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Mary, who has more sense, and worse spirits, than all three of us, says, it must be a quarrel. After that letter to your Sister, which is absurd to the brink of insanity, I see no hope. I see no middle way — I wish to God I did — between poor Emma's breaking off with her, and her riding triumphant over you. 'Tis a sad alternative. But let me witness, and to the whole world I am ready to do it, that in point of gratitude & obligation, Emma has never, never failed in one instance. I have been scolded again & again by her, when I have whispered against the other. She has repaid, on my conscience I believe, more (tho' that is much) than she is indebted. Why, a mother, a real mother, had no right to write such a letter. What I possibly can do in it, I see not. I have no communication with her, even by Letter. But I can ~~only~~ say; express your joint pleasures to me, and, at the hazard of losing all her good opinions, and all her friends' in the bargain, I will write or speak any thing. But can I do it, Dearests, now, without it's ~~not~~ being palpable to come from you? I fear, Dearest Emma, that you cannot keep the love of your Aunt with your love of our dear J. M. — 'Tis a horrible conflict. You have been a good Niece, I would tell any body. But she had

no right, whatever her feelings were, to write such a damnable letter to Miss M. She must be too insane (I will call it) to make it necessary for you to consult her feelings at all. I will answer that you have had for her every feeling that a Niece, or adopted Daughter, ought to have. But, when she, or when a real Mother even, intrudes upon the sacredness of married life, the bonds of Daughtership are snapt asunder. You must cleave to your husband. No, excuse me for schooling your Emma thus. And, Emma, think not I set light by the obligations you acknowledge to your ancient friends, all that you can remember of a Parent. But divided Duties cannot stand. I see, as plain as prophecy, that unless she can get a perfect ascendancy over you, there is no peace for your dear mind. I do not believe that if you invited her one, two, or three months, to your house, she would be satisfy'd. I think, Emma, you understand me. I mean, that she would plant herself in your way, &

be a thorn endlessly

Pray, pray, Emma, don't quarrel with me for expressing harsh notions of one, to whom you ought (I do) to venerate. But I see no hope on her side, nothing that can appease her, short of your absolute subjection to her will - which now would be wickedness.

Don't think, M, I meant to shirk interfering - for what to me is she & all her friends, but tell me how I can do it without involving you both. Mary & I long to see you. Bring my Pindar. Tell Emma (I hope she will always like news of dear Enfield) that Mrs Gough, who was only a name to her, is dead; & poor old Grover, who was a reality -

Take my Loves both of you -

C Lamb

Come on Tuesday if you can, but write first, if you come to dinner

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF LAMB LETTERS

I

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Come on Tuesdy if you can, but write first, if you come to dinner

"E. Moxon Esq--
Dover Street
Piccadilly"