

The Unconditional Love Of A Woman

This is a transcript of a letter written by Arundel Penruddock to her husband Colonel John Penruddock on the eve of his execution.

My dear heart,

My sad parting was so far from making me to forget you, that I have 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 reverence of your remembrances, that were it possible, I would with my own blood cement your dead limbs to life 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, tho' being the last (oh fatal word!) that ever you will receive from me; and know that until the last minute I can imagine you shall live, I will sacrifice the prayer of a Christian, and the groans of an affected 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. It is too late to tell you what I have done, or rather have not, done for you. How turned out of doors, because I came to beg for mercy! The Lord lay not your blood to their charge. I would fain discourse longer with you, but dare not, my passion begins to drown my reason, and will rob me of my devoir, 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 constancy may continue, and then I hope heaven will receive you, where grief and love will in short time after, I hope, translate, my dear, your sad but constant wife, even to love your ashes when dead'.

A. Penruddock

*Your children beg your blessing,
And present their duties to you.
May the 3rd 1655 11 o'clock at night.*