

35 B. K. Maydon E)

Three Mile Cross  
October 31<sup>st</sup> 1821.

My dear Sir

The magnificent portion of bridecake arrived this morning & shall be distributed as you desire - yes we will let half the pretty girls in the Parish dream on it - I wanted to make a bargain with one to whom I gave a bit first how that she should tell me her dream - but she says that would destroy the charm - If she told who the husband was to be she should never ~~see~~ get him. There was no saying a word after that you know.

By the bye nothing but the sort of sacred air that breathes around bridecake - so that to steal that would be to invade the sweetest & holiest of our affections & sympathies - nothing but this fine & general feeling could have preserved your magnificent present, & brought it safe to us. By some accident it was sent not by a heading coach but a hewbury one, & found its way to Three Mile Cross, after being carried half way to hewbury, through the intervention of all manner of men & women - foot boys - & chambermaids & keepers of Turnpike gates. What every thing belonging to such a wedding & such a honeymoon as yours will turn out right depend on it. You see that your good-luck extends even to your friends - & travels about with your bride-cake. Oh it will never forsake you! never! I think that last honeymoon letter written whilst the fair bride was sitting working & smiling at your side, was prettier even than the first - Did you read it to her as you wrote it? Or



shall send her a copy. It was worthy even of that charming seal.  
How much you must both have felt in going into your painting  
room! — Will the Lazarus be finished against next season? If  
any thing could improve your genius it would be living in such  
a measure of love & beauty.

Miss James is very anxious to have the pleasure  
of being known to Mrs. Haydon — she mentioned your note with  
great delight, & talked of calling — but was not I suppose cer-  
tain of the time you would return to Lipson Grove. She is by  
this time back again at Richmond. I wished her very much to call  
on you Sunday or Monday that she might leave with you my  
poor Tragedy which I have thought of all things have wished you to  
read — indeed I begged her to take the chance — I have such an opinion  
of your judgment. But it is now out of her hands. Only think  
of my shocking ill luck in having written on the same subject  
with Lord Byron — the story of Foscarini — I am so distressed at the  
idea of a competition, not merely with his Lordship's talents,  
but with his great name, & the strange awe in which he holds  
people, & the terrible stops & starts in which he indulges  
himself, that I have written to Mr. Talford requesting him to  
consult another ~~esteemed~~ friend on the propriety of entirely  
suppressing my play, which had gone to Town to be presented to the  
Manager the very day that the subject of Lord Byron's was an-  
nounced. I rather think now that it will not be offered — that Mr.  
Talford will suppress it — & I heartily wish he may. My poor  
Tragedy has been a work of great labour & is certainly complete  
enough in its own small way, but it is abundantly womanish  
& feeble, & does not at all adhere to the literal historic truth —  
which would be a great disadvantage in case the noble author

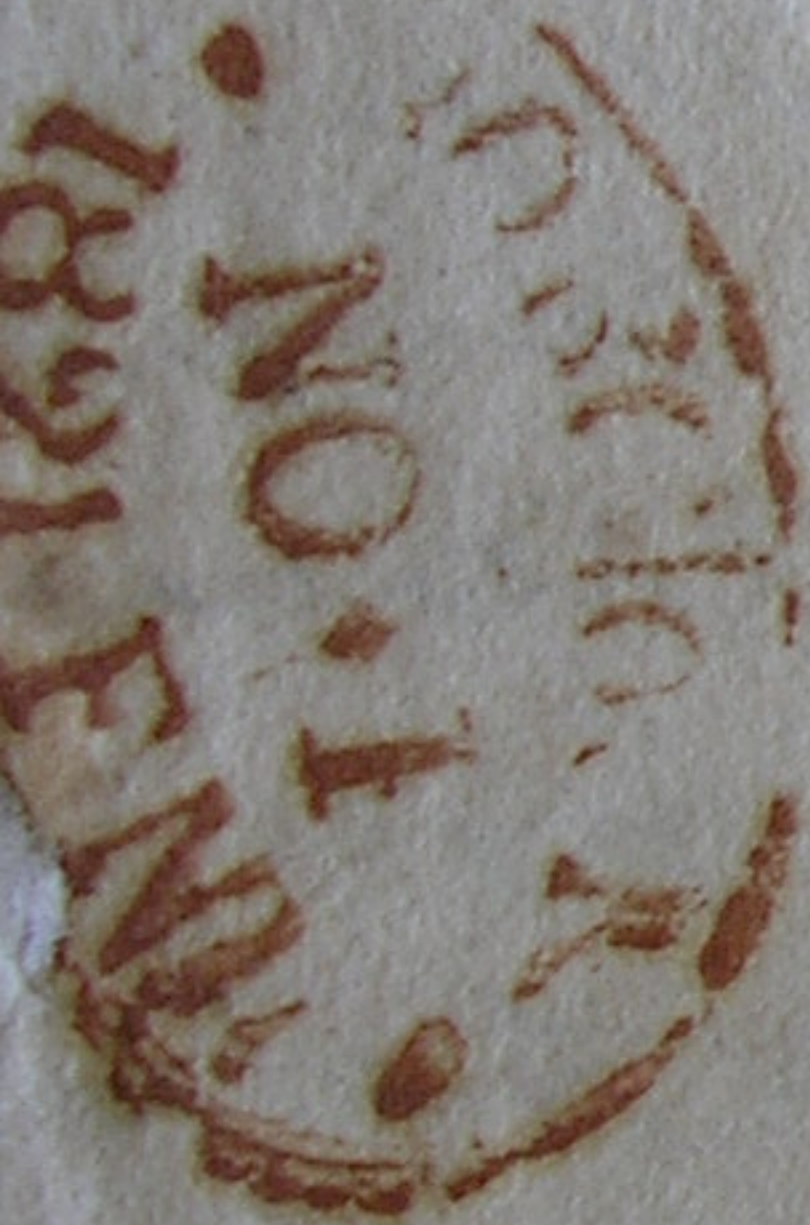


should have done so, & have made the public familiar with the  
 facts. I hope it will not be offered. What do you think of Lord  
 Byron's dramatic power? Hampden was very fine certainly - perhaps  
 the finest thing he ever did - & Marino Faliero certainly the worst.  
 But Toscani is a story of real human sympathy - not of  
 partitions sentiment - He will certainly succeed in that. If this  
 play be sent back to me unoffered I shall immediately begin  
 another on some German story & shall take for the opening the  
 exquisite first act of the Orestes of Euripides - which I saw  
 acted so finely a fortnight ago, & which it is quite wonderful  
 to think has never been transferred to the English stage. What  
 astonishing people those Greek dramatists were! I am just  
 now reading Voltaire's *Richard III* with the intensity of admiration  
 with which you would look at the fresco of Michael Angelo &  
 happening to express something of this enthusiasm to a person  
 of very great name he answered - "The Prometheus? Yes the  
 Prometheus is rather pretty - prettyish - one of the prettiest!" Now  
 what business has this man to know Greek! And what business  
 have I to be intruding so long on you? Good bye my dear Sir  
 My Father & Mother join <sup>me</sup> in every kind remembrance & kindest  
 wish to you & to Mrs. Haydon.

Ever most sincerely yours  
 M<sup>r</sup>. Mitford.

Do not mention my Toscani unless it should really be likely  
 to come out of which you shall have the earliest notice. But  
 of that there is very little chance. Once more God bless you. We  
 have just been drinking your health & your dear Mary's. Again Goodbye.





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