended emphatically, pausing to take off those superfluities and deposit them on a small table behind Ezra, who had the table in front of him covered with books and papers.

"I have been wearing my memorable ring ever since I came home," he went on, as he reseated himself. "But I am such a Sybarite that I constantly put it off as a burden when I am doing anything. I understand why the Romans had summer rings—*if* they had them. Now then, I shall get on better."

They were soon absorbed in their work again. Deronda was reading a piece of rabbinical Hebrew under Ezra's correction and comment, and they took little notice when Lapidoth re-entered and took a seat somewhat in the background.

His rambling eyes quickly alighted on the ring that sparkled on the bit of dark mahogany. During his walk, his mind had been occupied with the fiction of an advantageous opening for him abroad, only requiring a sum of ready money, which, on being communicated to Deronda in private, might immediately draw from him a question as to the amount of the required sum: and it was this part of his forecast that Lapidoth found the most debatable, there being a danger in asking too much, and a prospective regret in asking too little. His own desire gave him no limit, and he was quite without guidance as to the limit of Deronda's willingness. But now, in the midst of these airy conditions preparatory to a receipt which remained indefinite, this ring, which on Deronda's finger had become familiar to Lapidoth's envy, suddenly shone detached and within easy grasp. Its value was certainly below the smallest of the

imaginary sums that his purpose fluctuated between; but then it was before him as a solid fact, and his desire at once leaped into the thought (not yet an intention) that if he were quietly to pocket that ring and walk away he would have the means of comfortable escape from present restraint, without trouble, and also without danger; for any property of Deronda's (available without his formal consent) was all one with his children's property, since their father would never be prosecuted for taking it. The details of this thinking followed each other so quickly that they seemed to rise before him as one picture. Lapidoth had never committed larceny; but larceny is a form of appropriation for which people are punished by law; and, take this ring from a virtual relation, who would have been willing to make a much heavier gift, would not come under the head of larceny. Still, the heavier gift was to be preferred, if Lapidoth could only make haste enough in asking for it, and the imaginary action of taking the ring, which kept repeating itself like an inward tune, sank into a rejected idea. He satisfied his urgent longing by resolving to go below, and watch for the moment of Deronda's departure, when he would ask leave to join him in his walk and boldly carry out his meditated plan. He rose and stood looking out of the window, but all the while he saw what lay beyond him—the brief passage he would have to make to the door close by the table where the ring was. However he was resolved to go down; but—by no distinct change of resolution, rather by a dominance of desire, like the thirst of the drunkard—it so happened that in passing the table his fingers fell noiselessly on the ring, and he found himself in the passage with the ring in his hand. It followed that he put on his hat and quitted the house. The possibility of again throwing himself on his children receded into the indefinite distance, and before he was out on the square his sense of haste had concentrated itself on selling the ring and getting on shipboard.

Deronda and Ezra were just aware of his exit; that was all. But, by-and-by, Mirah came in and made a real interruption. She had not taken off her hat; and when Deronda rose and advanced to shake hands with her, she said, in a confusion at once unaccountable and troublesome to herself—

"I only came in to see that Ezra had his new draught. I must go directly to Mrs. Meyrick's to fetch something."

"Pray allow me to walk with you," said Deronda urgently. "I must not tire Ezra any further; besides my brains are melting. I want to go to Mrs. Meyrick's: may I go with you?"

"Oh, yes," said Mirah, blushing still more, with the vague sense of something new in Deronda, and turning away to pour out Ezra's draught; Ezra meanwhile throwing back his head with his eyes shut, unable to get his mind away from the ideas that had been filling it while the reading was going on. Deronda for a moment stood thinking of nothing but the walk, till Mirah turned round again and brought the draught, when he suddenly remembered that he had laid aside his cravat, and saying—"Pray excuse my dishabille—I did not mean you to see it," he went to the little table, took up his cravat, and exclaimed with a violent impulse of surprise, "Good heavens, where is my ring gone?" beginning to search about on the floor.

Ezra looked round the corner of his chair. Mirah, quick as thought, went to the spot where Deronda was seeking, and said, "Did you lay it down?"

"Yes," said Deronda, still unvisited by any other explanation than that the ring had fallen and was lurking in shadow, indiscernable on the variegated carpet. He was moving the bits of furniture near, and searching in all possible and impossible places with hand and eyes.

But another explanation had visited Mirah and taken the color from her cheeks. She went to Ezra's ear and whispered "Was my father here?" He bent his head in reply, meeting her eyes with terrible understanding. She darted back to the spot where Deronda was still casting down his eyes in that hopeless exploration which are apt to carry on over a space we have examined in vain. "You have not found it?" she said, hurriedly.

He, meeting her frightened gaze, immediately caught alarm from it and answered, "I perhaps put it in my pocket," professing to feel for it there.

She watched him and said, "It is not there?—you put it on the table," with a penetrating voice that would not let him feign to have found it in his pocket; and immediately she rushed out of the room. Deronda followed her—she was gone into the sitting-room below to look for her father—she opened the door of the bedroom to see if he were there—she looked where his hat usually hung—she turned with her hands clasped tight and her lips pale, gazing despairingly out of the window. Then she

looked up at Deronda, who had not dared to speak to her in her white agitation. She looked up at him, unable to utter a word—the look seemed a tacit acceptance of the humiliation she felt in his presence. But he, taking her clasped hands between both his, said, in a tone of reverent adoration—

"Mirah, let me think that he is my father as well as yours—that we can have no sorrow, no disgrace, no joy apart. I will rather take your grief to be mine than I would take the brightest joy of another woman. Say you will not reject me—say you will take me to share all things with you. Say you will promise to be my wife—say it now. I have been in doubt so long—I have had to hide my love so long. Say that now and always I may prove to you that I love you with complete love."

The change in Mirah had been gradual. She had not passed at once from anguish to the full, blessed consciousness that, in this moment of grief and shame, Deronda was giving her the highest tribute man can give to woman. With the first tones and the first words, she had only a sense of solemn comfort, referring this goodness of Deronda's to his feeling for Ezra. But by degrees the rapturous assurance of unhopd-for good took possession of her frame: her face glowed under Deronda's as he bent over her; yet she looked up still with intense gravity, as when she had first acknowledged with religious gratitude that he had thought her "worthy of the best;" and when he had finished, she could say nothing—she could only lift up her lips to his and just kiss them, as if that were the simplest "yes." They stood then, only looking at each other, he holding her hands between his—too happy to move, meeting so fully in their new consciousness that all signs would have seemed to throw them farther apart, till Mirah said in a whisper: "Let us go and comfort Ezra."

---

## CHAPTER 69

"The human nature unto which I felt  
 That I belonged, and revered with love,  
 Was not a punctual presence, but a spirit  
 Diffused through time and space, with aid derived  
 Of evidence from monuments, erect,  
 Prostrate, or leaning toward their common rest  
 In earth, the widely scattered wreck sublime  
 Of vanished nations."

—WORDSWORTH: *The Prelude*.

Sir Hugo carried out his plan of spending part of the autumn at Diplow, and by the beginning of October his presence was spreading some cheerfulness in the neighborhood, among all ranks and persons concerned, from the stately home of Brackenshaw and Quetcham to the respectable shop-parlors in Wanchester. For Sir Hugo was a man who liked to show himself and be affable, a Liberal of good lineage, who confided entirely in reform as not likely to make any serious difference in English habits of feeling, one of which undoubtedly is the liking to behold society well fenced and adorned with hereditary rank. Hence he made Diplow a most agreeable house, extending his invitations to old Wanchester solicitors and young village curates, but also taking some care in the combination of the guests, and not feeding all the common poultry together, so that they should think their meal no particular compliment. Easy-going Lord Brackenshaw, for example, would not mind meeting Robinson the attorney, but Robinson would have been naturally piqued if he had been asked to meet a set of people who passed for his equals. On all these points Sir Hugo was well informed enough at once to gain popularity for himself and give pleasure to others—two results which eminently suited his disposition. The rector of Pennicote now found a reception at Diplow very different from the haughty tolerance he had undergone during the reign of Grandcourt. It was not that the baronet liked Mr. Gascoigne; it was that he desired to keep up a marked relation of friendliness with him on account of Mrs. Grandcourt, for whom Sir Hugo's chivalry had become more and more engaged. Why? The chief reason was one that he could not fully communicate,

even to Lady Mallinger—for he would not tell what he thought one woman's secret to another, even though the other was his wife—which shows that his chivalry included a rare reticence.

Deronda, after he had become engaged to Mirah, felt it right to make a full statement of his position and purposes to Sir Hugo, and he chose to make it by letter. He had more than a presentiment that his fatherly friend would feel some dissatisfaction, if not pain, at this turn of his destiny. In reading unwelcome news, instead of hearing it, there is the advantage that one avoids a hasty expression of impatience which may afterward be repented of. Deronda dreaded that verbal collision which makes otherwise pardonable feeling lastingly offensive.

And Sir Hugo, though not altogether surprised, was thoroughly vexed. His immediate resource was to take the letter to Lady Mallinger, who would be sure to express an astonishment which her husband could argue against as unreasonable, and in this way divide the stress of his discontent. And in fact when she showed herself astonished and distressed that all Daniel's wonderful talents, and the comfort of having him in the house, should have ended in his going mad in this way about the Jews, the baronet could say—

"Oh, nonsense, my dear! depend upon it, Dan will not make a fool of himself. He has large notions about Judaism—political views which you can't understand. No fear but Dan will keep himself head uppermost."

But with regard to the prospective marriage she afforded him no counter-irritant. The gentle lady observed, without rancor, that she had little dreamed of what was coming when she had Mirah to sing at her musical party and give lessons to Amabel. After some hesitation, indeed, she confessed it *had* passed through her mind that after a proper time Daniel might marry Mrs. Grandcourt—because it seemed so remarkable that he should be at Genoa just at that time—and although she herself was not fond of widows she could not help thinking that such a marriage would have been better than his going altogether with the Jews. But Sir Hugo was so strongly of the same opinion that he could not correct it as a feminine mistake; and his ill-humor at the disproof of his disagreeable conclusions on behalf of Gwendolen was left without vent. He desired Lady Mallinger not to breathe a word about the affair till further notice, saying to himself, "If it is an unkind cut to the poor thing (meaning



Gwendolen), the longer she is without knowing it the better, in her present nervous state. And she will best learn it from Dan himself." Sir Hugo's conjectures had worked so industriously with his knowledge, that he fancied himself well informed concerning the whole situation.

Meanwhile his residence with his family at Diplow enabled him to continue his fatherly attentions to Gwendolen; and in these Lady Mallinger, notwithstanding her small liking for widows, was quite willing to second him.

The plan of removal to Offendene had been carried out; and Gwendolen, in settling there, maintained a calm beyond her mother's hopes. She was experiencing some of that peaceful melancholy which comes from the renunciation of demands for self, and from taking the ordinary good of existence, and especially kindness, even from a dog, as a gift above expectation. Does one who has been all but lost in a pit of darkness complain of the sweet air and the daylight? There is a way of looking at our life daily as an escape, and taking the quiet return of morn and evening—still more the star-like out-glowing of some pure fellow-feeling, some generous impulse breaking our inward darkness—as a salvation that reconciles us to hardship. Those who have a self-knowledge prompting such self-accusation as Hamlet's, can understand this habitual feeling of rescue. And it was felt by Gwendolen as she lived through and through again the terrible history of her temptations, from their first form of illusory self-pleasing when she struggled away from the hold of conscience, to their latest form of an urgent hatred dragging her toward its satisfaction, while she prayed and cried for the help of that conscience which she had once forsaken. She was now dwelling on every word of Deronda's that pointed to her past deliverance from the worst evil in herself, and the worst infliction of it on others, and on every word that carried a force to resist self-despair.

But she was also upborne by the prospect of soon seeing him again: she did not imagine him otherwise than always within her reach, her supreme need of him blinding her to the separateness of his life, the whole scene of which she filled with his relation to her—no unique preoccupation of Gwendolen's, for we are all apt to fall into this passionate egoism of imagination, not only toward our fellow-men, but toward God. And the future which she turned her face to with a willing

step was one where she would be continually assimilating herself to some type that he would hold before her. Had he not first risen on her vision as a corrective presence which she had recognized in the beginning with resentment, and at last with entire love and trust? She could not spontaneously think of an end to that reliance, which had become to her imagination like the firmness of the earth, the only condition of her walking.

And Deronda was not long before he came to Diplow, which was a more convenient distance from town than the Abbey. He had wished to carry out a plan for taking Ezra and Mirah to a mild spot on the coast, while he prepared another home which Mirah might enter as his bride, and where they might unitedly watch over her brother. But Ezra begged not to be removed, unless it were to go with them to the East. All outward solicitations were becoming more and more of a burden to him; but his mind dwelt on the possibility of this voyage with a visionary joy. Deronda, in his preparations for the marriage, which he hoped might not be deferred beyond a couple of months, wished to have fuller consultation as to his resources and affairs generally with Sir Hugo, and here was a reason for not delaying his visit to Diplow. But he thought quite as much of another reason—his promise to Gwendolen. The sense of blessedness in his own lot had yet an aching anxiety at his heart: this may be held paradoxical, for the beloved lover is always called happy, and happiness is considered as a well-fleshed indifference to sorrow outside it. But human experience is usually paradoxical, if that means incongruous with the phrases of current talk or even current philosophy. It was no treason to Mirah, but a part of that full nature which made his love for her the more worthy, that his joy in her could hold by its side the care for another. For what is love itself, for the one we love best?—an enfolding of immeasurable cares which yet are better than any joys outside our love.

Deronda came twice to Diplow, and saw Gwendolen twice—and yet he went back to town without having told her anything about the change in his lot and prospects. He blamed himself; but in all momentous communication likely to give pain we feel dependent on some preparatory turn of words or associations, some agreement of the other's mood with the probable effect of what we have to impart. In the first interview Gwendolen was so absorbed in what she had to say to him, so

full of questions which he must answer, about the arrangement of her life, what she could do to make herself less ignorant, how she could be kindest to everybody, and make amends for her selfishness and try to be rid of it, that Deronda utterly shrank from waiving her immediate wants in order to speak of himself, nay, from inflicting a wound on her in these moments when she was leaning on him for help in her path. In the second interview, when he went with new resolve to command the conversation into some preparatory track, he found her in a state of deep depression, overmastered by some distasteful miserable memories which forced themselves on her as something more real and ample than any new material out of which she could mould her future. She cried hysterically, and said that he would always despise her. He could only seek words of soothing and encouragement: and when she gradually revived under them, with that pathetic look of renewed childlike interest which we see in eyes where the lashes are still beaded with tears, it was impossible to lay another burden on her.

But time went on, and he felt it a pressing duty to make the difficult disclosure. Gwendolen, it was true, never recognized his having any affairs; and it had never even occurred to her to ask him why he happened to be at Genoa. But this unconsciousness of hers would make a sudden revelation of affairs that were determining his course in life all the heavier blow to her; and if he left the revelation to be made by different persons, she would feel that he had treated her with cruel inconsiderateness. He could not make the communication in writing: his tenderness could not bear to think of her reading his virtual farewell in solitude, and perhaps feeling his words full of a hard gladness for himself and indifference for her. He went down to Diplo again, feeling that every other peril was to be incurred rather than that of returning and leaving her still in ignorance.

On this third visit Deronda found Hans Meyrick installed with his easel at Diplo, beginning his picture of the three daughters sitting on a bank, "in the Gainsborough style," and varying his work by rambling to Pennicote to sketch the village children and improve his acquaintance with the Gascoignes. Hans appeared to have recovered his vivacity, but Deronda detected some feigning in it, as we detect the artificiality of a lady's bloom from its being a little too high-toned and steadily persistent (a "Fluctuating Rouge" not having yet appeared among the

advertisements). Also with all his grateful friendship and admiration for Deronda, Hans could not help a certain irritation against him, such as extremely incautious, open natures are apt to feel when the breaking of a friend's reserve discloses a state of things not merely unsuspected but the reverse of what had been hoped and ingeniously conjectured. It is true that poor Hans had always cared chiefly to confide in Deronda, and had been quite incurious as to any confidence that might have been given in return; but what outpourer of his own affairs is not tempted to think any hint of his friend's affairs is an egotistic irrelevance? That was no reason why it was not rather a sore reflection to Hans that while he had been all along naively opening his heart about Mirah, Deronda had kept secret a feeling of rivalry which now revealed itself as the important determining fact. Moreover, it is always at their peril that our friends turn out to be something more than we were aware of. Hans must be excused for these promptings of bruised sensibility, since he had not allowed them to govern his substantial conduct: he had the consciousness of having done right by his fortunate friend; or, as he told himself, "his metal had given a better ring than he would have sworn to beforehand." For Hans had always said that in point of virtue he was a *dilettante*: which meant that he was very fond of it in other people, but if he meddled with it himself he cut a poor figure. Perhaps in reward of his good behavior he gave his tongue the more freedom; and he was too fully possessed by the notion of Deronda's happiness to have a conception of what he was feeling about Gwendolen, so that he spoke of her without hesitation.

"When did you come down, Hans?" said Deronda, joining him in the grounds where he was making a study of the requisite bank and trees.

"Oh, ten days ago; before the time Sir Hugo fixed. I ran down with Rex Gascoigne and stayed at the rectory a day or two. I'm up in all the gossip of these parts; I know the state of the wheelwright's interior, and have assisted at an infant school examination. Sister Anna, with the good upper lip, escorted me, else I should have been mobbed by three urchins and an idiot, because of my long hair and a general appearance which departs from the Pennicote type of the beautiful. Altogether, the village is idyllic. Its only fault is a dark curate with broad shoulders and broad trousers who ought to have gone into the heavy drapery line. The Gascoignes are perfect—besides being related to the Vandyke duchess. I

caught a glimpse of her in her black robes at a distance, though she doesn't show to visitors."

"She was not staying at the rectory?" said Deronda.

"No; but I was taken to Offendene to see the old house, and as a consequence I saw the duchess' family. I suppose you have been there and know all about them?"

"Yes, I have been there," said Deronda, quietly.

"A fine old place. An excellent setting for a widow with romantic fortunes. And she seems to have had several romances. I think I have found out that there was one between her and my friend Rex."

"Not long before her marriage, then?" said Deronda, really interested, "for they had only been a year at Offendene. How came you to know anything of it?"

"Oh—not ignorant of what it is to be a miserable devil, I learn to gloat on the signs of misery in others. I found out that Rex never goes to Offendene, and has never seen the duchess since she came back; and Miss Gascoigne let fall something in our talk about charade-acting—for I went through some of my nonsense to please the young ones—something that proved to me that Rex was once hovering about his fair cousin close enough to get singed. I don't know what was her part in the affair. Perhaps the duke came in and carried her off. That is always the way when an exceptionally worthy young man forms an attachment. I understand now why Gascoigne talks of making the law his mistress and remaining a bachelor. But these are green resolves. Since the duke did not get himself drowned for your sake, it may turn out to be for my friend Rex's sake. Who knows?"

"Is it absolutely necessary that Mrs. Grandcourt should marry again?" said Deronda, ready to add that Hans's success in constructing her fortunes hitherto had not been enough to warrant a new attempt.

"You monster!" retorted Hans, "do you want her to wear weeds for *you* all her life—burn herself in perpetual suttee while you are alive and merry?"

Deronda could say nothing, but he looked so much annoyed that Hans turned the current of his chat, and when he was alone shrugged his shoulders a little over the thought that there really had been some stronger feeling between Deronda and the duchess than Mirah would like to know of. "Why didn't she fall in love with me?" thought Hans, laughing at himself. "She would have had no rivals. No woman ever wanted to discuss theology with me."

No wonder that Deronda winced under that sort of joking with a whip-lash. It touched sensibilities that were already quivering with the anticipation of witnessing some of that pain to which even Hans's light words seemed to give more reality:—any sort of recognition by another giving emphasis to the subject of our anxiety. And now he had come down with the firm resolve that he would not again evade the trial. The next day he rode to Offendene. He had sent word that he intended to call and to ask if Gwendolen could receive him; and he found her awaiting him in the old drawing-room where some chief crises of her life had happened. She seemed less sad than he had seen her since her husband's death; there was no smile on her face, but a placid self-possession, in contrast with the mood in which he had last found her. She was all the more alive to the sadness perceptible in Deronda; and they were no sooner seated—he at a little distance opposite to her—than she said:

"You were afraid of coming to see me, because I was so full of grief and despair the last time. But I am not so today. I have been sorry ever since. I have been making it a reason why I should keep up my hope and be as cheerful as I can, because I would not give you any pain about me."

There was an unwonted sweetness in Gwendolen's tone and look as she uttered these words that seemed to Deronda to infuse the utmost cruelty into the task now laid upon him. But he felt obliged to make his answer a beginning of the task.

"I *am* in some trouble to-day," he said, looking at her rather mournfully; "but it is because I have things to tell you which you will almost think it a want of confidence on my part not to have spoken of before. They are things affecting my own life—my own future. I shall seem to have made an ill return to you for the trust you have placed in me—never to have given you an idea of events that make great changes for me. But when we have been together we have hardly had time to enter into subjects which

at the moment were really less pressing to me than the trials you have been going through." There was a sort of timid tenderness in Deronda's deep tones, and he paused with a pleading look, as if it had been Gwendolen only who had conferred anything in her scenes of beseeching and confession.

A thrill of surprise was visible in her. Such meaning as she found in his words had shaken her, but without causing fear. Her mind had flown at once to some change in his position with regard to Sir Hugo and Sir Hugo's property. She said, with a sense of comfort from Deronda's way of asking her pardon—

"You never thought of anything but what you could do to help me; and I was so troublesome. How could you tell me things?"

"It will perhaps astonish you," said Deronda, "that I have only quite lately known who were my parents."

Gwendolen was not astonished: she felt the more assured that her expectations of what was coming were right. Deronda went on without check.

"The reason why you found me in Italy was that I had gone there to learn that—in fact, to meet my mother. It was by her wish that I was brought up in ignorance of my parentage. She parted with me after my father's death, when I was a little creature. But she is now very ill, and she felt that the secrecy ought not to be any longer maintained. Her chief reason had been that she did not wish me to know I was a Jew."

"*A Jew!*" Gwendolen exclaimed, in a low tone of amazement, with an utterly frustrated look, as if some confusing potion were creeping through her system.

Deronda colored, and did not speak, while Gwendolen, with her eyes fixed on the floor, was struggling to find her way in the dark by the aid of various reminiscences. She seemed at last to have arrived at some judgment, for she looked up at Deronda again and said, as if remonstrating against the mother's conduct—

"What difference need that have made?"

"It has made a great difference to me that I have known it," said Deronda, emphatically; but he could not go on easily—the distance between her ideas and his acted like a difference of native language, making him uncertain what force his words would carry.

Gwendolen meditated again, and then said feelingly, "I hope there is nothing to make you mind. *You* are just the same as if you were not a Jew."

She meant to assure him that nothing of that external sort could affect the way in which she regarded him, or the way in which he could influence her. Deronda was a little helped by this misunderstanding.

"The discovery was far from being painful to me," he said, "I had been gradually prepared for it, and I was glad of it. I had been prepared for it by becoming intimate with a very remarkable Jew, whose ideas have attracted me so much that I think of devoting the best part of my life to some effort at giving them effect."

Again Gwendolen seemed shaken—again there was a look of frustration, but this time it was mingled with alarm. She looked at Deronda with lips childishly parted. It was not that she had yet connected his words with Mirah and her brother, but that they had inspired her with a dreadful presentiment of mountainous travel for her mind before it could reach Deronda's. Great ideas in general which she had attributed to him seemed to make no great practical difference, and were not formidable in the same way as these mysteriously-shadowed particular ideas. He could not quite divine what was going on within her; he could only seek the least abrupt path of disclosure.

"That is an object," he said, after a moment, "which will by-and-by force me to leave England for some time—for some years. I have purposes which will take me to the East."

Here was something clearer, but all the more immediately agitating. Gwendolen's lips began to tremble. "But you will come back?" she said, tasting her own tears as they fell, before she thought of drying them.

Deronda could not sit still. He rose, and went to prop himself against the corner of the mantel-piece, at a different angle from her face. But when



she had pressed her handkerchief against her cheeks, she turned and looked up at him, awaiting an answer.

"If I live," said Deronda—"some time."

They were both silent. He could not persuade himself to say more unless she led up to it by a question; and she was apparently meditating something that she had to say.

"What are you going to do?" she asked, at last, very mildly. "Can I understand the ideas, or am I too ignorant?"

"I am going to the East to become better acquainted with the condition of my race in various countries there," said Deronda, gently—anxious to be as explanatory as he could on what was the impersonal part of their separateness from each other. "The idea that I am possessed with is that of restoring a political existence to my people, making them a nation again, giving them a national center, such as the English have, though they too are scattered over the face of the globe. That is a task which presents itself to me as a duty; I am resolved to begin it, however feebly. I am resolved to devote my life to it. At the least, I may awaken a movement in other minds, such as has been awakened in my own."

There was a long silence between them. The world seemed getting larger round poor Gwendolen, and she more solitary and helpless in the midst. The thought that he might come back after going to the East, sank before the bewildering vision of these wild-stretching purposes in which she felt herself reduced to a mere speck. There comes a terrible moment to many souls when the great movements of the world, the larger destinies of mankind, which have lain aloof in newspapers and other neglected reading, enter like an earthquake into their own lives—where the slow urgency of growing generations turns into the tread of an invading army or the dire clash of civil war, and gray fathers know nothing to seek for but the corpses of their blooming sons, and girls forget all vanity to make lint and bandages which may serve for the shattered limbs of their betrothed husbands. Then it is as if the Invisible Power that had been the object of lip-worship and lip-resignation became visible, according to the imagery of the Hebrew poet, making the flames his chariot, and riding on the wings of the wind, till the mountains smoke and the plains shudder under the rolling fiery visitations. Often the good cause seems to

lie prostrate under the thunder of relenting force, the martyrs live reviled, they die, and no angel is seen holding forth the crown and the palm branch. Then it is that the submission of the soul to the Highest is tested, and even in the eyes of frivolity life looks out from the scene of human struggle with the awful face of duty, and a religion shows itself which is something else than a private consolation.

That was the sort of crisis which was at this moment beginning in Gwendolen's small life: she was for the first time feeling the pressure of a vast mysterious movement, for the first time being dislodged from her supremacy in her own world, and getting a sense that her horizon was but a dipping onward of an existence with which her own was revolving. All the troubles of her wifeness and widowhood had still left her with the implicit impression which had accompanied her from childhood, that whatever surrounded her was somehow specially for her, and it was because of this that no personal jealousy had been roused in her relation to Deronda: she could not spontaneously think of him as rightfully belonging to others more than to her. But here had come a shock which went deeper than personal jealousy—something spiritual and vaguely tremendous that thrust her away, and yet quelled all her anger into self-humiliation.

There had been a long silence. Deronda had stood still, even thankful for an interval before he needed to say more, and Gwendolen had sat like a statue with her wrists lying over each other and her eyes fixed—the intensity of her mental action arresting all other excitation. At length something occurred to her that made her turn her face to Deronda and say in a trembling voice—

"Is that all you can tell me?"

The question was like a dart to him. "The Jew whom I mentioned just now," he answered, not without a certain tremor in his tones too, "the remarkable man who has greatly influenced my mind, has not perhaps been totally unheard of by you. He is the brother of Miss Lapidoth, whom you have often heard sing."

A great wave of remembrance passed through Gwendolen and spread as a deep, painful flush over neck and face. It had come first at the scene of that morning when she had called on Mirah, and heard Deronda's voice

reading, and been told, without then heeding it, that he was reading Hebrew with Mirah's brother.

"He is very ill—very near death now," Deronda went on, nervously, and then stopped short. He felt that he must wait. Would she divine the rest?

"Did she tell you that I went to her?" said Gwendolen, abruptly, looking up at him.

"No," said Deronda. "I don't understand you."

She turned away her eyes again, and sat thinking. Slowly the color dried out of face and neck, and she was as pale as before—with that almost withered paleness which is seen after a painful flush. At last she said—without turning toward him—in a low, measured voice, as if she were only thinking aloud in preparation for future speech—

"But *can* you marry?"

"Yes," said Deronda, also in a low voice. "I am going to marry."

At first there was no change in Gwendolen's attitude: she only began to tremble visibly; then she looked before her with dilated eyes, as at something lying in front of her, till she stretched her arms out straight, and cried with a smothered voice—

"I said I should be forsaken. I have been a cruel woman. And I am forsaken."

Deronda's anguish was intolerable. He could not help himself. He seized her outstretched hands and held them together, and kneeled at her feet. She was the victim of his happiness.

"I am cruel, too, I am cruel," he repeated, with a sort of groan, looking up at her imploringly.

His presence and touch seemed to dispel a horrible vision, and she met his upward look of sorrow with something like the return of consciousness after fainting. Then she dwelt on it with that growing pathetic movement of the brow which accompanies the revival of some tender recollection. The look of sorrow brought back what seemed a very far-off moment—the first time she had ever seen it, in the library at the Abbey. Sobs rose, and great tears fell fast. Deronda would not let her

hands go—held them still with one of his, and himself pressed her handkerchief against her eyes. She submitted like a half-soothed child, making an effort to speak, which was hindered by struggling sobs. At last she succeeded in saying, brokenly—

"I said—I said—it should be better—better with me—for having known you."

His eyes too were larger with tears. She wrested one of her hands from his, and returned his action, pressing his tears away.

"We shall not be quite parted," he said. "I will write to you always, when I can, and you will answer?"

He waited till she said in a whisper, "I will try."

"I shall be more with you than I used to be," Deronda said with gentle urgency, releasing her hands and rising from his kneeling posture. "If we had been much together before, we should have felt our differences more, and seemed to get farther apart. Now we can perhaps never see each other again. But our minds may get nearer."

Gwendolen said nothing, but rose too, automatically. Her withered look of grief, such as the sun often shines on when the blinds are drawn up after the burial of life's joy, made him hate his own words: they seemed to have the hardness of easy consolation in them. She felt that he was going, and that nothing could hinder it. The sense of it was like a dreadful whisper in her ear, which dulled all other consciousness; and she had not known that she was rising.

Deronda could not speak again. He thought that they must part in silence, but it was difficult to move toward the parting, till she looked at him with a sort of intention in her eyes, which helped him. He advanced to put out his hand silently, and when she had placed hers within it, she said what her mind had been laboring with—

"You have been very good to me. I have deserved nothing. I will try—try to live. I shall think of you. What good have I been? Only harm. Don't let me be harm to *you*. It shall be the better for me—"

She could not finish. It was not that she was sobbing, but that the intense effort with which she spoke made her too tremulous. The burden of that difficult rectitude toward him was a weight her frame tottered under.

She bent forward to kiss his cheek, and he kissed hers. Then they looked at each other for an instant with clasped hands, and he turned away.

When he was quite gone, her mother came in and found her sitting motionless.

"Gwendolen, dearest, you look very ill," she said, bending over her and touching her cold hands.

"Yes, mamma. But don't be afraid. I am going to live," said Gwendolen, bursting out hysterically.

Her mother persuaded her to go to bed, and watched by her. Through the day and half the night she fell continually into fits of shrieking, but cried in the midst of them to her mother, "Don't be afraid. I shall live. I mean to live."

After all, she slept; and when she waked in the morning light, she looked up fixedly at her mother and said tenderly, "Ah, poor mamma! You have been sitting up with me. Don't be unhappy. I shall live. I shall be better."

---

## CHAPTER 70

In the checkered area of human experience the seasons are all mingled as in the golden age: fruit and blossom hang together; in the same moment the sickle is reaping and the seed is sprinkled; one tends the green cluster and another treads the winepress. Nay, in each of our lives harvest and spring-time are continually one, until himself gathers us and sows us anew in his invisible fields.

Among the blessings of love there is hardly one more exquisite than the sense that in uniting the beloved life to ours we can watch over its happiness, bring comfort where hardship was, and over memories of privation and suffering open the sweetest fountains of joy. Deronda's love for Mirah was strongly imbued with that blessed protectiveness. Even with infantine feet she had begun to tread among thorns; and the first time he had beheld her face it had seemed to him the girlish image of despair.

But now she was glowing like a dark-tipped yet delicate ivory-tinted flower in the warm sunlight of content, thinking of any possible grief as part of that life with Deronda, which she could call by no other name than good. And he watched the sober gladness which gave new beauty to her movements; and her habitual attitudes of repose, with a delight which made him say to himself that it was enough of personal joy for him to save her from pain. She knew nothing of Hans's struggle or of Gwendolen's pang; for after the assurance that Deronda's hidden love had been for her, she easily explained Gwendolen's eager solicitude about him as part of a grateful dependence on his goodness, such as she herself had known. And all Deronda's words about Mrs. Grandcourt confirmed that view of their relation, though he never touched on it except in the most distant manner. Mirah was ready to believe that he had been a rescuing angel to many besides herself. The only wonder was, that she among them all was to have the bliss of being continually by his side.

So, when the bridal veil was around Mirah it hid no doubtful tremors—only a thrill of awe at the acceptance of a great gift which required great uses. And the velvet canopy never covered a more goodly bride and

bridegroom, to whom their people might more wisely wish offspring; more truthful lips never touched the sacrament marriage-wine; the marriage-blessing never gathered stronger promise of fulfillment than in the integrity of their mutual pledge. Naturally, they were married according to the Jewish rite. And since no religion seems yet to have demanded that when we make a feast we should invite only the highest rank of our acquaintances, few, it is to be hoped, will be offended to learn that among the guests at Deronda's little wedding-feast was the entire Cohen family, with the one exception of the baby who carried on her teething intelligently at home. How could Mordecai have borne that those friends of his adversity should have been shut out from rejoicing in common with him?

Mrs. Meyrick so fully understood this that she had quite reconciled herself to meeting the Jewish pawnbroker, and was there with her three daughters—all of them enjoying the consciousness that Mirah's marriage to Deronda crowned a romance which would always make a sweet memory to them. For which of them, mother or girls, had not had a generous part in it—giving their best in feeling and in act to her who needed? If Hans could have been there, it would have been better; but Mab had already observed that men must suffer for being so inconvenient; suppose she, Kate, and Amy had all fallen in love with Mr. Deronda?—but being women they were not so ridiculous.

The Meyricks were rewarded for conquering their prejudices by hearing a speech from Mr. Cohen, which had the rare quality among speeches of not being quite after the usual pattern. Jacob ate beyond his years, and contributed several small whinnying laughs as a free accompaniment of his father's speech, not irreverently, but from a lively sense that his family was distinguishing itself; while Adelaide Rebekah, in a new Sabbath frock, maintained throughout a grave air of responsibility.

Mordecai's brilliant eyes, sunken in their large sockets, dwelt on the scene with the cherishing benignancy of a spirit already lifted into an aloofness which nullified only selfish requirements and left sympathy alive. But continually, after his gaze had been traveling round on the others, it returned to dwell on Deronda with a fresh gleam of trusting affection.

The wedding-feast was humble, but Mirah was not without splendid wedding-gifts. As soon as the betrothal had been known, there were friends who had entertained graceful devices. Sir Hugo and Lady Mallinger had taken trouble to provide a complete equipment for Eastern travel, as well as a precious locket containing an inscription—*"To the bride of our dear Daniel Deronda all blessings. H. and L. M."* The Klesmers sent a perfect watch, also with a pretty inscription.

But something more precious than gold and gems came to Deronda from the neighborhood of Diplow on the morning of his marriage. It was a letter containing these words:—

Do not think of me sorrowfully on your wedding-day. I have remembered your words—that I may live to be one of the best of women, who make others glad that they were born. I do not yet see how that can be, but you know better than I. If it ever comes true, it will be because you helped me. I only thought of myself, and I made you grieve. It hurts me now to think of your grief. You must not grieve any more for me. It is better—it shall be better with me because I have known you.

#### **GWENDOLEN GRANDCOURT.**

The preparations for the departure of all three to the East began at once; for Deronda could not deny Ezra's wish that they should set out on the voyage forthwith, so that he might go with them, instead of detaining them to watch over him. He had no belief that Ezra's life would last through the voyage, for there were symptoms which seemed to show that the last stage of his malady had set in. But Ezra himself had said, "Never mind where I die, so that I am with you."

He did not set out with them. One morning early he said to Deronda, "Do not quit me to-day. I shall die before it is ended."

He chose to be dressed and sit up in his easy chair as usual, Deronda and Mirah on each side of him, and for some hours he was unusually silent, not even making the effort to speak, but looking at them occasionally with eyes full of some restful meaning, as if to assure them that while this remnant of breathing-time was difficult, he felt an ocean of peace beneath him.



It was not till late in the afternoon, when the light was falling, that he took a hand of each in his and said, looking at Deronda, "Death is coming to me as the divine kiss which is both parting and reunion—which takes me from your bodily eyes and gives me full presence in your soul. Where thou goest, Daniel, I shall go. Is it not begun? Have I not breathed my soul into you? We shall live together."

He paused, and Deronda waited, thinking that there might be another word for him. But slowly and with effort Ezra, pressing on their hands, raised himself and uttered in Hebrew the confession of the divine Unity, which long for generations has been on the lips of the dying Israelite.

He sank back gently into his chair, and did not speak again. But it was some hours before he had ceased to breathe, with Mirah's and Deronda's arms around him.

"Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,  
Dispraise or blame; nothing but well and fair,  
And what may quiet us in a death so noble."

---