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David  
William Drysdale  
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Letter to Sean Dempster, on her  
marriage to David Drysdale, from  
her cousin John Dempster - 1793  
Advising her how to behave as a wife!

Dear Cousin  
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As it is not in my power to pay my respects to you to day <sup>in person,</sup> with your friends who may be waiting upon you, permit me in this manner to congratulate you on your late change of condition & to wish you all manner of prosperity. May you never have cause to repent your choice, but as Mr Drysdale & you grow so together, may your mutual attachment grow stronger & stronger. But that this may be, the case, much prudence, much meekness is necessary in your part.

Lady Dowager Stirling has an observation which I have heard her ladyship make frequently & in which I am persuaded there is much truth. Her observation is, that it requires no less art to maintain a husband's affections than to win them. This task now falls to you. Could I give you an advice how to succeed in this business, I would do

it with pleasure. But when I consider your own good sense, & how near you are to your Mother, who has so successfully secured this object, & whose counsel will never be a ranting, I think no occasion to regret my ignorance on this subject. But altho' I would not presume to offer any thing as from myself, give me leave, to transcribe a few sentences, from a letter which an eminent Christian wrote to his niece, when in such a situation as you are now.

"By all means (says M. Williams to his niece) by  
"all means keep on good terms with your husband.  
"Submit yourself to him, as unto the Lord. Never dispute any  
"point with him, nor go beyond a mild & gentle remon-  
"strance. It is no less your interest than your duty to  
"please him. It is the only way to secure his love, and  
"the surest way to leave your own will. Whilst he sees  
"you make it your study to please him, he never  
"will think he can do too much to please you.  
"Every man has his foibles. Men are apt to run  
"into some or other little indulgences, or gratifications  
"in customs, modes, & fashions, which are not always  
"so pleasing to their wives, as to themselves. No  
"doubt you will find M. — possessed of some of them.

"and tenacious of them. In such a case be sure never to  
"thwart him. If any thing should appear imprudent  
"in his conduct, you will think of some gentle method  
"to give him a view of it. But on whatever is perfectly  
"innocent, never give him the least uneasiness, nor so  
"much as wish he would refrain from it — I wish  
"I could persuade you to pray with him sometimes, in  
"your turn, as well as he with you. I know nothing  
"you can do, which hath a more direct tendency to  
"cherish, & maintain conjugal love."

I bid my best Compl<sup>ts</sup> to Mr Doydale &  
hopeful the pleasure of his acquaintance.  
Please remember me kindly to all friends at  
Nobend Green, & Dalkeith & believe me to be  
with much affection

Dear Cousin

Your humble Serv<sup>t</sup>  
John Derrifoster

Glorat 31<sup>st</sup> Aug<sup>r</sup> 1793.

Mr. Doydale.

Dear Cousin

As it is not in my power to pay my respects to you today in person with your friends who may be waiting upon you, permit me in this manner to congratulate you on your late change of condition and wish you all manner of prosperity. May you never have cause to repent your choice, but as Mr Drysdale and you grow old together, may your mutual attachment grow stronger and stronger. But that this may be the case, much prudence, much meekness is necessary on your part.

Lady Dowager Stirling has an observation which I have heard her ladyship make frequently and in which I am persuaded there is much truth. Her observation is, 'that it requires no less art to maintain a husband's affections than to ruin them.'

This task now falls to you. Could I give you our advice than to succeed in this business I would do it with pleasure. But when I consider your own good sense and how near you are to your Mother, who has so successfully secured this object, I whose counsel will never be a wanting. I have no occasion to regret my ignorance on this subject but although I would not presume to offer anything as from myself, give me leave to transcribe a few sentences from a letter which an eminent Christian wrote to his niece, when in such a situation as you are now.

"By all means (says Mr Williams to his niece) by all means keep on good terms with your husband. Submit yourself to him, as unto the lord. Never dispute any point with him, nor go beyond a mild and gentle persuasion. It is no less your interest than your duty to please him. It is the only way to secure his love and the surest way to have your own will. Whilst he sees you make it your study to please him, he never will think he can do too much to please you. Every man has his foibles. Men are apt to run into some or other little indulgences, or gratifications, customs modes and forms, which are not always so pleasing to their wives as to themselves. No doubt you will find Mr \_\_\_\_\_ possessed of some of these and tenacious of them. In such a case be sure never to thwart him. If anything should appear imprudent in his conduct, you will think of some gentle method to give him a view of it. But in whatever is perfectly innocent, never give him the least uneasiness nor so much as wish he would refrain from it. I wish I could persuade you to pray with him sometimes, in your turn, as well as he with you. I know nothing you can do, which hath a more direct tendency to cherish, and maintain conjugal love."

I bear my best compliments to Mr Drysdale and hope of the pleasure of his acquaintance. Please remember me fondly to all friends at Messend Green in Dalkeith and believe me to be with much affection.

Dear Cousin  
Your Humble Servant  
John Dempster

Glorat 31<sup>st</sup> August 1793