

Outside the Box

Transcript

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8 New Cavendish Rd
Jany. 15th. 1841.

My own dearest Pothy!

We arrived here safe and sound on Wednesday last at 2 oClock, and after having embraced my dear Father, you may imagine the delight with which I hastened to the nursery, to press my treasures once more to my heart. My Birdie hung her head and was shy, for the first few minutes, but perhaps my crying (which I could not help) frightened her. She soon knew me quite well, and would not leave me afterwards for a moment all day, sitting on my knee, and every now & then stealing her little arms round my neck & kissing me. She constantly repeated "I wondered after you dear Mama, and talked "of you – but now, I am quite "happy – are you happy Mama? She has a bad cold & rather a cough, which added to strict confinement to the house, on

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account of the weather (Mr Dodd having allowed her to go out but 3 times in 6 weeks!!) has made her look sadly ill. She

has a broad black stripe under
each eye, and a cheek as pale
as a ghost. But she is well
thank <God!>, and sleeps & eats well,
though they say her stomach,
and tongue are not right and
so they physic her a little.
From the same cause, she has
lost much of her spirits, and
is grown quieter & more coaxing.
But all this will come right
again with country air, or
indeed fresh air of any sort
when she can get it. Her
eyes strike me as being the most
changed, I mean in expression.
Of course I speak as a Mother,
but to me now they are perfectly
lovely, though perhaps they had
better have remained animated
& wicked, because that bespoke

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health & spirits. Now they
are so soft, so sentimental, and
so deep. They look full of thought
& feeling. But they too will become
gay enough again I dare say,
when she gets her usual exercise.
So ends dote the first. Now
for my lessest darling, your God=
=daughter. She is a very fine
fat satisfactory darling with
very large eyes (dark grey I think)
& dark hair. She is very healthy,
and every body says very pretty.
I do not think her so pretty as
Birdie was, but I am told I
do not do her justice. The truth
is, the dear pet don't yet know
how to manage her large eyes,
and they sometimes look so
wondrous wise, and sometimes
so wondrous foolish, that it is
impossible to help laughing. I think
there is mischief in them too, please
God she lives to perpetrate it.
You cannot think how odd

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it seems to me, to see her, and to know that she is my own Babe. You know I scarcely saw her more than twice, before she was taken from me, and my confinement being so rapid, and then the whole thought of it being so soon & so completely swallowed up, in my subsequent illness, ~~{that}~~ <I> sometimes ~~{I}~~ almost forgot I had been confined at all - and now suddenly to return to my nursery, and to be told that a sweet bouncing Babe I behold there is my very own, is almost more than I can believe, or at least more than I can throughly take in at once - but a few days will soon reconcile the idea to me, more particularly, when I can have her more with me, but what with sleeping & wet nursing (oh! what pleasure it must be to nurse oneself & get rid of such necessary evils)

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I can <now> see but little of her. It was indeed providential that I had not attempted it this time, but <from> what I saw of myself, and from an expression Sir C Clarke made use of, I have little doubt but that I should have succeeded fairly well, had all gone on smoothly. And now my own Wathen, I have only to praise & bless my Heavenly Father, that he has preserved me to enjoy my present happiness, that we have been permitted to rejoin our loved ones, in so much health and joy & peace - and to pray that as he has ~~{th}~~ hitherto watched over them, He will still continue

His guardian care, and that
through His blessing or the means
& precautions we have taken
to avoid infection, we may not,

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(if it be His blessed will) have
the pain of bringing disease &
sorrow, to those we most
tenderly love. Into His Hands
do I commit them, with a
cheerful confidence, that He
who has dealt so mercifully
with us, will still shew his
loving kindness to us, and
remember us for good that
is, if His unerring wisdom sees fit.
And now I must tell you of
Myself, and how well I am,
and how much stronger than
I could have expected. Indeed
I believe I absolutely astonish
every body. Since I have
been allowed to leave my bed,
I have never felt faint or
languid as most do. Tired indeed
I felt of course after any little
exertion, but that was all, and
you would be quite surprized
to see how well I mount these

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stairs. The very day after
I came back, I am sure, I
ascended the whole way at least
8 or 9 times, and if I could have
dispensed with my back and
legs (particularly the former) I
should have known little about
it, but even as it is, I far surpass
my own hopes, and I try not
to think of the afore named
gentry, and then perhaps, they
will be ashamed & behave
better. The week at Richmond
did me, as folks says "a world

"of good" and I assure you
I did not find it dull at all.
After Albemarle S^t the very
difference of light alone, made
it cheerful, and my dear Hubby
took so much care of it, and
was so attentive & tender, that
I could have almost fancied
it the honey moon - barring the
slight accident of two children at home.

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He says he never spent a happier
week in his life, no small comfort
to me after 17 years & ½. We had
comfortable apartments & great
civility, for which of course we
paid - but then it was really
buying health & strength, so we
could not begrudge it. It think I feel
the benefit I have derived, more
since I returned, than I did
at the time. I have now thrown
aside all my Invalid habits,
and Mr Stone who saw me yesterday,
said nothing was wanting but a
little more strength. Thank God!
our dear Father is quite well,
and seems happy to have us
with him. We can never forget
his kindness. The {~~Xtting~~} Xning is to
be on the 21st and we are to have
a dinner party of 14 - Lady Nicolson's
name is Mary (one of Birdie's names)
and Emily is solely my own fancy, as
I like the name, and wanted something
different, as if we name the cousins so
much alike, there will be a sad jumble
by & bye. Moreover it comes in under GG's
wing, as it happens to be the name of Sainsbury's
sister. Thanks dearest for your

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kind letter received last
night enclosed in my Fathers.

I rejoice to hear such an excellent account of your dear self, my sweet Kate, and your darling Pets. I should like to see the Kittens toddling along. Papa sent me one of your letters which alluded to a fracas in your domestic establishment. I am sorry you have been plagued in that way, but it is the occasional fate of every body. You will be surprised to hear of the loss I am about to sustain in that respect. Bevan, the ancient Bevan, is going to be married. She says her heart is almost broken at the idea of leaving us & Birdie, but that feeling her eye sight daily failing her, and that in many respects she feared she could not long do her duty by me, she thought she ought not to reject the offer

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of a comfortable home. Mr Swindell is 57 - 10 years older than Bevan - and has we understand £300 p^r an[um]: He is a highly respectable and excellent man, at least as report says, and her family are much pleased, so I suppose ought I to be, but I cannot but feel it as a loss, not as a Lady's maid, for that I can easily replace & better myself, but in every other sense - and especially for my chicks. They want to marry at Easter so I have not much time to spare. I have been so interrupted that I must hasten to say Good bye. God bless you. Love to all dear ones, and a large portion for yourself my darling Pothy.

Ever Your own
Kittie

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Lady Nicholson who is here desires me
to tell that Sir Adam Drummond has
been trumpetting your praises loudly,
so that your hospitality has not
been thrown away.