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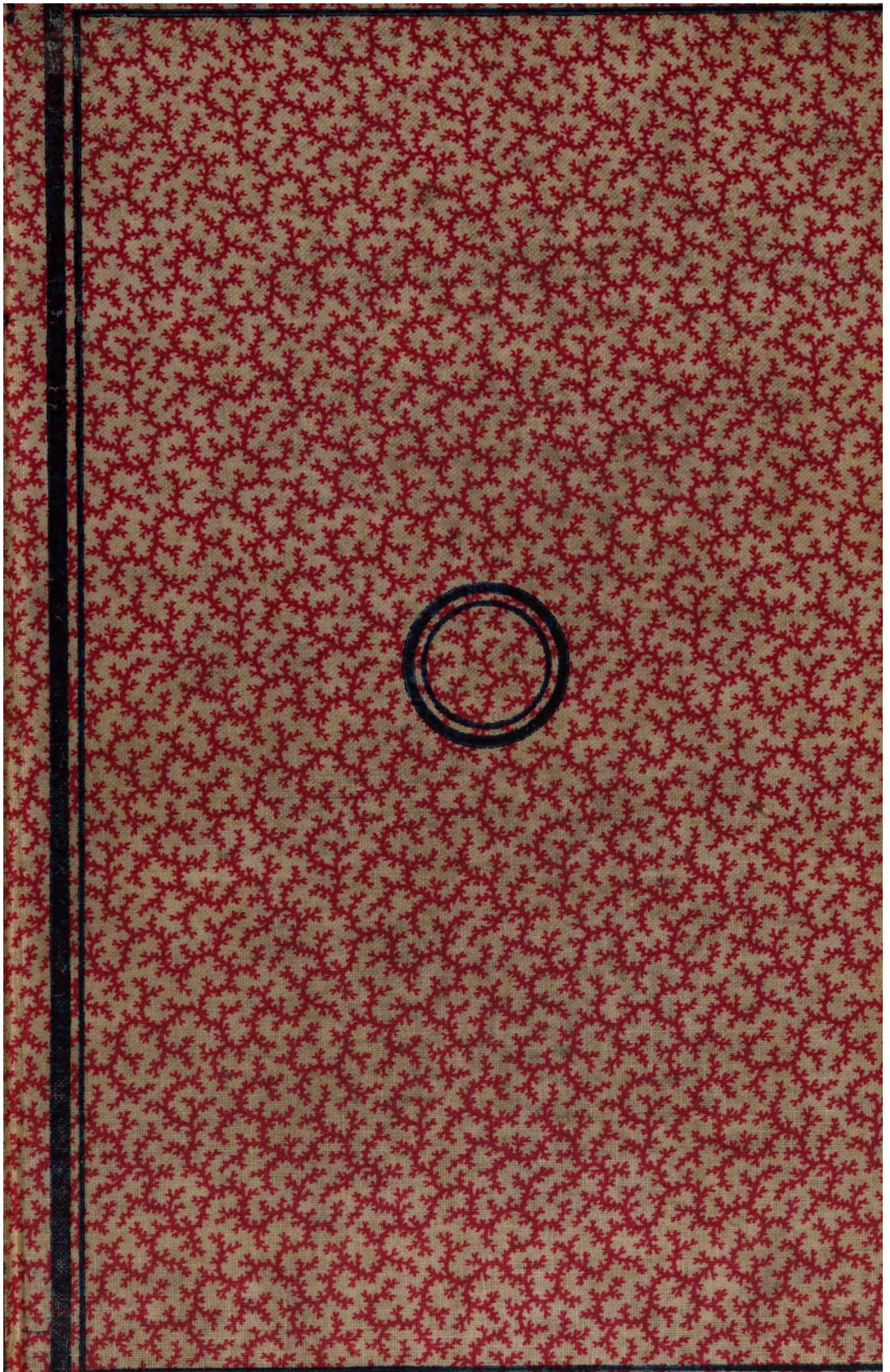
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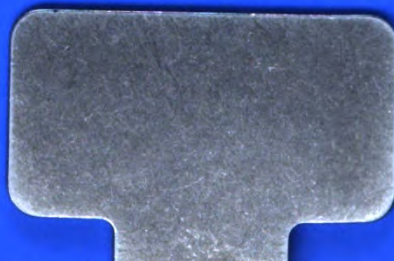


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CLARISSA.

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# CLARISSA

A *Novel*

By SAMUEL RICHARDSON

EDITED BY E. S. DALLAS

AUTHOR OF THE GAY SCIENCE

"The prolixity of Richardson, which, to our giddy paced time, is the greatest fault of his writing, was not such a fault to his contemporaries. But a modern reader may be permitted to wish that *Clarissa* had been a good deal abridged at the beginning."

Sir Walter Scott's *Memoir of Richardson*.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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**D**ACING up and down the library of the Athenæum club together, Macaulay and Thackeray came to talk of Richardson's masterpiece. The great novelist asked the great historian whether he had ever read it. "Not read *Clarissa!*" cried out Macaulay. "If you have once thoroughly entered on *Clarissa*, and are infected by it, you can't leave it. When I was in India I passed one hot season at the hills, and there were the Governor-general and the Secretary of government and the Commander-in-chief, and their wives. I had *Clarissa* with me; and as soon as they began to read it, the whole station was in a passion of excitement about Miss Harlowe and her misfortunes and her scoundrelly Lovelace! The Governor's wife seized the book, and the Secretary waited for it, and the Chief-justice could not read it for tears!"

No one who is familiar with *Clarissa* can wonder at Macaulay's admiration of it, nor be unprepared

for his account of its fascinating influence. He knew it almost by heart. It is the finest work of fiction ever written in any language, said Sir James Mackintosh. He who was our first novelist in point of time, has in fact produced our first novel in point of rank. And not only is this opinion the final outcome of English, it is also the settled faith of French, criticism. The French are our chief rivals in prose fiction; and their opinion of *Clarissa* is summed up in the saying of Alfred de Musset, that it is the *premier roman du monde*. The French, indeed, have been more unanimous than ourselves in according the highest praise to Richardson. We in England have been quick to observe whatever was weak in the man or in his works. We have been tickled by the foibles of his vanity; we have been confounded by his notions of gentility; we have been bored by the goody-goodness of his preaching; and in admiration for the rival who satirised the defects of his earliest work, we have kept back from him the full meed of praise to which he was entitled. If we have had among us men like Samuel Johnson who declared *Clarissa* to be "the first book in the world for the knowledge it displays of the human heart;" we have also had men among us, admirers of his rival Fielding (the prose Homer of human nature, as he has been called by one of them), who

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have been prejudiced enough to see in Richardson only sickliness and cant. The French, on the other hand, scarcely knew the name of Fielding; their judgment has not been disturbed by rival claims; they have, therefore, nearly without exception regarded Richardson as incomparable, and his chief romance as one of the greatest marvels of art. D'Alembert was, indeed, somewhat cold in his admiration of *Clarissa*, and Voltaire spoke sneeringly of the author's genius. But D'Alembert was never much given to admiration, and Voltaire, at least in one of his works, paid Richardson the compliment of imitating him in a style as different from his own as can well be conceived. Rousseau, more generous, declared that nothing equal to *Clarissa* or approaching it was ever written in any language; and on the death of its author, Diderot pronounced his panegyric in terms of the utmost enthusiasm. "O Richardson!" he said, "genius unique in my eyes! thou shalt form my reading at all times. If through dire necessity, through the need of a friend, or for the education of my children, I am driven to sell my books, I will sell them. But thou wilt remain to me on the same shelf with Moses, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles, and I will read you by turns. Read Richardson! Read him constantly. He is divine!" The terms of this eulogy may be extravagant, but there were

many besides Diderot who put Richardson and the Bible together.

Of the man and of his work thus lauded, it is a strange thing to say that, at least in England, they are now but little known. There are scores of circulating libraries throughout the land in which you shall ask for the finest, the most powerful, the most penetrating novel in the English language, and the librarians will tell you that they never heard of it. The fame of Fielding has been more enduring among us than that of Richardson. What novel reader has not heard of *Tom Jones*? And yet Johnson could say, "Sir, there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's than in all *Tom Jones*." If this be exaggeration, still it leaves us in wonder that an author who once commanded such praise, should have at length fallen into utter neglect. The circulating libraries give us the silver and the copper and the brass of modern fiction; and they forget the most fine gold which is hid in out of the way vaults.

Unfortunately Richardson has a great fault: he is prolix. He gives us, indeed, gold; but the gold is shapen into a goblet so huge that few of us can lift it to our lips. Or, to change the comparison, *Clarissa* is like the picture of the Primrose family, which was painted so big that it could not be got into the parlour, and was left forlorn in the outhouse. There

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is still another cause assigned for the neglect from which this novelist suffers, namely, the want of polish in his style. The French, it is said, are unable to appreciate the want of polish in an English writer, and hence they think more of him than his fellow-countrymen. Richardson is certainly not a graceful writer; but he is always clear, he is generally vigorous, he can be lively at command, and there is a raciness in his language which serves it in good stead. As a master of style he is no worse than such men as Bunyan and Defoe, who never made any attempt at rhetorical device; who, indeed, knew not what it was to trim or prune a sentence; and who yet spread their branches among us, wide and full of sap, from generation to generation. No: the source of Richardson's weakness lies not in his style, but in a prolixity which would be tiresome, even if he had the perfection of style.

Some critics, indeed, (the elder Disraeli and Lord Jeffrey among them,) make bold to say that prolixity was of the essence of his art, and that we have no right to quarrel with it unless we mean to quarrel with the novelist altogether, and to have none of him. Practically, also, the great mass of English readers have taken the same view, and have quarrelled with him out and out. French critics have thought differently; and here is one great cause of the superior regard in which the French hold Richardson. It has been

held in France that the prolixity of which all readers in all countries complain is not essential to the author's idea ; and accordingly the French translators made no scruple about the excision of much irrelevant detail from his narrative. The version of *Clarissa* by the Abbé Prevost, which made the reputation of Richardson in France, and sent the French into the wildest raptures at the mention of his name, was, in fact, an abridgement. We read in the pages of Jules Janin how Diderot glorified the work in the Café Procope, how for a whole month its author was exalted above Voltaire, how the Encyclopædia was neglected for it, how Crébillon paled before it, how Dorat wept in despair, and how the reigning mistress trembled for her empire because she had seen it on the king's table. It was the abridged translation of Prevost that stirred all this and much more enthusiasm. But, even thus shortened, the work was considered too long. In 1764, the publisher Panckoucke proposed to Rousseau that he should seriously undertake a more thoroughgoing abridgement of *Clarissa* than Prevost (who died the year before) had in his version dared. Rousseau admitted that further abridgement was necessary, and accepted the task ; but owing to his imperfect knowledge of English, he demanded his own time for the completion of it. He delayed, and delayed, and never carried out his intention. It was left for

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M. Jules Janin, a little more than twenty years ago, to produce an abridged version of *Clarissa*, which has met with the warmest acceptance, and which has given a new term of life to the reputation of Richardson in France. He was incited to this work by listening to the lecture of M. Villemain on our novelist. That accomplished critic, remarking on the undue length of Richardson's masterpiece, observed that it is the tendency of advancing civilisation to shorten labour, to expedite pleasure, and to abridge even histories. If fact detains an audience with difficulty, how can we expect, he asked, that fiction should hold us by the button for ever? Urged by this hint, M. Janin produced a version of *Clarissa* which has met with great success, although it has the demerit of making considerable alterations in the text, and also of adding to it.

I have ventured to offer to English readers a simple abridgement of the marvellous tale,—matchless in the range of prose fiction,—because, for the honour of our literature, I lament that the noblest of all novels, the most pathetic and the most sublime, should be unread and well-nigh unknown among us; and because I agree with the French critics in thinking that the prolixity which has been its bane may be diminished with an advantage to which there is no serious drawback.



Nor in arriving at this conclusion, is it necessary to underrate what both Jeffrey and the elder Disraeli set forth as to the value of prolixity in Richardson's art. Only let us understand wherein it is that this value consists, and what it is that we are to gain or lose by regard or disregard of it. The fact is that it touches Richardson's most obvious characteristic,—his undoubting faith in the reality of his story and its personages. His heroes and heroines seem to be no creatures of imagination, but living beings. He believes in them himself, and he makes his readers believe in them. When Pamela, whose history came out by instalments in a distant village, was known to be married, the good folks who were interested in her fate set the church bells ringing, and filled the air with rejoicings. When the first half of *Clarissa* was published, the author was besieged with letters entreating him to make the heroine happy in a union with her destroyer—and to reform Lovelace. "Will you not save his soul, sir?" Foreigners went to Hampstead to search out the house in the Flask Walk where Clarissa lodged, and Londoners as they strolled through King Street into Covent Garden, looked about for the shop of Smith the glover, in whose tenement Clarissa died. Now the prolixity of minute detail in which Richardson indulged went far to produce this sense of reality, and this it is that constitutes the worth of it to his

art. It does not make the story clearer, nor does it add to the interest of the events; but it seems to give them confirmation.

Yet the universal cry against Richardson's wearisomeness is pretty sure evidence that his art is, in this respect, overdone. We are delighted to have confirmation of a good story; but depend upon it that when the confirmation irks us, we have had more of it than is necessary. If we are really interested in a story, we complain of nothing which makes it either more clear or more credible. The evidence which palls upon us must needs be overmuch. And not only on this general ground may we declare the prolixity which all complain of to be unnecessary: we arrive at the same conclusion if we examine the channels into which Richardson's prolixity overflows. His prolixity is of three kinds, the first of which may be described as that of the gossip, the second as that of the moraliser, and the third as that of the complete letter-writer.

Prolixity of gossip, as displayed in the pages of literature, is most rank in the conversation of Dame Quickly. When this worthy hostess wished to bring it home to Falstaff that he had promised to marry her, she pelted his memory with a tempest of details that were more likely to drive him out of his wits than into belief:—  
“Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt

goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, upon Wednesday in Whitsun-week, when the prince broke thy head for liking his father to a singing-man of Windsor; thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then, and call me gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar; telling us, she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee, they were ill for a green wound? And didst thou not, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity with such poor people; saying, that ere long they should call me madam? And didst thou not kiss me, and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book-oath; deny it, if thou canst." Mrs. Quickly is very particular, and as she is not allowed to speak too often or too much we find her very amusing; but I suppose we should all take her word against Sir John without such a clatter of circumstantial evidence. This gossiping prolixity of hers may be found to some degree in Richardson, who is very particular in noting every trifling detail of the foreground, while, as a rule, his background is a blank. Our attention is fixed on a small group of figures, of whose surroundings, in any large sense, we know but little.

There is no broad landscape behind them ; there is no sense given to us of a great world of life bustling around, and, peradventure, intermeddling with them. But as for the little group in the foreground, we are instructed with microscopic minuteness in most of their ways, and many traits are brought into view which have no direct bearing on the story, but give a certain air of nature to the course of events, by besetting them with the redundant possibilities of life. With prolixity of this kind in the hands of a great artist it is difficult to interfere, and I have been chary of reducing any of Richardson's details where these convey additional fact, picturesque or significant.

It is different when we have to deal with prolixity of moralising. Richardson is mighty in sermons, and never weary of pointing a moral. And, doubtless, his habit of preaching about his characters, and of holding them up for warning or for example, as if they were real beings and not mere phantoms of the brain, tends to give an air of illusion to his embodiments. It seems impossible that there should be so much solemnity of discourse about persons who exist only in sport. A dream is more than a dream to us when we can be brought to accept its wanderings as the premises of an argument. But the credence which Richardson thus obtains, when he takes the pageantry of his imagina-

tion for granted as fact upon which to give us a lecture, is dearly bought. His moralising would be intrusive, even if inspired by veritable history; it becomes an intolerably tedious and solemn joke when it starts from fiction. It was regarded as a mistake in days when there were scarcely any good novels but his own in existence; in our days, when our literature teems with good novels, which avoid homily, the preaching of the author, far from tending to illusion, is at once detected as a trick. We resent the artifice of bringing God and his commandments into a story that we may give it a Credo. In epic poetry, we have, it is true, the so-called machinery of deities, one great purpose of which is precisely that of Richardson—to give the sanction of religion to the tale; and modern poets, who attempt the epic, make a grand mistake when they introduce machinery which no one believes in, and which, therefore, is powerless to invest the fictions they encumber with the faith of the soul. But the use of machinery—the use, that is, of religion in art as an instrument of sensation and as a means of pumping up faith in the story—is now obsolete; and the mild form of machinery employed by Richardson, where conscience with its monitions, or a preacher with his texts, takes the place of Jove and his decrees, defeats its end. We are not edified; we

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are not convinced ; we are not awe-struck. Weary as we should be of advice, even if its sole object were the good of our souls, we laugh it to scorn when we find that it has the further object of tricking the imagination. In this view I have felt myself free to apply the knife to a good deal of Richardson's preaching. He has so interwoven it with the story that it is impossible to cut out all. But wherever it seemed to be superfluous it has been excised, and enough has been omitted in this way to save the reader many pages of unprofitable exhortation.

Richardson's prolixity, however, is most of all apparent in the exigencies of the epistolary style of writing into which he threw his narrative. The story is told in the correspondence of the leading characters, who are addicted to letter-writing, surely as correspondents never were before, nor have been since. Some of them write so copiously that it is hard to understand how they find time for sleep or for meals, not to speak of the business which the letters record. By resorting to this method of telling his story the author undoubtedly gained not a little. He made his readers very familiar with the hearts of the several correspondents in their secret workings ; he ensured the continuity of our interest in these correspondents ; and in the way of illusion he gained whatever was to be gained by keeping himself (the showman) out of sight, and

by impressing the details of the story in repeated narratives. It is this last point that here especially demands our attention. A story once told may go in at one ear and out at the other. But when we find several witnesses vouching for it, and each repeating it after his own fashion, with those little differences of statement which always seem to betoken candour, it gains upon us. Nothing so convincing as manifold assertion. Tell a story twice, and it begins to take. Out of the mouth of two witnesses the world is convinced. Richardson knew this well, and liked to give importance to an event by telling it over and over again with variations. Who could doubt the reality of an event which was attested by several witnesses, and which all were anxious to relate with a minute accuracy wonderful to behold? This evident painstaking to ascertain the truth and this iteration had, and still have, their effect. No stories have ever imposed upon the reader so much as those of Richardson; and it is not to be denied that an abridgement of *Clarissa*, which deprives it of many repetitions, goes to deprive the author of his power of imposition. But then arises the question—Is imposition the chief thing to be desired in art? or is it the chief thing to be admired in Richardson's art? I have thought not; and have accordingly made bold in many instances to get rid of repetitions,

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or, where they could not well be dispensed with altogether, to curtail them. It is difficult to calculate how far this process of thinning the narrative may diminish the chances of a reader's credulity; for perhaps in the present day, when we are all sceptical, all inured to novel reading, and all accustomed every morning in the newspapers to distinguish between fact and fiction, these chances may not be very great. Whether great or not, it was necessary to make a choice. I am in hopes that whatever was imposing in Richardson's narrative has not suffered much at my hands; but I am sure that without abridgement he is not to be read at all.

I may add, as bearing on this point, that Richardson himself put forth his work as an abridgement. He knew the wild luxuriance of his vine, which threw out superabundant branches, and disported itself in wanton tendrils, in a waste of foliage, and in numberless small grapes, that, useless in themselves, crowded the clusters and exhausted the tree. He was aware that his story, told in the form of correspondence, had fallen into the most voluminous, indeed into an interminable method, of narrative; and he had to omit so many letters, and to be content to give the gist of so many more, that he reduced to eight volumes the correspondence of which the original bulk was ten. Surely it is no heresy to suggest



that he might well have carried this process of elimination still further; and accordingly I have acted on the suggestion of Sir Walter Scott, which I have placed as a motto on the title page. "A modern reader," he says, "may be permitted to wish that *Clarissa* had been a good deal abridged at the beginning and *Sir Charles Grandison* at the end; that the last two volumes of *Pamela* had been absolutely cancelled, and the second much compressed."

But, after all, and in spite of the prolixity on which, perhaps, I have dwelt too long because I have been anxious to justify the liberty I have taken with the work of a great master—what words can do justice to the dexterity, the pathos, and the sublimity of this tale, which ranks above all others in prose, and is indeed *facile princeps*? I have hitherto referred in particular only to its dexterity—to the wonderful skill with which Richardson contrived so to enlist our interest in his heroes and heroines that we seem to know them, they seem to belong to us, and all the fictions in which they move and have their being are accepted for fact. Voltaire laughed at the notion of an author devoting thousands upon thousands of pages all to show how a young lady in her teens was ensnared; and he declared that all

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the minute details of gossip with which Richardson indulged our curiosity could be interesting to us only if the persons to whom they related were of our own families. But there precisely is the triumph of the novelist: by the life and affectionateness of his portraiture his characters become to us as blood relations.

And yet it cannot be said that the attempt to represent nature with exceeding accuracy, as in the epistolary style of narrative adopted by Richardson, is always felicitous. The author is debarred from scenes which there is no one to describe, and he is oftentimes tempted into incongruities which are as fatal to the probability of his story as were the unities to which Addison submitted, when in his tragedy he brought the conspirators against Cato to plot in Cato's own hall. Thus (to speak first of the restrictions on his choice of subject), when the witch Ulrica stands in the burning tower by the bedside of Front de Bœuf and pours her imprecations on the head of the dying parricide, few would stop to consider that no living creature could ever have known what happened about that unhallowed deathbed. No human ear could have heard the mocking laugh which seemed to the suffocating wretch like a chorus of demons. The tower fell, covering in its fall all the guilt and all the unspeakable agony. From a scene of this

kind Richardson was debarred by the necessities of the epistolary method. It could never be described but by an author who takes upon himself the attribute of omniscience. And then again, by keeping to the epistolary plan, the author is compelled to make his correspondents divulge more than is natural. No one ever lifts the veil entirely from the recesses of his heart to reveal its workings to a friend, however loved and however trusted. Lovelace, who, with all his vices and crimes is essentially a prudent man, could not have written letters which would have put it in the power of any of his agents to bring him to justice. If he had employed Tomlinson, Leman, and others, he would have given them their instructions orally, and taken care that no one else was within hearing. Also distresses and perplexities communicated by letter reduce the recipient of the intelligence to the helpless position of the chorus in a Greek play. They are to know, but it is not intended that they should aid; and a thousand trivial reasons have to be invented to account for their incapacity. In letters, too, the verbiage is irksome. We do not care to read the compliments with which they begin and end; nor are we interested in hearing by what conveyance they reach their destination. Thus the attempt to make the externals of resemblance exact is not always successful. Probably Garrick, who played Macbeth in a bag wig and

ruffles, enchained his audience more than many gifted actors who have been assisted in their efforts by the perfection of costume and scenery.

In spite of all drawbacks—in spite of the restrictions which he accepted and the incongruities to which he was driven—Richardson produced a tale which has about it a more assured air of reality than perhaps any other that ever was written. His success in this way is very remarkable, seeing that he had no pattern to start from, unless it be imagined that he had one in the tales of Defoe and Swift, where adventures and marvels are treated with a realism of detail so effective, that Lord Chatham took the *Memoirs of a Cavalier* for history; we all know about *Mrs. Veal's Ghost*; and a story is told of an honest clergyman laying down *Gulliver's Travels* with the remark, that truly there were things in that book—which—he—for—one—could—not—believe. Richardson, however, followed no one in his path, having been led into it by an accident which I may by-and-by relate. He only followed the strong realistic bent of a true-born Englishman. The tales which in his day dealt with the affections were, in all their pastoral prettiness, artificial, and rarely condescended to the life of beings lower in the social scale than princes and princesses. He had to lead back romance to truth, to nature, and to ordinary life. It had just then reached the utmost

bourne of falsehood. Apparently without an effort he reached an extreme of realism and homeliness which has never been surpassed, and which startled the republic of letters with its prodigious success.

Great though the triumph was of Richardson's dexterity, he has achieved a still greater triumph in the depth of pathos which he has stirred, and in the sublimity of sentiment to which he has soared. Here we touch on the moral grandeur of his work. This, it must be noted, has nothing to do with his habit of moralising—a habit of which all his readers complain, although it is not without excuse. The excuse is, that just as when Hogarth rose among us, pictorial art in England was void of the ethical spirit,—was indeed, in great measure, an offence to the consciences of the people,—and he, in order to establish himself in their hearts, tried somewhat ostentatiously to lay bare the moral intent of the lines he drew; so at the same time the fashionable romances were godless and careless, having no sort of connection with the faith which is deepest in the human breast, often indeed being an outrage upon it, and Richardson felt naturally that if he were to establish himself in the hearts of his people, and especially in those of earnest mind, which it should be the artist's highest ambition to affect, he must, like Hogarth, exhibit very pointedly an ethical drift.

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It is not, however, in the display of copybook texts and good advice that the moral grandeur of *Clarissa* consists, but in the depth of tragic interest which it evokes and in the heroic splendour of the action as it draws to the close. There is something remarkable, to begin with, in the fact that the novel is a tragedy—a fact which separates it from nearly all other examples of prose fiction, and which argues on the part of its author an extraordinary intensity of feeling. Prose fiction, as a rule, belongs to a region of sentiment which, however noble or refined, lacks force to bear the weight and agony of tragic evolution, and so, for the most part, it disports itself cheerily in the comedy of life, and spins on to a happy end, attuned to marriage music. Richardson, however, has the confidence to abandon himself to the full swing of passion. He is not afraid to make the story turn upon the perpetration of the most atrocious crime which a man can commit, knowing that while he can strike us with horror at the deed, and wring and rend our hearts for the desolation of the beautiful victim undone in all her youth and innocence, he can soothe the tumult of our feelings by changing pity into worship, as the purity and majesty of the virgin soul is seen to triumph in dishonour, disaster, and death. In the whole world of literature there is nothing like this. I have already quoted phrases

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of distinguished men in which the work is described as without parallel; and these phrases are so large that they may be read as mere figures of speech. They are the downright truth. It would be difficult to find in literature a villain more desperate than Lovelace; or anything more tragic than the alternate rage and deluge of feelings with which his crime fills us—dismay and confusion of face at its infamy wrestling with the unutterable pathos of a lovely existence devastated in its prime, its trust betrayed, its affection blasted, and its purity desecrate—till, as pang succeeds pang at the dire revelation of anguish, we cry—Can such pain be, and why, oh why, have I read this book to know of it? But if it would be only difficult to find a parallel to such intensity of crime and of the passion of woe which follows thereupon, it is simply impossible to find anything to compare with the contrasted sublimity of the sequel in which our pain turns to homage of kin to jubilee, and in which the heroine—disgraced, destroyed and derelict—rises in immortal splendour above the wreck of her fair name, her fairer frame, and all her maiden promise; rises above the world where she can no more tarry; rises to the saints a saint. This it is, and not a sleek array of holy saws, that constitutes the moral grandeur of Richardson's chief performance; and this it is that places it

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beyond the reach of comparison with any other work of imagination.

It is not easy to speak of the crime, which forms the pivot of the story; for even in the present day, when our tellers of tales are supposed not to shrink from meddling with whatever is foulest in human life, it shocks us to know that any novelist has dared to wreak his genius on a subject so dreadful as the violation of a virgin. That indeed is a theme beset with danger, which none but a master of the heart dare handle, and which, if not so treated as to take us by storm, must excite us to unspeakable disgust. But Richardson is a master of imperial power, and has handled his theme, delicate in its approaches and horrible in its issues, with such commanding and yet such tender art, strangely blending before us all that is finest and most sensitive in human nature with all that is blackest and coarsest, unloosing the fountain of tears and making us feel the purifying influence of mighty sorrow, that not only is our sense of unseemliness in the plot lost in horror of the atrocity which has been committed and in the overwhelming pathos of the tragedy, but also one is tempted to call out to living romancers, Ye who dabble in vice and nibble at filth, see—mark—learn how the first of all novelists, with a heart above and a cunning beyond yours can deal



with human depravity ; for he can search and he can frankly lay bare a lower deep of abomination than you have courage even to hint at in whispers ; and his discovery of this wickedness will wound neither the taste nor the conscience of a reader so much as your finikin fumbling with the skirts of sin.

It is on the character of Lovelace that Richardson has lavished his utmost care and cunning. Its germ he found in the gay Lothario of Rowe ; but he has worked up the idea there sketched into a figure of so much importance that Lovelace is the name for an agreeable rake in half the European languages ; and he was so troubled at his own success (because of the possible harm which he might have done by too lively a picture of the accomplished blackguard), that immediately afterwards he set himself to show in Sir Charles Grandison the counterbalancing portrait of what he conceived to be a Christian gentleman. That Lovelace is depicted with wonderful subtlety is evident from the fact that, though a being made up of such contradictions could never have existed, we believe in him as a reality, and are made to accept him alternately as fascinating and detestable ; a hero and a villain ; a man likely to win the favour of a lady and yet a wretch not fit to live. His personal beauty, his wit, the keenness of his observations, and his rare assurance, rivet



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our attention, compel our admiration, and blind us for a time to the cold rancour of his nature and to the ruffian conduct which is in him its fruit. But if we are interested in Lovelace, it is the interest of curiosity, not of sympathy. A man hurried by circumstance and passion into crime may command our sympathy even though his crime may, for its concealment, engender others which are still more terrible.\* But Lovelace commands no such fellow-feeling. His life is deformed by vice till it darkens into crime; he revels in crime for the glory of it; and few things in fiction are more ghastly than the coldness of the effrontery with which, having accomplished his iniquity, he flaps his wings and crows for victory.

Lovelace is supposed to be a gentleman; but, although well born and highly cultured, his conduct

\* Thus in *Caleb Williams* there is a highborn gentleman of delicate mould, and rather deficient in physical strength, whose name is Falkland. A country squire, a gigantic lout, insults him in a ballroom, strikes him down, kicks him, tramples on him. Both leave the room, but only one reaches home alive. The squire is found murdered. Falkland is guilty; but his hitherto spotless character saves him from suspicion, except in the mind of a youth who is his servant, Caleb Williams. The youth has worshipped through his life the unsullied purity of his master, who to preserve this worship intact is urged to persecution of the young man whom he believes to be cognizant of his secret. By force of the writer's genius our sympathies are enlisted on the side of the high bred gentleman, jealous of his unspotted fame, though the seeming malevolence with which through life he pursues his second victim might, in the narrative of a less skilful novelist, give the preponderance of interest to the meddling youth whom Godwin makes us desire to clamp in the iron chest.

is such as to raise in us a doubt whether Richardson was precluded by his own station in life from the understanding of a gentleman, or whether in the time of Lovelace the men so called were unworthy of the name as determined by our present standard. The question may be raised without our attaching any importance to the complaint of Lady Mary Wortley Montague. "He has no idea of the manners of high life," she writes; "his old Lord M—— talks in the style of a country justice, and his virtuous young ladies romp like the wenches round a Maypole. Such liberties as pass between Mr. Lovelace and his cousin are not to be excused by the relation. I should have been much astonished if Lord Denbigh should have offered to kiss me; and I dare say Lord Trentham never attempted such impertinence to you." To which Sir Walter Scott fairly replies, that errors like these are, like Livy's patavinity, imperceptible to later readers; that we are not sufficiently acquainted with the manners of George the Second's reign to share in Lady Mary's displeasure; and that knowing salutation to have been for a long time permitted by custom, we are not troubled to ascertain at what particular year of God men of quality were restrained from kissing their cousins, or whether Richardson has made an anachronism in this important matter. It is from quite another point of view that the question is to

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be regarded. The fact of Lovelace breaking the seals of letters which were none of his ought of itself to brand him. Moreover, the safety of his wrongdoing adds an ugly stain of dishonour to his deep damnation. He incurs none of that risk which sometimes gives a lustre to crime. He entraps an unoffending lady of tender years into his power, and stupefies her with drugs before he has courage to commit the capital offence, which he knows will go unpunished. The worst punishment he anticipates is the reward of marriage. It is the fair young victim that in this event would be punished. What, as she herself says, must be her degradation were she to vow at the altar to love him whose love was an accursed outrage, or to honour and obey him who was saved only by her forbearance from the gallows? Yet Richardson seems to set this being before us, notwithstanding his guilt, as a gentleman; and I have been amazed to find that a writer in the *Cornhill Magazine* of the present year describes him as “a thoroughly fine gentleman of the Chesterfield type.” The devil take such gentlemen! One grudges that Lovelace should fall in a duel with an honourable man instead of rolling handcuffed to his doom in the hangman’s cart; and if it must be admitted that his letters are the most vivacious in the whole correspondence,—always sparkling, always readable,—we who can read him aright know that his wit, his

spirits, his gaiety, his power of dealing with solemn subjects so as to rob them of their importance, are but as the luminous unwholesome vapours that play upon graves and declare the dank corruption buried underneath.

Whatever we may say in criticism of Lovelace, it is a character which has the crowning merit of success, and which deserved this success, seeing that probably it gave the author more trouble than any other which occupied his pen. It is peculiar to Richardson, however, that though he could make heroines of his women, he could never make true heroes of his men. Remember the sneaking, servile demands made for Pamela by Gaffer Andrews; compare these with the dignified and spirit-stirring denunciations hurled by Basil, the father of Laurette, at the seducer of his child, in Marmontel's tale; and admit the superiority of the French author. Although Richardson is inimitable in his description of Clarissa struggling with the storms of fate, he has never pictured one of his supposed heroes under distressing or undignified circumstances. Squire B. is prosperous in his wickedness, and then respectable in his propriety. Lovelace is successful in carrying out schemes of the darkest villany ever recorded in fiction; and he is so wealthy, and withal so very prudent in money matters, that one fancies Clarissa, while she believed him to be in earnest in his

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proposals of marriage, must have considered him in her heart a stingy fellow, for the small amount of pin-money which was to have been settled on her. Sir Charles Grandison clears his estates from all encumbrances ; he is very wealthy ; and he is successful in every encounter of arms, not only in single combat with practised swordsmen, but also against overwhelming odds. The qualities of Richardson's mind imprinted themselves on his literary offspring. He was uncommonly prudent, and his heroes always partake of the same disposition. One feels inclined to speculate how that piece of perfection, "who always wrote and spoke just as he ought," would have looked, had he been kicked, instead of kicking the step-father of his young ward, Miss Jervois ; or if, when he was going onwards in life in the minuet step of his serene majesty, Lady Grandison had indeed, as suggested by Leigh Hunt, gone off with Mr. Greville. The distresses of Sir Charles consisted simply in this, that all the women of his acquaintance wanted to marry him. The old husbandman, Basil, toiling in the sweat of his brow under the burning sun in his vineyard, by the side of his weeping daughter, whom he had deprived of the trappings of her infamy, and reduced to a coarse petticoat and wooden shoes, precipitating his reproaches and his curses on the head of the kneeling, supplicating, Count, and condescending at length to

receive, as his son-in-law, the penitent nobleman, not because he is high born and wealthy, but because by his repentance he has raised himself to the level of an honest man, is a finer conception than that of any man drawn by Richardson.

He was in early life thrown much into female society, and he is far happier in his pictures of women than of men. It is rare for men to succeed in feminine portraiture; but Richardson, in laying the foundations of the modern novel, set the rule, with which we have since become familiar, at defiance. *Clarissa* is the most resplendent heroine in the whole wide circuit of romance. In the delineation of this stainless creature, who, like the lady in *Comus*, is compelled powerless to witness the orgies of the rabble rout that hem her in, and who walks alone in her saintly majesty, a sinless Margaret, the one perfect image on which the mind can repose amid the grotesque and loathsome demons of the witches' Sabbath, Richardson has achieved a miracle of beauty unapproached by any writer before or since his time. One of the charms of this lady is that she is so truly a woman as not to be faultless. There are some pardonable sneers of hers at the puffed and full-blown countenance of her sister Bella when distorted with rage, which prove the maiden to be not utterly merged in the angel; and her little con-

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trivances to deceive her persecutors by keeping reserves of pens, ink, and paper in different holes and corners, belong to that class of petty artifices which, if they be needful as a guard against the oppressor, still indicate with an amusing homeliness of touch the weakness of girlish nature.

The sort of oppression to which Clarissa was subject, and which drove her to her doom, is now impossible in English families. Our girls no longer kneel daily to their parents to ask a blessing; a simple Good Morning is held to be sufficient greeting. The treatment which Clarissa dreaded when she was to be taken to the solitary moated mansion of her tyrannical uncle, where cries for help could not be heard, and whence escape would have been impossible, there to be forcibly married, "sensible or insensible," to a suitor whom she loathed, would in the present day be incredible. No parents, however determined, would venture on such a step; and no daughter, in her wits, would fear its fulfilment. Yet we have only to read the biographies of a hundred, or less than a hundred, years ago, to find the record of marriages in which the bride was as young, as helpless, and as reluctant as Clarissa, and the bridegroom as old and as decrepit, as hideous and as debauched as Solmes. Assuming these premises, the flight of Clarissa with Lovelace becomes intelligible. "Hemmed in by bands of



sturdy rogues about," in the persons of her violent father, her vindictive brother, her unfeeling sister, her coarse and cruel uncles, she was to be delivered over to the power of that crawling reptile whom her friends had selected for her husband; and alas, she escaped from one rabble crew only to fall into the toils of a worse. Once in the power of Lovelace her fate is sealed. Not only is he determined to possess her person, cost what it may, but unsatisfied with a brute victory, he would degrade her mind to patient existence as his mistress, and reduce the purest of maidens to the level of the inmates of Mrs. Sinclair's brothel. This fiendish determination of his the author has wisely actuated by the wounded pride of a man contumeliously repulsed by the family of a lady to whom he is superior in birth. His conduct is so far of a piece with that of the Red Indian, in one of Cooper's novels, who carries off the beautiful daughter of a general, from whom he had received some fancied injury, to serve him in his wigwam—at once his slave and his concubine.

It is not till she is in the power of Lovelace that the full glory of Clarissa's character shows itself. After the capital crime has been committed on the drugged and insensible lady, whose reason is for several days paralysed by the powerful opiates which have been administered to her, Lovelace, assured of his theory

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that once subdued a woman is always subdued, insists on an interview with her, to look her into shame and confusion. When doors are double-locked and windows are barred, lest any screams should be heard to come from that fatal quadrangle, the lady steps into the midst of the plotting group. No shame—no womanly consciousness flushes that pure cheek ; for her form, though ravished, is the shrine of immaculate thought. She looks the ravisher into confusion, and the reader feels that, though physically degraded, she is morally supreme. “There is something in virgin purity,” says Mrs. Barbauld, “to which the imagination willingly pays homage. In all ages something saintly has been attached to the idea of unblemished chastity ; but it was reserved for Richardson to overcome all circumstances of dishonour and disgrace, and to throw a splendour round the violated virgin more radiant than she possessed in her first bloom. He has drawn the triumph of mental chastity ; he has drawn it uncontaminated, untarnished, and incapable of mingling with pollution.” During the remainder of her young life, when, like the ermine of fable that exists not if its fur be sullied, she pines away in her outraged purity, the mind of the reader is tossed in strife between grief and admiration, and while at last settling into laud of that saint-like image which the storms of passion, however they might tear around, could not

invade, it cannot choose but make obeisance to the great novelist, who, by the spectacle of immeasurable wrong and misery, has opened the sluices of sorrow as they have seldom been opened before, but has also rung a peerless note of triumph in despair, which suddenly transfigures sorrow into radiance, and gives one to see more than aught else in uninspired writing, the soul in royalty inviolable, and in immortal essence ascendant over the ruin of its house of clay.

For the novelist who could so prevail I claim in all the English courts of criticism, and in the regard of all his countrymen, a reversal of the sentence of neglect from which he now suffers. Let me point out a great historic fact. It is—that in the last century, not one man of us, except this Richardson, made his mark on the literature of the Continent. I have already spoken of Frenchmen coming to seek out the Flask Walk at Hampstead, where Clarissa found refuge. I might now speak of Germans coming reverently to Richardson's house at Parson's Green, to kiss the ink-horn from which he wrote; and of the Moravians, struck by the fine strain of his writings, beseeching him, through Count Zinzendorf, to leave England and to join their society. But the most important of all the facts which bear upon this question is to be found broadcast in French literature. That is a literature which has always

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been rather impervious to foreign influence ; and in the last century, it was the regnant literature of the civilised world. In this regnant literature there was not to be found a trace of English influence, save that of our novelist. The French discovered Shakespeare and Richardson about the same time. The former excited their wonder—nothing deeper ; and their wonder was mingled with smiles, at a barbaric freedom of movement and of expression abhorrent to the genius of their own drama, which they were justly proud of. But Richardson went to their hearts, and roused their enthusiasm. Although the style of novel which he invented was new to them, it did not clash with any national prejudice. They were free to enjoy him without stint : and they did enjoy him ; they worshipped him. We may say, roundly, that all else in our literature of the last century was a blank to them. But Richardson they placed on a pedestal among the greatest authors of the world. Not only was he thus exalted by the turbulent and witty intellects that in the mid-century were busily sowing the dragon's teeth which thirty years afterwards were to spring up into armed men, and to shake the foundations of Europe ; but also his glory remained through all change ; he has never been lowered in the esteem of Frenchmen ; there are troops of them at this hour living who have sworn by *Clarissa*, who have chanted hymns in her praise,

who have made music to her name, and who will tell us Englishmen, with chiding, that Richardson, one of the rarest of men, is of more account in France than in his own country.

Now it is a shame to us to need this lesson from foreigners; and it is no small thing for the little printer in Salisbury Square to have achieved the sort of greatness I have described. To have been able to pass beyond the confines of English literature, and to take possession of the French, implies in him a faculty unknown to all his fellow countrymen of last century, however great may be their gifts, and however splendid their renown: it implies the rare power which no one else among us possessed of reaching home to the universal heart. The greatest of his countrymen in that century had but a local influence, and a repute wholly insular. Richardson alone of us beamed upon the wide world, and was recognised in the current of European thought. And so now he is forgotten. It is like what happens in a provincial town, where some poet or painter, who ministers to local tastes, and hits the local fancy, is more cherished in life and, after it, has more care taken of his tombstone, than some greater man whose fame resounds all England over. There is Henry Fielding, your local celebrity; a great writer, no doubt; but one for whom, say what you will, you have ceased to care. He, too,

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notwithstanding his masculine acumen, his scholarly style, and his flowing humour, has dropped into oblivion; only he has fared better than Richardson, because (to follow Johnson's distinction between the novel of manners in which he, and the novel of character in which his rival, excelled,) he hit the local feeling, he caught the manners of his day and generation, he made himself all at home with his own people, studying their ways. But now that we have got tired even of this favourite writer, with all his strong sense, and all his power of adapting himself to our insular humours, perhaps I may be heard in Richardson's behalf. I challenge for him, as I have said, in all the courts of English criticism, and in the regard of all his countrymen, a reconsideration of his claims. They are the claims of a man, who, though inferior in culture and in comedy to Fielding, went deeper into the heart than he, rose higher, and carried further; who was more in literature than a local magnate; and who deserves more than temporary fame. He alone, of Englishmen in the last century, had the ear of Europe; and his work is for all time.

Richardson is so little known to English readers, that they may expect here some account of his private history. There is not much to be told, and that little

is not of a nature to fill us with awe. Like the great Apostle, he was weak of presence; and whatever he might be to foreigners, he was in his own country neither a prophet nor a hero. Yet the facts of his life are interesting, and indeed worthy of note.

He was the son of a carpenter, and was born somewhere in Derbyshire in the year 1689. Of his early life we know little more than he has himself told us. "I recollect," he says, "that I was early noted for having invention. I was not fond of play as other boys: my schoolfellows used to call me *Serious* and *Gravity*; and five of them particularly delighted to single me out, either for a walk, or at their fathers' houses, or at mine, to tell them stories, as they phrased it. Some I told them from my reading, as true; others from my head as mere invention, of which they would be most fond, and often were affected by them. One of them particularly, I remember, was for putting me to write a history, as he called it, on the model of Tommy Pots; I now forget what it was, only that it was of a servant man preferred by a fine young lady (for his goodness) to a lord, who was a libertine. All my stories carried with them, I am bold to say, an useful moral." And then he goes on to describe how his faculty for letter writing, which formed the basis of his style, came to be formed;

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and how he obtained his first insight into the intricacies of feminine character. "As a bashful and not forward boy," he says, "I was an early favourite with all the young women of taste and reading in the neighbourhood. Half a dozen of them, when met to work with their needles, used, when they got a book they liked, and thought I should, to borrow me to read to them—their mothers sometimes with them; and both mothers and daughters used to be pleased with the observations they put me upon making. I was not more than thirteen, when three of these young women, unknown to each other, having an high opinion of my taciturnity, revealed to me their love-secrets, in order to induce me to give them copies to write after, or correct, for answers to their lovers' letters; nor did any one of them ever know that I was the secretary to the others. I have been directed to chide, and even repulse, when an offence was either taken or given, at the very time that the heart of the chider or repulser was open before me, overflowing with esteem and affection; and the fair repulser, dreading to be taken at her word, directing this word, or that expression, to be softened or changed. One, highly gratified with her lover's fervour, and vows of everlasting love, has said, when I have asked her direction, I cannot tell you what to write, but (her heart on her lips) you cannot write too kindly.



All her fear was only that she should incur slight for her kindness." If in this coterie of mantua-makers he learned much of the feminine mind, and became an adept in letter-writing, it may be added that among them also was nurtured that interest in the trifling details of feminine attire, which in his novels he loved to dwell upon, and which at times led him to call the attention of his readers to a sash or a tippet or a piece of lace, while they are all breathless for news of life or death.

Richardson came to London at the age of seventeen, and bound himself to a printer. He was a most industrious, prudent man; and ere long was able to set up on his own account, marrying his master's daughter. At the same time his literary talents became manifest; and he not only printed books, but furnished the booksellers with prefaces, dedications, and indexes. And so he flourished—one thing leading to another—until, at length, he had a large business; he became printer to the House of Commons, printer also to the King; he was exceedingly well to do; and he could afford the luxury of a villa first at Northend, near Hammer-smith, then at Parson's Green, in addition to his establishment in Salisbury Court, now called Salisbury Square. He married a second time; and led, in honour and prosperity, the happy, peaceful life of a plain, thrifty, good-hearted burgess; disturbed only

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by this, that with grief of soul he had to see most of his children to the grave. He had to encounter no less than eleven deaths in two years (but these were of more than his children); his nerves were so shaken that he suffered much in health; he flew to the popular nostrums, tarwater and a vegetable diet; he exercised himself diligently in town and country on a chamber-horse; and so he kept going to the age of seventy-two, when he died and was buried in the middle aisle of St. Bride's, near the pulpit.

He took to novel writing apparently by chance. Two of the booksellers, his friends, had long urged him to prepare for them a complete letter-writer suitable for the class of persons likely to need such a work. He undertook the task, and imagining a servant maid in the position of Pamela, he wrote letters of good advice to her till they grew into a story. The story is not a pleasant one to read, and it is made so nauseous by the excess of prosy advice which it contains that the public went not a little with Fielding when he turned it into ridicule by his parody of *Joseph Andrews*. The ridicule was so pungent and so deserved—for the work, with all its parade of morality, is not moral and is altogether unhealthy in tone—that it went some way to damage the author's reputation as a novelist; and its effect has been lasting, for it is in fact partly

owing to the contempt thus shown for Richardson's first and feeblest work that he is now so little known. Yet there is this to be said for *Pamela*, that it made a revolution in the art of novel writing, and that it set Fielding himself on his legs. Fielding began *Joseph Andrews* in jest, but he finished it in all seriousness, and made himself a great name, overshadowing that of Richardson, by following Richardson's example. "Hitherto," says Sir Walter Scott, "romances had been written, generally speaking, in the old French taste, containing the protracted amours of princes and princesses, told in language coldly extravagant and metaphysically absurd. In these wearisome performances there appeared not the most distant allusion to the ordinary tone of feeling, the slightest attempt to paint mankind as it exists in the ordinary walks of life—all was rant and bombast, stilt and buskin. It will be Richardson's eternal praise, did he merit no more, that he tore from his personages those painted vizards which concealed, under a clumsy and affected disguise, everything like the natural lineaments of the human countenance, and placed them before us barefaced in all the actual changes of feature and complexion and all the light and shade of human passion. It requires a reader to be in some degree acquainted with the huge folios of inanity, over which our ancestors yawned themselves to sleep,

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ere he can estimate the delight they must have experienced from this return to truth and nature.”

*Pamela*, which made this revolution and created a great sensation, was published in 1740, when the author was fifty-one years of age; which reminds one of Thackeray's saying, that no man can well write a novel after fifty. Richardson was close upon sixty when his masterpiece, *Clarissa*, was published; and he was sixty-five when *Sir Charles Grandison*, which ranks next in importance, made its appearance. The honest man was delighted at his own success, and had the satisfaction of knowing that, though his sons and daughters died, the children of his brain would live. He had an enjoyment of praise which a man's contemporaries dislike, though, when he is dead, we pardon it easily. Why should we grudge the good man his eagerness for esteem? He has lived a dull plodding life—respectable but inglorious; seems but one of the common herd of citizens—podgy, patient, content in his insignificance, and aiming, as the crown of his ambition, to be the master of his guild. Suddenly, at the mature age of fifty-one, when many a man thinks of retiring from business, he finds himself famous; he has won a name in the literature of his country; he has astonished the world; he will go down to posterity. What wonder if his heart is in his mouth at the change in his expectations; if he

can scarcely believe it true; and if he is greedy for every scrap of assurance from the chronicle of his success?

But his friends and neighbours could not take this into account; they tittered over his appetite for praise; and they told, with envious delight, queer stories of the way in which ever and anon it was mortified. Boswell, who, bestowing worship on one great man, took it out in dispraise of others, had, of course, his malicious tale to tell. "A literary lady," he says, and he means Mrs. Lennox, "has favoured me with a characteristic anecdote of Richardson. One day, at his country house at Northend, where a large company was assembled at dinner, a gentleman, who was just returned from Paris, wishing to please Richardson, mentioned to him a flattering circumstance, that he had seen his *Clarissa* lying on the king's brother's table. Richardson, observing that part of the company were engaged in talking to each other, affected then not to attend to it; but, by-and-by, when there was a general silence, and he thought that the flattery might be fully heard, he addressed himself to the gentleman: 'I think, sir, you were saying something about——' pausing in a high flutter of expectation. The gentleman, provoked at his inordinate vanity, resolved not to indulge it, and with an exquisitely sly air of indifference, answered:

‘A mere trifle, sir; not worth repeating!’ The mortification of Richardson was visible, and he did not speak ten words more the whole day. Dr. Johnson was present, and appeared to enjoy it much.” All very fine, we may now say; but we are not going to quarrel with the honest printer, son of a carpenter, who had passed all his days in obscurity, because, when he came to the end of them, the discovery that he was somebody made him palpitate, and he was not proud enough to conceal it.

He surrounded himself with folks who enjoyed his society, who ministered to his love of praise, and who listened to his stories in their progress. These were chiefly ladies, who rustled their silks about the kindly old man and plied him with letters. But among them were to be found some of the other sex, and, notably, that jaded reprobate, Colley Cibber. Colley would get the loose sheets of *Sir Charles Grandison* to read, and say at one time: “I have just finished the sheets you favoured me with; but never found so strong a proof of your sly nature, as to have hung me upon tenters, till I see you again. Z—ds! I have not patience, till I know what’s become of her. Why, you!—I don’t know what to call you!—Ah! ah! you may laugh if you please; but how will you be able to look me in the face, if the lady should ever be able to show hers again? What piteous, d—d, disgraceful pickle have you plunged her in?

For God's sake send me the sequel; or—I don't know what to say." Then again: "The delicious meal I made of Miss Byron on Sunday last, has given me an appetite for another slice of her, off from the spit, before she is served up to the public table; if about five o'clock to-morrow afternoon will not be inconvenient, Mrs. Brown and I will come and piddle upon a bit more of her; but pray let your whole family, with Mrs. Richardson at the head of them, come in for their share."

It is chiefly, however, by women that Richardson was surrounded. They loved his purity and his goodness; and they were not backward in giving him the incense which men rarely offer to men. One lady indeed expressed a wish that he were himself a lady; and for her wish she gave an odd Hibernian reason. "I am more and more charmed with your *Clarissa*," she says; "it is indeed a noble character; but, I fear, nowhere to be met with except in your letters. What a pity it is you are not a woman, and blest with means of shining as she did; for a person capable of drawing such a character would certainly be able to act in the same manner, if in a like situation!" It is to be feared, however, that if Richardson were indeed a woman, neither this *Cleomira*, nor the other fair dames who gathered around him, would have been so lavish of their admiration. As it was, the novelist led a pleasant life

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among them, with much tea-drinking and buttered toast. With one of his fair friends, Lady Bradshaigh, he held for some time a correspondence, which was on her side anonymous. She was shy in discovering herself, not knowing what manner of man Richardson was apart from authorship; and he drew his own portrait for her as follows:—"I go through the park once or twice a week to my little retirement; but I will for a week together be in it every day three or four hours, at your command, till you tell me you have seen a person who answers to this description: namely, short; rather plump than emaciated, notwithstanding his complaints; about five feet five inches; fair wig; lightish cloth coat, all black besides; one hand generally in his bosom, the other a cane in it, which he leans upon under the skirts of his coat usually, that it may imperceptibly serve him as a support, when attacked by sudden tremors or startings, and dizziness, which too frequently attack him, but, thank God, not so often as formerly; looking directly fore-right, as passers-by would imagine, but observing all that stirs on either hand of him without moving his short neck; hardly ever turning back; of a light-brown complexion; teeth not yet failing him; smoothish faced, and ruddy cheeked; at sometimes looking to be about sixty-five, at other times much younger; a regular even



pace, stealing away ground, rather than seeming to rid it ; a grey eye, too often overclouded by mistiness from the head ; by chance lively—very lively it will be, if he have hope of seeing a lady whom he loves and honours ; his eye always on the ladies ; if they have very large hoops, he looks down and supercilious, and as if he would be thought wise, but perhaps the sillier for that : as he approaches a lady, his eye is never fixed first upon her face, but upon her feet, and thence he raises it up, pretty quickly for a dull eye ; and one would think (if we thought him at all worthy of observation) that from her air, and (the last beheld) her face, he sets her down in his mind as *so or so*, and then passes on to the next object he meets ; only then looking back, if he greatly likes or dislikes, as if he would see if the lady appear to be all of a piece, in the one light or in the other. Are these marks distinct enough, if you are resolved to keep all the advantages you set out with ? And from this odd, this grotesque figure, think you, madam, that you have anything to apprehend ? anything that will not rather promote than check your mirth ? I dare be bold to say (and allow it too) that you would rather see this figure than any other you ever saw, whenever you should find yourself graver than you wish to be.”

Not a commanding figure—is he ?—this squat

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citizen, with little pig's eyes dotted in his fat bulbous face. And to talk to him, slow of speech as he is, we are as little impressed by the strength of his mind as by the dignity of his presence. Call this man great! I venture to do so, and even to claim for him the veneration of his countrymen. But in doing so, I am bound to say frankly, that I lay no stress on his intellectual eminence. Nay, for that matter, I may at once make a clean breast of it and say, that having read a good many novels in my time, I am not at all struck with their intellectual grasp, nor feel that great force of thought is needed in them for the attainment of extraordinary success. It is not to be denied that there are great intellectual novelists. No one can read Fielding, or Scott, or Thackeray (to speak only of the dead) without feeling in their works a great intellectual momentum. But is it their intellectual momentum, the breadth of their thinking, and the fulness of their culture, that is the chief constituent of their success? Not so; it is a knack of storytelling which they share in common with men and women, whose minds are, as compared with theirs, what our Yankee friends would call one-horse minds. In driving a novel, six horses are not much better than one. Perhaps the one-horse novel will overtake the six-horse vehicle on the road. It is not always the most powerful minds that most enthrall

us in the stories they tell. Or to state the case still more broadly—it is not always the most powerful things in nature that give us the most pleasure. That singer who fills your ear with the most ravishing melody—who has a power beyond that of any created thing of stirring your whole soul into tumult, and of holding you spell-bound—would you be surprised to learn, that what we call intellect and worship as such, is dead or dormant in him ; that he passes for a fool ; and that he has not brains enough even to read the music which he sings ? Yet this is often true. And so in story-telling ; there is a knack of weaving events, which many an old crone possesses, and which is denied to the lords of intellect. Therefore, it need not disturb us to say of Richardson that, intellectually, he was a man of limited means. But it is the fault of criticism to set too much store by mere intellectual display, as if intellect in this world were all in all. Unhappily the world is in the main composed of stupid people ; our utmost of intellect is never much ; and the higher any man soars in the scale of intellect, the more does he feel his own littleness with the smallness of the interval in reason that separates himself from his dog.

In the reckoning of magnitude there is something to be said for the heart. Richardson had a great heart. He nursed the consciousness of in-

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tense feeling, as men of high intellect nurse the consciousness of urgent thought. In Shakespeare we have vast tides of both—the thoughts that sway mankind, and the feelings that drive us more blindly. But after him there is no such tide of deep and dominant feeling, no such command of passionate situation, no such access to the most tremulous currents of emotion, to be found in our literature as in the pages of Richardson; and Richardson had a religious bias that enabled him to traverse and to fathom a sublime flood of feeling to which the great dramatist never drew near. His range of sympathy does not appear to have been great; and he is by no means remarkable for versatility. But within his range he is very intense; wonderfully true; and fine as fine as can be. For this man, though his intellect was only respectable, and though his outward form was ungainly, we may well claim the attribute of greatness, by reason of the narrative skill wherewith he has carried us to the deeps of the heart, and tossed us to and fro on billows of feeling, which are known full well in life, but which few besides himself have dared to navigate in fiction. When we think of the profundity of the feelings which he has sounded with consummate ease, we need not wonder at those French critics, who, to this day, speak of his work as colossal; and if our hearts can vibrate to the

piercing strain of victory to which he has set the catastrophe of a fair life destroyed, we shall still less need their apologies when we hear them pronounce this work divine.

E. S. D.

NOTE.

To prevent any mistake as to the name of this novel, which is sometimes supposed to be *Clarissa Harlowe*, a copy of the original title page is printed opposite.

It may be right to add that nearly all the short passages of narrative which intersperse the following correspondence, and are printed in Italics, belong to the author; and that the editor is responsible only for those which are subscribed as his.

CLARISSA:  
OR, THE  
HISTORY  
OF A  
YOUNG LADY.

Comprehending  
The most important Concerns of PRIVATE LIFE.

And particularly shewing  
The DISTRESSES that may attend the Misconduct  
both of PARENTS and CHILDREN  
In Relation to MARRIAGE.

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Published by the Editor of PAMELA.

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VOL. I.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR S. RICHARDSON

And Sold by A. MILLAR, over-against CATHERINE-STREET in the STRAND:  
J. and Ja. RIVINGTON, in ft. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD:  
JOHN OSBORN, in PATER-NOSTER ROW:  
And by S. LEAKE, at BATH.

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M.DCC.XLVIII.



## *PREFACE.*

**T**HE following history is given in a series of letters written principally in a double yet separate correspondence ;

Between two young ladies of virtue and honour, bearing an inviolable friendship for each other, and writing not merely for amusement, but upon the most interesting subjects ; in which every private family, more or less, may find itself concerned : and,

Between two gentlemen of free lives ; one of them glorying in his talents for stratagem and invention, and communicating to the other, in confidence, all the secret purposes of an intriguing head and resolute heart.

But here it will be proper to observe, for the sake of such as may apprehend hurt to the morals of youth, from the more freely written letters, that the gentlemen, though professed libertines as to the female sex, and making it one of their wicked maxims, to keep no faith with any of the individuals of it, who are thrown into their power, are not, however, either infidels or scoffers ; nor yet such as think themselves freed from the observance of those other moral duties which bind man to man.

On the contrary, it will be found, in the progress of the



work, that they very often make such reflections upon each other, and each upon himself and his own actions, as reasonable beings must make, who disbelieve not a future state of rewards and punishments, and who one day propose to reform—one of them actually reforming, and by that means giving an opportunity to censure the freedoms which fall from the gayer pen and lighter heart of the other.

And yet that other, although in unbosoming himself to a select friend, he discover wickedness enough to entitle him to general detestation, preserves a decency, as well in his images, as in his language, which is not always to be found in the works of some of the most celebrated modern writers, whose subjects and characters have less warranted the liberties they have taken.

In the letters of the two young ladies, it is presumed will be found not only the highest exercise of a reasonable and practical friendship, between minds endowed with the noblest principles of virtue and religion, but, occasionally interspersed, such delicacy of sentiments, particularly with regard to the other sex ; such instances of impartiality, each freely, as a fundamental principle of their friendship, blaming, praising, and setting right the other, as are strongly to be recommended to the observation of the younger part (more especially) of the female readers.

The principal of these two young ladies is proposed as an exemplar to her sex. Nor is it any objection to her being so, that she is not in all respects a perfect character. It was not only natural, but it was necessary, that she should have some faults, were it only to show the reader how laudably she could mistrust and blame herself, and carry to her own heart, divested of self-partiality, the

censure which arose from her own convictions. As far as is consistent with human frailty, and as far as she could be perfect, considering the people she had to deal with, and those with whom she was inseparably connected, she is perfect. To have been impeccable, must have left nothing for the divine grace and a purified state to do, and carried our idea of her from woman to angel. As such is she often esteemed by the man whose heart was so corrupt, that he could hardly believe human nature capable of the purity, which, on every trial or temptation, shone out in hers.

Besides the four principal persons, several others are introduced, whose letters are characteristic: and it is presumed that there will be found in some of them, but more especially in those of the chief character among the men, and the second character among the women, such strokes of gaiety, fancy, and humour, as will entertain and divert, and at the same time both warn and instruct.

All the letters are written while the hearts of the writers must be supposed to be wholly engaged in their subjects (the events at the time generally dubious): so that they abound not only with critical situations, but with what may be called instantaneous descriptions and reflections (proper to be brought home to the breast of the youthful reader); as also with affecting conversations, many of them written in the dialogue or dramatic way.

“Much more lively and affecting,” says one of the principal characters, “must be the style of those who write in the height of a present distress; the mind tortured by the pangs of uncertainty (the events then hidden in the womb of fate); than the dry, narrative, unanimated style of a person relating difficulties and dangers surmounted,

can be ; the relater perfectly at ease ; and if himself unmoved by his own story, not likely greatly to affect the reader."

What will be found to be more particularly aimed at in the following work, is—to warn the inconsiderate and thoughtless of the one sex, against the base arts and designs of specious contrivers of the other—to caution parents against the undue exercise of their natural authority over their children in the great article of marriage—to warn children against preferring a man of pleasure to a man of probity, upon that dangerous but too commonly received notion, that a reformed rake makes the best husband—but above all, to investigate the highest and most important doctrines not only of morality, but of Christianity, by showing them thrown into action in the conduct of the worthy characters ; while the unworthy, who set those doctrines at defiance, are condignly, and, as may be said, consequentially, punished.

From what has been said, considerate readers will not enter upon the perusal of the piece before them, as if it were designed only to divert and amuse. It will probably be thought tedious to all such as dip into it, expecting a light novel, or transitory romance ; and look upon story in it (interesting as that is generally allowed to be) as its sole end, rather than as a vehicle to the instruction.

Different persons, as might be expected, have been of different opinions in relation to the conduct of the heroine in particular situations ; and several worthy persons have objected to the general catastrophe, and other parts of the history. Whatever is thought material of these shall be taken notice of by way of postscript, at the conclusion of the history ; for this work being addressed to the public

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as a history of life and manners, those parts of it which are proposed to carry with them the force of an example, ought to be as unobjectible as is consistent with the design of the whole, and with human nature.



## NAMES OF THE PRINCIPAL PERSONS.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE . . .	A young lady of great beauty and merit.
ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ. . .	Her admirer.
JAMES HARLOWE, ESQ. . . .	Father of CLARISSA.
MRS. HARLOWE . . . . .	His lady.
JAMES HARLOWE . . . . .	Their only son.
ARABELLA . . . . .	Their elder daughter.
JOHN HARLOWE, ESQ. . . .	Elder brother of JAMES HARLOWE, Sen.
ANTHONY HARLOWE . . . .	Third brother.
ROGER SOLMES, ESQ. . . .	} An admirer of CLARISSA, favoured by her friends.
MRS. HERVEY . . . . .	Half-sister of MRS. HARLOWE.
MISS DOLLY HERVEY . . . .	Her daughter.
MRS. JUDITH NORTON . . . .	} A woman of great piety and discretion, who had a principal share in the education of CLARISSA.
COLONEL WM. MORDEN . . . .	A near relation of the HARLOWES.
MISS HOWE . . . . .	} The most intimate friend, companion, and correspondent of CLARISSA.
MRS. HOWE . . . . .	Her mother.
CHARLES HICKMAN, ESQ. . . .	An admirer of MISS HOWE.
LORD M. . . . .	Uncle to MR. LOVELACE.
LADY SARAH SADLIER . . . .	} Half-sisters of LORD M.
LADY BETTY LAWRENCE . . . .	} Half-sisters of LORD M.
MISS CHARLOTTE MONTAGUE . . . .	} Nieces of the same Nobleman.
MISS PATTY MONTAGUE . . . .	} Nieces of the same Nobleman.
DR. LEWIN . . . . .	A worthy divine.
MR. ELIAS BRAND . . . . .	A pedantic young clergyman.
DR. H. . . . .	An humane physician.
MR. GODDARD . . . . .	An honest and skilful apothecary.
JOHN BEDFORD, ESQ. . . . .	} MR. LOVELACE'S principal intimate and confidant.
RICHARD MOWBRAY . . . . .	} Esqs., libertine friends of MR. LOVELACE.
THOMAS DOLEMAN . . . . .	} Esqs., libertine friends of MR. LOVELACE.
JAMES TOURVILLE . . . . .	} Esqs., libertine friends of MR. LOVELACE.
THOMAS BELTON . . . . .	} Esqs., libertine friends of MR. LOVELACE.
MRS. MOORE . . . . .	} A widow, keeping a lodging-house at Hampstead.
MISS RAWLINGS . . . . .	A notable young gentlewoman there.
MRS. BEVIS . . . . .	A lively young widow there.
MRS. SINCLAIR . . . . .	} The pretended name of a private brothel-keeper in London.
CAPTAIN TOMLINSON . . . . .	} The assumed name of a vile pander to the debaucheries of MR. LOVELACE.
SALLY MARTIN . . . . .	} Assistants of, and partners with, the infamous SINCLAIR.
POLLY HORTON . . . . .	} Assistants of, and partners with, the infamous SINCLAIR.
DORCAS WYKES . . . . .	An artful servant at the vile house.

CLARISSA.



*Part First.—Her Home.*



# CLARISSA.

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## *Part First.—Her Home.*

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MISS ANNA HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*January 10.*



I AM extremely concerned, my dearest friend, for the disturbances that have happened in your family. I long to have the particulars from yourself.

Mr. Diggs the Surgeon, whom I sent for at the first hearing of the rencounter, to inquire, for your sake, how your brother was, told me, that there was no danger from the wound, if there were none from the fever.

They say, that Mr. Lovelace could not avoid drawing his sword, and that either your brother's unskilfulness or passion left him from the very first pass entirely in his power.

Write to me, therefore, my dear, the whole of your story from the time that Mr. Lovelace was first introduced into your family; and particularly an account of all that passed between him and your sister, about which there are different reports; some people scrupling not to insinuate that the younger sister has stolen a lover from the elder.

Your ever grateful and affectionate

ANNA HOWE.



Will you oblige me with a copy of the preamble to the clauses in your grandfather's will in your favour; and allow me to send it to my aunt Harman? She is very desirous to see it.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

HARLOWE PLACE, *January 13.*



WILL begin, my dearest friend, as you command, with Mr. Lovelace's address to my sister.

It was in pursuance of a conference between Lord M. and my Uncle Antony, that Mr. Lovelace paid his respects to my sister Arabella. My brother was then in Scotland, busying himself in viewing the condition of the estate which was left him there by his generous godmother, together with one in Yorkshire. I was also absent at my dairyhouse, as it is called, busied in the accounts relating to the estate which my grandfather had the goodness to devise to me; and which once a year are left to my inspection, although I have given the whole into my father's power.

My sister made me a visit there the day after Mr. Lovelace had been introduced; and seemed highly pleased with the gentleman; his birth, his fortune, his great expectations.

"So handsome a man! O her beloved Clary!" (for then she was ready to love me dearly, from the overflowings of her good humour on his account!) "He was but too handsome a man for her! Were she but as amiable as Somebody, there would be a probability of holding his affections! For he was wild, she heard; very wild, very gay, loved intrigue; but he was young, a man of sense; would see his error, could she but have patience with his faults, if his faults were not cured by marriage."

Thus she ran on; and then wanted me "to see the

charming man," as she called him. Again concerned, "that she was not handsome enough for him;" with, "a sad thing, that the man should have the advantage of the woman in that particular!" But then, stepping to the glass, she complimented herself, "that she was very well: that there were many women deemed passable who were inferior to herself; that she was always thought comely, and comeliness, let her tell me, having not so much to lose as beauty had, would hold, when that would evaporate or fly off. Nay, for that matter," (and then again she turned to the glass) "her features were not irregular; her eyes not at all amiss." And I remember they were more than usually brilliant at that time. "Nothing, in short, to be found fault with, though nothing very engaging, she doubted—was there, Clary?"

Excuse me, my dear, I never was thus particular before; no, not to you. Nor would I now have written thus freely of a sister, but that she makes a merit to my brother of disowning that she ever liked him.

She liked the gentleman still more at his next visit; and yet he made no particular address to her, although an opportunity was given him for it. This was wondered at, as my uncle had introduced him into our family declaredly as a visitor to my sister. But as we are ever ready to make excuses when in good humour with ourselves for the perhaps not unwilful flights of those whose approbation we wish to engage, so my sister found out a reason much to Mr. Lovelace's advantage for his not improving the opportunity that was given him. It was bashfulness, truly, in him. (Bashfulness in Mr. Lovelace, my dear!) Indeed, gay and lively as he is, he has not the look of an impudent man. But I fancy it is many, many years ago since he was bashful.

Thus, however, could my sister make it out. "Upon her word, she believed Mr. Lovelace deserved not the bad character he had as to women. He was really, to her

thinking, a modest man. He would have spoken out, she believed ; but once or twice as he seemed to intend to do so, he was under so agreeable a confusion ! Such a profound respect he seemed to show her. A perfect reverence, she thought. She loved dearly that a man in courtship should show a reverence to his mistress." So indeed we all do, I believe : and with reason ; since, if I may judge from what I have seen in many families, there is little enough of it shown afterwards. And she told my aunt Hervey that she would be a little less upon the reserve next time he came. "She was not one of those flirts, not she, who would give pain to a person that deserved to be well treated ; and the more pain for the greatness of his value for her." I wish she had not Somebody whom I love in her eye.

In his third visit, Bella governed herself by this kind and considerate principle ; so that, according to her own account of the matter, the man might have spoken out. But he was still bashful : he was not able to overcome this unseasonable reverence. So this visit went off as the former.

But now she began to be dissatisfied with him. She compared his general character with this his particular behaviour to her ; and having never been courted before, owned herself puzzled how to deal with so odd a lover. "What did the man mean, she wondered ? Had not her uncle brought him declaredly as a suitor to her ? It could not be bashfulness (now she thought of it) since he might have opened his mind to her uncle, if he wanted courage to speak directly to her. Not that she cared much for the man neither : but it was right, surely, that a woman should be put out of doubt early as to a man's intentions, in such a case as this, from his own mouth. Reserves were painful, she must needs say, to open and free spirits like hers. And yet she must tell my aunt (to whom all this was directed) that she should never forget what she

owed to her sex and to herself, were Mr. Lovelace as unexceptionable in his morals as in his figure, and were he to urge his suit ever so warmly."

I was not of her council. I was still absent. And it was agreed upon between my aunt Hervey and her, that she was to be quite solemn and shy in his next visit, if there were not a peculiarity in his address to her.

But my sister it seems had not considered the matter well. This was not the way to be taken with a man of Mr. Lovelace's penetration. Nor with any man; since if love has not taken root deep enough to cause it to shoot out into declaration, if an opportunity be fairly given for it, there is little room to expect that the blighting winds of anger or resentment will bring it forward.

How they managed it in their next conversation I know not. One would be tempted to think by the issue, that Mr. Lovelace was ungenerous enough to seek the occasion given, and to improve it. Yet he thought fit to put the question too. But, she says, it was not till, by some means or other (she knew not how), he had wrought her up to such a pitch of displeasure with him, that it was impossible for her to recover herself at the instant. Nevertheless he reurged his question, as expecting a definitive answer, without waiting for the return of her temper, or endeavouring to mollify her; so that she was under a necessity of persisting in her denial; yet gave him reason to think she did not dislike his address, only the manner of it.

And thus, as Mr. Lovelace thought fit to take it, had he his answer from my sister. It was with very great regret, as he pretended (I doubt the man is an hypocrite, my dear), that he acquiesced in it. "So much determinedness; such a noble firmness in my sister, that there was no hope of prevailing upon her to alter sentiments she had adopted on full consideration." He sighed, as Bella told us, when he took his leave of her. "Profoundly sighed—grasped her hand, and kissed it with such an

ardour—withdrew with such an air of solemn respect—she had him then before her. She could almost find in her heart, although he had vexed her, to pity him.” She little thought that he would not renew his offer.

He waited on my mother after he had taken leave of Bella, and reported his ill success in so respectful a manner, as well with regard to my sister as to the whole family, and with so much concern, that it left upon them all impressions in his favour, and a belief that this matter would certainly be brought on again. But Mr. Lovelace going up directly to town, where he stayed a whole fortnight, and meeting there with my uncle Antony, to whom he regretted his niece’s cruel resolution not to change her state, it was seen that there was a total end of the affair.

My sister was not wanting to herself on this occasion. She made a virtue of necessity ; and the man was quite another man with her. “A vain creature ! A steady man, a man of virtue, a man of morals, was worth a thousand of such gay flutterers. Her sister Clary might think it worth her while perhaps to try to engage such a man. She had patience. She was mistress of persuasion ; and indeed, to do the girl justice, had something of a person. But as for her, she would not have a man of whose heart she could not be sure for one moment ; no, not for the world : and most sincerely glad was she that she had rejected him.”

But when Mr. Lovelace returned into the country, he thought fit to visit my father and mother, hoping, as he told them, that, however unhappy he had been in the rejection of the wished-for alliance, he might be allowed to keep up an acquaintance and friendship with a family which he should always respect. And then, unhappily as I may say, was I at home and present.

It was immediately observed that his attention was fixed on me. My sister, as soon as he was gone, in a spirit of

bravery, seemed desirous to promote his address, should it be tendered.

My aunt Hervey was there, and was pleased to say we should make the finest couple in England, if my sister had no objection. "No, indeed!" with a haughty toss, was my sister's reply. It would be strange if she had, after the denial she had given him upon full deliberation.

My mother declared that her only dislike of his alliance with either daughter was on account of his reputed faulty morals.

My uncle Harlowe, that his daughter Clary, as he delighted to call me from childhood, would reform him if any woman in the world could.

My uncle Antony gave his approbation in high terms; but referred, as my aunt had done, to my sister.

She repeated her contempt of him, and declared that were there not another man in England she would not have him. She was ready, on the contrary, she could assure them, to resign her pretensions under hand and seal, if Miss Clary were taken with his tinsel; and if every one else approved of his address to the girl.

My father, indeed, after a long silence, being urged by my uncle Antony to speak his mind, said that he had a letter from his son, on his hearing of Mr. Lovelace's visits to his daughter Arabella; which he had not shown to anybody but my mother; that treaty being at an end when he received it; that in this letter he expressed great dislike to an alliance with Mr. Lovelace on the score of his immoralities; that he knew, indeed, there was an old grudge between them; but that, being desirous to prevent all occasions of disunion and animosity in his family, he would suspend the declaration of his own mind till his son arrived, and till he had heard his further objections; that he was the more inclined to make his son this compliment, as Mr. Lovelace's general character gave but too much ground for his son's dislike of him.

These particulars I had partly from my aunt Hervey, and partly from my sister ; for I was called out as soon as the subject was entered upon. When I returned, my uncle Antony asked me how I should like Mr. Lovelace. Everybody saw, he was pleased to say, that I had made a conquest.

I immediately answered that I did not like him at all. He seemed to have too good an opinion both of his person and parts, to have any great regard to his wife, let him marry whom he would.

My sister particularly was pleased with this answer, and confirmed it to be just, with a compliment to my judgment—for it was hers.

But the very next day Lord M. came to Harlowe Place (I was then absent), and in his nephew's name made a proposal in form, declaring that it was the ambition of all his family to be related to ours ; and he hoped his kinsman would not have such an answer on the part of the younger sister as he had had on that of the elder.

In short, Mr. Lovelace's visits were admitted as those of a man who had not deserved disrespect from our family ; but as to his address to me, with a reservation, as above, on my father's part, that he would determine nothing without his son. My discretion as to the rest was confided in ; for still I had the same objections as to the man ; nor would I, when we were better acquainted, hear anything but general talk from him, giving him no opportunity of conversing with me in private.

But this indifference on my side was the means of procuring him one very great advantage, since upon it was grounded that correspondence by letters which succeeded, and which, had it been to be begun when the family animosity broke out, would never have been entered into on my part. The occasion was this :—

My uncle Hervey has a young gentleman entrusted to his care, whom he has thoughts of sending abroad a year or two hence, to make the grand tour, as it is called ; and,

finding Mr. Lovelace could give a good account of everything necessary for a young traveller to observe upon such an occasion, he desired him to write down a description of the courts and countries he had visited, and what was most worthy of curiosity in them.

He consented, on condition that I would direct his subjects, as he called it; and as every one had heard his manner of writing commended, and thought his narratives might be agreeable amusements in winter evenings; and that he could have no opportunity particularly to address me in them, since they were to be read in full assembly before they were given to the young gentleman, I made the less scruple to write, and to make observations, and put questions for our further information; still the less, perhaps, as I love writing; and those who do are fond, you know, of occasions to use the pen. And then, having every one's consent, and my uncle Hervey's desire that I would write, I thought that if I had been the only scrupulous person, it would have shown a particularity that a vain man might construe to his advantage, and which my sister would not fail to animadvert upon.

You have seen some of these letters, and have been pleased with his account of persons, places, and things; and we have both agreed that he was no common observer upon what he had seen.

My sister herself allowed that the man had a tolerable knack of writing and describing; and my father, who had been abroad in his youth, said that his remarks were curious, and showed him to be a person of reading, judgment, and taste.

Thus was a kind of correspondence begun between him and me, with general approbation, while every one wondered at, and was pleased with, his patient veneration of me; for so they called it. However, it was not doubted but he would soon be more importunate, since his visits were more frequent, and he acknowledged to my aunt



Hervey a passion for me, accompanied with an awe that he had never known before, to which he attributed what he called his but seeming acquiescence with my father's pleasure, and the distance I kept him at.

But I should own; that in the letters he sent me upon the general subject, he more than once inclosed a particular one, declaring his passionate regards for me, and complaining, with fervour enough, of my reserves; but of these I took not the least notice, for, as I had not written to him at all, but upon a subject so general, I thought it was but right to let what he wrote upon one so particular pass off as if I had never seen it; and the rather, as I was not then at liberty (from the approbation his letters met with) to break off the correspondence unless I had assigned the true reason for doing so. Besides, with all his respectful assiduities, it was easy to observe (if it had not been his general character) that his temper is naturally haughty and violent; and I had seen too much of that untractable spirit in my brother to like it in one who hoped to be still more nearly related to me.

I had a little specimen of this temper of his upon the very occasion I have mentioned; for after he had sent me a third particular letter with the general one, he asked me the next time he came to Harlowe Place if I had not received such a one from him. I told him I should never answer one so sent, and that I had waited for such an occasion as he had now given me to tell him so. I desired him, therefore, not to write again on the subject, assuring him that if he did, I would return both, and never write another line to him.

You can't imagine how saucily the man looked; as if, in short, he was disappointed that he had not made a more sensible impression upon me; nor, when he recollected himself (as he did immediately) what a visible struggle it cost him to change his haughty airs for more placid ones. But I took no notice of either, for I thought it best to

convince him, by the coolness and indifference with which I repulsed his forward hopes, that he was not considerable enough in my eyes to make me take over-ready offence at what he said, or at his haughty looks. Indeed, he had cunning enough to give me, undesignedly, a piece of instruction which taught me this caution, for he had said in conversation once, "That if a man could not make a woman in courtship own herself pleased with him, it was as much and oftentimes more, to his purpose to make her angry with him."

Such, my dear, was the situation, when my brother arrived from Scotland.

The moment Mr. Lovelace's visits were mentioned to him, he wondered how it came into the heads of his uncles to encourage such a man for either of his sisters.

He justified his avowed inveteracy by common fame, and by what he had known of him at college; declaring that he had ever hated him, ever should hate him, and would never own him for a brother, or me for a sister, if I married him.

That early antipathy I have heard accounted for in this manner:—

Mr. Lovelace was always noted for his vivacity and courage; and no less, it seems, for the swift and surprising progress he made in all parts of literature. This gained him many friends among the more learned; while those who did not love him, feared him, by reason of the offence his vivacity made him too ready to give, and of the courage he showed in supporting the offence when given. No very amiable character, you'll say, upon the whole.

But my brother's temper was not more happy. His native haughtiness could not bear a superiority so visible; and whom we fear more than love, we are not far from hating; and, having less command of his passions than the other, he was evermore the subject of his, perhaps, indecent ridicule, so that they never met without quarrelling. It

was the less wonder, therefore, that a young man who is not noted for the gentleness of his temper, should resume an antipathy early begun, and so deeply rooted.

He found my sister, who waited but for the occasion ready to join him in his resentments against the man he hated. She utterly disclaimed all manner of regard for him. "Never liked him at all." And then did she boast of, and my brother praise her for, refusing him. And both joined on all occasions to depreciate him, and not seldom made the occasions ; their displeasure against him causing every subject to run into this, if it began not with it.

I was not solicitous to vindicate him when I was not joined in their reflections. I told them I did not value him enough to make a difference in the family on his account.

Now and then, indeed, when I observed that their vehemence carried them beyond all bounds of probability in their charges against him, I thought it but justice to put in a word for him. But this only subjected me to reproach, as having a prepossession in his favour which I would not own, so that when I could not change the subject, I used to retire either to my music, or to my closet.

Their behaviour to him, when they could not help seeing him, was very cold and disobliging, and at last, they gave such a loose to their passions, that instead of withdrawing, as they used to do, when he came, they threw themselves in his way purposely to affront him.

Mr. Lovelace, you may believe, very ill brooked this, but, nevertheless, contented himself to complain of it to me ; in high terms, however, telling me that but for my sake my brother's treatment of him was not to be borne.

My brother had just before, with the approbation of my uncles, employed a person related to a discharged bailiff or steward of Lord M., who had had the management of some part of Mr. Lovelace's affairs (from which he was

also dismissed by him) to inquire into his debts, after his companions, into his amours, and the like.

My aunt Hervey, in confidence, gave me the following particulars of what the man said of him:—

“That he was a generous landlord; that he spared nothing for solid and lasting improvements upon his estate; and that he looked into his own affairs, and understood them. That he had been very expensive when abroad, and contracted a large debt (for he made no secret of his affairs), yet chose to limit himself to an annual sum, and to decline equipage, in order to avoid being obliged to his uncle and aunts, from whom he might have what money he pleased, but that he was very jealous of their control, had often quarrels with them, and treated them so freely that they were all afraid of him. However, that his estate was never mortgaged, as my brother had heard it was; his credit was always high; and the man believed he was by this time near upon, if not quite, clear of the world.

“He was a sad gentleman, he said, as to women. If his tenants had pretty daughters, they chose to keep them out of his sight. He believed he kept no particular mistress, for he had heard *newelty*, that was the man’s word, was everything with him. But for his uncle’s and aunt’s teazings, the man fancied he would not think of marriage. He was never known to be disguised with liquor, but was a great plotter, and a great writer. That he lived a wild life in town, by what he had heard, had six or seven companions as bad as himself, whom now and then he brought down with him, and the country was always glad when they went up again. He would have it, that although passionate, he was good-humoured; loved as well to take a jest as to give one, and would rally himself upon occasion the freest of any man he ever knew.”

This was his character from an enemy; for, as my aunt observed, everything the man said commendably of him

came grudgingly, with a "Must needs say"—"To do him justice," &c., while the contrary was delivered with a free good-will. And this character, as a worse was expected, though this was bad enough, not answering the end of inquiring after it, my brother and sister were more apprehensive than before that his address would be encouraged, since the worst part of it was known, or supposed, when he was first introduced to my sister.

But, with regard to myself, I must observe in his disfavour, that, notwithstanding the merit he wanted to make with me for his patience upon my brother's ill treatment of him, I owed him no compliments for trying to conciliate with him. Not that I believe it would have signified anything if he had made ever such court either to him or to my sister. Yet one might have expected from a man of his politeness, and from his pretensions, you know, that he would have been willing to try, instead of which, he showed such a contempt both of my brother and sister, especially of my brother, as was construed into a defiance of them.

After several excesses, which Mr. Lovelace still returned with contempt, and a haughtiness too much like that of the aggressor, my brother took upon himself to fill up the doorway once when he came, as if to oppose his entrance, and, upon his asking for me, demanded what his business was with his sister.

The other, with a challenging air, as my brother says, told him he would answer a gentleman any question, but he wished that Mr. James Harlowe, who had of late given himself high airs, would remember that he was not now at college.

Just then the good Dr. Lewen, who frequently honours me with a visit of conversation, as he is pleased to call it, and had parted with me in my own parlour, came to the door, and, hearing the words, interposed; both having their hands upon their swords, and telling Mr. Lovelace

where I was, he burst by my brother to come to me, leaving him chafing, he said, like a hunted boar at bay.

This alarmed us all. My father was pleased to hint to Mr. Lovelace, that he wished he would discontinue his visits for the peace' sake of the family ; and I, by his command, spoke a great deal plainer.

But Mr. Lovelace is a man not easily brought to give up his purpose, especially in a point wherein he pretends his heart is so much engaged ; and no absolute prohibition having been given, things went on for a little while as before.

My brother then kept no measures, and first set himself to upbraid me for a supposed prepossession, which he treated as if it were criminal ; and then to insult Mr. Lovelace in person, and the unhappy rencounter followed. My brother was disarmed, as you have heard ; and on being brought home, and giving us ground to suppose he was much worse hurt than he really was, and a fever ensuing, every one flamed out, and all was laid at my door.

Mr. Lovelace for three days together sent twice each day to inquire after my brother's health ; and although he received rude and even shocking returns, he thought fit on the fourth day to make in person the same inquiries, and received still greater incivilities from my two uncles, who happened to be both there. My father also was held by force from going to him with his sword in his hand, although he had the gout upon him.

I fainted away with terror, seeing every one so violent, and hearing Mr. Lovelace swear that he would not depart till he had made my uncles ask his pardon for the indignities he had received at their hands ; a door being held fast locked between him and them. My mother all the time was praying and struggling to withhold my father in the great parlour. Meanwhile my sister, who had treated Mr. Lovelace with virulence, came in to me and insulted

me as fast as I recovered. But when Mr. Lovelace was told how ill I was, he departed, nevertheless vowing revenge.

He was ever a favourite with our domestics. His bounty to them, and having always something facetious to say to each, had made them all of his party; and on this occasion they privately blamed everybody else, and reported his calm and gentlemanly behaviour (till the provocations given him ran very high) in such favourable terms, that those reports, and my apprehensions of the consequence of this treatment, induced me to read a letter he sent me that night, and, it being written in the most respectful terms (offering to submit the whole to my decision and to govern himself entirely by my will), to answer it some days after.

To this unhappy necessity was owing our renewed correspondence, as I may call it; yet I did not write till I had informed myself from Mr. Symmes's brother that he was really insulted into the act of drawing his sword by my brother's repeatedly threatening (upon his excusing himself out of regard to me) to brand him if he did not; and, by all the inquiry I could make, that he was again the sufferer from my uncles in a more violent manner than I have related.

The same circumstances were related to my father and other relations by Mr. Symmes, but they had gone too far in making themselves parties to the quarrel either to retract or forgive; and I was forbidden to correspond with him, or to be seen a moment in his company.

One thing, however, I can say, but that in confidence, because my mother commanded me not to mention it: that, expressing her apprehension of the consequences of the indignities offered to Mr. Lovelace, she told me she would leave it to my prudence to do all I could to prevent the impending mischief on one side.

I am obliged to break off; but I believe I have written

enough to answer very fully all that you have required of me. I will continue to write, as I have opportunity, as minutely as we are used to write to each other. Indeed I have no delight, as I have often told you, equal to that which I take in conversing with you—by letter when I cannot in person.

Your ever-grateful and affectionate,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Copy of the requested PREAMBLE to the clauses in her grandfather's will (inclosed in the preceding letter).*

As the particular estate I have mentioned and described above is principally of my own raising : as my three sons have been uncommonly prosperous and are very rich—the eldest by means of the unexpected benefits he reaps from his new-found mines ; the second, by what has, as unexpectedly, fallen in to him on the deaths of several relations of his present wife, the worthy daughter by both sides of very honourable families, over and above the very large portion which he received with her in marriage ; my son Antony by his East India traffic and successful voyages ; as, furthermore, my grandson James will be sufficiently provided for by his grandmother Lovell's kindness to him, who, having no near relations, hath assured me that she hath, as well by deed of gift as by will, left him both her Scottish and English estates : for never was there a family more prosperous in all its branches, blessed be God therefore ; and as my said son James will very probably make it up to my granddaughter Arabella, to whom I intend no disrespect, nor have reason, for she is a very hopeful and dutiful child ; and as my sons John and Antony seem not inclined to a married life, so that my son James is the only one who has children, or is likely to have any—for all these reasons, and because my dearest and beloved granddaughter Clarissa hath been from her infancy a matchless young creature in her duty to me, and admired



by all who knew her as a very extraordinary child, I must therefore take the pleasure of considering her as my own peculiar child, and this without intending offence; and I hope it will not be taken as any, since my son James can bestow his favours accordingly, and in greater proportion, upon his son James and upon his daughter Arabella. These, I say, are the reasons which move me to dispose of the above-described estate in the precious child's favour, who is the delight of my old age, and, I verily think, has contributed, by her amiable duty and kind and tender regards, to prolong my life.

Wherefore it is my express will and commandment, and I enjoin my said three sons John, James, and Antony, and my grandson James, and my granddaughter Arabella, as they value my blessing, and will regard my memory, and would wish their own last wills and desires to be fulfilled by their survivors, that they will not impugn or contest the following bequests and devises in favour of my said granddaughter Clarissa, although they should not be strictly conformable to law or to the forms thereof, nor suffer them to be controverted or disputed on any pretence whatsoever.

And in this confidence, &c., &c., &c.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*January 20.*

**I** HAVE been hindered from prosecuting my intention. Neither nights nor mornings have been my own. My mother has been very ill, and would have no other nurse but me. I have not stirred from her bedside; and two nights I had the honour of sharing it with her.

Her disorder was a violent colic. The foundations laid for jealousy and heart-burnings in her own family, late so happy and so united, afflict exceedingly a gentle and

sensible mind, which has from the beginning, on all occasions, sacrificed its own inward satisfaction to outward peace. My brother and sister, who used very often to jar, are now so entirely one, and are so much together (*caballing* was the word that dropped from my mother's lips, as if at unawares) that she is very fearful of the consequences that may follow; yet, would she but exert that authority which the superiority of her fine talents gives her, all these family-feuds might perhaps be extinguished in their but yet beginnings.

It is my opinion, that had she been of a temper that would have borne less, she would have had ten times less to bear than she has had.

Were there not truth in this observation, is it possible that my brother and sister could make their vehemences of such importance to all the family? "How will my son, how will my nephew, take this or that measure? What will he say to it? Let us consult him about it;" are references always previous to every resolution taken by his superiors, whose will ought to be his. Well may he expect to be treated with this deference by every other person, when my father himself, generally so absolute, constantly pays it to him; and the more since his god-mother's bounty has given independence to a spirit that was before under too little restraint.

My friends (my father and uncles, however, if not my brother and sister) begin to think that I have been treated unkindly. My mother has been so good as to tell me this since I sent away my last.

Nevertheless I believe they all think that I receive letters from Mr. Lovelace. But Lord M. being inclined rather to support than to blame his nephew, they seem to be so much afraid of Mr. Lovelace, that they do not put it to me whether I do or not, conniving, on the contrary, as it should seem, at the only method left to allay the vehemence of a spirit which they have so much provoked;

for he still insists upon satisfaction from my uncles, and this possibly (for he wants not art) as the best way to be introduced again, with some advantages, into our family. And, indeed, my aunt Hervey has put it to my mother, whether it were not best to prevail upon my brother to take a turn to his Yorkshire estate (which he was intending to do before), and to stay there till all is blown over.

But this is very far from being his intention, for he has already begun to hint again, that he shall never be easy or satisfied till I am married; and, finding neither Mr. Symmes nor Mr. Mullins will be accepted, has proposed Mr. Wyerley once more, on the score of his great passion for me. This I have again rejected; and but yesterday he mentioned one who has applied to him by letter, making high offers. This is Mr. Solmes—rich Solmes they call him. But this application has not met with the attention of one single soul.

If none of his schemes of getting me married take effect, he has thoughts, I am told, of proposing to me to go to Scotland, that, as the compliment is, I may put his house there in such order as our own is in. But this my mother intends to oppose for her own sake, because, having relieved her, as she is pleased to say, of the household cares (for which my sister, you know, has no turn), they must again devolve upon her if I go. And if she did not oppose it I should, for I have no mind to be his house-keeper; and I am sure, were I to go with him, I should be treated rather as a servant than a sister.

But I have besought my mother, who is apprehensive of Mr. Lovelace's visits, and for fear of whom my uncles never stir out without arms and armed servants (my brother also being near well enough to go abroad) to procure me permission to be your guest for a fortnight or so. Will your mother, think you, my dear, give me leave?

I dare not ask to go to my dairy-house, as my good grandfather would call it; for I am now afraid of being thought to have a wish to enjoy that independence to which his will has entitled me.

Just now my mother has rejoiced me with the news that my requested permission is granted. Everyone thinks it best that I should go to you, except my brother. But he was told that he must not expect to rule in everything. I am to be sent for into the great parlour, where are my two uncles and my aunt Hervey, and to be acquainted with this concession in form.

Clary, said my mother, as soon as I entered the great parlour, your request to go to Miss Howe's for a few days has been taken into consideration, and granted——

Much against my liking, I assure you, said my brother, rudely interrupting her.

Son James! said my father, and knit his brows.

He was not daunted. His arm is in a sling. He often has the mean art to look upon that, when anything is hinted that may be supposed to lead towards the least favour to or reconciliation with Mr. Lovelace.

Let the girl, then (I am often the girl with him) be prohibited seeing that vile libertine.

Nobody spoke.

Do you hear, sister Clary? taking their silence for approbation of what he had dictated; you are not to receive visits from Lord M.'s nephew.

Every one still remained silent.

Do you so understand the licence you have, miss? interrogated he.

I would be glad, sir, said I, to understand that you are my brother; and that you would understand that you are only my brother.

O, the fond, fond heart! with a sneer of insult, lifting up his hands.

Sir, said I to my father, to your justice I appeal.

If I have deserved reflection, let me not be spared. But if I am to be answerable for the rashness—

No more!—No more of either side, said my father. You are not to receive the visits of that Lovelace, though.—Nor are you, son James, to reflect upon your sister. She is a worthy child.

Sir, I have done, replied he;—and yet I have her honour at heart, as much as the honour of the rest of the family.

And hence, sir, retorted I, your unbrotherly reflections upon me!

Well but you observe, miss, said he, that it is not I, but your father that tells you, that you are not to receive the visits of that Lovelace.

Cousin Harlowe, said my aunt Hervey, allow me to say, that my cousin Clary's prudence may be confided in.

I am convinced it may, joined my mother.

But, aunt, but, madam (put in my sister) there is no hurt, I presume, in letting my sister know the condition she goes to Miss Howe upon; since, if he gets a knack of visiting her there—

You may be sure, interrupted my uncle Harlowe, he will endeavour to see her there.

So would such an impudent man here, said my uncle Antony: and 'tis better there than here.

Better nowhere, said my father.—I command you (turning to me) on pain of my displeasure, that you see him not at all.

I will not, sir, in any way of encouragement, I do assure you: nor at all, if I can properly avoid it.

You know with what indifference, said my mother, she has hitherto seen him.—

With what appa—rent indifference, drolled my brother.

Son James! said my father, sternly.

I have done, sir, said he. But again, in a provoking manner, he reminded me of the prohibition.

Thus ended this conference.

Will you engage, my dear, that the hated man shall not come near your house ?

As I have no reason to doubt a welcome from your good mother, I will put everything in order here, and be with you in two or three days.—Meantime I am,

Your most affectionate and obliged,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

(*After her return from her.*)

HARLOWE PLACE, *February 20.*



BEG your excuse for not writing sooner. Alas, my dear, I have sad prospects before me ! My brother and sister have succeeded in all their views. They have found out another lover for me ; an hideous one !—No wonder that I was ordered home so suddenly. At an hour's warning !—No other notice, you know, than what was brought with the chariot that was to carry me back.—It was for fear I should have entered into any concert with Mr. Lovelace had I known their motive for commanding me home ; apprehending, 'tis evident, that I should dislike the man they had to propose to me.

And well might they apprehend so :—For who do you think he is ?—No other than that Solmes !—Could you have believed it ?—And they are all determined, too ; my mother with the rest !—

The reception I met with at my return, so different from what I used to meet with on every little absence (and now I had been from them three weeks) convinced me that I was to suffer for the happiness I had had in your company and conversation for that most agreeable period.

My brother met me at the door, and gave me his hand when I stepped out of the chariot. He bowed very low ;

Pray, miss, favour me.—I thought it in good humour ; but found it afterwards mock respect : and so he led me in great form, I prattling all the way, inquiring of everybody's health (although I was so soon to see them, and there was hardly time for answers) into the great parlour ; where were my father, mother, my two uncles, and sister.

I was struck all of a heap as soon as I entered, to see a solemnity which I had been so little used to on the like occasions in the countenance of every dear relation. They all kept their seats. I ran to my father, and kneeled : then to my mother : and met from both a cold salute : from my father a blessing but half pronounced : my mother indeed called me child ; but embraced me not with her usual indulgent ardour.

After I had paid my duty to my uncles, and my compliments to my sister, which she received with solemn and stiff form, I was bid to sit down. But my heart was full : and I said it became me to stand, if I could stand, upon a reception so awful and unusual. I was forced to turn my face from them, and pull out my handkerchief.

My unbrotherly accuser hereupon stood forth, and charged me with having received no less than five or six visits at Miss Howe's from the man they had all so much reason to hate (that was the expression) ; notwithstanding the commands I had had to the contrary. And he bid me deny it if I could.

I had never been used, I said, to deny the truth ; nor would I now. I owned I had in the three weeks passed seen the person I presumed he meant oftener than five or six times [Pray hear me, brother, said I ; for he was going to flame out]. But he always asked for Mrs. or Miss Howe, when he came.

I proceeded, that I had reason to believe, that both Mrs. Howe and Miss, as matters stood, would much rather have excused his visits ; but they had more than once apologised, that having not the same reason my papa had to

forbid him their house, his rank and fortune entitled him to civility.

You see, my dear, I made not the pleas I might have made.

My brother seemed ready to give a loose to his passion ; my father put on the countenance which always portends a gathering storm : my uncles mutteringly whispered : and my sister aggravatingly held up her hands. While I begged to be heard out ;—and my mother said, let the child, that was her kind word, be heard.

I hoped, I said, there was no harm done : that it became not me to prescribe to Mrs. or Miss Howe who should be their visitors : that Mrs. Howe was always diverted with the raillery that passed between Miss and him : that I had no reason to challenge her guest for my visitor, as I should seem to have done had I refused to go into their company when he was with them : that I had never seen him out of the presence of one or both of those ladies ; and had signified to him once, on his urging for a few moments' private conversation with me, that unless a reconciliation were effected between my family and his, he must not expect that I would countenance his visits, much less give him an opportunity of that sort.

I told them further, that Miss Howe so well understood my mind, that she never left me a moment while Mr. Lovelace was there : that when he came, if I was not below in the parlour, I would not suffer myself to be called to him : although I thought it would be an affectation which would give him advantage rather than the contrary if I had left company when he came in ; or refused to enter into it when I found he would stay any time.

My brother heard me out with such a kind of impatience as showed he was resolved to be dissatisfied with me, say what I would. The rest, as the event has proved, behaved as if they would have been satisfied, had they not further points to carry by intimidating me. All this made



it evident, as I mentioned above, that they themselves expected not my voluntary compliance ; and was a tacit confession of the disagreeableness of the person they had to propose.

I was no sooner silent than my brother swore, although in my father's presence (swore, unchecked either by eye or countenance) that for his part, he would never be reconciled to that libertine : and that he would renounce me for a sister, if I encouraged the addresses of a man so obnoxious to them all.

A man who had like to have been my brother's murderer, my sister said, with a face even bursting with restraint of passion.

The poor Bella, has, you know, a plump high-fed face, if I may be allowed the expression.

My father, with vehemence both of action and voice (my father has, you know, a terrible voice when he is angry !) told me, that I had met with too much indulgence in being allowed to refuse this gentleman, and the other gentleman ; and it was now his turn to be obeyed.

Very true, my mother said :—and hoped his will would not now be disputed by a child so favoured.

To show they were all of a sentiment, my uncle Harlowe said, he hoped his beloved niece only wanted to know her father's will, to obey it.

And my uncle Antony, in his rougher manner, added, that surely I would not give them reason to apprehend, that I thought my grandfather's favour to me had made me independent of them all.—If I did, he would tell me, the will could be set aside, and should.

I was astonished, you must needs think.—Whose addresses now, thought I, is this treatment preparative to ? —Mr. Wyerley's again ?—or whose ? But that it could be for Solmes, how should it enter into my head ?

I did not know, I said, that I had given occasion for this harshness. I hoped I should always have a just sense

of every one's favour to me, superadded to the duty I owed as a daughter and a niece: but that I was so much surprised at a reception so unusual and unexpected, that I hoped my papa and mamma would give me leave to retire, in order to recollect myself.

I went up to my chamber, and there with my faithful Hannah deplored the determined face which the new proposal it was plain they had to make me wore.

I had not recovered myself when I was sent for down to tea. I begged by my maid to be excused attending; but on the repeated command, went down with as much cheerfulness as I could assume; and had a new fault to clear myself of: for my brother charged my desire of being excused coming down, to sullens, because a certain person had been spoken against, upon whom, as he supposed, my fancy ran.

I could easily answer you, sir, said I, as such a reflection deserves: but I forbear.

Pretty meekness! Bella whisperingly said; looking at my brother, and lifting up her lip in contempt.

He, with an imperious air, bid me deserve his love, and I should be sure to have it.

As we sat, my mother expatiated upon brotherly and sisterly love; indulgently blamed my brother and sister for having taken up displeasure too lightly against me; and politically, if I may so say, answered for my obedience to my father's will.—Then it would be all well, my father was pleased to say: Then they should dote upon me, was my brother's expression: Love me as well as ever, was my sister's: and my uncles, That I then should be the pride of their hearts.—But, alas! what a forfeiture of all these must I make!

Mr. Solmes came in before we had done tea. My uncle Antony presented him to me, as a gentleman he had a particular friendship for. My uncle Harlowe in terms equally favourable for him. My father said, Mr. Solmes

is my friend, Clarissa Harlowe. My mother looked at him, and looked at me, now and then, as he sat near me, I thought with concern.—I at her, with eyes appealing for pity. At him, when I could glance at him, with disgust little short of affrightment. While my brother and sister Mr. Solmes'd him, and sir'd him up, at every word. So caressed, in short, by all;—yet such a wretch!

*February 24. \**

They drive on here at a furious rate. The man lives here, I think. He courts them, and is more and more a favourite.

Hitherto, I seem to be delivered over to my brother.

My father and mother industriously avoid giving me opportunity of speaking to them alone. They ask not for my approbation, intending, as it should seem, to suppose me into their will. And with them I shall hope to prevail, or with nobody.

I have already stood the shock of three of this man's particular visits, besides my share in his more general ones; and find it is impossible I should ever endure him. He has but a very ordinary share of understanding; is very illiterate; knows nothing but the value of estates, and how to improve them, and what belongs to land-jobbing and husbandry. Yet am I as one stupid, I think. They have begun so cruelly with me, that I have not spirit enough to assert my own negative.

They had endeavoured it seems to influence my good Mrs. Norton before I came home—so intent are they to carry their point! And her opinion not being to their liking, she has been told that she would do well to decline visiting here for the present: yet she is the person of all the world, next to my mother, the most likely to prevail upon me, were the measures they are engaged in reasonable measures, or such as she could think so.

My aunt likewise having said that she did not think

her niece could ever be brought to like Mr. Solmes, has been obliged to learn another lesson.

I am to have a visit from her to-morrow. And since I have refused so much as to hear from my brother and sister what the noble settlements are to be, she is to acquaint me with the particulars; and to receive from me my determination: for my father, I am told, will not have patience but to suppose that I shall stand in opposition to his will.

Meantime it has been signified to me, that it will be acceptable if I do not think of going to church next Sunday.

The same signification was made me for last Sunday; and I obeyed. They are apprehensive that Mr. Lovelace will be there with design to come home with me.

The man, this Solmes, you may suppose, has no reason to boast of his progress with me. He has not the sense to say anything to the purpose. His courtship indeed is to them; and all I say against him is affectedly attributed to coyness: and he, not being sensible of his own imperfections, believes that my avoiding him when I can, and the reserves I express, are owing to nothing else:—for, as I said, all his courtship is to them; and I have no opportunity of saying no, to one who asks me not the question. And so, with an air of mannish superiority, he seems rather to pity the bashful girl, than to apprehend that he shall not succeed.

*February 25.*

I have had the expected conference with my aunt.

I have been obliged to hear the man's proposals from her; and upon my absolute refusal of him upon any terms, have I had a signification made me that wounds me to the heart. How can I tell it you? Yet I must. It is, my dear, that I must not for a month to come, or till licence obtained, correspond with anybody out of the house.

My brother, upon my aunt's report, brought me, in authoritative terms, the prohibition.

Not to Miss Howe ? said I.

No, not to Miss Howe, madam, tauntingly : for have you not acknowledged, that Lovelace is a favourite there ?

And do you think, brother, this is the way—

Do you look to that.—But your letters will be stopt, I can tell you.—And away he flung.

My sister came to me soon after : Sister Clary, you are going on in a fine way, I understand. But as there are people who are supposed to harden you against your duty, I am to tell you, that it will be taken well if you avoid visits or visitings for a week or two till further order.

Can this be from those who have authority—

Ask them ; ask them, child—with a twirl of her finger.—I have delivered my message. Your father will be obeyed.

I know my duty, said I ; and hope I shall not find impossible conditions annexed to it.

A pert young creature, she called me.

Dear Bella, said I ! hands and eyes lifted up—why all this ?—Dear, dear Bella, why—

None of your dear, dear Bella's to me.—I tell you, I see through your witchcrafts. And away she flung ; adding, as she went, And so will everybody else very quickly, I dare say.

*February 25 (in the Evening).*

What my brother and sister have said against me I cannot tell :—but I am in heavy disgrace with my father.

I was sent for down to tea. I went with a very cheerful aspect : but had occasion soon to change it.

Such a solemnity in every-body's countenance !—My mother's eyes were fixed upon the tea-cups ; and when she looked up, it was heavily, as if her eyelids had weights upon them ; and then not to me. My father sat half-aside in his elbow-chair, that his head might be turned from

me ; his hands clasped, and waving, as it were, up and down ; his fingers, poor dear gentleman ! in motion, as if angry to the very ends of them. My sister sat swelling. My brother looked at me with scorn, having measured me, as I may say, with his eyes as I entered, from head to foot. My aunt was there, and looked upon me as if with kindness restrained, bending coldly to my compliment to her as she sat ; and then cast an eye first on my brother, then on my sister, as if to give the reason of her unusual stiffness.—Bless me, my dear ! that they should choose to intimidate rather than invite a mind, till now, not thought either unpersuadable or ungenerous !

I took my seat. Shall I make tea, madam, to my mother ?—I always used, you know, to make tea.

No ! a very short sentence, in one very short word, was the expressive answer. And she was pleased to take the canister in her own hand.

My brother bid the footman who attended leave the room. I, said he, will pour out the water.

My heart was up at my mouth. I did not know what to do with myself. What is to follow ? thought I.

Just after the second dish, out stepped my mother—A word with you, sister Hervey ! taking her in her hand. Presently my sister dropt away. Then my brother. So I was left alone with my father.

He looked so very sternly, that my heart failed me as twice or thrice I would have addressed myself to him : nothing but solemn silence on all hands having passed before.

At last, I asked, if it were his pleasure that I should pour him out another dish ?

He answered me with the same angry monosyllable, which I had received from my mother before ; and then arose, and walked about the room. I arose too, with intent to throw myself at his feet ; but was too much over-awed by his sternness, even to make such an ex-

pression of my duty to him as my heart overflowed with.

At last, as he supported himself, because of his gout, on the back of a chair, I took a little more courage; and approaching him, besought him to acquaint me in what I had offended him?

He turned from me, and in a strong voice, *Clarissa Harlowe*, said he, know, that I will be obeyed.

God forbid, sir, that you should not!—I have never yet opposed your will—

Nor I your whimsies, *Clarissa Harlowe*, interrupted he.—Don't let me run the fate of all who show indulgence to your sex; to be the more contradicted for mine to you.

I was going to make protestations of duty—No protestations, girl! I will not be prated to! I will be obeyed! I have no child, I will have no child, but an obedient one.

Sir, you never had reason, I hope—

Tell me not what I never had, but what I have, and what I shall have.

Good sir, be pleased to hear me—my brother and my sister, I fear—

Your brother and sister shall not be spoken against, girl!—they have a just concern for the honour of my family.

And I hope, sir—

Hope nothing.—Tell me not of hopes, but of facts. I ask nothing of you but what is in your power to comply with, and what it is your duty to comply with.

Then, sir, I will comply with it—but yet I hope from your goodness—

No but's, girl! I will be obeyed, I tell you; and cheerfully too!—or you are no child of mine!

I wept.

Let me beseech you, my dear and ever-honoured papa (and I dropt down on my knees) that I may have only

yours and my mamma's will, and not my brother's to obey.

I was going on ; but he was pleased to withdraw, leaving me on the floor ; saying, that he would not hear me thus by subtilty and cunning aiming to distinguish away my duty ; repeating, that he would be obeyed.

My heart is too full ;—I will lay down my pen !—

*February 26.*

I find, by a few words which dropt unawares from my aunt, that they have all an absolute dependence upon what they suppose to be a meekness in my temper. But in this they may be mistaken ; for I verily think, upon a strict examination of myself, that I have almost as much in me of my father's as of my mother's family.

My uncle Harlowe it seems is against driving me upon extremities : but my brother has engaged, that the regard I have for my reputation, and my principles, will bring me round to my duty ; that's the expression.

My aunt advises me to submit for the present to the interdicts they have laid me under ; and indeed to encourage Mr. Solmes's address. I have absolutely refused the latter, let what will (as I have told her) be the consequence. The visiting prohibition I will conform to. But as to that of not corresponding with you, nothing but the menace that our letters shall be intercepted can engage my observation of it.

But can you, my dear Miss Howe, condescend to carry on a private correspondence with me ?—if you can, there is one way I have thought of, by which it may be done.

You must remember the green lane, as we call it, that runs by the side of the wood-house and poultry-yard where I keep my bantams, pheasants, and peahens.

The lane is lower than the floor of the wood-house ; and in the side of the wood-house the boards are rotted away down to the floor for half an ell together in several places. Hannah can step into the lane, and make a mark with





chalk where a letter or parcel may be pushed in, under some sticks.

I have been just now to look at the place, and find it will answer. So your faithful Robert may, without coming near the house, and as only passing through the green lane which leads to two or three farm-houses [out of livery, if you please] very easily take from thence my letters, and deposit yours.

Try, my dear, the success of a letter this way ; and give me your opinion and advice what to do in this disgraceful situation.

But before-hand I will tell you, that your advice must not run in favour of this Solmes.

Yet, on second thoughts, if you incline to that side of the question, I would have you write your whole mind. For my regards are not so much engaged (upon my word they are not ; I know not myself if they be) to another person as some of my friends suppose ; and as you, giving way to your lively vein, upon his last visits, affected to suppose. What preferable favour I may have for him to any other person, is owing more to the usage he has received, and for my sake borne, than to any personal consideration.

I write a few lines of grateful acknowledgment to your good mother for her favours to me in the late happy period. I fear I shall never know such another. I hope she will forgive me, that I did not write sooner.

The bearer, if suspected and examined, is to produce that as the only one he carries.

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MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*February 27.*



**W**HAT old heads some people have !—Miss Clarissa Harlowe to be sacrificed in marriage to Mr. Roger Solmes !—Astonishing !

I must not, you say, give my advice in favour of this

man!—You now convince me, my dear, that you are nearer of kin than I thought you, to the family that could think of so preposterous a match, or you would never have had the least notion of my advising in his favour.

That they prohibit your corresponding with me, is a wisdom I neither wonder at nor blame them for: since it is an evidence to me that they know their own folly: and if they do, is it strange that they should be afraid to trust another's judgment upon it?

We heard before you wrote that all was not right between your relations and you at your coming home: that Mr. Solmes visited you, and that with a prospect of success. But I concluded the mistake lay in the person, and that his address was to Miss Arabella. And indeed had she been as good-natured as your plump ones generally are, I should have thought her too good for him by half. This must certainly be the thing, thought I; and my beloved friend is sent for to advise and assist in her nuptial preparations. Who knows, said I to my mother, but that when the man has thrown aside his yellow full-buckled peruke, and his broad-brimmed beaver (both of which I suppose were Sir Oliver's best of long standing) he may cut a tolerable figure dangling to church with Miss Bell!—The woman, as she observes, should excel the man in features: and where can she match so well for a foil?

I indulged this surmise against rumour, because I could not believe that the absurdest people in England could be so very absurd as to think of this man for you.

We heard moreover, that you received no visitors. I could assign no reason for this; except that the preparations for your sister were to be private, and the ceremony sudden, for fear this man should, as another man did, change his mind. Miss Lloyd and Miss Biddulph were with me to enquire what I knew of this; and of your not being at church, either morning or afternoon, the Sunday

after your return from us ; to the disappointment of a little hundred of your admirers, to use their words. It was easy for me to guess the reason to be what you confirm—their apprehensions that Lovelace would be there, and attempt to wait on you home.

My mother takes very kindly your compliments in your letter to her. Her words upon reading it were ; “ Miss Clarissa Harlowe is an admirable young lady : wherever she goes, she confers a favour : whomever she leaves, she fills with regret.”—And then a little comparative reflection ; “ O my Nancy, that you had a little of her sweet obligingness !”

No matter. The praise was yours. You are me ; and I enjoyed it. The more enjoyed it, because—shall I tell you the truth ?—because I think myself as well as I am—were it but for this reason ; that had I twenty brother James’s, and twenty sister Bell’s, not one of them, nor all of them joined together, would dare to treat me as yours presume to treat you. I am fitter for this world than you : you for the next than me ;—that’s the difference.

I communicated to my mother the account you give of your strange reception ; also what a horrid wretch they have found out for you ; and the compulsory treatment they give you. It only set her on magnifying her lenity to me on my tyrannical behaviour, as she will call it (mothers must have their way, you know, my dear) to the man whom she so warmly recommends, against whom it seems there can be no just exception. Moreover she lends a pretty open ear to the preachments of that starch old bachelor your uncle Antony ; and for an example to her daughter would be more careful how she takes your part, be the cause ever so just.

But can you divine, my dear, what that old preachment-making plump-hearted soul your uncle Antony means by his frequent amblings hither ?—There is such smirking and smiling between my mother and him ! Such mutual

praises of economy ; and “ That is my way ! ”—and “ This I do ! ”—and “ I am glad it has your approbation, sir ! ”—and “ You look into everything, madam ! ”—“ Nothing would be done, if I did not ! ”—Such exclamations against servants ! Such exaltings of self ! And dear heart, and good lack !—and ’las a day !—And now and then their conversation sinking into a whispering accent, if I come cross them !—I’ll tell you, my dear, I don’t above half like it. Only that these old bachelors usually take as many years to resolve upon matrimony as they can reasonably expect to live, or I should be ready to fire upon his visits.

You are pleased to say, and upon your word too, that your regards (a mighty quaint word for affections) are not so much engaged, as some of your friends suppose, to another person.

So much engaged !—How much, my dear ? You seem to own a little.

But further you say, What preferable favour you may have for him to any other person, is owing more to the usage he has received, and for your sake borne, than to any personal consideration.

This is generously said. It is in character. But, O my friend, depend upon it, you are in danger. Depend upon it, whether you know it or not, you are a little in for’t. Your native generosity and greatness of mind endanger you : all your friends, by fighting against him with impolitic violence, fight for him. And Lovelace, my life for yours, notwithstanding all his veneration and assiduities, has seen further than that veneration and those assiduities (so well calculated to your meridian) will let him own he has seen.

In short, my dear, it is my opinion, and that from the easiness of his heart and behaviour, that he has seen more than I have seen ; more than you think could be seen ;—more than I believe you yourself know, or else you would have let me know it.

Already, in order to restrain him from resenting the indignities he has received, and which are daily offered him, he has prevailed upon you to correspond with him privately. I know he has nothing to boast of from what you have written: but is not his inducing you to receive his letters, and to answer them, a great point gained? By your insisting that he should keep this correspondence private, it appears that there is one secret which you do not wish the world should know: and he is master of that secret. He is indeed himself, as I may say, that secret! What an intimacy does this beget for the lover! How is it distancing the parent!

It is my humble opinion, I tell you frankly, that on enquiry it will come out to be love—don't start, my dear!—Has not your man himself had natural philosophy enough to observe already to your aunt Hervey, that love takes the deepest root in the steadiest minds? The deuce take his sly penetration, I was going to say; for this was six or seven weeks ago.

I have been tinctured, you know. Nor on the coolest reflection, could I account how and when the jaundice began: but had been over head and ears, as the saying is, but for some of that advice from you which I now return you. Yet my man was not half so—so what, my dear—to be sure Lovelace is a charming fellow. And were he only—but I will not make you glow, as you read—upon my word I will not.—Yet, my dear, don't you find at your heart somewhat unusual make it go throb, throb, throb, as you read just here?—If you do, don't be ashamed to own it. It is your generosity, my love! that's all.—But, as the Roman augur said, Cæsar, beware of the Ides of March!

Your ever affectionate,

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Wednesday, March 1.*

**I** CANNOT own any of the glow, any of the throbs you mention.—Upon my word I will repeat, I cannot. And yet the passages in my letter upon which you are so humorously severe, lay me fairly open to your agreeable raillery. I own they do. And I cannot tell what turn my mind had taken to dictate so oddly to my pen.

But, pray now—Is it saying so much, when one, who has no very particular regard to any man, says, there are some who are preferable to others? Mr. Lovelace, for instance, I may be allowed to say, is a man to be preferred to Mr. Solmes; and that I do prefer him to that man: but, surely, this may be said without its being a necessary consequence that I must be in love with him.

Indeed I would not be in love with him, as it is called, for the world: first, because I have no opinion of his morals. Next, because I think him to be a vain man, capable of triumphing (secretly at least) over a person whose heart he thinks he has engaged. And, thirdly, because the assiduities and veneration which you impute to him, seem to carry a haughtiness in them, as if he thought his address had a merit in it, that would be more than an equivalent to a woman's love.

Indeed, my dear, this man is not the man. I have great objections to him. My heart throbs not after him. I glow not, but with indignation against myself for having given room for such an imputation.

Be satisfied, my dear, meantime that I am *not* displeased with you: indeed I am not.

Your equally affectionate and grateful,  
CL. HARLOWE.

## MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Thursday Morning, March 2.*

**I**NDEED you would not be in love with him for the world!—Your servant, my dear. Nor would I have you. For I think, with all the advantages of person, fortune, and family, he is not by any means worthy of you. And this opinion I give as well from the reasons you mention (which I cannot but confirm) as from what I have heard of him but a few hours ago from Mrs. Fortescue, a favourite of Lady Betty Lawrence, who knows him well.

A hundred wild stories she tells of him, from childhood to manhood: he was always as mischievous as a monkey. But I shall pass over his puerile rogueries.

Mrs. Fortescue owns, what everybody knows, “that he is notoriously, nay, avowedly, a man of pleasure; yet says, that in anything he sets his heart upon or undertakes, he is the most industrious and persevering mortal under the sun. He rests it seems not above six hours in the twenty-four—any more than you. He delights in writing. Whether at Lord M.’s, or at Lady Betty’s, or Lady Sarah’s, he has always a pen in his fingers when he retires. One of his companions (confirming his love of writing) has told her, that his thoughts flow rapidly to his pen.”

Whatever his other vices are, all the world, as well as Mrs. Fortescue, says, “he is a sober man. And among all his bad qualities, gaming, that great waster of time as well as fortune, is not his vice:” so that he must have his head as cool, and his reason as clear, as the prime of youth and his natural gaiety will permit; and by his early morning hours, a great portion of time upon his hands, to employ in writing, or worse.

Mrs. Fortescue says, “he has one gentleman who is more his intimate and correspondent than any of the

rest." You remember what his dismissed bailiff said of him and of his associates. I don't find but that man's character of him was in general pretty just. Mrs. Fortescue confirms this part of it, "that all his relations are afraid of him; and that his pride sets him above owing obligations to them. She believes he is clear of the world; and that he will continue so:" no doubt from the same motive that makes him avoid being obliged to his relations.

A person willing to think favourably of him would hope, that a brave, a learned, and a diligent man, cannot be naturally a bad man. But if he be better than his enemies say he is (and if worse, he is bad indeed) he is guilty of an inexcusable fault in being so careless as he is of his reputation.

Upon the whole, and upon all that I could gather from Mrs. Fortescue, Mr. Lovelace is a very faulty man. You and I have thought him too gay, too inconsiderate, too rash, too little an hypocrite, to be deep. But were he deep, and ever so deep, you would soon penetrate him, if they would leave you to yourself. His vanity would be your clue. Never man had more: yet, as Mrs. Fortescue observed, "never did man carry it off so happily." There is a strange mixture in it of humorous vivacity:—since but for one half of what he says of himself, when he is in the vein, any other man would be insufferable.

"Talk of the devil," is an old saying. The lively wretch has made me a visit, and is but just gone away. He is all impatience and resentment at the treatment you meet with; and full of apprehensions too, that they will carry their point with you.

I told him my opinion, that you will never be brought to think of such a man as Solmes; but that it will probably end in a composition, never to have either.

No man, he said, whose fortunes and alliances are so



considerable, ever had so little favour from a woman for whose sake he had borne so much.

But, Lord help the shallow souls of the Harlowes! Would I believe it? they were for turning plotters upon him. They had best take care he did not pay them in their own coin. Their hearts were better turned for such works, than their heads.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Wednesday, March 1.*

**N**OW take up my pen, to lay before you the inducements and motives which my friends have to espouse so earnestly the address of this Mr. Solmes.

I gave you an account of my brother's and sister's antipathy to Mr. Lovelace; and I told you, that after a very cold, yet not a directly affrontive behaviour to him, they all of a sudden became more violent, and proceeded to personal insults; which brought on at last the unhappy rencounter between my brother and him.

Now you must know, that this sudden vehemence on my brother's and sister's parts, was owing to stronger reasons than to the college-begun antipathy on his side, or to slighted love on hers; to wit, to an apprehension that my uncles intended to follow my grandfather's example in my favour; at least in a higher degree than they wish they should. An apprehension founded it seems on a conversation between my two uncles and my brother and sister; which my aunt communicated to me in confidence.

I have more than once mentioned to you the darling view some of us have long had of raising a family, as it is called.

My brother, as the only son, thought the two girls might be very well provided for by ten or fifteen thousand

pounds apiece : and that all the real estates in the family, to wit, my grandfather's, father's, and two uncles, and the remainder of their respective personal estates, together with what he had an expectation of from his godmother, would make such a noble fortune, and give him such an interest, as might entitle him to hope for a peerage. Nothing less would satisfy his ambition.

With this view he gave himself airs very early ; “ that his grandfather and uncles were his stewards : that no man ever had better : that daughters were but incumbrances and drawbacks upon a family : ” and this low and familiar expression was often in his mouth, and uttered always with the self-complaisance which an imagined happy thought can be supposed to give the speaker ; to wit, “ that a man who has sons brings up chickens for his own table, ” (though once I made his comparison stagger with him, by asking him, if the sons, to make it hold, were to have their necks wrung off ?) “ whereas daughters are chickens brought up for the tables of other men. ”

When my grandfather's will (of the purport of which in my particular favour, until it was opened, I was as ignorant as they) had lopped off one branch of my brother's expectation, he was extremely dissatisfied with me. Nobody indeed was pleased : for although every one loved me, yet being the youngest child, father, uncles, brother, sister, all thought themselves postponed, as to matter of right and power : and my father himself could not bear that I should be made sole, as I may call it, and independent ; for such the will, as to that estate and the powers it gave (unaccountably as they all said), made me.

To obviate therefore every one's jealousy, I gave up to my father's management, as you know, not only the estate, but the money bequeathed me (which was a moiety of what my grandfather had by him at his death ; the other moiety being bequeathed to my sister) ; contenting myself to take as from his bounty what he was pleased to

allow me, without desiring the least addition to my annual stipend.

My brother's acquisition then took place. This made us all very happy ; and he went down to take possession of it : and his absence (on so good an account too) made us still happier. Then followed Lord M.'s proposal for my sister : and this was an additional felicity for the time. I have told you how exceedingly good-humoured it made my sister. You know how that went off : you know what came on in its place.

My brother then returned ; and we were all wrong again : and Bella, as I observed in my letters above mentioned, had an opportunity to give herself the credit of having refused Mr. Lovelace, on the score of his reputed faulty morals. This united my brother and sister in one cause. They set themselves on all occasions to depreciate Mr. Lovelace, and his family too (a family which deserves nothing but respect) : and this gave rise to the conversation I am leading to between my uncles and them : of which I now come to give the particulars ; after I have observed, that it happened before the rencounter, and soon after the inquiry made into Mr. Lovelace's affairs had come out better than my brother and sister hoped it would.

They were bitterly inveighing against him, in their usual way, strengthening their invectives with some new stories in his disfavour ; when my uncle Antony, having given them a patient hearing, declared, " That he thought the gentleman behaved like a gentleman ; his niece Clary with prudence ; and that a more honourable alliance for the family, as he had often told them, could not be wished for : since Mr. Lovelace had a very good paternal estate ; and that, by the evidence of an enemy, all clear.

" That, besides his paternal estate, he was the immediate heir to very splendid fortunes : that, when he was in treaty for his niece Arabella, Lord M. told him (my uncle) what

great things he and his two half-sisters intended to do for him, in order to qualify him for the title, which would be extinct at his lordship's death, and which they hoped to procure for him, or a still higher, that of those ladies' father, which had been for some time extinct on failure of heirs male : that it was with this view that his relations were all so earnest for his marrying : that as he saw not where Mr. Lovelace could better himself ; so, truly, he thought there was wealth enough in their own family to build up three considerable ones : that therefore he must needs say, he was the more desirous of this alliance, as there was a great probability, not only from Mr. Lovelace's descent, but from his fortunes, that his niece Clarissa might one day be a peeress of Great Britain :—and upon that prospect (here was the mortifying stroke) he should, for his own part, think it not wrong to make such dispositions as should contribute to the better support of the dignity."

My uncle Harlowe, it seems, far from disapproving of what his brother had said, declared, "that there was but one objection to an alliance with Mr. Lovelace ; to wit, his faulty morals : especially as so much could be done for Miss Bella, and for my brother too, by my father ; and as my brother was actually possessed of a considerable estate by virtue of the deed of gift and will of his godmother Lovell."

Had I known this before, I should the less have wondered at many things I have been unable to account for in my brother's and sister's behaviour to me ; and been more on my guard than I imagined there was a necessity to be.

You may easily guess how much this conversation affected my brother at the time. He could not, you know, but be very uneasy to hear two of his stewards talk at this rate to his face.

"See, sister Bella," said he in an indecent passion before

my uncles,—“see how it is! You and I ought to look about us! This little siren is in a fair way to out-uncle, as she has already out-grandfathered us both!”

From this time did my brother and sister behave to me, as to one who stood in their way; and to each other, as having but one interest: and were resolved therefore to bend all their force to hinder an alliance from taking effect, which they believed was likely to oblige them to contract their views.

And how was this to be done, after such a declaration from both my uncles?

My brother found out the way. My sister (as I have said) went hand-in-hand with him. Between them, the family union was broken, and every one was made uneasy. Mr. Lovelace was received more and more coldly by all: but not being to be put out of his course by slights only, personal affronts succeeded; defiances next; then the rencounter: that, as you have heard, did the business: and now, if I do not oblige them, my grandfather's estate is to be litigated with me; and I, who never designed to take advantage of the independency bequeathed me, am to be as dependent upon my father's will, as a daughter ought to be who knows not what is good for herself. This is the language of the family now.

And surely I will not stand against such an accession to the family as may happen from marrying Mr. Solmes: since now a possibility is discovered (which such a grasping mind as my brother's can easily turn into a probability) that my grandfather's estate will revert to it, with a much more considerable one of the man's own. Instances of estates falling in, in cases far more unlikely than this, are insisted upon; and my sister says, in the words of an old saw, “it is good to be related to an estate.”

I will break off here.



*Friday, March 3.*

I went down this morning when breakfast was ready with a very uneasy heart, from something Hannah had informed me of yesterday afternoon ; wishing for an opportunity, however, to appeal to my mother, in hopes to engage her interest in my behalf, and purposing to try to find one when she retired to her own apartment after breakfast : but, unluckily, there was the odious Solmes sitting asquat between my mother and sister, with so much assurance in his looks !—But you know, my dear, that those we love not, cannot do anything to please us.

Had the wretch kept his seat, it might have been well enough : but the bent and broad-shouldered creature must needs rise, and stalk towards a chair ; which was just by that which was set for me.

I removed it to a distance, as if to make way to my own : and down I sat, abruptly I believe. But this was not enough to daunt him. The man is a very confident, he is a very bold, staring man !—Indeed, my dear, the man is very confident !

He took the removed chair, and drew it so near mine, squatting in it with his ugly weight, that he pressed upon my hoop.—I was so offended that I removed to another chair. I own I had too little command of myself. It gave my brother and sister too much advantage. I dare say they took it. But I did it involuntarily, I think. I could not help it.—I knew not what I did.

I saw that my father was excessively displeased. When angry, no man's countenance ever shows it so much as my father's. Clarissa Harlowe ! said he with a big voice—and there he stopped.—Sir ! said I, trembling and courtseying (for I had not then sat down again) : and put my chair nearer the wretch, and sat down—my face, as I could feel, all in a glow.

Make tea, child, said my kind mamma : sit by me, love, and make tea.

I removed with pleasure to the seat the man had quitted ; and being thus indulgently put into employment, soon recovered myself ; and in the course of the breakfasting officiously asked two or three questions of Mr. Solmes, which I would not have done, but to make up with my father.—Proud spirits may be brought to ! whisperingly spoke my sister to me, over her shoulder, with an air of triumph and scorn : but I did not mind her.

My mother was all kindness and condescension. I asked her once, if she were pleased with the tea ? She said softly (and again called me dear) she was pleased with all I did. I was very proud of this encouraging goodness : and all blew over, as I hoped, between my father and me ; for he also spoke kindly to me two or three times.

Small incidents these, my dear, to trouble you with ; only as they lead to greater, as you shall hear.

Before the usual breakfast-time was over, my father withdrew with my mother, telling her he wanted to speak to her. Then my sister and next my aunt (who was with us) dropped away.

My brother gave himself some airs of insult, which I understood well enough ; but which Mr. Solmes could make nothing of : and at last he arose from his seat—Sister, said he, I have a curiosity to show you. I will fetch it. And away he went, shutting the door close after him.

I saw what all this was for. I arose ; the man hemming up for a speech, rising, and beginning to set his splay-feet [indeed, my dear, the man in all his ways is hateful to me !] in an approaching posture.—I will save my brother the trouble of bringing to me his curiosity, said I. I curtsied—Your servant, sir—The man cried, Madam, madam, twice, and looked like a fool.—But away I went—to find my brother, to save my word.—But my brother, indifferent as the weather was, was gone to walk in the garden with my sister. A plain case, that he had left his curiosity with me, and designed to show me no other.

I had but just got into my own apartment, and began to think of sending Hannah to beg an audience of my mother (the more encouraged by her condescending goodness at breakfast) when Shorey her woman brought me her commands to attend her in her closet.

My father, Hannah told me, was just gone out of it with a positive angry countenance. Then I as much dreaded the audience as I had wished for it before.

I went down however ; but, apprehending the subject she intended to talk to me upon, approached her trembling, and my heart in visible palpitations.

She saw my concern. Holding out her kind arms, as she sat, Come kiss me, my dear, said she, with a smile like a sunbeam breaking through the cloud that overshadowed her naturally benign aspect. Why flutters my jewel so ?

This preparative sweetness, with her goodness just before, confirmed my apprehensions. My mother saw the bitter pill wanted gilding.

O my mamma ! was all I could say ; and I clasped my arms round her neck, and my face sank into her bosom.

My child ! my child ! restrain, said she, your powers of moving ! I dare not else trust myself with you.—And my tears trickled down her bosom, as hers bedewed my neck.

O the words of kindness, all to be expressed in vain, that flowed from her lips !

Lift up your sweet face, my best child, my own Clarissa Harlowe ?—Why these sobs ?—Is an apprehended duty so affecting a thing, that before I can speak—But I am glad, my love, you can guess at what I have to say to you. I am spared the pains of breaking to you what was a task upon me reluctantly enough undertaken to break to you.

Then rising, she drew a chair near her own, and made me sit down by her, overwhelmed as I was with tears of apprehension of what she had to say, and of gratitude



for her truly maternal goodness to me—sobs still my only language.

And drawing her chair still nearer to mine, she put her arms round my neck, and my glowing cheek, wet with my tears, close to her own: Let me talk to you, my child. Since silence is your choice, hearken to me, and be silent.

You know, my dear, what I every day forego, and undergo, for the sake of peace. Your papa is a very good man, and means well; but he will not be controlled; nor yet persuaded. You would not add, I am sure, to my trouble: you would not wilfully break that peace which costs your mother so much to preserve. Obedience is better than sacrifice. O my Clary Harlowe, rejoice my heart, by telling me I have apprehended too much!—I see your concern! I see your perplexity! I see your conflict (loosing her arm, and rising, not willing I should see how much she herself was affected). I will leave you a moment.—Answer me not—(For I was essaying to speak, and had, as soon as she took her dear cheek from mine, dropt down on my knees, my hands clasped, and lifted up in a supplicating manner). I am not prepared for your irresistible expostulation, she was pleased to say. I will leave you to recollection: and I charge you, on my blessing, that all this my truly maternal tenderness be not thrown away upon you.

And then she withdrew into the next apartment; wiping her eyes, as she went from me; as mine overflowed; my heart taking in the whole compass of her meaning.

She soon returned, having recovered more steadiness.

Still on my knees, I had thrown my face across the chair she had sat in.

Look up to me, my Clary Harlowe—No sullenness, I hope!

No, indeed, my ever-to-be-revered mamma.—And I arose. I bent my knee.



She raised me. No kneeling to me, but with knees of duty and compliance. Your heart, not your knees, must bend. It is absolutely determined—Prepare yourself therefore to receive your father, when he visits you by and-by, as he would wish to receive you. But on this one quarter of an hour depends the peace of my future life, the satisfaction of all the family, and your own security from a man of violence : and I charge you besides, on my blessing, that you think of being Mrs. Solmes.

There went the dagger to my heart, and down I sank : and when I recovered, found myself in the arms of my Hannah, my sister's Betty holding open my reluctantly-opened palm, my laces cut, my linen scented with harts-horn ; and my mother gone. Had I been less kindly treated, the hated name still forborne to be mentioned, or mentioned with a little more preparation and reserve, I had stood the horrid sound with less visible emotion—but to be bid, on the blessing of a mother so dearly beloved, so truly revered, to think of being Mrs. Solmes—what a denunciation was that !

Shorey came in with a message (delivered in her solemn way) : Your mamma, miss, is concerned for your disorder : she expects you down again in an hour ; and bid me say, that she then hopes everything from your duty.

I made no reply ; for what could I say ? And leaning upon my Hannah's arm, withdrew to my own apartment. There you will guess how the greatest part of the hour was employed.

Within that time, my mother came up to me.

I love, she was pleased to say, to come into this apartment!—No emotions, child ! No flutters!—Am I not your mother!—Am I not your fond, your indulgent mother!—Do not discompose me by discomposing yourself ! Do not occasion me uneasiness, when I would give you nothing but pleasure. Come, my dear, we will go into your closet.

She took my hand, led the way, and made me sit down by her : and after she had inquired how I did, she began in a strain as if she had supposed I had made use of the intervening space to overcome all my objections.

She was pleased to tell me, that my father and she, in order to spare my natural modesty, had taken the whole affair upon themselves—

Hear me out ; and then speak ; for I was going to expostulate. You are no stranger to the end of Mr. Solmes's visits—

O madam—

Hear me out ; and then speak.—He is not indeed everything I wish him to be : but he is a man of probity, and has no vices—

No vices, madam !—

Hear me out, child—You have not behaved much amiss to him : we have seen with pleasure that you have not—

O madam, must I not now speak !—

I shall have done presently—A young creature of your virtuous and pious turn, she was pleased to say, cannot surely love a profligate : you love your brother too well, to wish to marry one who had like to have killed him, and who threatened your uncles, and defies us all. You have had your own way six or seven times : we want to secure you against a man so vile. Tell me (I have a right to know) whether you prefer this man to all others ?—Yet God forbid that I should know you do ! for such a declaration would make us all miserable. Yet, tell me, are your affections engaged to this man ?

I knew what the inference would be, if I had said they were not.

You hesitate—you answer me not—you cannot answer me. Rising—never more will I look upon you with an eye of favour—

O madam, madam ! kill me not with your displeasure—

I would not, I need not, hesitate one moment, did I not dread the inference, if I answer you as you wish.

Well then, Clary, if your heart be free—

O my beloved mamma, let the usual generosity of your dear heart operate in my favour. Urge not upon me the inference that made me hesitate.

I won't be interrupted, Clary—you have seen in my behaviour to you, on this occasion, a truly maternal tenderness; you have observed that I have undertaken this task with some reluctance, because the man is not everything; and because I know you carry your notions of perfection in a man too high—

Dearest madam, this one time excuse me!—Is there then any danger that I should be guilty of an imprudent thing for the man's sake you hint at?

Again interrupted!—Am I to be questioned, and argued with? You know this won't do somewhere else. You know it won't. What reason then, ungenerous girl, can you have for arguing with me thus, but because you think from my indulgence to you, you may?

What can I say? What can I do? What must that cause be that will not bear being argued upon?

Again! Clary Harlowe!—

Dearest madam, forgive me: it was always my pride and my pleasure to obey you. But look upon that man—see but the disagreeableness of his person—

Now, Clary, do I see whose person you have in your eye!—Now is Mr. Solmes, I see, but comparatively disagreeable; disagreeable only as another man has a much more specious person.

But, madam, are not his manners equally so?—Is not his person the true representative of his mind?—That other man is not, shall not be, anything to me, release me but from this one man, whom my heart, unbidden, resists.

Condition thus with your father. Will he bear, do you

think, to be thus dialogued with? Have I not conjured you, as you value my peace—what is it that I do not give up?—This very talk, because I apprehended you would not be easily persuaded, is a task indeed upon me. And will you give up nothing? Have you not refused as many as have been offered to you? If you would not have us guess for whom, comply; for comply you must, or be looked upon as in a state of defiance with your whole family.

And saying this, she arose, and went from me. But at the chamber-door stopped; and turned back: I will not say below in what a disposition I leave you. Consider of everything. The matter is resolved upon. As you value your father's blessing and mine, and the satisfaction of all the family, resolve to comply. I will leave you for a few moments. I will come up to you again. See that I find you as I wish to find you; and since your heart is free, let your duty govern it.

In about half an hour, my mother returned. She found me in tears. She took my hand: It is my part evermore, said she, to be of the acknowledging side. I believe I have needlessly exposed myself to your opposition, by the method I have taken with you. I first began as if I expected a denial, and by my indulgence brought it upon myself.

Do not, my dearest mamma! do not, say so!

When I came to you a second time, proceeded she, knowing that your opposition would avail you nothing, I refused to hear your reasons: and in this I was wrong too, because a young creature who loves to reason, and used to love to be convinced by reason, ought to have all her objections heard: I now, therefore, this third time, see you; and am come resolved to hear all you have to say: and let me, my dear, by my patience engage your gratitude; your generosity, I will call it; because it is to you I speak, who used to have a mind wholly generous.—

Let me, if your heart be really free, let me see what it will induce you to do to oblige me : and so as you permit your usual discretion to govern you, I will hear all you have to say ; but with this intimation, that say what you will, it will be of no avail elsewhere.

What a dreadful saying is that ! but could I engage your pity, madam, it would be somewhat.

You have as much of my pity, as of my love. But what is person, Clary, with one of your prudence, and your heart disengaged ?

Should the eye be disgusted, when the heart is to be engaged ?—O madam, who can think of marrying when the heart is shocked at the first appearance, and where the disgust must be confirmed by every conversation afterwards ?

This, Clary, is owing to your prepossession. Have you not made objections to several—

That was to their minds, to their principles, madam— but this man—

Is an honest man, Clary Harlowe. He has a good mind. He is a virtuous man.

He an honest man ! His a good mind, madam ! He a virtuous man !—

Nobody denies him these qualities.

Can he be an honest man who offers terms that will rob all his own relations of their just expectations ?—Can his mind be good—

You, Clary Harlowe, for whose sake he offers so much, are the last person that should make this observation.

Give me leave to say, madam, that a person preferring happiness to fortune, as I do ; that want not even what I have, and can give up the use of that, as an instance of duty—

No more, no more of your merits !—You know you will be a gainer by that cheerful instance of your duty ; not a loser.

Just then, up came my father, with a sternness in his looks that made me tremble.—He took two or three turns about my chamber, though pained by his gout.—And then said to my mother, who was silent as soon as she saw him.

My dear, you are long absent.—Dinner is near ready. What you had to say, lay in a very little compass. Surely, you have nothing to do but to declare your will, and my will—but perhaps you may be talking of the preparations—let us have you soon down—your daughter in your hand, if worthy of the name.

And down he went, casting his eye upon me with a look so stern, that I was unable to say one word to him, or even for a few minutes to my mother.

Was not this very intimidating, my dear ?

My mother, seeing my concern, seemed to pity me. She called me her good child, and kissed me; and told me that my father should not know I had made such opposition. He has kindly furnished us with an excuse for being so long together, said she.—Come, my dear—dinner will be upon table presently—Shall we go down ?—And took my hand.

This made me start : What, madam, go down to let it be supposed we were talking of preparations !—O my beloved mamma, command me not down upon such a supposition.

You see, child, that to stay longer together, will be owning that you are debating about an absolute duty : and that will not be borne. Did not your father himself some days ago tell you, he would be obeyed ? I will a third time leave you. I must say something by way of excuse for you : and that you desire not to go down to dinner—that your modesty on the occasion—

O madam ! say not my modesty on such an occasion : for that will be to give hope—

And design you not to give hope ?—Perverse girl !—rising, and flinging from me ; take more time for consideration !—since it is necessary, take more time—and when

I see you next, let me know what blame I have to cast upon myself, or to bear from your father, for my indulgence to you.

She made, however, a little stop at the chamber-door; and seemed to expect that I would have besought her to make the gentlest construction for me; for, hesitating, she was pleased to say, I suppose you would not have me make a report—

O madam, interrupted I, whose favour can I hope for, if I lose my mamma's?

And so my mother went down stairs.

My mother, on her return, which was as soon as she had dined, was pleased to inform me, that she told my father that she was willing, on so material a point, to give a child whom she had so much reason to love (as she condescended to acknowledge were her words) liberty to say all that was in her heart to say, that her compliance might be the freer: letting him know, that when he came up, she was attending to my pleas; for that she found I had rather not marry at all.

She told me, that to this my father angrily said, Let her take care—let her take care—that she give me not ground to suspect her of a preference somewhere else. But, if it be to ease her heart, and not to dispute my will, you may hear her out.

So, Clary, said my mother, I am returned in a temper accordingly: and I hope you will not again, by your pe-remptoriness, show me, how I ought to treat you.

Indeed, madam, you did me justice, to say, I have no inclination to marry at all. I have not, I hope, made myself so very unuseful in my papa's family, as—

No more of your merits, Clary! you have been a good child. You have eased me of all the family-cares: but do not now give more than ever you relieved me from. You have been amply repaid in the reputation your skill and management have given you: but now there is soon to be



a period to all those assistances from you. If you marry, there will be a natural period ; if you do not, there will be a period likewise, but not a natural one—you understand me, child.

I wept.

I have made inquiry already after a housekeeper. I would have had your good Norton ; but I suppose you will yourself wish to have the worthy woman with you. If you desire it, that shall be agreed upon for you.

But, why, dearest madam, why am I, the youngest, to be precipitated into a state, that I am very far from wishing to enter into with anybody ?

You are going to question me, I suppose, why your sister is not thought of for Mr. Solmes ?

I hope, madam, it will not displease you, if I were ?

I might refer you for an answer to your father.—Mr. Solmes has reasons for preferring you—

And I have reasons, madam, for disliking him. And why am I—

This quickness upon me, interrupted my mother, is not to be borne ! I am gone, and your father comes, if I can do no good with you.

O madam, I would rather die, than—

She put her hand to my mouth.—No peremptoriness, Clary Harlowe : once you declare yourself inflexible, I have done.

I wept for vexation. This is all, all, my brother's doings—his grasping views—

No reflections upon your brother : he has entirely the honour of the family at heart.

I would no more dishonour my family, madam, than my brother would.

I believe it : but I hope you will allow your father, and me, and your uncles, to judge what will do it honour, what dishonour.

I then offered to live single ; never to marry at all ; or never but with their full approbation.

If you mean to show your duty, and your obedience, Clary, you must show it in our way, not in your own.

I hope, madam, that I have not so behaved hitherto, as to render such a trial of my obedience necessary.

Yes, Clary, I cannot but say that you have hitherto behaved extremely well : but you have had no trials till now : we have hitherto rather complied with you, than you with us. Now that you are grown up to marriageable years, is the test ; especially as your grandfather has made you independent, in preference to those who had prior expectations upon that estate.

Madam, my grandfather knew, and expressly mentions in his will his desire, that my father will more than make it up to my sister.

I am loth to interrupt you, Clary ; though you could more than once break in upon me.

I beg your pardon, dear madam, and your patience with me on such an occasion as this. If I did not speak with earnestness upon it, I should be supposed to have only maidenly objections against a man I never can endure.

How now, Clary !—O girl !—

Your patience, my dearest mamma :—you were pleased to say, you would hear me with patience.—Person in a man is nothing, because I am supposed to be prudent : so my eye is to be disgusted, and my reason not convinced—

Girl, girl !

Thus are my imputed good qualities to be made my punishment ; I am to be wedded to a monster. And that I may be induced to bear this treatment, I am to be complimented with being indifferent to all men : yet, at other times, and to serve other purposes, be thought prepossessed in favour of a man against whose moral character lie just objections.—Confined, as if, like the giddiest of creatures, I would run away with this man,

and disgrace my whole family!—O my dearest mamma! who can be patient under such treatment?

Now, Clary, I suppose you will allow me to speak. I think I have had patience indeed with you.—Could I have thought—but I will put all upon a short issue. Your mother, Clarissa, shall show you an example of that patience you so boldly claim from her, without having any yourself.

Let me tell you then, proceeded she, that all lies in a small compass, as your father said. Whether you will break with us all, and stand in defiance of a jealous father. This is now the point with us. You know your father has made it a point; and did he ever give up one he thought he had a right to carry?

I was silent. To say the truth, I was just then sullenly silent. My heart was too big. I thought it was hard to be thus given up by my mother; and that she should make a will so uncontrollable as my brother's, her will.—My mother, my dear, though I must not say so, was not obliged to marry against her liking. My mother loved my father.

My silence availed me still less.

I see, my dear, said she, that you are convinced. Now, my good child, now, my Clary, do I love you! It shall not be known, that you have argued with me at all. All shall be imputed to that modesty which has ever so much distinguished you. You shall have the full merit of your resignation.

I wept.

She tenderly wiped the tears from my eyes, and kissed my cheek. Your father expects you down with a cheerful countenance—but I will excuse your going. All your scruples, you see, have met with an indulgence truly maternal from me. I rejoice in the hope that you are convinced. This indeed seems to be a proof of the truth of your agreeable declaration, that your heart is free.

Did not this seem to border upon cruelty, my dear, in so indulgent a mother?

I will go down, proceeded she, and excuse your attendance at afternoon tea, as I did to dinner: for I know you will have some little reluctances to subdue. I will allow you those; and also some little natural shynesses—and so you shall not come down, if you choose not to come down—only, my dear, do not disgrace my report when you come to supper. And be sure behave as you used to do to your brother and sister; for your behaviour to them will be one test of your cheerful obedience to us. I advise as a friend, you see, rather than command as a mother—So adieu, my love. And again she kissed me; and was going.

O my dear mamma, said I, forgive me!—But surely you cannot believe, I can ever think of having that man!

She was very angry.

Determined and perverse, my dear mamma called me: and after walking twice or thrice in anger about the room, she turned to me;—Your heart free, Clarissa! How can you tell me your heart is free? Such extraordinary antipathies to a particular person must be owing to extraordinary prepossessions in another's favour!—Tell me, Clary; and tell me truly—do you not continue to correspond with Mr. Lovelace?

Dearest madam, replied I, you know my motives: to prevent mischief, I answered his letters. The reasons for our apprehensions of this sort are not over. He is only restrained by his regard for me from resenting the violent treatment of him and his family; what can I do? Would you have me, madam, make him desperate?

The law will protect us, child! Offended magistracy will assert itself—

But, madam, may not some dreadful mischief first happen?—The law asserts not itself, till it is offended.

You have made offers, Clary, if you might be obliged in the point in question—Are you really in earnest, were you to be complied with, to break off all correspondence with Mr. Lovelace?—Let me know this.

Indeed, I am ; and I will. You, madam, shall see all the letters that have passed between us. You shall see I have given him no encouragement.

I take you at your word, Clarissa—Give me his letters ; and the copies of yours.

I am sure, madam, you will keep the knowledge that I write, and what I write—

No conditions with your mother—surely my prudence may be trusted to.

I begged her pardon ; and besought her to take the key of the private drawer in my escritoire, where they lay, that she herself might see, that I had no reserves to my mother.

She did ; and took all his letters, and the copies of mine.—Unconditioned with, she was pleased to say, they shall be yours again, unseen by anybody else.

I thanked her ; and she withdrew to read them ; saying, she would return them, when she had.

In about an hour my mother returned. Take your letters, Clary : I have nothing, she was pleased to say, to tax your discretion with, as to the wording of yours to him : you have even kept up a proper dignity, as well as observed all the rules of decorum ; and you have resented, as you ought to resent, his menacing invectives. In a word, I see not, that he can form the least expectations from what you have written, that you will encourage the passion he avows for you. But does he not avow his passion ? Have you the least doubt about what must be the issue of this correspondence, if continued ? And do you yourself think, when you know the avowed hatred of one side, and the declared defiances of the other, that this can be, that it ought to be a match ?

By no means it can, madam ; you will be pleased to observe, that I have said as much to him. But now, madam, that the whole correspondence is before you, I beg your commands what to do in a situation so very disagreeable.

Let me ask you, what you yourself can propose ? What, Clary, are your own thoughts of the matter ?

Without hesitation thus I answered—What I humbly propose is this :—“That I will write to Mr. Lovelace (for I have not answered his last) that he has nothing to do between my father and me : that I neither ask his advice, nor need it : but that since he thinks he has some pretence for interfering, because of my brother’s avowal of the interest of Mr. Solmes in displeasure to him, I will assure him (without giving him any reason to impute the assurance to be in the least favourable to himself) that I never will be that man’s.” And if, proceeded I, I may be permitted to give him this assurance ; and Mr. Solmes, in consequence of it, be discouraged from prosecuting his address ; let Mr. Lovelace be satisfied or dissatisfied, I will go no farther ; nor write another line to him ; nor ever see him more, if I can avoid it ; and I shall have a good excuse for it, without bringing in any of my family.

Ah ! my love !—But what shall we do about the terms Mr. Solmes offers ? Those are the inducements with everybody. He has even given hopes to your brother that he will make exchanges of estates.

And for the sake of these views, for the sake of this plan of my brother’s, am I, madam, to be given in marriage to a man I never can endure !—O my dear mamma, save me, save me, if you can, from this heavy evil !—I had rather be buried alive, indeed I had, than have that man !

She chid me for my vehemence ; but was so good as to tell me, that she would sound my uncle Harlowe, who was then below ; and if he encouraged her (or would engage to

second her) she would venture to talk to my father herself; and I should hear further in the morning.

She went down to tea, and kindly undertook to excuse my attendance at supper.

Would you not have thought that something might have been obtained in my favour, from an offer so reasonable, to put an end, as from myself, to a correspondence I hardly know how otherwise, with safety to some of my family, to get rid of?—But my brother's plan, joined with my father's impatience of contradiction, are irresistible.

I have not been in bed all night; nor am I in the least drowsy. Expectation, and hope, and doubt kept me sufficiently wakeful. I stepped down at my usual time, that it might not be known I had not been in bed.

About eight o'clock Shorey came to me from my mother with orders to attend her in her chamber.

My mother had been weeping, I saw by her eyes: but her aspect seemed to be less tender, and less affectionate, than the day before; and this, as soon as I entered into her presence, struck me with an awe, which gave a great damp to my spirits.

Sit down, Clary Harlowe; I shall talk to you by-and-by: and continued looking into a drawer among laces and linen, in a way neither busy nor unbusy.

I believe it was a quarter of an hour before she spoke to me (my heart throbbing with the suspense all the time); and then she asked me coldly, what directions I had given for the day?

I shewed her the bill of fare for this day, and to-morrow, if, I said, it pleased her to approve of it.

She made a small alteration in it; but with an air so cold and so solemn, as added to my emotions.

Mr. Harlowe talks of dining out to-day, I think, at my brother Antony's.

Mr. Harlowe!—not my father!—have I not then a father!—thought I?

Sit down when I bid you.

I sat down.

You look very sullen, Clary.

I hope not, madam.

If children would always be children—parents—and there she stopt.

She then went to her toilette, and looked in the glass, and gave half a sigh—the other half, as if she would not have sighed could she have helped it, she gently hem'd away.

I don't love to see the girl look so sullen.

Indeed, madam, I am not sullen.—And I arose, and, turning from her, drew out my handkerchief; for the tears ran down my cheeks.

I thought, by the glass before me, I saw the mother in her softened eye cast towards me: but her words confirmed not the hoped-for tenderness.

One of the most provoking things in the world is, to have people cry for what they can help!

I wish to heaven I could, madam!—and I sobbed again.

Tears of penitence and sobs of perverseness are mighty well suited!—You may go up to your chamber. I shall talk with you by-and-by.

I courtesied with reverence.

Mock me not with outward gestures of respect. The heart, Clary, is what I want.

Indeed, madam, you have it. It is not so much mine as my mamma's!

Fine talking!—As somebody says, if words were to pass for duty, Clarissa Harlowe would be the dutifullest child breathing.

God bless that somebody!—Be it whom it will, God bless that somebody!—and I courtésied, and, pursuant to her last command, was going.

She seemed struck; but was to be angry with me.



So turning from me, she spoke with quickness, Whither now, Clary Harlowe ?

You commanded me, madam, to go to my chamber.

I see you are very ready to go out of my presence.

I could hold no longer ; but threw myself at her feet : O my dearest mamma ! Let me know all I am to suffer. I will bear it, if I can bear it : but your displeasure I cannot bear !

Leave me, leave me, Clary Harlowe !—No kneeling !—Limbs so supple ; will so stubborn !—Rise, I tell you.

I cannot rise ! I will disobey my mamma, when she bids me leave her without being reconciled to me ! No sullens, my mamma : no perverseness : but, worse than either : this is direct disobedience !—Yet tear not yourself from me ! (wrapping my arms about her as I kneeled ; she struggling to get from me ; my face lifted up to hers, with eyes running over, that spoke not my heart if they were not all humility and reverence)—you must not, must not, tear yourself from me ! (for still the dear lady struggled, and looked this way and that, in a sweet disorder, as if she knew not what to do).—I will neither rise, nor leave you, nor let you go, till you say you are not angry with me.

O thou ever-moving child of my heart ! (folding her dear arms about my neck, as mine embraced her knees)—why was this talk—But leave me !—You have discomposed me beyond expression ! Leave me, my dear !—I won't be angry with you—if I can help it—if you'll be good.

I arose trembling, and hardly knowing what I did, or how I stood or walked, withdrew to my chamber. My Hannah followed me as soon as she heard me quit my mother's presence, and with salts and spring water just kept me from fainting ; and that was as much as she could do. It was near two hours before I could so far

recover myself as to take up my pen, to write to you how unhappily my hopes have ended.

My mother went down to breakfast. I was not fit to appear : but if I had been better, I suppose I should not have been sent for ; since the permission for my attending her down, was given by my father (when in my chamber) only on condition that she found me worthy of the name of daughter.

*Saturday, March 4.*

Hannah informs me, that she heard my father high and angry with my mother, at taking leave of her : I suppose for being too favourable to me ; for Hannah heard her say, as in tears, “ Indeed, Mr. Harlow, you greatly distress me ! —The poor girl does not deserve—” Hannah heard no more, but that he said, he would break somebody’s heart—mine, I suppose—not my mother’s, I hope.

As only my sister dines with my mother, I thought I should have been commanded down : but she sent me up a plate from her table. I could not touch a morsel. I ordered Hannah, however, to eat of it, that I might not be thought sullen.

I have made, said my mother, as she entered my room, a short as well as early dinner, on purpose to confer with you : and I do assure you, that it will be the last conference I shall either be permitted or inclined to hold with you on the subject, if you should prove refractory.

Your father both dines and sups at your uncle’s, on purpose to give us this opportunity ; and according to the report I shall make on his return he will take his measures with you.

I was offering to speak—Hear, Clarissa, what I have to tell you, said she, before you speak, unless what you have to say will signify to me your compliance—Say—will it ? —if it will, you may speak.

I was silent ; looking down ; the tears in my eyes.

O thou determined girl!—But say—speak out—are you resolved to stand in opposition to us all, in a point our hearts are set upon?

May I, madam, be permitted to expostulate?—

To what purpose expostulate with me, Clarissa? Your father is determined.

I wept. I knew not what to say; or rather how to express what I had to say.

Take notice, that there are flaws in your grandfather's will: not a shilling of that estate will be yours, if you do not yield. Your grandfather left it to you, as a reward of your duty to him and to us—you will justly forfeit it, if—

Permit me, good madam, to say, that, if it were unjustly bequeathed me, I ought not to wish to have it. But I hope Mr. Solmes will be apprised of these flaws.

This is very pertly said, Clarissa: but reflect, that the forfeiture of that estate through your opposition will be attended with the total loss of your father's favour.

I must accommodate myself, madam, in the latter case, to my circumstances.

You are sullen, Clarissa: I see you are sullen.—And she walked about the room in anger. Then turning to me, you can bear the imputation of sullenness, I see!—You have no concern to clear yourself of it. I was afraid of telling you all I was enjoined to tell you, in case you were to be unpersuadable: but I find that I had a greater opinion of your delicacy, of your gentleness, than I needed to have—It cannot discompose so steady, so inflexible a young creature, to be told, as I now tell you, that the settlements are actually drawn; and that you will be called down in a very few days to hear them read, and to sign them.

I was speechless, absolutely speechless. Although my heart was ready to burst, yet could I neither weep nor speak.

I am sorry, said she, for your averseness to this match. (Match she was pleased to call it!): but there is no help.

I was still speechless.

She folded the warm statue, as she was pleased to call me, in her arms; and entreated me, for heaven's sake, and for her sake, to comply.

Speech and tears were lent me at the same time.—You have given me life, madam, said I, clasping my uplifted hands together, and falling on one knee; a happy one, till now, has your goodness, and my papa's, made it! O do not, do not, make all the remainder of it miserable!

Your father, replied she, is resolved not to see you, till he sees you as obedient a child as you used to be. You have never been put to a test till now, that deserved to be called a test. This is, this must be, my last effort with you. Give me hope, my dear child: my peace is concerned: I will compound with you but for hope: and yet your father will not be satisfied without an implicit, and even a cheerful obedience—Give me but hope, my child!

To give you hope, my dearest, my most indulgent mamma, is to give you everything. Can I be honest, if I give a hope that I cannot confirm?

She was very angry. She again called me perverse: she upbraided me with regarding only my own prepossessions, and respecting not either her peace of mind, or my own duty.

She went on, "Your father has declared, that your unexpected opposition, and Mr. Lovelace's continued menaces and insults, more and more convince him, that a short day is necessary in order to put an end to all that man's hopes, and to his own apprehensions resulting from the disobedience of a child so favoured. He has therefore actually ordered patterns of the richest silks to be sent for from London—"

I started—I was out of breath—I gasped, at this frightful precipitance— I was going to open with warmth against it. I knew whose the happy expedient must be : female minds, I once heard my brother say, that could but be brought to balance on the change of their state, might easily be determined by the glare and splendour of the nuptial preparations, and the pride of becoming the mistress of a family.

Save me, said I, save me, O my dearest mamma, save your child, from this heavy, from this insupportable evil !—

Never was there a countenance that expressed so significantly, as my mother's did, an anguish, which she struggled to hide, under an anger she was compelled to assume.

I then, half frantically I believe, laid hold of her gown— Have patience with me, dearest madam ! said I—do not you renounce me totally !—My uncles may be hard-hearted—my father may be immovable—I may suffer from my brother's ambition, and from my sister's envy !—but let me not lose my mamma's love ; at least, her pity.

She turned to me with benigner rays—You have my love ! You have my pity ! But, O my dearest girl—I have not yours.

Indeed, indeed, madam, you have : and all my reverence, all my gratitude, you have !—But in this one point—Cannot I be this once obliged ?—will no expedient be accepted ? Have I not made a very fair proposal as to Mr. Lovelace ?

I wish, for both our sakes, my dear unpersuadable girl, that the decision of this point lay with me. But why, when you know it does not, why should you thus perplex and urge me ?—To renounce Mr. Lovelace is now but half what is aimed at. Nor will anybody else believe you in earnest in the offer, if I would. While you remain single, Mr. Lovelace will have hopes—and you, in the opinion of others, inclinations.

Once more, I will put it to you,—Are you determined to brave your father's displeasure?—are you determined to defy your uncles?—do you choose to break with us all, rather than encourage Mr. Solmes?—rather than give me hope?

Dreadful alternative.—Dear, dear madam, how can I give hope, and not intend to be this man's?

Ah, girl, never say your heart is free!

Let me tell you, ungrateful girl, and unmovable as ungrateful, let me repeatedly tell you, that nothing but a love unworthy of your prudence can make a creature late so dutiful, now so sturdy. You may guess what your father's first question on his return will be. He must know, that I can do nothing with you. I have done my part. Seek me, if your mind change before he comes back: you have yet a little more time, as he stays supper. I will no more seek you, nor to you.—And away she flung.

What could I do but weep?

My mother hinted to me, that I must seek her, if my mind changed; which is a condition that amounts to a prohibition of attending her: but, as she left me in displeasure, will it not have a very obstinate appearance, and look like a kind of renunciation of her mediation in my favour, if I go not down before my father returns, to supplicate her pity, and her kind report to him?

I will attend her. I had rather all the world should be angry with me than my mamma!

Meantime, to clear my hands from papers of such a nature, Hannah shall deposit this. If two or three letters reach you together, they will but express, from one period to another, the anxieties and difficulties which the mind of your unhappy but ever affectionate friend labours under.

*Saturday Night.*

I have been down. I have made matters worse instead of better: as I shall now tell you.

I found my mother and sister together in my sister's parlour.

I entered like a dejected criminal; and besought the favour of a private audience.

You have, said my mother (looking at me with a sternness that never sits well on her sweet features) rather a requesting than a conceding countenance, *Clarissa Harlowe*: if I am mistaken, tell me so; and I will withdraw with you wherever you will.—Yet whether so, or not, you may say what you have to say before your sister. •

I come down, madam, said I, to beg of you to forgive me for anything you may have taken amiss in what passed above respecting your honoured self; and that you will be pleased to use your endeavours to soften my papa's displeasure against me, on his return.

Such aggravating looks; such lifting up of hands and eyes; such a furrowed forehead, in my sister!

My mother was angry enough without all that; and asked me, to what purpose I came down, if I were still so untractable?

She had hardly spoken the words, when *Shorey* came in to tell her, that *Mr. Solmes* was in the hall, and desired admittance.

I was hurrying away; but my mother commanded me (since I had come down only, as she said, to mock her) not to stir; and at the same time see if I could behave so to *Mr. Solmes*, as might encourage her to make the favourable report to my father which I had besought her to make.

The man stalked in: and first paid his clumsy respects to my mother; then to my sister; next to me, as if I were already his wife, and therefore to be last in his notice; and sitting down by me, told us in general what weather it was. Very cold he made it; but I was warm enough. Then addressing himself to me; and how do

you find it, miss ? was his question ; and would have taken my hand.

I withdrew it, I believe with disdain enough. My mother frowned. My sister bit her lip.

I could not contain myself : I never was so bold in my life ; for I went on with my plea, as if Mr. Solmes had not been there.

My mother coloured, and looked at him, at my sister, and at me. My sister's eyes were opener and bigger than ever I saw them before.

The man understood me. He hemmed, and removed from one chair to another.

I went on, supplicating for my mother's favourable report : nothing but invincible dislike, said I—

What would the girl be at ? interrupted my mother. Why, Clary ! Is this a subject !—Is this !—Is this !—Is this a time—and again she looked upon Mr. Solmes.

I am sorry, on reflection, that I put my mamma into so much confusion—to be sure it was very saucy in me.

I beg pardon, madam, said I. But my papa will soon return. And since I am not permitted to withdraw, it is not necessary, I humbly presume, that Mr. Solmes's presence should deprive me of this opportunity to implore your favourable report ; and at the same time, if he still visit on my account (looking at him) to convince him, that it cannot possibly be to any purpose—

Is the girl mad ? said my mother, interrupting me.

My sister, with the affectation of a whisper to my mother—this is—this is spite, madam (very spitefully she spoke the word) because you commanded her to stay.

I only looked at her, and turning to my mother, Permit me, madam, said I, to repeat my request. I have no brother, no sister !—If I lose my mamma's favour, I am lost for ever !

Mr. Solmes removed to his first seat, and fell to gnawing the head of his hazel ; a carved head, almost as



ugly as his own—I did not think the man was so sensible.

My sister rose, with a face all over scarlet; and stepping to the table, where lay a fan, she took it up, and, although Mr. Solmes had observed that the weather was cold, fanned herself very violently.

My mother came to me, and angrily taking my hand, led me out of that parlour into my own; which, you know, is next to it—Is not this behaviour very bold, very provoking, think you, Clary?

I beg your pardon, madam, if it has that appearance to you.

My mother was about to leave me in high displeasure.

I besought her to stay: one favour, but one favour, dearest madam, said I, give me leave to beg of you—

What would the girl?

I see how everything is working about.—I never, never, can think of Mr. Solmes. My papa will be in tumults when he is told that I cannot. They will judge of the tenderness of your heart to a poor child who seems devoted by everyone else, from the willingness you have already shown to hearken to my prayers. There will be endeavours used to confine me, and keep me out of your presence, and out of the presence of everyone who used to love me (this, my dear Miss Howe, is threatened). If this be effected; if it be out of my power to plead my own cause, and to appeal to you, and to my uncle Harlowe, of whom only I have hope; then will every ear be opened against me, and every tale encouraged—it is, therefore, my humble request, that, added to the disgraceful prohibitions I now suffer under, you will not, if you can help it, give way to my being denied your ear.

Your listening Hannah has given you this intelligence, as she does many others.

My Hannah, madam, listens not—my Hannah—

No more in Hannah's behalf—Hannah is known to

make mischief—Hannah is known—but no more of that bold intermeddler—'tis true, your father threatened to confine you to your chamber. He bid me tell you so, when he went out, if I found you refractory. But I was loth to deliver so harsh a declaration ; being still in hope that you would come down to us in a compliant temper. Hannah has overheard this I suppose ; and has told you of it ; as also, that he declared he would break your heart, rather than you should break his. And I now assure you, that you will be confined, and prohibited making teasing appeals to any of us : and we shall see who is to submit, you to us, or everybody to you.

Again I offered to clear Hannah, and to lay the latter part of the intelligence to my sister's echo, Betty Barnes, who had boasted of it to another servant : but I was again bid to be silent on that head. I should soon find, my mother was pleased to say, that others could be as determined as I was obstinate : and, once for all, would add, that since she saw that I built upon her indulgence, and was indifferent about involving her in contentions with my father, she would now assure me, that she was as much determined against Mr. Lovelace, and for Mr. Solmes and the family schemes, as anybody ; and would not refuse her consent to any measures that should be thought necessary to reduce a stubborn child to her duty.

I was ready to sink. She was so good as to lend me her arm to support me.

And this, said I, is all I have to hope for from my mamma ?

It is. But, Clary, this further opportunity I give you—go in again to Mr. Solmes, and behave discreetly to him ; and let your father find you together, upon civil terms at least.

My feet moved (of themselves, I think) farther from the parlour where he was, and towards the stairs ; and there I stopped and paused.

If, proceeded she, you are determined to stand in defiance of us all—then indeed may you go up to your chamber (as you are ready to do)—and God help you!

God help me indeed! for I cannot give hope of what I cannot intend—but let me have your prayers, my dear mamma!—Those shall have mine, who have brought me into all this distress.

I was moving to go up—

And will you go up, Clary?

I turned my face to her: My officious tears would needs plead for me: I could not just then speak; and stood still.

Good girl, distress me not thus!—Dear, good girl, do not thus distress me! holding out her hand; but standing still likewise.

What can I do, madam?—What can I do?

Go in again, my child—go in again, my dear child!—repeated she; and let your father find you together.

What, madam, to give him hope?—To give hope to Mr. Solmes?

Then take your own way, and go up!—But stir not down again, I charge you, without leave, or till your father's pleasure be known concerning you.

She flung from me with high indignation: And I went up with a very heavy heart; and feet as slow as my heart was heavy.

My father is come home, and my brother with him. Late as it is, they are all shut up together. Not a door opens; not a soul stirs. Hannah, as she moves up and down, is shunned as a person infected.

The angry assembly is broken up. My two uncles and my Aunt Hervey are sent for, it seems, to be here in the morning to breakfast. I shall then, I suppose, know my doom. 'Tis past eleven, and I am ordered not to go to bed.

This moment the keys of everything are taken from

me. It was proposed to send for me down: but my father said, he could not bear to look upon me.—Strange alteration in a few weeks!—Shorey was the messenger. The tears stood in her eyes when she delivered her message.

*Sunday Morning, March 5.*

Hannah has just brought me, from the private place in the garden wall, a letter from Mr. Lovelace, deposited last night, signed also by Lord M.

He tells me in it, “That Mr. Solmes makes it his boast, that he is to be married in a few days to one of the shyest women in England: that my brother explains his meaning; this shy creature, he says, is me; and he assures everyone, that his younger sister is very soon to be Mr. Solmes’s wife. He tells me of the patterns bespoke which my mother mentioned to me.” Not one thing escapes him that is done or said in this house.

“My sister, he says, reports the same things; and that with such particular aggravations of insult upon him, that he cannot but be extremely piqued, as well at the manner, as from the occasion; and expresses himself with great violence upon it.

“He knows not, he says, what my relations’ inducements can be, to prefer such a man as Solmes to him. If advantageous settlements be the motive, Solmes shall not offer what he will refuse to comply with.

“As to his estate, and family; the first cannot be excepted against: and for the second, he will not disgrace himself by a comparison so odious. He appeals to Lord M. for the regularity of his life and manners ever since he has made his addresses to me, or had hope of my favour.”

I suppose, he would have his lordship’s signing to this letter to be taken as a voucher for him.

“He desires my leave (in company with my lord, in a pacific manner) to attend my father or uncles, in order to make proposals that must be accepted, if they will but

see him, and hear what they are : and tells me, that he will submit to any measures that I shall prescribe, in order to bring about a reconciliation."

He presumes to be very earnest with me, "to give him a private meeting some night, in my father's garden, attended by whom I please."

Really, my dear, were you to see his letter, you would think I had given him great encouragement, and that I am in direct treaty with him ; or that he is sure that my friends will drive me into a foreign protection ; for he has the boldness to offer, in my lord's name, an asylum to me, should I be tyrannically treated in Solmes's behalf.

For my own part, I am very uneasy to think how I have been drawn on one hand, and driven on the other, into a clandestine, in short, into a mere lover-like correspondence, which my heart condemns.

It is easy to see, if I do not break it off, that Mr. Lovelace's advantages, by reason of my unhappy situation, will every day increase, and I shall be more and more entangled. Yet if I do put an end to it, without making it a condition of being freed from Mr. Solmes's address—may I, my dear, is it best to continue it a little longer, in hopes to extricate myself out of the other difficulty, by giving up all thoughts of Mr. Lovelace?—Whose advice can I now ask but yours?

All my relations are met. They are at breakfast together. Mr. Solmes is expected. I am excessively uneasy. I must lay down my pen.

They are all going to church together. Grievously disordered they appear to be, as Hannah tells me. She believes something is resolved upon.

What a cruel thing is suspense ! I will ask leave to go to church this afternoon. I expect to be denied : but if I do not ask, they may allege, that my not going is owing to myself.

I desired to speak with Shorey. Shorey came. I

directed her to carry to my mother my request for permission to go to church this afternoon. What think you was the return? Tell her, that she must direct herself to her brother for any favour she has to ask.—So, my dear, I am to be delivered up to my brother!

I was resolved, however, to ask of him this favour. Accordingly, when they sent me up my solitary dinner, I gave the messenger a billet, in which I made it my humble request through him to my father, to be permitted to go to church this afternoon.

This was the contemptuous answer: “Tell her, that her request will be taken into consideration to-morrow.”—My request to go to church to-day to be taken into consideration to-morrow!

They are resolved to break my heart. My poor Hannah is discharged—disgracefully discharged!—Thus it was.

Within half an hour after I had sent the poor girl down for my breakfast, that bold creature Betty Barnes, my sister’s confidant and servant (if a favourite maid and confidant can be deemed a servant) came up.

What, miss, will you please to have for breakfast?

I was surprised. What will I have for breakfast, Betty!—how!—what!—how comes it!—Then I named Hannah. I could not tell what to say.

Don’t be surprised, miss:—but you’ll see Hannah no more in this house.

God forbid!—Is any harm come to Hannah?—What! what is the matter with Hannah?

Why, miss, the short and the long is this: your papa and mamma think Hannah has staid long enough in the house to do mischief; and so she is ordered to troop (that was the confident creature’s word); and I am directed to wait upon you in her stead.

I burst into tears. I have no service for you, Betty Barnes; none at all. But where is Hannah? Cannot I speak with the poor girl? I owe her half a year’s wages.

May I not see the honest creature, and pay her her wages ? I may never see her again perhaps ; for they are resolved to break my heart.

And they think you are resolved to break theirs : so tit for tat, miss.

Impertinent I called her ; and asked her, if it were upon such confident terms that her service was to begin.

I was so very earnest to see the poor maid, that (to oblige me, as she said) she went down with my request.

The worthy creature was as earnest to see me ; and the favour was granted in presence of Shorey and Betty.

I thanked her, when she came up, for her past service to me.

Her heart was ready to break. And she began to vindicate her fidelity and love ; and disclaimed any mischief she had ever made.

I told her, that those who occasioned her being turned out of my service, made no question of her integrity : that her dismissal was intended for an indignity to me. That I was very sorry to be obliged to part with her, and hoped she would meet with as good a service.

Never, never, wringing her hands, should she meet with a mistress she loved so well. And the poor creature ran on in my praises, and in professions of love to me.

I gave her a little linen, some laces, and other odd things ; and instead of four pounds which were due to her, ten guineas : and said, if ever I were again allowed to be my own mistress, I would think of her in the first place.

Betty enviously whispered Shorey upon it.

Hannah told me, before their faces, having no other opportunity, that she had been examined about letters to me, and from me : and that she had given her pockets to Miss Harlowe, who looked into them, and put her fingers in her stays, to satisfy herself that she had not any.

She gave me an account of the number of my pheasants and bantams ; and I said they should be my own care

twice or thrice a day. We wept over each other at parting. The girl prayed for all the family. If you can commend the good creature to a place worthy of her, pray do for my sake.

*Monday.*

The enclosed letter was just now delivered to me. My brother has carried all his points.

*Monday, March 6.*

MISS CLARY,

By command of your father and mother I write, expressly to forbid you to come into their presence, or into the garden when they are there : nor when they are not there, but with Betty Barnes to attend you ; except by particular licence or command.

On their blessings, you are forbidden likewise to correspond with the vile Lovelace ; as it is well known you did by means of your sly Hannah. Whence her sudden discharge. As was fit.

Neither are you to correspond with Miss Howe ; nor, in short, with anybody without leave.

You are not to enter into the presence of either of your uncles, without their leave first obtained. It is in mercy to you, after such a behaviour to your mother, that your father refuses to see you.

You are not to be seen in any apartment of the house you so lately governed as you pleased, unless you are commanded down.

In short, you are strictly to confine yourself to your chamber, except now-and-then, in Betty Barnes's sight (as aforesaid) you take a morning or evening turn in the garden : and then you are to go directly, and without stopping at any apartment in the way, up and down the back stairs, that the sight of so perverse a young creature may not add to the pain you have given everybody.

The hourly threatenings of your fine fellow, as well as



your own unheard-of obstinacy, will account to you for all this.

If anything I have written, appear severe or harsh, it is still in your power (but perhaps will not always be so) to remedy it; and that by a single word.

Betty Barnes has orders to obey you on all points consistent with her duty to those to whom you owe it, as well as she.

JA. HARLOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

*Tuesday, March 7.*

**B**Y my last deposit, you will see how I am driven, and what a poor prisoner I am.—All my hope is, to be able to weather this point till my cousin Morden comes from Florence; and he is soon expected: yet, if they are determined upon a short day, I doubt he will not be here time enough to save me.

They think they have done everything by turning away my poor Hannah: but as long as the liberty of the garden, and my poultry visits, are allowed me, they will be mistaken.

I asked Mrs. Betty, if she had any orders to watch or attend me; or whether I was to ask her leave whenever I should be disposed to walk in the garden, or to go to feed my bantams?—Lord bless her! what could I mean by such a question! Yet she owned, that she had heard, that I was not to go into the garden, when my father, mother, or uncles were there.

However, as it behoved me to be assured on this head, I went down directly, and stayed an hour, without question or impediment; and yet a good part of the time, I walked under and in sight, as I may say, of my brother's study-window, where both he and my sister happened to be. And I am sure they saw me, by the loud mirth they affected, by way of insult, as I suppose.

So this part of my restraint was doubtless a stretch of the authority given him. The enforcing of that, may perhaps, come next. But I hope not.

*Tuesday Night.*

Since I wrote the above, I ventured to send a letter by Shorey to my mother. I desired her to give it into her own hand, when nobody was by. I enclose the copy of it.

HONOURED MADAM,

Having acknowledged to you, that I had received letters from Mr. Lovelace full of resentment, and that I answered them purely to prevent further mischief; and having shown you copies of my answers, which you did not disapprove of, although you thought fit, after you had read them, to forbid me any further correspondence with him; I think it my duty to acquaint you, that another letter from him has since come to my hand, in which he is very earnest with me to permit him to wait on my papa, or you, or my two uncles, in a pacific way, accompanied by Lord M. : on which I beg your commands.

If I do not answer him, he will be made desperate, and think himself justified (though I shall not think him so) in resenting the treatment he complains of: if I do, and if, in compliment to me, he forbears to resent what he thinks himself entitled to resent; be pleased, madam, to consider the obligation he will suppose he lays me under.

If I were as strongly prepossessed in his favour as is supposed, I should not have wished this to be considered by you. And permit me, as a still further proof that I am not prepossessed, to beg of you to consider, whether, upon the whole, the proposal I made, of declaring for the single life (which I will religiously adhere to) is not the best way to get rid of his pretensions with honour. To renounce him, and not be allowed to aver, that I will never be the other

man's, will make him conclude (driven as I am driven) that I am determined in that other man's favour.

Honoured Madam,  
Your unhappy, but ever dutiful daughter,  
CL. HARLOWE.

*Wednesday Morning.*

I have just received an answer to the letter. My mother, you will observe, has ordered me to burn it: but, as you will have it in your safe keeping, and nobody else will see it, her end will be equally answered, as if it were burnt. It has neither date nor superscription.

CLARISSA,

I don't know what to write, about your answering that man of violence. What can you think of it, that such a family as ours, should have such a rod held over it?—For my part, I have not owned that I know you have corresponded: as to an answer, take your own methods. But let him know it will be the last you will write. And, if you do write, I won't see it: so seal it up (if you do) and give it to Shorey; and she—yet do not think I give you licence to write.

We will be upon no conditions with him, nor will you be allowed to be upon any. Your father and uncles would have no patience were he to come. What have you to do to oblige him with your refusal of Mr. Solmes?—Will not that refusal be to give him hope? And while he has any, can we be easy or free from his insults?

I charge you, let not this letter be found. Burn it. There is too much of the mother in it, to a daughter so unaccountably obstinate.

Write not another letter to me. I can do nothing for you. But you can do everything for yourself.

*Thursday Morning, March 9.*

I have another letter from Mr. Lovelace, although I had not answered his former.

This man, somehow or other, knows everything that passes in our family. My confinement ; Hannah's dismissal ; and more of the resentments and resolutions of my father, uncles, and brother, than I can possibly know, and almost as soon as the things happen, which he tells me of. He cannot come at these intelligences fairly.

He is excessively uneasy upon what he hears ; and his expressions both of love to me, and resentment to them, are very fervent. He solicits me, "to engage my honour to him, never to have Mr. Solmes."

I think I may fairly promise him that I will not.

He begs, "That I will not think he is endeavouring to make himself a merit at any man's expense, since he hopes to obtain my favour on the foot of his own ; nor that he seeks to intimidate me into a consideration for him. But declares, that the treatment he meets with from my family is of such a nature, that he is perpetually reproached for not resenting it ; and that as well by Lord M. and Lady Sarah, and Lady Betty, as by all his other friends : and if he must have no hope from me, he cannot answer for what his despair will make him do."

Indeed, he says, "his relations, the ladies particularly, advise him to have recourse to a legal remedy : but how, he asks, can a man of honour go to law for verbal abuses given by people entitled to wear swords ?"

You see, my dear, that my mother seems as apprehensive of mischief as myself ; and has indirectly offered to let Shorey carry my answer to the letter he sent me before.

He is full of the favour of the ladies of his family to me : to whom, nevertheless, I am personally a stranger ; except, that once I saw Miss Patty Montague at Mrs. Knollys's.

It is natural, I believe, for a person to be the more desirous of making new friends, in proportion as she loses the favour of old ones : yet had I rather appear amiable

in the eyes of my own relations, and in your eyes, than in those of all the world besides.—But these four ladies of his family have such excellent characters, that one cannot but wish to be thought well of by them. Cannot there be a way to find out by Mrs. Fortescue's means, or by Mr. Hickman, who has some knowledge of Lord M. (covertly, however) what their opinions are of the present situation of things in our family ; and of the little likelihood there is, that ever the alliance once approved of by them, can take effect ?

I have answered his letters.

This is the substance of my letter :

“I express my surprise at his knowing (and so early) all that passes here.”

I assure him, “That were there not such a man in the world as himself, I would not have Mr. Solmes.”

I tell him, “That to return, as I understand he does, de-fiances for de-fiances, to my relations, is far from being a proof with me, either of his politeness, or of the consideration he pretends to have for me.

“That the moment I hear he visits any of my friends without their consent, I will make a resolution never to see him more, if I can help it.”

I apprise him, “that I am connived at in sending this letter (although no one has seen the contents) provided it shall be the last I will ever write to him : that I had more than once told him, that the single life was my choice ; and this before Mr. Solmes was introduced as a visitor to our family : that Mr. Wyerley, and other gentlemen, knew it to be my choice, before himself was acquainted with any of us : that I had never been induced to receive a line from him on the subject, but that I thought he had not acted ungenerously by my brother ; and yet had not been so handsomely treated by my friends, as he might have expected : but that had he even my friends on his side, I should have very great objections to him, were I to get

over my choice of a single life, so really preferable to me as it is ; and that I should have declared as much to him, had I regarded him as more than a common visitor. On all these accounts, I desire, that the one more letter, which I will allow him to deposit in the usual place, may be the very last ; and that only, to acquaint me with his acquiescence that it shall be so ; at least till happier times."

This last I put in, that he may not be quite desperate. But if he take me at my word, I shall be rid of one of my tormentors.

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MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Thursday Night, March 9.*

**H**AVE no patience with any of the people you are with. I know not what to advise you to do. How do you know, that you are not punishable for being the cause, though to your own loss, that the will of your grandfather is not complied with ?

I allow of all your noble reasonings for what you did at the time : but since such a charming, such a generous instance of filial duty is to go thus unrewarded, why should you not resume ?

I would resume it. Indeed I would.

You will say, you cannot do it, while you are with them. I don't know that. Do you think they can use you worse than they do ? And is it not your right ? And do they not make use of your own generosity to oppress you ? Your uncle Harlowe is one trustee ; your cousin Morden is the other : insist upon your right to your uncle ; and write to your cousin Morden about it. This, I dare say, will make them alter their behaviour to you.

Your insolent brother—what has he to do to control you ?—Were it me (I wish it were for one month, and no more) I'd show him the difference. I would be in my own mansion, pursuing my charming schemes, and making all around me happy. I would set up my own chariot. I

would visit them when they deserved it. But when my brother and sister gave themselves airs, I would let them know, that I was their sister, and not their servant : and, if that did not do, I would shut my gates against them ; and bid them go, and be company for each other.

As to this odious Solmes, I wonder not at your aversion to him.

I was twice in this wretch's company. At one of the times your Lovelace was there.

Lovelace entertained the company in his lively gay way, and made everybody laugh at one of his stories. It was before this creature was thought of for you. Solmes laughed too. It was, however, his laugh : for his first three years, at least, I imagine, must have been one continual fit of crying ; and his muscles have never yet been able to recover a risible tone. His very smile is so little natural to his features, that it appears in him as hideous as the grin of a man in malice.

What a dreadful thing must even the love of such a husband be ! For my part, were I his wife, I should never have comfort but in his absence, or when I was quarrelling with him. But how grievous and apprehensive a thing must it be for his wife, had she the least degree of delicacy, to catch herself in having done something to oblige him ?

So much for his person : as to the other half of him, he is said to be an insinuating, creeping mortal to anybody he hopes to be a gainer by : an insolent, overbearing one, where he has no such views.

My Kitty, from one of his domestics, tells me, that his tenants hate him : and that he never had a servant who spoke well of him. Vilely suspicious of their wronging him, he is always changing.

His pockets, they say, are continually crammed with keys : so that when he would treat a guest (a friend he has not out of your family) he is half as long puzzling

which is which, as his niggardly treat might be concluded in. And if it be wine, he always fetches it himself. Nor has he much trouble in doing so; for he has very few visitors—only those, whom business or necessity brings: for a gentleman who can help it, would rather be benighted, than put up at his house.

Yet this is the man they have found out (for considerations as sordid as those he is governed by) for a husband, that is to say, for a lord and master, for Miss Clarissa Harlowe!

Here my mother broke in upon me.

I cannot but think, Nancy, said she, after all, that there is a little hardship in Miss Harlowe's case: and yet (as her mother says) it is a grating thing to have a child, who was always noted for her duty in smaller points, to stand in opposition to her parents' will, in the greater; yea, in the greatest of all. And now, to meddle the matter between both, is a pity, that the man they favour has not that sort of merit which a person of a mind so delicate as that of Miss Harlowe might reasonably expect in a husband.—But then, this man is surely preferable to a libertine: to a libertine too, who has had a duel with her own brother: fathers and mothers must think so, were it not for that circumstance—And it is strange if they do not know best.

But you see, child, proceeded my mother, what a different behaviour mine is to you. I recommend to you one of the soberest, yet politest, men in England.—

I think little of my mother's politest, my dear. She judges of honest Hickman for her daughter, as she would have done, I suppose, twenty years ago, for herself.

Of a good family, continued my mother; a fine, clear, and improving estate (a prime consideration with my mother, as well as with some other folks, whom you know): and I beg and I pray you to encourage him: at least, not to use him the worse, for his being so obsequious to you.



Yes, indeed! To use him kindly, that he may treat me familiarly.—But distance to the men-wretches is best—I say.

Yet all will hardly prevail upon you to do as I would have you. What would you say, were I to treat you as Miss Harlowe's father and mother treat her?

What would I say, madam!—That's easily answered. I would say nothing. Can you think such usage, and to such a young lady, is to be borne?

But still obedience without reserve, reason what I will, is the burden of my mother's song: And this, for my sake, as well as for yours.

Mr. Hickman is expected from London this evening. I have desired him to inquire after Lovelace's life and conversation in town. If he has not inquired, I shall be very angry with him. Don't expect a very good account of either. He is certainly an intriguing wretch, and full of inventions.

Mr. Hickman shall sound Lord M. upon the subject you recommend. But beforehand I can tell you what he and what his sisters will say, when they are sounded. Who would not be proud of such a relation as Miss Clarissa Harlowe?—Mrs. Fortescue told me, that they are all your very great admirers.

If I have not been clear enough in my advice about what you shall do, let me say, that I can give it in one word: It is only by re-urging you to resume. If you do, all the rest will follow.

Your mother tells you, That it is out of her power to help you! And again: That if you have any favour to hope for, it must be by the mediation of your uncles. I suppose you will write to the oddities, since you are forbid to see them—But can it be, that such a lady, such a sister, such a wife, such a mother, has no influence in her own family? Who, indeed, as you say, if this be so, would marry, that can live single? My choler is again beginning

to rise. Resume, my dear :—And that is all I will give myself time to say further, lest I offend you when I cannot serve you—Only this, that I am

Your truly affectionate friend and servant,

ANNA HOWE.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Friday, March 10.*



I CANNOT help owning that I am pleased to have you join with me in opinion of the contempt which Mr. Solmes deserves from me.

As to the advice you give, to resume my estate, I am determined not to litigate with my father, let what will be the consequence to myself. I may give you, at another time, a more particular answer to your reasonings on this subject : but, at present, will only observe, that it is my opinion, that Lovelace himself would hardly think me worth addressing, were he to know this to be my resolution. These men, my dear, with all their flatteries, look forward to the permanent. Indeed, it is fit they should. For love must be a very foolish thing to look back upon, when it has brought persons born to affluence into indigence, and laid a generous mind under obligation and dependence.

I knew your mother would be for implicit obedience in a child. I am sorry my case is so circumstanced, that I cannot comply. It would be my duty to do so, if I could. You are indeed very happy, that you have nothing but your own agreeable, yet whimsical, humours to contend with, in the choice she invites you to make of Mr. Hickman. How happy should I be, to be treated with so much lenity !—I should blush to have my mother say, that she begged and prayed me, and all in vain, to encourage a man so unexceptionable as Mr. Hickman.

I should be very biameable to endeavour to hide any

the least bias upon my mind, from you : and I cannot but say—that this man—this Lovelace—is a man that might be liked well enough, if he bore such a character as Mr. Hickman bears ; and even if there were hopes of reclaiming him. And further still I will acknowledge, that I believe it possible that one might be driven, by violent measures, step by step, as it were, into something that might be called—I don't know what to call it—a conditional kind of liking, or so. But as to the word love, it has, methinks, in the narrow, circumscribed, selfish, peculiar sense, in which you apply it to me (the man too so little to be approved of for his morals, if all that report says of him be true) no pretty sound with it.

I have had such taunting messages brought me from my brother and sister, that I have thought it proper, before I entered upon my intended address to my uncles, to expostulate a little with them. But I have done it in such a manner, as will give you (if you please to take it as you have done some parts of my former letters) great advantage over me. In short, you will have more cause than ever, to declare me far gone in love, if my reasons for the change of my style in these letters, with regard to Mr. Lovelace, do not engage your more favourable opinion. For I have thought proper to give them their own way ; and, since they will have it that I have a preferable regard for Mr. Lovelace, I give them cause rather to confirm their opinion than doubt it.

It might not be amiss, I thought, to alarm them a little with an apprehension, that the methods they are taking with me are the very reverse of those they should take to answer the end they design by them. And after all, what is the compliment I make Mr. Lovelace, if I allow it to be thought that I do really prefer him to such a man as him they terrify me with ? Then, my Miss Howe [concluded I] accuses me of a tameness which subjects me to insults from my brother : I will keep that dear

friend in my eye; and for all these considerations, try what a little of her spirit will do—sit it ever so awkwardly upon me.

In this way of thinking, I wrote to my brother and sister. I will give you a copy of my letter to my sister; with her answer.

“In what, my dear sister, have I offended you, that instead of endeavouring to soften my father’s anger against me you should, in so hard-hearted a manner, join to aggravate not only his displeasure, but my mother’s against me. Make but my case your own, my dear Bella, and suppose you were commanded to marry Mr. Lovelace (to whom you are believed to have an antipathy), would you not think it a very grievous injunction? Yet cannot your dislike to Mr. Lovelace be greater than mine is to Mr. Solmes. Nor are love and hatred voluntary passions.

“My brother may perhaps think it a proof of a manly spirit, to show himself an utter stranger to the gentle passions. But, that a sister should give up the cause of a sister, and join with him to set her father and mother against her, in a case that might have been her own—indeed, my Bella, this is not pretty in you.

“There was a time that Mr. Lovelace was thought reclaimable, and when it was far from being deemed a censurable view to hope to bring back to the paths of virtue and honour, a man of his sense and understanding. I am far from wishing to make the experiment: but nevertheless will say, that if I have not a regard for him, the disgraceful methods taken to compel me to receive the addresses of such a man as Mr. Solmes, are enough to induce it.

“Do you, my sister, for one moment, lay aside all prejudice, and compare the two men in their births, their educations, their persons, their understandings, their manners, their air, and their whole deportments; and in

their fortunes too, taking in reversions ; and then judge of both : yet, as I have frequently offered, I will live single with all my heart, if that will do.

“ Pity then, my dearest Bella, my sister, my friend, my companion, my adviser, as you used to be when I was happy, and plead for

Your ever affectionate

“ CL. HARLOWE.”

“ TO MISS CLARY HARLOWE.

“ Let it be pretty or not pretty in your wise opinion, I shall speak my mind, I will assure you, both of you and your conduct in relation to this detested Lovelace. You are a fond, foolish girl with all your wisdom. Your letter shows that enough in twenty places. And as to your cant of living single, nobody will believe you. This is one of your fetches to avoid complying with your duty, and the will of the most indulgent parents in the world, as yours have been to you, I am sure—though now they see themselves finely requited for it.

“ We all, indeed, once thought your temper soft and amiable : but why was it ? You never was contradicted before. You had always your own way. But no sooner do you meet with opposition in your wishes to throw yourself away upon a vile rake, but you show what you are. You cannot love Mr. Solmes ! that’s the pretence : but sister, sister, let me tell you, that is because Lovelace has got into your fond heart :—a wretch, hated, justly hated, by us all ; and who has dipped his hands in the blood of your brother : yet him you would make our relation, would you ?

“ O how you run out in favour of the wretch !—His birth, his education, his person, his understanding, his manners, his air, his fortune—reversions too taken in to augment the surfeiting catalogue ! What a fond string of love-sick praises is here ! And yet you would live single—yes, I warrant !—when so many imaginary perfections dance

before your dazzled eye? But no more—I only desire that you will not, while you seem to have such an opinion of your wit, think every one else a fool; and that you can at pleasure, by your whining flourishes, make us all dance after your lead.

“Write as often as you will, this shall be the last answer or notice you shall have upon this subject from

“ARABELLA HARLOWE.”

I had in readiness a letter for each of my uncles; and meeting in the garden a servant of my uncle Harlowe, I gave them to him to deliver according to their respective directions. If I am to form a judgment by the answers I have received from my brother and sister, I must not, I doubt, expect any good from those letters. But when I have tried every expedient, I shall have the less to blame myself for, if anything unhappy should fall out. I will send you copies of both, when I shall see what notice they will be thought worthy of, if of any.

*Sunday Night, March 12.*

This man, this Lovelace, gives me great uneasiness. He is extremely bold and rash. He was this afternoon at our church—in hopes to see me, I suppose: and yet, if he had such hopes, his usual intelligence must have failed him.

Shorey was at church; and a principal part of her observation was upon his haughty and proud behaviour when he turned round in the pew where he sat to our family pew. My father and both my uncles were there; so were my mother and sister. My brother happily was not.—They all came home in disorder. Nor did the congregation mind anybody but him; it being his first appearance there, since the unhappy rencounter.

Shorey says, that Mr. Lovelace watched my mother's eye, and bowed to her: and she returned the compliment.

He always admired my mother. She would not, I believe, have hated him, had she not been bid to hate him; and had it not been for the rencounter between him and her only son.

Dr. Lewen was at church; and observing, as every one else did, the disorder into which Mr. Lovelace's appearance had put all our family, was so good as to engage him in conversation, when the service was over, till they were all gone to their coaches.

My uncles had my letters in the morning. They, as well as my father, are more and more incensed against me, it seems. Their answers, if they vouchsafe to answer me, will demonstrate, I doubt not, the unseasonableness of this rash man's presence at our church.

They are angry also, as I understand, with my mother, for returning his compliment.

CL. H.

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MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*Monday, March 13.*

**I**N vain dost thou\* and thy compeers press me to go to town, while I am in such an uncertainty as I am in at present with this proud beauty. All the ground I have hitherto gained with her, is entirely owing to her concern for the safety of people whom I have reason to hate.

Write then, thou biddest me, if I will not come. That, indeed, I can do; and as well without a subject, as with one. And what follows shall be a proof of it.

The lady's malevolent brother has now, as I told thee at M. Hall, introduced another man; the most unpromising

\* These gentlemen affected what they called the Roman style (to wit, the *thee* and the *thou*) in their letters: and it was an agreed rule with them, to take in good part whatever freedoms they treated each other with, if the passages were written in that style.

in his person and qualities, the most formidable in his offers, that has yet appeared.

This man has by his proposals captivated every soul of the Harlowes—soul! did I say—there is not a soul among them but my charmer's.

But is it not a confounded thing to be in love with one, who is the daughter, the sister, the niece, of a family I must eternally despise? And, the devil of it, that love increasing, with her—what shall I call it?—'tis not scorn:—'tis not pride:—'tis not the insolence of an adored beauty:—but 'tis to virtue, it seems, that my difficulties are owing; and I pay for not being a sly sinner, an hypocrite; for being regardless of my reputation; for permitting slander to open its mouth against me. But is it necessary for such a one as I, who have been used to carry all before me, upon my own terms—I, who never inspired a fear, that had not a discernibly predominant mixture of love in it; to be an hypocrite?—Well says the poet:

He who seems virtuous does but act a part;  
And shows not his own nature, but his art.

Well, but it seems I must practise for this art, if I would succeed with this truly admirable creature! But why practise for it? Cannot I indeed reform? I have but one vice;—have I, Jack? Thou knowest my heart, if any man living does. As far as I know it myself, thou knowest it. But 'tis a cursed deceiver; for it has many and many a time imposed upon its master—master, did I say? That am I not now; nor have I been from the moment I beheld this angel of a woman. Prepared indeed as I was by her character before I saw her: my visit to Arabella, owing to a mistake of the sisters, into which, as thou hast heard me say, I was led by the blundering uncle; who was to introduce me (but lately come from abroad) to the divinity, as I thought; but, instead of her, carried me to a mere mortal. And much difficulty had I,



so fond and so forward my lady! to get off without forfeiting all with a family that I intended should give me a goddess.

I have boasted, that I was once in love before:—and indeed I thought I was. It was in my early manhood—with that quality-jilt, whose infidelity I had vowed to revenge upon as many of the sex as shall come into my power. I believe, in different climes, I have already sacrificed an Hecatomb to my Nemesis, in pursuance of this vow. But upon recollecting what I was then, and comparing it with what I find in myself now, I cannot say that I was ever in love before.

Now am I indeed in love. I can think of nothing, of nobody, but the divine Clarissa Harlowe.

Clarissa! O there's music in the name,  
That soft'ning me to infant tenderness,  
Makes my heart spring like the first leaps of life!

But couldst thou have believed that I, who think it possible for me to favour as much as I can be favoured; that I, who for this charming creature think of foregoing the life of honour for the life of shackles; could adopt those over-tender lines of Otway?

Love various minds does variously inspire :  
He stirs in gentle natures gentle fire ;  
Like that of incense on the altar laid.  
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade :  
A fire, which ev'ry windy passion blows ;  
With pride it mounts, and with revenge it glows.

And with revenge it shall glow!—for, dost thou think, that if it were not from the hope, that this stupid family are all combined to do my work for me, I would bear their insults?—Is it possible to imagine, that I would be braved as I am braved, threatened as I am threatened, by those who are afraid to see me; and by this brutal brother too, to whom I gave a life (a life, indeed, not worth my taking!); had I not a greater pride in knowing, that by means of his very spy upon me, I am playing him off as I please; cooling or inflaming his violent passions as may

best suit my purposes ; permitting so much to be revealed of my life and actions and intentions, as may give him such a confidence in his double-faced agent, as shall enable me to dance his employer upon my own wires ?

This it is that makes my pride mount above my resentment. By this engine, whose springs I am continually oiling, I play them all off. The busy old tarpaulin uncle I make but my ambassador to Queen Annabella Howe, to engage her (for example-sake to her princessly daughter) to join in their cause, and to assert an authority they are resolved, right or wrong, (or I could do nothing) to maintain.

And what my motive, dost thou ask ? No less than this, that my beloved shall find no protection out of my family ; for, if I know hers, fly she must, or have the man she hates. This, therefore, if I take my measures right, and my familiar fail me not, will secure her mine, in spite of them all ; in spite of her own inflexible heart : mine, without condition ; without reformation-promises ; without the necessity of a siege of years, perhaps ; and to be even then, after wearing the guise of a merit-doubting hypocrisy, at an uncertainty, upon a probation unapproved of—then shall I have all the rascals and rascalleesses of the family come creeping to me : I prescribing to them ; and bringing that sordidly-imperious brother to kneel at the footstool of my throne.

All my fear arises from the little hold I have in the heart of this charming frost-piece : such a constant glow upon her lovely features : eyes so sparkling : limbs so divinely turned : health so florid : youth so blooming : air so animated—to have an heart so impenetrable : and I, the hitherto successful Lovelace, the addresser—how can it be ? Yet there are people, and I have talked with some of them, who remember that she was born. Her nurse Norton boasts of her maternal offices in her earliest infancy ; and in her education gradatim. So that there is

full proof, that she came not from above all at once an angel! How then can she be so impenetrable?

By this incoherent ramble thou wilt gather, that I am not likely to come up in haste; since I must endeavour first to obtain some assurance from the beloved of my soul, that I shall not be sacrificed to such a wretch as Solmes! Woe be to the fair-one, if ever she be driven into my power (for I despair of a voluntary impulse in my favour) and I find a difficulty in obtaining this security.

That her indifference to me is not owing to the superior liking she has for any other man, is what rivets my chains: but take care, fair-one; take care, O thou most exalted of female minds, and loveliest of persons, how thou debasest thyself, by encouraging such a competition as thy sordid relations have set on foot in mere malice to me!—Thou wilt say I rave. And so I do:

Perdition catch my soul, but I *do* love her.

Else, could I bear the perpetual revilings of her implacable family?—Else, could I barely creep about—not her proud father's house—but his paddock—and garden-walls?—Yet (a quarter of a mile's distance between us) not hoping to behold the least glimpse of her shadow?—Else, should I think myself repaid, amply repaid, if the fourth, fifth, or sixth midnight stroll, through unfrequented paths, and over briery inclosures, affords me a few cold lines; the even expected purport only to let me know, that she values the most worthless person of her very worthless family, more than she values me; and that she would not write at all, but to induce me to bear insults, which unman me to bear?—My lodging in the intermediate way, at a wretched alehouse; disguised like an inmate of it: accommodations equally vile, as those I met with in my Westphalian journey.

Thou art curious to know, if I had not started a new game?—If it be possible for so universal a lover to be

confined so long to one object? Thou knowest nothing of this charming creature, that thou canst put such questions to me; or thinkest thou knowest me better than thou dost. All that's excellent in her sex is this lady!—until by matrimonial, or equal intimacies, I have found her less than angel, it is impossible to think of any other. Then there are so many stimulatives to such a spirit as mine in this affair, besides love: such a field for stratagem and contrivance, which thou knowest to be the delight of my heart. Then the rewarding end of all?—To carry off such a girl as this, in spite of all her watchful and implacable friends; and in spite of a prudence and reserve that I never met with in any of the sex:—What a triumph!—What a triumph over the whole sex!—And then such a revenge to gratify; which is only at present politically reined-in, eventually to break forth with the greater fury—Is it possible, thinkest thou, that there can be room for a thought that is not of her, and devoted to her?

By the advices I have this moment received, I have reason to think, that I shall have occasion for thee here. Hold thyself in readiness to come down upon the first summons.

Let Belton, and Mowbray, and Tourville, likewise prepare themselves. I have a great mind to contrive a method to send James Harlowe to travel for improvement. Never was there booby 'squire that more wanted it. Contrive it, did I say? I have already contrived it; could I but put it in execution without being suspected to have a hand in it. This I am resolved upon; if I have not his sister, I will have him.

But be this as it may, there is a present likelihood of room for glorious mischief. A confederacy had been for some time formed against me; but the uncles and the nephew are now to be double-servanted (single-servanted they were before); and those servants are to be double-armed when they attend their masters abroad. This

indicates their resolute enmity to me, and as resolute favour to Solmes.

The reinforced orders for this hostile apparatus are owing it seems to a visit I made yesterday to their church—they were filled with terror it seems at my entrance; a terror they could not get over. I saw it indeed in their countenances; and that they all expected something extraordinary to follow.—And so it should have done, had I been more sure than I am of their daughter's favour. Yet not a hair of any of their stupid heads do I intend to hurt.

You shall all have your directions in writing, if there be occasion. But after all, I dare say there will be no need but to show your faces in my company.

Such faces never could four men show—Mowbray's so fierce and so fighting: Belton's so pert and so pimply: Tourville's so fair and so foppish: thine so rough and so resolute: and I your leader!—What hearts, although meditating hostility, must those be which we shall not appal?—Each man occasionally attended by a servant or two, long ago chosen for qualities resembling those of his master.

Thus, Jack, as thou desirest, have I written.—Written upon something; upon nothing; upon revenge, which I love; upon love, which I hate, and upon the devil knows what besides:—For, looking back, I am amazed at the length of it. Thou may'st read it: I would not for a king's ransom—But so as I do but write, thou sayest thou wilt be pleased. Farewell.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Tuesday, March 14.*



NOW send you copies of my letters to my uncles: with their answers. Be pleased to return the latter by the first deposit. I leave them for you to make remarks upon. I shall make none.

*Thursday, March 16.*

Having met with such bad success in my application to my relations, I have taken a step that will surprise you. It is no other than writing a letter to Mr. Solmes himself. I sent it; and have his answer. He had certainly help in it. For I have seen a letter of his; as indifferently worded, as poorly spelt. Yet the superscription is of his dictating, I dare say; for he is a formal wretch. With these, I shall enclose one from my brother to me, on occasion of mine to Mr. Solmes. I did think that it was possible to discourage this man from proceeding; and if I could have done that, it would have answered all my wishes. It was worth the trial. But you'll see nothing will do. My brother has taken his measures too securely.

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MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*Friday, March 17.*

**I** WOULD have thee, Jack, come down, as soon as thou canst. I believe I shall not want the others so soon. Yet they may come down to Lord M's. I will be there, if not to receive them, to satisfy my lord, that there is no new mischief in hand, which will require his second intervention.

For thyself, thou must be constantly with me: not for my security: the family dare do nothing but bully: they bark only at a distance: but for my entertainment: that thou mayst, from the Latin and the English classics, keep my love-sick soul from drooping.

Thou hadst best come to me here, in thy old corporal's coat: thy servant out of livery; and to be upon a familiar foot with me, as a distant relation, to be provided for by thy interest above—I mean not in heaven, thou mayst be sure. Thou wilt find me at a little alehouse; they call it an inn: the White Hart; most terribly wounded (but by the weather only) the sign:—In a sorry village; within five miles from Harlowe-Place; for, like Versailles, it is

sprung up from a dunghill, within every elderly person's remembrance. Every poor body, particularly, knows it: but that only a few years past, since a certain angel has appeared there among the sons and daughters of men.

The people here at the Hart are poor, but honest; and have gotten into their heads, that I am a man of quality in disguise; and there is no reining in their officious respect. Here is a pretty little smirking daughter; seventeen six days ago. I call her my rosebud. Her grandmother (for there is no mother) a good neat old woman, as ever filled a wicker-chair in a chimney-corner, has besought me to be merciful to her.

This is the right way with me. Many and many a pretty rogue had I spared, whom I did not spare, had my power been acknowledged, and my mercy in time implored. But the *debellare superbos* should be my motto, were I to have a new one.

But I charge thee, that thou do not crop my rosebud.

I never was so honest for so long together since my matriculation. It behoves me so to be—Some way or other, my recess at this little inn may be found out; and it will then be thought that my rosebud has attracted me. A report in my favour, from simplicities so amiable, may establish me; for the grandmother's relation to my rosebud may be sworn to: and the father is an honest poor man: has no joy, but in his rosebud.—O Jack! spare thou therefore (for I shall leave thee often alone with her, spare thou) my rosebud! Unsuspicious of her danger, the lamb's throat will hardly shun thy knife—O be not thou the butcher of my lambkin!

The gentle heart is touched by love: Her soft bosom heaves with a passion she has not yet found a name for. I once caught her eye following a young carpenter, a widow neighbour's son, living (to speak in her dialect) at the little white house over the way. A gentle youth he also seems to be, about three years older than herself: play-

mates from infancy, till his eighteenth and her fifteenth year furnished a reason for a greater distance in show, while their hearts gave a better for their being nearer than ever—for I soon perceived the love reciprocal. A scrape and a bow at first seeing his pretty mistress ; turning often to salute her following eye ; and, when a winding lane was to deprive him of her sight, his whole body turned round, his hat more reverently doffed, than before. This answered (for, unseen, I was behind her) by a low curtsey, and a sigh, that Johnny was too far off to hear !—Happy whelp ! said I to myself !—I withdrew ; and in tripped my rosebud, as if satisfied with the dumb show, and wishing nothing beyond it.

I have examined the little heart. She has made me her confidant. She owns, she could love Johnny Barton very well : and Johnny Barton has told her, he could love her better than any maiden he ever saw—but, alas ! it must not be thought of. Why not be thought of ?—She don't know !—And then she sighed : but Johnny has an aunt, who will give him a hundred pounds, when his time is out ; and her father cannot give her but a few things, or so, to set her out with : and though Johnny's mother says, she knows not where Johnny would have a prettier, or notabler wife, yet—and then she sighed again—what signifies talking ?—I would not have Johnny be unhappy and poor for me !—For what good would that do me, you know, sir !

Mean time, as I make it my rule, whenever I have committed a very capital enormity, to do some good by way of atonement ; and as I believe I am a pretty deal indebted on that score ; I intend, before I leave these parts (successfully shall I leave them I hope, or I shall be tempted to double the mischief by way of revenge, though not to my rosebud any) to join a hundred pounds to Johnny's aunt's hundred pounds, to make one innocent couple happy.—I repeat therefore, and for half-a-dozen more therefores, spare thou my rosebud.



I have found out by my watchful spy almost as many of my charmer's motions, as of those of the rest of her relations. It delights me to think how the rascal is caressed by the uncles and nephew ; and let into their secrets ; yet he proceeds all the time by my line of direction. I have charged him, however, on forfeiture of his present weekly stipend, and my future favour, to take care, that neither my beloved, nor any of the family, suspect him : I have told him, that he may indeed watch her egresses and regresses ; but that only to keep off other servants from her paths ; yet not to be seen by her himself.

The dear creature has tempted him, he told them, with a bribe (which she never offered) to convey a letter (which she never wrote) to Miss Howe ; he believes, with one inclosed (perhaps to me) : but he declined it : and he begged they would take no notice of it to her. This brought him a stingy shilling ; great applause ; and an injunction followed it all to the servants, for the strictest look-out, lest she should contrive some way to send it—and, about an hour after, an order was given him to throw himself in her way ; and (expressing his concern for denying her request) to tender his service to her, and to bring them her letter : which it will be proper for him to report that she has refused to give him.

Now seest thou not, how many good ends this contrivance answers ?

In the first place, the lady is secured by it, against her own knowledge, in the liberty allowed her of taking her private walks in the garden : For this attempt has confirmed them in their belief, that now they have turned off her maid, she has no way to send a letter out of the house : If she had, she would not have run the risk of tempting a fellow who had not been in her secret.

In the next place, it will perhaps afford me an opportunity of a private interview with her, which I am meditating, let her take it as she will ; having found out by my

spy (who can keep off everybody else) that she goes every morning and evening to a woodhouse remote from the dwelling-house, under pretence of visiting and feeding a set of bantam poultry, which were produced from a breed that was her grandfather's, and of which for that reason she is very fond; as also of some other curious fowls brought from the same place. I have an account of all her motions here.—And as she has owned to me in one of her letters that she corresponds privately with Miss Howe, I presume it is by this way.

The interview I am meditating, will produce her consent, I hope, to other favours of the like kind: for, should she not choose the place in which I am expecting to see her, I can attend her anywhere in the rambling, Dutch-taste garden, whenever she will permit me that honour: for my implement, hight Joseph Leman, has procured me the opportunity of getting two keys made to the garden-door (one of which I have given him, for reasons good); which door opens to the haunted coppice, as tradition has made the servants think it; a man having been found hanging in it about twenty years ago: and Joseph, under proper notice, will leave it unbolted.

But I was obliged previously to give him my honour, that no mischief shall happen to any of my adversaries, from this liberty: for the fellow tells me, that he loves all his masters: and only that he knows I am a man of honour; and that my alliance will do credit to the family; and after prejudices are overcome, everybody will think so; or he would not for the world act the part he does.

There never was a rogue, who had not a salvo to himself for being so.

## MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Saturday Night, March 18.*

**I** HAVE been frightened out of my wits—still am in a manner out of breath—thus occasioned— I went down, under the usual pretence, in hopes to find something from you. Concerned at my disappointment, I was returning from the woodhouse, when I heard a rustling as of somebody behind a stack of wood. I was extremely surprised: but still more, to behold a man coming from behind the furthest stack. O, thought I, at that moment, the sin of a prohibited correspondence!

In the same point of time that I saw him, he besought me not to be frightened: and, still nearer approaching me, threw open a horseman's coat: and who should it be but Mr Lovelace!—I could not scream out (yet attempted to scream, the moment I saw a man; and again, when I saw who it was); for I had no voice: and had I not caught hold of a prop which supported the old roof, I should have sunk.

I had hitherto, as you know, kept him at a distance; and now, as I recovered myself, judge of my first emotions, when I recollected his character from every mouth of my family; his enterprising temper; and found myself alone with him, in a place so near a bye-lane, and so remote from the house.

But his respectful behaviour soon dissipated those fears, and gave me others; lest we should be seen together, and information of it given to my brother.

As soon as I could speak, I expressed with the greatest warmth my displeasure; and told him, that he cared not how much he exposed me to the resentment of all my friends, provided he could gratify his own impetuous humour. I then commanded him to leave the place that

moment ; and was hurrying from him, when he threw himself in the way at my feet, beseeching my stay for one moment ; declaring, that he suffered himself to be guilty of this rashness, as I thought it, to avoid one much greater :—For, in short, he could not bear the hourly insults he received from my family, with the thoughts of having so little interest in my favour, that he could not promise himself that his patience and forbearance would be attended with any other issue than to lose me for ever, and be triumphed over and insulted upon it.

This man, you know, has very ready knees. You have said, that he ought, in small points, frequently to offend, on purpose to show what an address he is master of.

I was very uneasy to be gone ; and the more as the night came on apace. But there was no getting from him, till I had heard a great deal more of what he had to say.

As he hoped, that I would one day make him the happiest man in the world, he assured me, that he had so much regard for my fame, that he would be as far from advising any step that was likely to cast a shade upon my reputation (although that step was to be ever so much in his own favour) as I would be to follow such advice. But since I was not to be permitted to live single, he would submit it to my consideration, whether I had any way but one to avoid the intended violence to my inclinations.

And then he asked me, if I would receive a letter from Lady Betty Lawrence, on this occasion : for Lady Sarah Sadleir, he said, having lately lost her only child, hardly looked into the world, or thought of it farther than to wish him married, and preferably to all the women in the world, with me.

To be sure, my dear, there is a great deal in what the man said—I may be allowed to say this, without an imputed glow or throb.—But I told him nevertheless, that although I had great honour for the ladies he was related to, yet I should not choose to receive a letter on the sub-

ject that had a tendency to promote an end I was far from intending to promote.

He represented to me, that my present disgraceful confinement was known to all the world: that neither my sister nor brother scrupled to represent me as an obliged and favoured child in a state of actual rebellion:—that, nevertheless, everybody who knew me was ready to justify me for an aversion to a man whom everybody thought utterly unworthy of me, and more fit for my sister: that unhappy as he was, in not having been able to make any greater impression upon me in his favour, all the world gave me to him:—nor was there but one objection made to him, by his very enemies (his birth, his fortunes, his prospects all unexceptionable, and the latter splendid); and that objection, he thanked God, and my example, was in a fair way of being removed for ever: since he had seen his error, and was heartily sick of the courses he had followed; which, however, were far less enormous than malice and envy had represented them to be. But of this he should say the less, as it were much better to justify himself by his actions, than by the most solemn asseverations and promises. And then complimenting my person, he assured me (for that he always loved virtue, although he had not followed its rules as he ought) that he was still more captivated with the graces of my mind: and would frankly own, that till he had the honour to know me, he had never met with an inducement sufficient to enable him to overcome an unhappy kind of prejudice to matrimony; which had made him before impenetrable to the wishes and recommendations of all his relations.

You see, my dear, he scruples not to speak of himself, as his enemies speak of him. I can't say, but his openness in these particulars gives a credit to his other professions. We have heard, that the man's head is better than his heart: but do you really think Mr. Lovelace can

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have a very bad heart? Why should not there be something in blood in the human creature, as well as in the ignobler animals? None of his family are exceptionable—but himself, indeed. The characters of the ladies are admirable.

He then again pressed me to receive a letter of offered protection from Lady Betty. He said, that people of birth stood a little too much upon punctilio; as people of virtue also did; but indeed birth, worthily lived up to, was virtue: virtue, birth; the inducements to a decent punctilio the same; the origin of both, one (how came this notion from him!)—: else, Lady Betty would write to me: but she would be willing to be first apprised, that her offer would be well received.

I told him, that, however greatly I thought myself obliged to Lady Betty Lawrence, if this offer came from herself; yet it was easy to see to what it led. It might look like vanity in me perhaps to say, that this urgency in him, on this occasion, wore the face of art, in order to engage me into measures from which I might not easily extricate myself.

I then assured him, that it was with infinite concern, that I had found myself drawn into an epistolary correspondence with him; especially since that correspondence had been prohibited:—and the only agreeable use I could think of making of this unexpected and undesired interview, was, to let him know, that I should from henceforth think myself obliged to discontinue it. And I hoped, that he would not have the thought of engaging me to carry it on by menacing my relations.

There was light enough to distinguish, that he looked very grave upon this. He said, he would leave it to me to judge, whether it would be reasonable for him, as a man of spirit, to bear insults, if it were not for my sake. I would be pleased to consider, in the next place, whether the situation I was in admitted of delay in the preventive

measures he was desirous to put me upon, in the last resort only. Nor was there a necessity, he said, if I were actually in Lady Betty's protection, that I should be his, if, afterwards, I should see anything objectionable in his conduct.

But what would the world conclude would be the end, I demanded, were I, in the last resort, as he proposed, to throw myself into the protection of his friends, but that it was with such a view?

And what less did the world think now, he asked, than that I was confined that I might not? You are to consider, madam, you have not now an option.

And give me leave to say, proceeded he, that if a correspondence on which I have founded all my hopes, is, at this critical conjuncture, to be broken off; and if you are resolved not to be provided against the worst; it must be plain to me, that you will at last yield to that worst—worst to me only—it cannot be to you—and then! (and he put his hand clenched to his forehead) how shall I bear the supposition?—Then will you be that Solmes's!—But, by all that's sacred, neither he, nor your brother, nor your uncles, shall enjoy their triumph—perdition seize my soul, if they shall!

The man's vehemence frightened me: yet, in resentment, I would have left him; but, throwing himself at my feet again, leave me not thus—I beseech you, dearest madam, leave me not thus, in despair.

Would I declare, that I would still honour him with my correspondence?—He could not bear, that, hoping to obtain greater instances of my favour, he should forfeit the only one he had to boast of.

I bid him forbear rashness or resentment to any of my family, and I would, for some time at least, till I saw what issue my present trials were likely to have, proceed with a correspondence, which, nevertheless, my heart condemned—

I made many efforts to go; and now it was so dark, that I began to have great apprehensions. I cannot say from his behaviour: indeed, he has a good deal raised himself in my opinion by the personal respect, even to reverence, which he paid me during the whole conference: for although he flamed out once, upon a supposition that Solmes might succeed, it was upon a supposition that would excuse passion, if anything could, you know, in a man pretending to love with fervour; although it was so levelled, that I could not avoid resenting it.

He recommended himself to my favour at parting, with great earnestness, yet with as great submission; not offering to condition anything with me; although he hinted his wishes for another meeting: which I forbid him ever attempting again in the same place.—And I will own to you, from whom I should be really blameable to conceal anything, that his arguments (drawn from the disgraceful treatment I meet with) of what I am to expect, make me begin to apprehend, that I shall be under an obligation to be either the one man's or the other's—and if so, I fancy I shall not incur your blame, were I to say, which of the two it must be. You have said, which it must not be. But, O my dear, the single life is by far the most eligible to me: indeed it is. And I hope yet to be permitted to make that option.

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MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Sunday, March 19.*

**A**S to your change of style to your uncles, and brother and sister, since they were so fond of attributing to you a regard for Lovelace, and would not be persuaded to the contrary; and since you only strengthened their arguments against yourself by denying it; you did but just as I would have done, in giving way to their suspicions, and trying what that would



do—But if—but if—pray, my dear, indulge me a little— You yourself think it was necessary to apologise to me for that change of style to them—and till you will speak out like a friend to her unquestionable friend, I must tease you a little—Let it run therefore ; for it will run—

If, then, there be not a reason for this change of style, which you have not thought fit to give me, be so good as to watch, as I once before advised you, how the cause for it will come on—Why should it be permitted to steal upon you, and you know nothing of the matter ?

When we get a great cold, we are apt to puzzle ourselves to find out when it began, or how we got it ; and when that is accounted for, down we sit contented, and let it have its course ; or, if it be very troublesome, take a sweat, or use other means to get rid of it—So, my dear, before the malady you wot of, yet wot not of, grows so importunate, as that you must be obliged to sweat it out, let me advise you to mind how it comes on. For I am persuaded, as surely as that I am now writing to you, that the indiscreet violence of your friends on one hand, and the insinuating address of Lovelace on the other (if the man be not a greater fool than anybody thinks him) will effectually bring it to this, and do all his work for him.

I wish you are not indeed angry with me for harping so much on one string. I must own, that I should think myself inexcusable so to do, if you would ingeniously own—

Own what ? you'll say. Why, my Anna Howe, I hope, you don't think, that I am already in love !—

No, to be sure ! How can your Anna Howe have such a thought ?—What then shall we call it ? You have helped me to a phrase.—A conditional kind of liking !—that's it. —O my friend ! How much you despise prudery ; and that you are too young, and too lovely, to be a prude—

Let me add, that if you would clearly and explicitly tell me, how far Lovelace has, or has not, a hold in your

affections, I could better advise you what to do, than at present I can.

Remember, that you found me out in a moment. You challenged me. I owned directly, that there was only my pride between the man and me ; for I could not endure, I told you, to think it in the power of any living fellow to give me a moment's uneasiness.

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Monday, March 20.*



WHAT I am now to give you are the particulars of another effort made by my friends, through the good Mrs. Norton.

It seems they had sent to her yesterday, to be here this day, to try what she could do with me.

She found assembled my father and mother, my brother and sister, my two uncles, and my aunt Hervey.

My brother acquainted her with all that had passed since she was last permitted to see me ; with the contents of my letters avowing my regard to Mr. Lovelace (as they all interpreted them) ; with the substance of their answers to them ; and with their resolutions.

Be assured of this, Mrs. Norton, said my father, in an angry tone, that we will not be baffled by her. We will not, in short, be bullied out of our child by a cursed rake, who had like to have killed our only son !—And so she had better make a merit of her obedience : for comply she shall, if I live ; independent as she thinks my father's indiscreet bounty has made her of me, her father. Indeed, since that, she has never been what she was before. An unjust bequest !—And it is likely to prosper accordingly !—But if she marry that vile Lovelace, I will litigate every shilling with her. Tell her so ; and that the will may be set aside, and shall.

Thus instructed, the good woman came up to me. She

told me all that had passed, and was very earnest with me to comply ; and so much justice did she to the task imposed upon her, that I more than once thought, that her own opinion went with theirs. But when she saw what an immovable aversion I had to the man, she lamented with me their determined resolution : and then examined into the sincerity of my declaration, that I would gladly compound with them by living single. Of this being satisfied, she was so convinced that this offer, which, carried into execution, would exclude Lovelace effectually, ought to be accepted, that she would go down (although I told her, it was what I had tendered over and over to no purpose) and undertake to be guaranty for me on that score.

She went accordingly ; but soon returned in tears ; being used harshly for urging this alternative.

Your brother says that I harden you by my whining nonsense. 'Tis indeed hard, that so much regard should be paid to the humours of one child ; and so little to the inclination of another. But let me repeat, that it is your duty to acquiesce, if you can acquiesce. Must I now go down, and make a report, that you are resolved never to have Mr. Solmes.—Consider, my dear Miss Clary—Must I ?

Indeed you must !—But of this I do assure you, that I will do nothing to disgrace the part you have had in my education. I will bear everything that shall be short of forcing my hand into his who never can have any share in my heart. I will try, by patient duty, by humility, to overcome them. But death will I choose, in any shape, rather than that man.

When she went away, the better half of my heart went with her.

I listened to hear what reception she would meet with below ; and found it was just such a one as she had apprehended.

Will she, or will she not, be Mrs. Solmes? None of your whining circumlocutions, Mrs. Norton!

This cut short all she was going to say.

If I must speak so briefly, Miss will sooner die than have—

Anybody but Lovelace! interrupted my brother. This, madam, this, sir, is your meek daughter! This is Mrs. Norton's sweet child!—Well, Goody, you may return to your own habitation. I am empowered to forbid you to have any correspondence with this perverse girl for a month to come, as you value the favour of our whole family, or of any individual of it.

And saying this, uncontradicted by anybody, he himself showed her to the door.

Situated as I am, I own to you that I have now and then had a little more difficulty than I wished for, in passing by Mr. Lovelace's tolerable qualities, to keep up my dislike to him for his others.

You say, I must have argued with myself in his favour, and in his disfavour, on a supposition that I might possibly be one day his. I own that I have: and, I will set before you both parts of the argument.

At his introduction into our family, his negative virtues were insisted upon:—He was no gamester; no horse-racer; no fox-hunter; no drinker.

He was never thought to be a niggard: not even ungenerous: nor, when his conduct came to be inquired into, a squanderer. Then he was ever ready to own his errors. He was no jester upon sacred things. His conversation with us was always unexceptionable.

As to the advantage of birth, that is of his side, above any man who has been found out for me.

His fortunes in possession are handsome; in expectation, splendid: so nothing need be said on that subject.

But now, in his disfavour. When I have reflected upon the prohibition of my parents: that I must therefore be

at perpetual variance with all my own family: that I must go to him, and to his, as an obliged and half-fortuned person: that he has a very immoral character as to women: that he is young, unbroken, his passions unsubdued: that he is violent in his temper, yet artful: I am afraid, vindictive too: that what tolerable qualities he has, are founded more in pride than in virtue. I cannot help conjuring you, my dear, to pray with me, and for me, that I may not be pushed upon such indiscreet measures, as will render me inexcusable to myself.

I have said in his praise, that he is extremely ready to own his errors: but I have sometimes made a great drawback upon this article, in his disfavour; having been ready to apprehend that this ingenuousness may possibly be attributable to two causes, neither of them, by any means, creditable to him. The one, that his vices are so much his masters, that he attempts not to conquer them; the other, that he may think it policy, to give up one half of his character to save the other, when the whole may be blameable.

Sometimes we have both thought him one of the most undesigning merely witty men we ever knew; at other times one of the deepest creatures we ever conversed with. So that when in one visit we have imagined we fathomed him, in the next he has made us ready to give him up as impenetrable. This impenetrableness, my dear, is to be put among the shades in his character.—Yet, upon the whole, you have been so far of his party, that you have contested, that his principal fault is over-frankness, and too much regardlessness of appearances, and that he is too giddy to be very artful.

But I used then to say, and I still am of opinion, that he wants a heart: and if he does, he wants everything.

I have said, that I think Mr. Lovelace a vindictive man: upon my word, I have sometimes doubted, whether his perseverance in his addresses to me has not been the

more obstinate, since he has found himself so disagreeable to my friends.

From these considerations ; from these over-balances ; I said that I would not be in love with this man for the world : and it was going further than prudence would warrant, when I was for compounding with you, by the words conditional liking ; which you so humorously rally.

Well but, methinks you say, what is all this to the purpose ? This is still but reasoning : but, if you are in love, you are : and love, like the vapours, is the deeper rooted for having no sufficient cause assignable for its hold. And so you call upon me again, to have no reserves, and so forth.

Why then, my dear, if you will have it, I think, that, with all his preponderating faults, I like him better than I ever thought I should like him ; and, those faults considered, better perhaps than I ought to like him. And I believe, it is possible for the persecution I labour under, to induce me to like him still more. In a word, I will frankly own (since you cannot think anything I say too explicit) that were he now but a moral man, I would prefer him to all the men I ever saw.

So that this is but conditional liking still, you'll say. Nor, I hope, is it more. I never was in love as it is called. Since I am persuaded that I could, without a throb, most willingly give up the one man to get rid of the other.

P.S.—The insolent Betty Barnes has just now fired me anew, by reporting to me the following expressions of the hideous creature, Solmes—"That he is sure of the coy girl ; and that with little labour to himself." "That be I ever so averse to him beforehand, he can depend upon my principles ; and it will be a pleasure to him to see by what pretty degrees I shall come to."

*Tuesday, March 21.*

How willingly would my dear mother show kindness to

me, were she permitted! This morning her Shorey delivered into my hand the following condescending letter.

MY DEAR GIRL,

For so I must still call you; since dear you may be to me, in every sense of the word—We have taken into particular consideration, some hints that fell yesterday from your good Norton, as if we had not, at Mr. Solmes's first application, treated you with that condescension, wherewith we have in all other instances treated you. If it even had been so, my dear, you were not excusable to be wanting in your part, and to set yourself to oppose your father's will in a point into which he had entered too far, to recede with honour. But all yet may be well. On your single will, my child, depends all our happiness.

Your father permits me to tell you, that if you now at last comply with his expectations, all past disobligations shall be buried in oblivion, as if they had never been: but withal, that this is the last time that that grace will be offered you.

I hinted to you, you must remember, that patterns of the richest silks were sent for. They are come. And your father will have me send them up to you.

These are the newest, as well as richest, that we could procure.

Your father intends you six suits (three of them dressed suits) at his own expense. You have an entire new suit; and one besides, which I think you never wore but twice. As the new suit is rich, if you choose to make that one of the six, your father will present you with an hundred guineas in lieu.

Mr. Solmes intends to present you with a set of jewels. As you have your grandmother's and your own, if you choose to have the former new-set, and to make them serve, his present will be made in money; a very round sum—which will be given in full property to yourself;

besides a fine annual allowance for pin-money, as it is called.

The draught of the settlements you may see whenever you will. We think there can be no room for objection to any of the articles. If, upon perusal of them, you think any alteration necessary, it shall be made.—Do, my dear girl, send to me within this day or two, or rather ask me, for the perusal of them.

As a certain person's appearance at church so lately, and what he gives out everywhere, make us extremely uneasy, and as that uneasiness will continue while you are single, you must not wonder that a short day is intended. This day fortnight we design it to be, if you have no objection to make that I shall approve of. But if you determine as we would have you, and signify it to us, we shall not stand with you for a week or so.

Signify to us, now, therefore, your compliance with our wishes. And then there is an end of your confinement. An act of oblivion, as I may call it, shall pass upon all your former refractoriness : and you will once more make us happy in you, and in one another. You may, in this case, directly come down to your father and me, in his study ; where we will give you our opinions of the patterns, with our hearty forgiveness and blessings.

You don't know what I have suffered within these few weeks past ; nor ever will be able to guess, till you come to be in my situation ; which is that of a fond and indulgent mother, praying night and day, and struggling to preserve the peace and union of her family.

But you know the terms. Come not near us, if you resolve to be undutiful : but this, after what I have written, I hope you cannot be.

Your truly affectionate Mother.

It was not possible for me to go down upon the prescribed condition. Do you think it was ?—



At last Betty brought me these lines from my father.

UNDUTIFUL AND PERVERSE CLARISSA,

No condescension, I see, will move you. Your mother shall not see you; nor will I. Prepare however to obey. You know our pleasure. Your uncle Antony, your brother, and your sister, and your favourite Mrs. Norton, shall see the ceremony performed privately at your uncle's chapel. And when Mr. Solmes can introduce you to us, in the temper we wish to behold you in, we may perhaps forgive his wife, although we never can, in any other character, our perverse daughter. As it will be so privately performed, clothes and equipage may be provided afterwards. So prepare to go to your uncle's for an early day in next week. We will not see you till all is over. This from

Your incensed Father.

If this resolution be adhered to, then will my father never see me more!—For I will never be the wife of that Solmes—I will die first!—

Solmes came hither soon after I had received my father's letter. He sent up to beg leave to wait upon me.

I said to Betty, but, if my friends will not see me on his account, I will not see him upon his own.

Down she went with my answer.

O how I heard my father storm!

They were all together it seems, in his study. My brother was for having me turned out of the house that moment.

My papa's letter threatening me with my uncle Antony's house and chapel, terrifies me strangely; and by their silence I am afraid some new storm is gathering.

But what shall I do with this Lovelace? I have just now, by the unsuspected hole in the wall, got a letter from him—So uneasy is he for fear I should be prevailed upon

in Solmes's favour; so full of menaces, if I am; so resenting the usage I receive [for, how I cannot tell; but he has undoubtedly intelligence of all that is done in the family]; such protestations of inviolable faith and honour; such vows of reformation; such pressing arguments to escape from this disgraceful confinement—O my Nancy, what shall I do with this Lovelace?—

*Wednesday, March 22.*

My aunt Hervey lay here last night, and is but just gone from me. She came up to me with my sister. They would not trust my aunt without this ill-natured witness. When she entered my chamber, I told her, that this visit was a high favour to a poor prisoner, in her hard confinement. I kissed her hand. She, kindly saluting me, said, Why this distance to your aunt, my dear, who loves you so well?

She owned, that she came to expostulate with me, for the peace' sake of the family.

When she found me inflexible, as she was pleased to call it, she said, for her part, she could not but say, that if I were not to have either Mr. Solmes or Mr. Lovelace, and yet, to make my friends easy, must marry, she should not think amiss of Mr. Wyerley. What did I think of Mr. Wyerley?

Ay, Clary, put in my sister, what say you to Mr. Wyerley?

I saw through this immediately. It was said on purpose, I doubted not, to have an argument against me of absolute prepossession in Mr. Lovelace's favour: since Mr. Wyerley everywhere avows his value, even to veneration, for me; and is far less exceptionable, both in person and mind, than Mr. Solmes: and I was willing to turn the tables, by trying how far Mr. Solmes's terms might be dispensed with; since the same terms could not be expected from Mr. Wyerley.

I therefore desired to know, whether my answer, if it should be in favour of Mr. Wyerley, would release me from Mr. Solmes?—For I owned, that I had not the aversion to him, that I had to the other.

Nay, she had no commission to propose such a thing. She only knew, that my father and mother would not be easy till Mr. Lovelace's hopes were entirely defeated.

Cunning creature! said my sister.

And this, and her joining in the question before, convinced me, that it was a designed snare for me.

My aunt was so good as to return; yet not without my sister: and, taking my hand, made me sit down by her.

She came, she must own, officiously, she said, this once more; though against the opinion of my father: but knowing and dreading the consequence of my opposition, she could not but come.

She said it would break the heart of my father to have it imagined, that he had not a power over his child; and that, as he thought, for my own good: a child too, whom they always had doated upon!—Dearest miss, concluded she, clasping her fingers, with the most condescending earnestness, let me beg of you, for my sake, for your own sake, for a hundred sakes, to get over this averseness, to give up your prejudices, and make every one happy and easy once more.

What can I do, my dearest aunt Hervey? What can I do? Were I capable of giving a hope I meant not to enlarge, then could I say, I would consider of your kind advice. But I would rather be thought perverse than insincere. Is there, however, no medium? Can nothing be thought of?

My aunt retired to the window, weeping.

My sister took that opportunity to insult me barbarously: for, stepping to my closet, she took up the patterns which my mother had sent me up, and bringing them to me, she

spread them upon the chair by me ; and, offering one, and then another, upon her sleeve and shoulder, thus she ran on, with great seeming tranquillity, but whisperingly, that my aunt might not hear her. This, Clary, is a pretty pattern enough : but this is quite charming ! I would advise you to make your appearance in it. And this, were I you, should be my wedding night-gown—and this my second dressed suit ! Won't you give orders, love, to have your grandmother's jewels new-set ?—Or will you think to show away in the new ones Mr. Solmes intends to present to you ? He talks of laying out two or three thousand pounds in presents, child ! Dear heart ?—How gorgeously will you be arrayed !—What ! silent, my dear ! mamma Norton's sweet dear ! What ! silent still ?—But, Clary, won't you have a velvet suit ? It would cut a great figure in a country church, you know : and the weather may bear it for a month yet to come. Crimson velvet, suppose ! Such a fine complexion as yours, how would it be set off by it ! What an agreeable blush would it give you !—Heigh-ho ! (mocking me ; for I sighed to be thus fooled with). And do you sigh, love ?—Well then, as it will be a solemn wedding, what think you of black velvet, child ?—Silent still, Clary !—Black velvet, so fair as you are, with those charming eyes, gleaming through a wintry cloud, like an April sun !—Does not Lovelace tell you they are charming eyes !—How lovely will you appear to every one !—What ! silent still, love !—But about your laces, Clary !—

She would have gone on still further, had not my aunt advanced towards us, wiping her eyes.

O Bella ! said I, that Mr. Lovelace had not taken you at your word !—You had before now been exercising your judgment on your own account : and I had been happy, as well as you ! Was it my fault, I pray you, that it was not so ?—

O how she raved !

To be so ready to give, Bella, and so loth to take, is not very fair in you.

The poor Bella descended to call names.

Why, sister, said I, you are as angry, as if there were more in the hint, than possibly might be designed.

Fie, fie, Miss Clary! said my aunt.

My sister was more and more outrageous.

O how much fitter, said I, to be a jest, than a jester!—But now, Bella, turn the glass to you, and see how poorly fits the robe upon your own shoulders, which you have been so unmercifully fixing upon mine!

Fie, fie, Miss Clary! repeated my aunt.

And fie, fie, likewise, good madam, to Miss Harlowe, you would say, were you to have heard her barbarous insults!

Let us go, madam, said my sister, with great violence; let us leave the creature to swell till she bursts with her own poison.—The last time I will ever come near her, in the mind I am in!

O thou art a—and down she flung without saying what.

Permit me, madam, said I to my aunt, sinking down, and clasping her knees with my arms, to detain you one moment—only to thank you for all your condescending goodness to me. I only beg of you, not to impute to obstinacy the immovableness I have shown to so tender a friend; and to forgive me everything I have said or done amiss in your presence.

I saw, to my comfort, what effect my sister's absence wrought for me.—Rise! [those were her kind words] kneel not to me!—Keep to yourself what I now say to you.—I admire you more than I can express—And if you can forbear claiming your estate, and can resolve to avoid Lovelace, you will be the greatest miracle I ever knew at your years.

Take this, and this, and this, my charming niece (for so she called me almost at every word; kissing me earnestly, and clasping her arms about my neck): and God protect

you, and direct you ! But you must submit : indeed you must. Some one day in a month from this, is all the choice that is left you.

What will be their next measure, who can divine ?

Your

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

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MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Wednesday Night, March 22.*

**Y**OU believe me to be very happy in my prospects in relation to Hickman. I have great exceptions to him. He and wedlock never yet once entered into my head at one time. Shall I give you my free thoughts of him ? Take it then—his best and his worst.

Hickman is a sort of fiddling, busy, yet, to borrow a word from you, unbusy man : has a great deal to do, and seems to me to dispatch nothing.

Then I have a quarrel against his face, though in his person, for a well-thriven man, tolerably genteel—not to his features so much neither ; for what, as you have often observed, are features in a man ?—But Hickman, with strong lines, and big cheek and chin bones, has not the manliness in his aspect, which Lovelace has with the most regular and agreeable features.

As to his dress in general, he cannot indeed be called a sloven, but sometimes he is too gaudy, at other times too plain, to be uniformly elegant. And for his manners, he makes such a bustle with them, and about them, as would induce one to suspect that they are more strangers than familiars to him.

The man however is honest : is of family : has a clear and good estate ; and may one day be a baronet, an't please you. He is humane and benevolent, tolerably generous, as people say, and a good manager.

Then I cannot but confess, that now I like not anybody better, whatever I did once.

Nevertheless, to own the truth, I cannot say I love the man; nor, I believe, ever shall.

I must blame you, my dear, for your resolution not to litigate for your right, if occasion were to be given you. Justice is due to ourselves, as well as to everybody else. Still more must I blame you for declaring to your aunt and sister, that you will not: since (as they will tell it to your father and brother) the declaration must needs give advantage to spirits who have so little of that generosity for which you are so much distinguished.

At first reading I was much affected with your mother's letter sent with the patterns. A strange measure however from a mother; for she did not intend to insult you; and I cannot but lament that so sensible and so fine a woman should stoop to so much art as that letter is written with.

But I will spare the good lady for your sake—and one argument, indeed, I think may be pleaded in her favour, in the present contention—she who has for so many years, and with such absolute resignation, borne what she has borne, to the sacrifice of her own will, may think it an easier task than another person can imagine it, for her daughter to give up her's. But to think to whose instigation all this is originally owing—God forgive me; but with such usage I should have been with Lovelace before now! Yet remember, my dear, that the step which would not be wondered at from such an hasty-tempered creature as me, would be inexcusable in such a considerate person as you.

After your mother has been thus drawn in against her judgment, I am the less surprised, that your Aunt Hervey should go along with her; since the two sisters never separate. I have inquired into the nature of the obligation which Mr. Hervey's indifferent conduct in his affairs has laid him under—it is only, it seems, that your brother has paid off for him a mortgage upon one part of his estate, which the mortgagee was about to foreclose; and

taken it upon himself. A small favour (as he has ample security in his hands) from kindred to kindred : but such a one, it is plain, as has laid the whole family of the Herveys under obligation to the ungenerous lender, who has treated him, and his aunt too (as Miss Dolly Hervey has privately complained) with the less ceremony ever since.

Mr. Hickman, when in London, found an opportunity to inquire after Mr. Lovelace's town-life and conversation.

At the Cocoa-tree in Pall Mall he fell in with two of his intimates, the one named Belton, the other Mowbray ; both very free of speech, and probably as free in their lives : but the waiters paid them great respect, and on Mr. Hickman's inquiry after their characters, called them men of fortune and honour.

They began to talk of Mr. Lovelace of their own accord ; and upon some gentlemen in the room asking, when they expected him in town, answered, that very day. Mr. Hickman (as they both went on praising Lovelace) said, he had indeed heard, that Mr. Lovelace was a very fine gentleman—and was proceeding, when one of them, interrupting him, said, only, sir, the finest gentleman in the world ; that's all.

And so he led them on to expatiate more particularly on his qualities ; which they were very fond of doing : but said not one single word in behalf of his morals—mind that.

Mr. Hickman said, that Mr. Lovelace was very happy, as he understood, in the esteem of the ladies ; and, smiling, to make them believe he did not think amiss of it, that he pushed his good fortune as far as it would go.

Well put, Mr. Hickman ! thought I ; equally grave and sage—thou seemest not to be a stranger to their dialect, as I suppose this is. But I said nothing ; for I have often tried to find out this mighty sober man of my mother's :



but hitherto have only to say, that he is either very moral, or very cunning.

No doubt of it, replied one of them ; and out came an oath, with a who would not ?—that he did as every young fellow would do.

Very true ! said my mother's puritan—but I hear he is in treaty with a fine lady——

So he was, Mr. Belton said—the devil fetch her ! for she engrossed all his time—but that the lady's family ought to be—something—(Mr. Hickman desired to be excused repeating what—though he had repeated what was worse) and might dearly repent their usage of a man of his family and merit.

Perhaps they may think him too wild, cried Hickman : and theirs is, I hear, a very sober family——

Sober ! said one of them : a good honest word, Dick !—where the devil has it lain all this time ?—d— me if I have heard of it in this sense, ever since I was at college !

These, my dear, are Mr. Lovelace's companions.

Mr. Hickman, upon the whole, professed to me, that he had no reason to think well of Mr. Lovelace's morals, from what he heard of him in town : yet his two intimates talked of his being more regular than he used to be : that he had made a very good resolution, that of old Tom Wharton, was the expression, that he would never give a challenge, nor refuse one ; which they praised in him highly : that, in short, he was a very brave fellow, and the most agreeable companion in the world : and would one day make a great figure in his country ; since there was nothing he was not capable of——

I am afraid that this last assertion is too true. And this, my dear, is all that Mr. Hickman could pick up about him : and is it not enough to determine such a mind as yours, if not already determined ?

Yet it must be said, too, that if there be a woman in the world that can reclaim him, it is you. And, by your

account of his behaviour in the interview between you, I own I have some hope of him.

An unexpected visitor has turned the course of my thoughts: a visitor whom, according to Mr. Hickman's report, I supposed to be in town.—Now, my dear, have I saved myself the trouble of telling you, that it was your too-agreeable rake.

The end of his coming was, to engage my interest with my charming friend; and as he was sure that I knew all your mind, to acquaint him what he had to trust to.

He gave me fresh instances of indignities cast upon himself by your uncles and brother; and declared, that if you suffered yourself to be forced into the arms of the man for whose sake he was loaded with undeserved abuses, you should be one of the youngest, as you would be one of the loveliest widows in England: and that he would moreover call your brother to account for the liberties he takes with his character to every one he meets with.

He proposed several schemes, for you to choose some one of them, in order to enable you to avoid the persecutions you labour under: one I will mention; that you will resume your estate; and if you find difficulties that can be no otherwise surmounted, that you will, either avowedly or privately, as he had proposed to you, accept of Lady Betty Lawrance's or Lord M.'s assistance to instate you in it. He declared, that if you did, he would leave absolutely to your own pleasure afterwards, and to the advice which your cousin Morden on his arrival should give you, whether to encourage his address, or not, as you should be convinced of the sincerity of the reformation which his enemies make him so much want.

I had now a good opportunity to sound him, as you wished Mr. Hickman would Lord M. as to the continued or diminished favour of the ladies, and of his lordship, towards you, upon their being acquainted with the ani-

mosity of your relations to them, as well as to their kinsman. I laid hold of the opportunity ; and he satisfied me, by reading some passages of a letter he had about him, from Lord M. That an alliance with you, and that on the foot of your own single merit, would be the most desirable event to them that could happen : and so far to the purpose of your wished inquiry does his lordship go in this letter, that he assures him, that whatever you suffer in fortune from the violence of your relations on his account, he and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty will join to make it up to him. And yet that the reputation of a family so splendid would, no doubt, in a case of such importance to the honour of both, make them prefer a general consent.

And now, my dear, upon the whole, I think it behoves you to make yourself independent : all then will fall right. To demand, is not to litigate. But be your resolution what it will, do not by any means repeat to them, that you will not assert your right. If they go on to give you provocation, you may have sufficient reason to change your mind : and let them expect that you will change it. They have not the generosity to treat you the better for disclaiming the power they know you have. That, I think, need not now be told you. I am, my dearest friend, and will be ever,

Your most affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

*[On the report made by Clarissa's aunt and sister of what they term that unhappy young lady's obstinacy, it is resolved in council that she shall be sent to stay at her uncle Antony's moated house. Her brother gladly takes upon himself the office of conveying to her by letter the commands of her parents on this subject ; and he frankly explains to her the object of her exile, which is, to destroy all possibility of her*

*intercourse with Miss Howe, or with Lovelace, and to compel her to receive the visits of Mr. Solmes. Stung by his reproaches, she returns an indignant answer, utterly refusing to go to her uncle Antony's. In two more communications her brother insists on her obedience to the commands of her parents; in two more replies she persists in her refusal; and she relates the whole circumstance in a letter to Miss Howe.—ED.]*

## MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Friday Morning, 6 o' Clock.*

**M**RS. BETTY tells me, there is now nothing talked of but of my going to my uncle Antony's. She has been ordered, she says, to get ready to attend me thither: and upon my expressing my averseness to go, had the confidence to say, that having heard me often praise the romanticness of the place, she was astonished (her hands and eyes lifted up) that I should set myself against going to a house so much in my taste.

I asked, if this was her own insolence or her young mistress's observation?

She half astonished me by her answer; that it was hard she could not say a good thing, without being robbed of the merit of it.

As the wench looked as if she really thought she had said a good thing, without knowing the boldness of it, I let it pass.

*Friday, 10 o' Clock.*

Going down to my poultry yard, just now, I heard my brother and sister and that Solmes laughing and triumphing together. The high yew hedge between us, which divides the yard from the garden, hindered them from seeing me.

Never fear, Mr. Solmes, said my brother, but we'll carry our point, if she do not tire you out first. We have gone

too far in this method to recede. Her cousin Morden will soon be here : so all must be over before that time, or she'll be made independent of us all.

There, Miss Howe, is the reason given for their Jehu-driving !

Mr. Solmes declared that he was determined to persevere while my brother gave him any hopes, and while my father stood firm.

Some lively, and I suppose, witty answer, my brother returned ; for he and Mr. Solmes laughed outrageously upon it, and Bella, laughing too, called him a naughty man : but I heard no more of what they said ; they walking on into the garden.

If you think, my dear, that what I have related did not again fire me, you will find yourself mistaken when you read at this place the enclosed copy of my letter to my brother ; struck off—while the iron was red-hot.

No more call me meek and gentle, I beseech you.

TO MR. JAMES HARLOWE.

*Friday Morning.*

SIR,—If I should be silent, on occasion of your last, you would perhaps conclude, that I was consenting to go to my uncle Antony's upon the condition you mention. My father must do as he pleases with his child. He may turn me out of his doors, if he think fit, or give you leave to do it ; but (loth as I am to say it) I should think it very hard to be carried by force to anybody's house when I have one of my own to go to.

Far be it from me, notwithstanding yours and my sister's provocations, to think of taking my estate into my own hands, without my father's leave : but why, if I must not stay any longer here, may I not be permitted to go thither ? I will engage to see nobody they would not have me see, if this favour be permitted. Favour I call it, and am ready to receive and acknowledge it as such, although my grandfather's will has made it matter of right.

You ask me, in a very unbrotherly manner, in the postscript to your letter, if I have not some new proposals to make? I have (since you put the question) three or four; new ones all, I think; though I will be bold to say, that, submitting the case to any one person whom you have not set against me, my old ones ought not to have been rejected.

These, then, are my new proposals.

That, as above, I may not be hindered from going to reside (under such conditions as shall be prescribed to me, which I will most religiously observe) at my grandfather's late house. I will not again in this place call it mine. I have reason to think it a great misfortune, that ever it was so—indeed I have.

If this be not permitted, I desire leave to go for a month, or for what time shall be thought fit, to Miss Howe's. I dare say her mother will consent to it, if I have my father's permission to go.

If this, neither, be allowed, and I am to be turned out of my father's house, I beg I may be suffered to go to my aunt Hervey's, where I will inviolably observe her commands, and those of my father and mother.

But if this, neither, is to be granted, it is my humble request, that I may be sent to my uncle Harlowe's, instead of my uncle Antony's. I mean not by this any disrespect to my uncle Antony: but his moat, with his bridge threatened to be drawn up, and perhaps the chapel there, terrify me beyond expression, notwithstanding your witty ridicule upon me for that apprehension.

If this likewise be refused, and if I must be carried to the moated-house, which used to be a delightful one to me, let it be promised me, that I shall not be compelled to receive Mr. Solmes's visits there; and then I will as cheerfully go, as ever I did.

So here, sir, are my new proposals. And if none of them answer your end, as each of them tends to the

exclusion of that ungenerous *persister's* visits, be pleased to know, that there is no misfortune I will not submit to, rather than yield to give my hand to the man to whom I can allow no share in my heart.

If I write in a style different from my usual, and different from what I wished to have occasion to write, an impartial person, who knew what I have accidentally, within this hour past, heard from your mouth, and my sister's, and a third person's (particularly the reason you give for driving on at this violent rate; to wit, my cousin Morden's soon-expected arrival) would think I have but too much reason for it.

CL. HARLOWE.

See, my dear, the force, and volubility as I may say, of passion; for the letter I send you, is my first draught, struck off without a blot or erasure.

*Friday, Three o'Clock.*

As soon as I had transcribed it, I sent it down to my brother by Mrs. Betty.

The wench came up soon after, all aghast, with a Laud, Miss! what have you done? What have you written? For you have set them all in a joyful uproar!

My sister is but this moment gone from me: she came up all in a flame; which obliged me abruptly to lay down my pen: she ran to me——

O spirit! said she; tapping my neck a little too hard. And is it come to this at last!

Do you beat me, Bella?

Do you call this beating you? only tapping your shoulder thus, said she; tapping again more gently—This is what we expected it would come to—you want to be independent—my father has lived too long for you!

I was going to speak with vehemence; but she put her handkerchief before my mouth, very rudely—You have done enough with your pen, mean listener, as you are!

But, know, that neither your independent scheme, nor any of your visiting ones, will be granted you. Take your course, perverse one! Call in your rake to help you to an independence upon your parents, and a dependence upon him!—Do so!—Prepare this moment—Resolve what you will take with you—To-morrow you go—Depend upon it to-morrow you go!—No longer shall you stay here, watching and creeping about to hearken to what people say—'Tis determined, child!—You go to-morrow—My brother would have come up to tell you so; but I persuaded him to the contrary—For I know not what had become of you, if he had—Such a letter! such an insolent, such a conceited challenger!—O thou vain creature! But prepare yourself, I say—To-morrow you go—My brother will accept of your bold challenge; but it must be personal; and at my uncle Antony's—Or perhaps at Mr. Solmes's—

Thus she ran on, almost foaming with passion, till quite out of patience, I said, No more of your violence, Bella—Had I known in what a way you designed to come up, you should not have found my chamber-door open.—Talk to your servant in this manner. Unlike you, as I bless God I am, I am nevertheless your sister—And let me tell you, that I won't go to-morrow, nor next day, nor next day to that—except I am dragged away by violence.

What! not if your father or your mother command it—girl? said she; intending another word, by her pause and manner before it came out.

Let it come to that, Bella; then I shall know what to say. But it shall be from their own mouths, if I do—Not from yours, nor your Betty's—And say another word to me, in this manner, and be the consequence what it may, I will force myself into their presence; and demand what I have done to be used thus!

Come along, child! Come along, meekness—taking



my hand, and leading me towards the door—demand it of them now—you'll find both your despised parents together!—What! does your heart fail you?—for I resisted, being thus insolently offered to be led, and pulled my hand from her.

I want not to be led, said I; and since I can plead your invitation, I will go: and was posting to the stairs accordingly in my passion—but she got between me and the door, and shut it—

Let me first, bold one, said she, apprise them of your visit—for your own sake let me—for my brother is with them. But yet opening it again, seeing me shrink back—Go if you will! Why don't you go?—Why don't you go, miss?—following me to my closet, whither I retired, with my heart full, and pulled the sash-door after me; and could no longer hold in my tears.

Nor would I answer one word to her repeated aggravations, nor to her demands upon me to open my door (for the key was on the inside); nor so much as turn my head towards her, as she looked through the glass at me. And at last, which vexed her to the heart, I drew the silk curtain, that she should not see me, and down she went muttering all the way.

Is not this usage enough to provoke a rashness never before thought of?

As it is but too probable that I may be hurried away to my uncle's without being able to give you previous notice of it; I beg that as soon as you shall hear of such a violence, you would send to the usual place, to take back such of your letters as may not have reached my hands, or to fetch any of mine that may be there.

May you, my dear, be always happy, prays your

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Friday Night, March 24.*



HAVE a most provoking letter from my sister. I might have supposed, she would resent the contempt she brought upon herself in my chamber. Her conduct surely can only be accounted for by the rage instigated by a supposed rivalry.

TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I am to tell you, that your mother has begged you off for the morrow : but that you have effectually done your business with her, as well as with everybody else.

In your proposals, and letter to your brother, you have shown yourself so silly, and so wise ; so young, and so old ; so gentle, and so obstinate ; so meek, and so violent ; that never was there so mixed a character.

Here, miss, your mother will not let you remain : she cannot have any peace of mind while such a rebel of a child is so near her : your aunt Hervey will not take a charge which all the family put together cannot manage : your uncle Harlowe will not see you at his house till you are married—so, thanks to your own stubbornness, you have nobody that will receive you but your uncle Antony—thither you must go in a very few days ; and when there, your brother will settle with you, in my presence, all that relates to your modest challenge :—for it is accepted, I assure you. Dr. Lewin will possibly be there, since you make choice of him. Another gentleman likewise, were it but to convince you, that he is another sort of man than you have taken him to be. Your two uncles will possibly be there too, to see that the poor, weak, and defenceless sister has fair play. So, you see, miss, what company your smart challenge will draw together.

Prepare for the day. You'll soon be called upon. Adieu, Mamma Norton's *sweet child* !

ARAB. HARLOWE.

I transcribed this letter, and sent it to my mother, with these lines.

A very few words, my ever-honoured mamma !

If my sister wrote the inclosed by my father's direction, or yours, I must submit to the usage she gives me in it, with this only observation, that it is short of the personal treatment I have received from her. If it be of her own head—why then, madam—but I knew, that when I was banished from your presence—yet, till I know if she has or has not authority for this usage, I will only write further, that I am

Your very unhappy child,

CL. HARLOWE.

This answer I received in an open slip of paper ; but it was wet in one place. I kissed the place ; for I am sure it was blister'd, as I may say, by a mother's tear !—she must (I hope she must) have written it reluctantly.

To apply for protection, where authority is defied, is bold. Your sister, who would not in your circumstances have been guilty of your perverseness, may allowably be angry at you for it. However, we have told her to moderate her zeal for our insulted authority. See, if you can deserve another behaviour, than that you complain of : which cannot, however, be so grievous to you, as the cause of it is to

Your more unhappy Mother.

How often must I forbid you any address to me !

Tell me, tell me, my dearest Miss Howe (for I dare not trust myself) tell me what I can do.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Saturday, March 25.*

WHAT can I advise you to do, my noble creature? Your merit is your crime. You can no more change your nature, than your persecutors can theirs. Your distress is owing to the vast disparity between you and them. What would you have of them? Do they not act in character?—and to whom? To an alien. You are not one of them. They have two dependencies in their hope to move you to compliance—upon their impenetrableness one (I'd give it a more proper name, if I dared); the other, on the regard you have always had for your character (have they not heretofore owned as much?) and upon your apprehensions from that of Lovelace, which would discredit you, should you take any step by his means to extricate yourself.

I'll give you the substance of a conversation that passed between Sir Harry Downeton and this Solmes, but three days ago, as Sir Harry told it but yesterday to my mother and me.

Sir Harry told him, he wondered he should wish to obtain you so much against your inclination as everybody knew it would be, if he did.

He matter'd not that, he said: coy maids made the fondest wives (a sorry fellow!): it would not at all grieve him to see a pretty woman make wry faces, if she gave him cause to vex her. And your estate, by the convenience of its situation, would richly pay him for all he could bear with your shyness.

He should be sure, he said, after a while, of your complaisance, if not of your love: and in that should be happier than nine parts in ten of his married acquaintance.

What a wretch is this!

My mother, however, says, it would be a prodigious merit in you, if you could get over your aversion to him. Where, asks she (as you have been asked before) is the praiseworthiness of obedience, if it be only paid in instances where we give up nothing ?

What a fatality, that you have no better an option—either a Scylla or a Charybdis !

You must, if possible, avoid being carried to that uncle's. The man, the parson, your brother and sister present!—they'll certainly there marry you to the wretch. Nor will your newly-raised spirit support you in your resistance on such an occasion. Your meekness will return ; and you will have nothing for it but tears (tears despised by them all) and ineffectual appeals and lamentations :—and these tears, when the ceremony is profaned, you must suddenly dry up ; and endeavour to dispose yourself to such an humble frame of mind, as may induce your new-made lord to forgive all your past declarations of aversion.

I will add nothing (though I could an hundred things on occasion of your latest communications) but that I am

Your ever-affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Sunday Morning, March 26.*



HAVE received two letters from Mr. Lovelace, since his visit to you ; which make three that I have not answered. I doubt not his being uneasy ; but in his last he complains in high terms of my silence ; not in the still small voice, or rather style of an humble lover, but in a style like that which would probably be used by a slighted protector. And his pride is again touched, that like a thief, or eaves-dropper, he is forced to dodge about in hopes of a letter, and return five miles (and then to an inconvenient lodging) without any.

I take his pride to task, on his disdain to watch

for my letters ; and for his eves-dropping language : and say, That, surely, he has the less reason to think so hardly of his situation ; since his faulty morals are the cause of all ; and since faulty morals deservedly level all distinction, and bring down rank and birth to the canaille, and to the necessity which he so much regrets, of appearing (if I must descend to his language) as an eves-dropper and a thief. And then I forbid him ever to expect another letter from me that is to subject him to such disgraceful hardships.

This is the substance of the letter I have written to him.

The man, to be sure, must have the penetration to observe, that my correspondence with him hitherto is owing more to the severity I meet with, than to a very high value for him. And so I would have him think. What a worse than Moloch deity is that, which expects an offering of reason, duty, and discretion, to be made to its shrine !

Mr. Solmes is almost continually here : so is my aunt Hervey : so are my two uncles. Something is working against me, I doubt. What an uneasy state is suspense !—when a naked sword, too, seems hanging over one's head !

I hear nothing but what this confident creature Betty throws out in the wantonness of office. Now it is, Why, miss, don't you look up your things ? You'll be called upon, depend upon it, before you are aware. Another time she intimates darkly, and in broken sentences (as if on purpose to tease me) what one says, what another ; with their inquiries how I dispose of my time ? And my brother's insolent question comes frequently in, whether I am not writing a history of my sufferings ?

But I am now used to her pertness : and as it is only through that, that I can hear of anything intended against

me, before it is to be put into execution ; and as, when she is most impertinent, she pleads a commission for it ; I bear with her : yet, now and then, not without a little of the heart-burn.

I will deposit thus far. Adieu, my dear.  
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Sunday Afternoon.*

**I** HAD reason to fear, as I mentioned in mine of this morning, that a storm was brewing. Mr. Solmes came home from church this afternoon with my brother. Soon after, Betty brought me up a letter, without saying from whom. It was in a cover, and directed by a hand I never saw before ; as if it were supposed that I would not receive and open it, had I known from whom it came.

These are the contents :

TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Sunday, March 26.*

DEAREST MADAM,—I think myself a most unhappy man, in that I have never yet been able to pay my respects to you with your consent for one half-hour. I have something to communicate to you that concerns you much, if you be pleased to admit me to your speech. Your honour is concerned in it, and the honour of all your family.

Pray, madam, vouchsafe me a hearing, as you value your honour and family : which will oblige, dearest miss,  
Your most humble and most faithful servant,

ROGER SOLMES.

I wait below for the hope of admittance.

I have no manner of doubt, that this is a poor device, to get this man into my company. I would have sent down

a verbal answer ; but Betty refused to carry any message, which should prohibit his visiting me. So I was obliged either to see him, or to write to him. I wrote therefore an answer, of which I shall send you the rough draught. And now my heart aches for what may follow from it ; for I hear a great hurry below.

TO ROGER SOLMES, ESQ.

SIR,—Whatever you have to communicate to me, which concerns my honour, may as well be done by writing as by word of mouth. If Mr. Lovelace is any of my concern, I know not that therefore he ought to be yours : for the usage I receive on your account (I must think it so !) is so harsh, that were there not such a man in the world as Mr. Lovelace, I would not wish to see Mr. Solmes, no, not for one half-hour, in the way he is pleased to be desirous to see me. I never can be in any danger from Mr. Lovelace (and of consequence, cannot be affected by any of your discoveries) if the proposal I made be accepted. You have been acquainted with it, no doubt. If not, be pleased to let my friends know, that if they will rid me of my apprehensions of one gentleman, I will rid them of theirs of another.

Excuse me, sir : but after my former letter to you, and your ungenerous perseverance ; and after this attempt to avail yourself at the expence of another man's character, rather than by your own proper merit ; I see not that you can blame any asperity in her, whom you have so largely contributed to make unhappy.

CL. HARLOWE.

*Sunday Night.*

My father was for coming up to me, in great wrath it seems ; but was persuaded to the contrary. My aunt Hervey was permitted to send me this that follows.—Quick work, my dear !—



TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

NIECE,—Everybody is now convinced, that nothing is to be done with you in the way of gentleness or persuasion. Your mother will not permit you to stay in the house ; for your father is so incensed by your strange letter to his friend, that she knows not what will be the consequence if you do. So, you are commanded to get ready to go to your uncle Antony's out of hand.

Your uncle thinks he has not deserved of you such an unwillingness as you show to go to his house.

You must not answer me. There will be no end of that.

You know not the affliction you give to everybody ; but to none more than to

Your affectionate aunt,  
DOROTHY HERVEY.

Forbid to write to my aunt, I took a bolder liberty. I wrote a few lines to my mother ; beseeching her to procure me leave to throw myself at my father's feet, and hers, if I must go (nobody else present) to beg pardon for the trouble I had given them both, and their blessings ; and to receive their commands as to my removal, and the time for it, from their own lips.

“ What new boldness this !—Take it back ; and bid her learn to obey,” was my mother's angry answer, with my letter returned, unopened

But that I might omit nothing, that had an appearance of duty, I wrote a few lines to my father himself, to the same purpose ; begging that he would not turn me out of his house without his blessing. But this, torn in two pieces, and unopened, was brought me up again by Betty, with an air, one hand held up, the other extended, the torn letter in her open palm ; and a See here !—What a sad thing is this !—Nothing will do but duty, miss !—Your papa said, Let her tell me of deeds ! I'll receive no

words from her : and so he tore the letter and flung the pieces at my head.

So desperate my case, I was resolved not to stop even at this repulse. I took my pen, and addressed myself to my uncle Harlowe, enclosing that which my mother had returned unopened, and the torn unopened one sent to my father ; having first hurried off a transcript for you.

My uncle was going home, and it was delivered to him just as he stepped into his chariot. What may be the fate of it therefore I cannot know till to-morrow.

The following is a copy of it.

TO JOHN HARLOWE, ESQ.


MY DEAR AND EVER-HONOURED UNCLE,—I have nobody now but you, to whom I can apply, with hope, so much as to have my humble addresses opened and read. Give me leave to say, sir, that if deaf-eared anger will neither grant me a hearing, nor what I write a perusal, some time hence, the hard-heartedness may be regretted. I beseech you, dear, good sir, to let me know what is meant by sending me to my uncle Antony's house, rather than to yours, or to my aunt Hervey's, or elsewhere ? If it be for what I apprehend it to be, life will not be supportable upon the terms. I beg also to know when I am to be turned out of doors ! *My heart strongly gives me, that if once I am compelled to leave this house I never shall see it more.*

It becomes me, however, to declare, that I write not this through perverseness, or in resentment. God knows my heart, I do not ! But the treatment I apprehend I shall meet with, if carried to my other uncle's, will, in all probability, give the finishing stroke to the distresses, the undeserved distresses I will be bold to call them, of

Your once highly favoured,

But now most unhappy,

CL. HARLOWE.



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*March 27.*

This morning early my uncle Harlowe came hither. He sent up the enclosed very tender letter. It has made me wish I could oblige him. You will see how Mr. Solmes's ill qualities are glossed over in it. What blemishes does affection hide!—But perhaps they may say to me, what faults does antipathy bring to light!

*Sunday Night, or rather Monday Morning.*

I must answer you, though against my own resolution. Everybody loves you; and you know they do. The very ground you walk upon is dear to most of us. But how can we resolve to see you? There is no standing against your looks and language. It is our love makes us decline to see you. How can we, when you are resolved not to do what we are resolved you shall do?

I have read the letters you enclosed. At a proper time, I may show them to my brother and sister. But they will receive nothing from you at present.

We are all afraid to see you, because we know we shall be made as so many fools. Nay, your mother is so afraid of you, that once or twice when she thought you was coming to force yourself into her presence, she shut the door, and locked herself in, because she knew she must not see you upon your terms, and you are resolved you will not see her upon hers.

Resolve but to oblige us all, my dearest Miss Clary, and you shall see how we will clasp you every one by turns to our rejoicing hearts. If the one man has not the wit, and the parts, and the person, of the other, no one breathing has a worse heart than that other: and is not the love of all your friends, and a sober man (if he be not so polished) to be preferred to a debauchee, though ever so fine a man to look at?

Come, my dear niece, let me have the honour of doing with you what nobody else yet has been able to do. Your

father, mother, and I, will divide the pleasure, and the honour, I will again call it, between us; and all past offences shall be forgiven; and Mr. Solmes, we will engage, shall take nothing amiss hereafter of what has passed.

He knows, he says, what a jewel that man will have, who can obtain your favour; and he will think light of all he has suffered, or shall suffer, in obtaining you.

Dear, sweet creature, oblige us: and oblige us with a grace. It must be done, whether with a grace or not. I do assure you it must. You must not conquer father, mother, uncles, everybody: depend upon that.

I have sat up half the night to write this. You do not know how I am touched at reading yours, and writing this. Yet will I be at Harlowe Place early in the morning. So upon reading this, if you will oblige us all, send me word to come up to your apartment: and I will lead you down and present you to the embraces of every one: and you will then see, you have more of a brother and sister in them both, than of late your prejudices will let you think you have. This from one who used to love to style himself

Your paternal uncle,

JOHN HARLOWE.

In about an hour after this kind letter was given me, my uncle sent up to know, if he should be a welcome visitor, upon the terms mentioned in his letter? He bid Betty bring him down a verbal answer: a written one, he said, would be a bad sign; and he bid her therefore not bring a letter. But I had just finished the inclosed transcription of one I had been writing. She made a difficulty to carry it; but was prevailed upon to oblige me by a token which these Mrs. Betty's cannot withstand.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—How you rejoice me by your condescending goodness!—so kind, so paternal a

letter!—so soothing to a wounded heart; and of late what I have been so little used to!—how am I affected with it! Tell me not, dear sir, of my way of writing: your letter has more moved me, than I have been able to move anybody! It has made me wish with all my heart, that I could entitle myself to be visited upon your own terms; and to be led down to my father and mother by so good and so kind an uncle.

I will tell you, dearest sir, what I will do to make my peace. I have no doubt that Mr. Solmes, upon consideration, would greatly prefer my sister to such a strange averse creature as me. His chief, or one of his chief motives in his address to me, is, as I have reason to believe, the contiguity of my grandfather's estate to his own. I will resign it; for ever I will resign it: and the resignation must be good, because I will never marry at all. I will make it over to my sister, and her heirs for ever. I shall have no heirs, but my brother and her; and I will receive, as of my father's bounty, such an annuity (not in lieu of the estate, but as of his bounty) as he shall be pleased to grant me, if it be ever so small: and whenever I disoblige him, he to withdraw it, at his pleasure.

Will not this be accepted?—surely it must—surely it will!—I beg of you, dearest sir, to propose it; and second it with your interest. This will answer every end. My sister has a high opinion of Mr. Solmes. I never can have any in the light he is proposed to me. But as my sister's husband, he will be always entitled to my respect; and shall have it.

I wait, sir, for your answer to this proposal, made with the whole heart of

Your dutiful and most obliged niece,  
CL. HARLOWE.

*Monday Noon.*

I hope this will be accepted: for Betty tells me, that



my uncle Antony and my aunt Hervey are sent for ; and not Mr. Solmes ; which I look upon as a favourable circumstance. With what cheerfulness will I assign over this envied estate!—what a much more valuable consideration shall I part with it for!—the love and favour of all my relations! That love and favour, which I used for eighteen years together to rejoice in, and be distinguished by!—and what a charming pretence will this afford me of breaking with Mr. Lovelace! And how easy will it possibly make him to part with me!

I found this morning in the usual place a letter from him, in answer, I suppose, to mine of Friday, which I deposited not till Saturday. But I have not opened it; nor will I, till I see what effect this new offer will have.

They have been all assembled some time, and are in close debate I believe: but can there be room for long debate upon a proposal which, if accepted, will so effectually answer all their views?—can they insist a moment longer upon my having Mr. Solmes, when they see what sacrifices I am ready to make, to be freed from his addresses?—Oh, but I suppose the struggle is, first, with Bella's nicety, to persuade her to accept of the estate, and of the husband; and next, with her pride, to take her sister's refusals, as she once phrased it!—or, it may be, my brother is insisting upon equivalents for his reversion in the estate: and these sort of things take up but too much the attention of some of our family. To these, no doubt, one or both, it must be owing, that my proposal admits of so much consideration.

I want, methinks, to see, what Mr. Lovelace, in his letter, says. But I will deny myself this piece of curiosity till that which is raised by my present suspense is answered.

*Monday Evening.*

Would you believe it?—Betty, by anticipation, tells me, that I am to be refused. I am “a vile, artful creature.

Everybody is too good to me. My uncle Harlowe has been taken in, that's the phrase. They knew how it would be, if he either wrote to me, or saw me. He has, however, been made ashamed to be so wrought upon. A pretty thing truly in the eye of the world would it be, were they to take me at my word! It would look as if they had treated me thus hardly, as I think it, for this very purpose. It was amazing, that it could admit of a moment's deliberation: that anything could be supposed to be done in it. It was equally against law and equity: and a fine security Miss Bella would have, or Mr. Solmes, when I could resume it when I would!—my brother and she my heirs! Oh, the artful creature!—I to resolve to live single, when Lovelace is so sure of me—and everywhere declares as much!—and can whenever he pleases, if my husband, claim under the will!”

The result of their debate, I suppose, will somehow or other be communicated to me by-and-by. But let me tell you, my dear, that I am made so desperate, that I am afraid to open Mr. Lovelace's letter, lest, in the humour I am in, I should do something (if I find it not exceptionable) that may give me repentance as long as I live.

*Monday Night.*

This moment the following letter is brought me by Betty.

*Monday, 5 o'clock.*

MISS CUNNING-ONE,—Your fine new proposal is thought unworthy of a particular answer. Your uncle Harlowe is ashamed to be so taken in. Have you no new fetch for your uncle Antony? Go round with us, child, now your hand's in. But I was bid to write only one line, that you might not complain, as you did of your worthy sister, for the freedoms you provoked: it is this;—prepare yourself. To-morrow you go to my uncle Antony's. [That's all, child.

JAMES HARLOWE.

I was vexed to the heart at this : and immediately, in the warmth of resentment, wrote the inclosed to my uncle Harlowe ; who it seems stays here this night.

When what I have before written in the humblest strain has met with such strange constructions, I am afraid that this unguarded scrawl will be very ill received. But I beg, sir, you will oblige me with one line, be it ever so harsh, in answer to my proposal. I still think it ought to be attended to. I will enter into the most solemn engagements to make it valid by a perpetual single life. In a word, anything I can do, I will do, to be restored to all your favours. More I cannot say, but that I am, very undeservedly,

A most unhappy Creature.

Betty scrupled again to carry this letter ; and said, she should have anger ; and I should but have it returned in scraps and bits.

I bid her, if she could, slide it into my uncle's hand, unseen ; at least, unseen by my brother or sister, for fear it should meet, through their good offices, with the fate she had bespoken for it.

I am now in expectation of the result. But having so little ground to hope for either favour or mercy, I opened Mr. Lovelace's letter.

He says, "He has more reason than ever, from the contents of my last, to apprehend, that I shall be prevailed upon by force, if not by fair means, to fall in with my brother's measures ; and sees but too plainly, that I am preparing him to expect it.

"Upon this presumption, he supplicates, with the utmost earnestness, that I will not give way to the malice of his enemies.

"Solemn vows of reformation, and everlasting truth and obligingness, he makes ; all in the style of desponding humility.



“He despises himself, he solemnly protests, for his past follies: he thanks God he has seen his error; and nothing but my more particular instructions is wanting to perfect his reformation.”

He apprises me (It is still my wonder, how he comes by his intelligence!) “that my friends have written to my cousin Morden to represent matters to him in their own partial way; nor doubt they to influence him on their side of the question.

“That all this shows I have but one way; if none of my own friends or intimates will receive me.

“If I will transport him with the honour of my choice of this one way, settlements shall be drawn, with proper blanks, which I shall fill up as I please. Let him but have from my own mouth a repetition that I will not, on any consideration, be Solmes’ wife; and he shall be easy. But, after such a letter as I have written, nothing but an interview can make him so.” He beseeches me therefore, “To unbolt the door, as that very night; or, if I receive not this time enough, this night;—and he will in a disguise that shall not give a suspicion who he is, if he should be seen, come to the garden door, in hopes to open it with his key; nor will he have any other lodging than in the Coppice both nights; watching every wakeful hour for the propitious unbolting, unless he has a letter with my orders to the contrary, or to make some other appointment.”

This letter was dated yesterday: so he was there last night, I suppose; and will be there this night; and I have not written a line to him: and now it is too late, were I determined what to write.

What have I do with such headstrong spirits? I wish I had never—but what signifies wishing?—I am strangely perplexed—but I need not have told you this, after such a representation of my situation.

My uncle has vouchsafed to answer me. These that

follow are the contents of his letter ; but just now brought me, although written last night—late, I suppose.

MISS CLARY,—Your parents will be obeyed. It is fit they should. Your mother has nevertheless prevailed to have your going to your uncle Antony's put off till Thursday : yet owns you deserve not that, or any other favour from her. I will receive no more of your letters. You are too artful for me. You are an ingrateful and unreasonable child : must you have your will paramount to everybody's ? How are you altered !

Your displeased uncle,  
JOHN HARLOWE.

To be carried away on Thursday—to the moated house—to the chapel—to Solmes ! How can I think of this !—they will make me desperate.

*Tuesday Morning, 8 o'clock.*

I have another letter from Mr. Lovelace. I opened it with the expectation of its being filled with bold and free complaints, on my not writing to prevent his two nights' watching, in weather not extremely agreeable. But instead of complaints, he is "full of tender concern lest I may have been prevented by indisposition, or by the closer confinement which he has frequently cautioned me that I may expect."

He says, "He had been in different disguises loitering about our garden and park-wall, all the day on Sunday last ; and all Sunday night was wandering about the Coppice, and near the back-door. It rained ; and he has got a great cold, attended with feverishness, and so hoarse that he has almost lost his voice."

Why did he not flame out in his letter ?—treated as I am treated by my friends, it is dangerous to be laid under the sense of an obligation to an addresser's patience, and especially when such a one suffers in health for my sake.

I can't help saying, I am sorry he has suffered for my sake. But 'tis his own seeking.

His letter is dated last night at eight: "And indisposed as he is, he tells me, that he will watch till ten, in hopes of my giving him the meeting he so earnestly requests. And after that, he has a mile to walk to his horse and servant: and four miles then to ride to his inn."

He owns, "That he has an intelligencer in our family; who has failed him for a day or two past: and not knowing how I do, or how I may be treated, his anxiety is increased."

This circumstance gives me to guess who this intelligencer is: Joseph Leman: the very creature employed and confided in, more than any other, by my brother.

This is not an honourable way of proceeding in Mr. Lovelace.

"He says, he can give me such reasons for my permitting him to wait upon my father or uncles, as he hopes will be approved by me: for he cannot help observing, that it is no more suitable to my own spirit than to his, that he, a man of fortune and family, should be obliged to pursue such a clandestine address, as would only become a vile fortune-hunter. But, if I will give my consent for his visiting me like a man and a gentleman, no ill-treatment shall provoke him to forfeit his temper.

"He most earnestly repeats his importunities for the supplicated interview." He says, "He has business of consequence in London: but cannot stir from the inconvenient spot where he has for some time resided, in disguises unworthy of himself, until he can be absolutely certain, that I shall not be prevailed upon, either by force or otherwise; and until he finds me delivered from the insults of my brother.

"He renews his professions of reformation: he is convinced, he says, that he has already run a long and dangerous course; and that it is high time to think of

returning: it must be from proper convictions, he says, that a person who has lived too gay a life, resolves to reclaim, before age of sufferings come upon him."

I cannot but say, I am sorry the man is not well.


I am afraid to ask you, my dear, what you would have done, thus situated. But what I have done, I have done. In a word, I wrote, "That I would, if possible, give him a meeting to-morrow night, between the hours of nine and twelve, by the ivy summer house, or in it, or near the great cascade, at the bottom of the garden; and would unbolt the door, that he might come in by his own key. But that, if I found the meeting impracticable, or should change my mind, I would signify as much by another line; which he must wait for until it were dark."

*Tuesday, 11 o'clock.*

I am just returned from depositing my billet. How diligent is this man! It is plain he was in waiting: for I had walked but a few paces, after I had deposited it, when, my heart misgiving me, I returned, to have taken it back, in order to reconsider it as I walked, and whether I should, or should not, let it go. But I found it gone.

Betty confirms the intimation, that I must go to my uncle's on Thursday. She was sent on purpose to direct me to prepare myself for going, and to help me to get everything up in order for my removal.

TO JOHN HARLOWE, ESQ.

ONoured SIR,—Let me this once be heard with patience, and have my petition granted, It is only, that I may not be hurried away so soon as next Thursday.

Why should the poor girl be turned out of doors so suddenly, so disgracefully? Procure for me, sir, one fortnight's respite. In that space of time, I hope you will all relent. My mamma shall not need to shut her door in

apprehension of seeing her disgraced child. I will not presume to think of entering her presence, or my papa's, without leave. One fortnight's respite is but a small favour for them to grant, except I am to be refused everything I ask ; but it is of the highest import to my peace of mind. Procure it for me, therefore, dear sir ; and you will exceedingly oblige

Your dutiful though greatly afflicted niece,

CL. HARLOWE.

I sent this down : my uncle was not gone : and he now stays to know the result of the question put to me in the inclosed answer which he has given to mine.

Your going to your uncle's was absolutely concluded upon for next Thursday. Nevertheless, your mother, seconded by Mr. Solmes, pleaded so strongly to have you indulged that your request for a delay will be complied with, upon one condition.

This condition is, that you admit of a visit from Mr. Solmes, for one hour, in company of your brother, your sister, or your uncle Antony, choose which you will.

If you comply not, you go next Thursday to a house which is become strangely odious to you of late, whether you get ready to go or not. Answer therefore directly to the point. No evasion. Name your day and hour. Mr Solmes will neither eat you, nor drink you. Let us see, whether we are to be complied with in anything or not.

JOHN HARLOWE.

After a very little deliberation, I resolved to comply with this condition. All I fear is, that Mr. Lovelace's intelligencer may inform him of it ; and that his apprehensions upon it may make him take some desperate resolution : especially as now (having more time given me here) I think to write to him to suspend the interview he

is possibly so sure of. I sent down the following to my uncle :

HONOURED SIR,—Although I see not what end the proposed condition can answer, I comply with it. I wish I could with everything expected of me. If I must name one, in whose company I am to see the gentleman, and that one not my mamma, whose presence I could wish to be honoured by on the occasion, let my uncle, if he pleases, be the person. If I must name the day (a long day, I doubt, will not be permitted me) let it be next Tuesday. The hour, four in the afternoon. The place either the ivy summer house, or in the little parlour I used to be permitted to call mine.

Be pleased, sir, nevertheless, to prevail upon my mamma to vouchsafe me her presence on the occasion. I am, sir,

Your ever-dutiful

CL. HARLOWE.

A reply is just sent me. I thought it became my averseness to this meeting, to name a distant day : but I did not expect they would have complied with it. So here is one week gained !

This is the reply :

You have done well to comply. We are willing to think the best of every slight instance of duty from you. Yet have you seemed to consider the day as an evil day, and so put it far off. This nevertheless is granted you, as no time need to be lost, if you are as generous after the day, as we are condescending before it. Let me advise you, not to harden your mind ; nor take up your resolution beforehand. Mr. Solmes has more awe, and even terror, at the thoughts of seeing you than you can have at the thoughts of seeing him. His motive is love ; let not yours be hatred.

This compliance, I hope, will produce greater ; and then

the peace of the family will be restored : which is what is heartily wished by

Your loving uncle,  
JOHN HARLOWE.

Unless it be to the purpose our hearts are set upon, you need not write again.

This man has more terror at seeing me, than I can have at seeing him!—how can that be? If he had half as much, he would not wish to see me!—his motive love!—yes, indeed! Love of himself! He knows no other; for love, that deserves the name, seeks the satisfaction of the beloved object more than its own. Weighed in this scale, what a profanation is this man guilty of!

Repenting of my appointment with Mr. Lovelace before I had this favour granted me, you may believe I hesitated not a moment to revoke it now that I had gained such a respite. Accordingly, I wrote, “That I found it inconvenient to meet him, as I had intended: that the risk I should run of a discovery, and the mischiefs that might flow from it, could not be justified by any end that such a meeting could answer: that I found one certain servant more in my way, when I took my morning and evening airings, than any other: that the person who might reveal the secrets of a family to him, might, if opportunity were given him, betray me, or him, to those whom it was his duty to serve: that I had not been used to a conduct so faulty, as to lay myself at the mercy of servants: that things drawing towards a crisis between my friends and me, an interview could avail nothing; especially as the method by which this correspondence was carried on, was not suspected, and he could write all that was in his mind to write: that I expected to be at liberty to judge of what was proper and fit upon this occasion: especially as

he might be assured, that I would sooner choose death, than Mr. Solmes."

*Tuesday Night.*

I have deposited my letter to Mr. Lovelace. Threatening as things look against me, I am much better pleased with myself for declining the interview than I was before. I suppose he will be a little out of humour upon it, however: but as I reserved to myself the liberty of changing my mind; and as it is easy for him to imagine there may be reasons for it within-doors, which he cannot judge of without; besides those I have suggested, which of themselves are of sufficient weight to engage his acquiescence; I should think it strange, if he acquiesces not on this occasion, and that with a cheerfulness, which may show me, that his last letter is written from his heart.

Pray, my dear, be so kind, as to make inquiry by some safe hand, after the disguises Mr. Lovelace assumes at the inn he puts up at in the poor village of Neale, he calls it. If it be the same I take it to be, I never knew it was considerable enough to have a name; nor that it has an inn in it.

As he must, to be so constantly near us, be much there, I would be glad to have some account of his behaviour; and what the people think of him. In such a length of time, he must by his conduct either give scandal, or hope of reformation. Pray, my dear, humour me in this inquiry. I have reasons for it, which you shall be acquainted with another time, if the result of the inquiry discover them not.

I am just returned from my morning walk, and already have received a letter from Mr. Lovelace in answer to mine deposited last night. He must have had pen, ink, and paper with him; for it was written in the Coppice; with this circumstance: on one knee, kneeling with the other. Not from reverence to the written to, however, as you'll find!



This man has vexed me heartily. I see his gentleness was art: fierceness, and a temper like what I have been too much used to at home, are nature in him. Nothing, I think, shall ever make me forgive him; for surely, there can be no good reason for his impatience on an expectation given with reserve, and revocable. I so much to suffer through him; yet, to be treated as if I were obliged to bear insults from him!

But here you will be pleased to read his letter; which I shall inclose.

TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Good God! what is now to become of me!—How shall I support this disappointment!—No new cause!—On one knee, kneeling with the other, I write!—My feet benumbed with midnight wanderings through the heaviest dews, that ever fell: my wig and my linen dripping with the hoar-frost dissolving on them!—Day but just breaking—Sun not risen to exhale—May it never rise again! Unless it bring healing and comfort to a benighted soul! In proportion to the joy you had inspired (ever lovely promiser!) in such proportion is my anguish!

And are things drawing towards a crisis between your friends and you?—Is not this a reason for me to expect, the rather to expect, the promised interview?

Can I write all that is in my mind, say you?—Impossible!—Not the hundredth part of what is in my mind, and in my apprehension, can I write!

You would sooner choose death than Solmes (how my soul spurns the competition!) O my beloved creature, what are these but words?—Whose words?—Sweet and ever-adorable—What?—Promise-breaker—must I call you?—How shall I believe the asseveration (your supposed duty in the question! Persecution so flaming! Hatred to me so strongly avowed!) after this instance of your so lightly dispensing with your promise?

If, my dearest life! you would prevent my distraction, or, at least, distracted consequences, renew the promised hope!—My fate is indeed upon its crisis.

I dare not re-peruse what I have written.—I must deposit it.—It may serve to show you my distracted apprehension that this disappointment is but a prelude to the greatest of all.—Nor, having here any other paper, am I able to write again if I would on this gloomy spot (gloomy is my soul; and all nature round me partakes of my gloom!)—I trust it therefore to your goodness—if its fervour excite your displeasure rather than your pity, you wrong my passion; and I shall be ready to apprehend, that I am intended to be the sacrifice of more miscreants than one! (Have patience with me, dearest creature!—I mean Solmes and your brother only.) But if, exerting your usual generosity, you will excuse and re-appoint, may that God, whom you profess to serve, and who is the God of truth and of promises, protect and bless you, for both; and for restoring to himself, and to hope,

Your ever-adoring, yet almost desponding,

LOVELACE!

*Ivy-Cavern, in the Coppice—day but just breaking.*

This is the answer I shall return.

*Wednesday Morning.*

I am amazed, sir, at the freedom of your reproaches. Pressed and teased, against convenience and inclination, to give you a private meeting, am I to be thus challenged and upbraided, because I thought it prudent to change my mind?—A liberty I had reserved to myself, when I made the appointment, as you call it. Two motives you must be governed by in this excess. The one my easiness; the other your own presumption. Since you think you have found out the first, and have shown so much of the last upon it, I am too much alarmed, not to wish and

desire, that your letter of this day may conclude all the trouble you had from, or for,

Your humble servant,

CL. HARLOWE.

In this respite till Tuesday, I have a little time to look about me, as I may say, and to consider of what I have to do, and can do. And Mr. Lovelace's insolence will make me go very home with myself. Not that I think I can conquer my aversion to Mr. Solmes. I am sure I cannot. But, if I absolutely break with Mr. Lovelace, and give my friends convincing proofs of it, who knows but they will restore me to their favour, and let their views in relation to the other man go off by degrees? Or, at least, that I may be safe till my cousin Morden arrives: to whom, I think, I will write; and the rather, as Mr. Lovelace has assured me, that my friends have written to him to make good their side of the question. Adieu, my beloved friend.

CL. HARLOWE.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Thursday, March 30.*

**M**Y mother was sent for on Sunday night by her cousin Larkin, whom I mentioned in one of my former, and who was extremely earnest to see her.

She sent my mother word, that the doctors had given her over: but that she could not die till she saw her. I told my mother, that if she wished her a chance for recovery, she should not, for that reason, go. But go she would; and, what was worse, would make me go with her; and that, at an hour's warning; for she said nothing of it to me, till she was rising in the morning early, resolving to return at night. Had there been more time

for argumentation, to be sure I had not gone ; but as it was, there was a kind of necessity that my preparation to obey her, should, in a manner, accompany her command.

I have but one way of accounting for this sudden whim of my mother ; and that is this—she had a mind to accept of Mr. Hickman's offer to escort her :—and I verily believe had a mind to oblige him with my company—as far as I know, to keep me out of worse.

It was Monday afternoon before we reached the old lady's house. That fiddling, parading fellow (you know who I mean) made us wait for him two hours, and I to go a journey I disliked ! only for the sake of having a little more tawdry upon his housings ; which he had hurried his saddler to put on, to make him look fine, being to escort his dear Madame Howe, and her fair daughter. I told him, that I supposed he was afraid, that the double solemnity in the case (that of the visit to a dying woman, and that of his own countenance) would give him the appearance of an undertaker ; to avoid which, he ran into as bad an extreme, and I doubted would be taken for a mountebank.

The man was confounded. He took it as strongly, as if his conscience gave assent to the justice of the remark : otherwise he would have borne it better ; for he is used enough to this sort of treatment. I thought he would have cried. I have heretofore observed, that on this side of the contract, he seems to be a mighty meek sort of creature.—And though I should like it in him hereafter perhaps, yet I can't help despising him a little in my heart for it now. I believe, my dear, we all love your blustering fellows best ; could we but direct the bluster, and bid it roar when, and at whom we pleased.

The poor man looked at my mother. She was so angry (my airs upon it, and my opposition to the journey, having all helped) that for half the way she would not speak to me. And when she did, it was, "I wish I had not brought

you! You know not what it is to condescend. It is my fault, not Mr. Hickman's, that you are here so much against your will. Have you no eyes for this side of the chariot?"

And then he fared the better from her, as he always does, for faring worse from me: for there was, How do you now, sir? and how do you now, Mr. Hickman? as he ambled now on this side of the chariot, now on that, stealing a prim look at me; her head half out of the chariot, kindly smiling as if married to the man but a fortnight herself: while I always saw something to divert myself on the side of the chariot where the honest man was not, were it but old Robin at a distance, on his roan kessel.

Our courtship-days, they say, are our best days. Favour destroys courtship. Distance increases it. Its essence is distance. And to see how familiar these men wretches grow upon a smile, what an awe they are struck into when we frown; who would not make them stand off? Who would not enjoy a power, that is to be so short-lived?

At our alighting I gave him another dab; but it was but a little one. Yet the manner, and the air, made up (as I intended they should) for that defect. My mother's hand was kindly put into his, with a simpering altogether bridal; and with another How do you now, sir?—All his plump muscles were in motion, and a double charge of care and obsequiousness fidgeted up his whole form, when he offered to me his officious palm. My mother, when I was a girl, always bid me hold up my head. I just then remembered her commands, and was dutiful—I never held up my head so high. With an averted supercilious eye, and a rejecting hand, half-flourishing—I have no need of help, sir!—you are in my way.

He ran back, as if on wheels; with a face excessively mortified: I had thoughts else to have followed the too

gentle touch, with a declaration, that I had as many hands and feet as himself. But this would have been telling him a piece of news, as to the latter, that I hope he had not the presumption to guess at.

We found the poor woman, as we thought, at the last gasp.

I never saw the approaches of death in a grown person before ; and was extremely shocked. Death, to one in health, is a very terrible thing. We pity the person for what she suffers : and we pity ourselves for what we must some time hence in like sort suffer ; and so are doubly affected.

She held out till Tuesday morning, eleven. We were employed all that day in matters of the will ; so that it was Wednesday morning early, before we could set out on our return.

It is true, we got home (having no housings to stay for) by noon : but though I sent Robin away before he dismounted (who brought me back a whole packet, down to the same Wednesday noon) yet was I really so fatigued, and shocked, as I must own, at the hard death of the old lady ; my mother likewise (who has no reason to dislike this world) being indisposed from the same occasion ; that I could not set about writing time enough for Robin's return that night.

I will soon follow this with another. I will employ a person directly to find out how Lovelace behaves himself at his inn. Such a busy spirit must be traceable.

But, perhaps, my dear, you are indifferent now about him, or his employments ; for this request was made before he mortally offended you. Nevertheless, I will have inquiry made. The result, it is very probable, will be of use to confirm you in your present unforgiving temper. And yet, if the poor man [Shall I pity him for you, my dear ?] should be deprived of the greatest blessing any man on earth can receive, and to which he has the

presumption, with so little merit, to aspire ; he will have run great risks ; caught great colds ; hazarded fevers ; sustained the highest indignities ; braved the inclemencies of skies, and all for—nothing !—Will not this move your generosity (if nothing else) in his favour !—Poor Mr. Lovelace !

And now, my dear, how is it with you ? How do you now, as my mother says to Mr. Hickman, when her pert daughter has made him look sorrowful ?

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You have, in your letters to your uncle and the rest, done all that you ought to do. You are wholly guiltless of the consequence, be it what it will. To offer to give up your estate !—That would not I have done ! You see this offer staggered them : they took time to consider of it. They made my heart ache in the time they took. I was afraid they would have taken you at your word : and so, but for shame, and for fear of Lovelace, I dare say they would. You are too noble for them. This, I repeat, is an offer I would not have made. Let me beg of you, my dear, never to repeat the temptation to them.

I freely own to you, that their usage of you upon it, and Lovelace's different treatment of you in his letter received at the same time, would have made me his past redemption. The deuce take the man, I was going to say, for not having had so much regard to his character and morals, as would have entirely justified such a step in a *Clarissa* persecuted as she is !

I wonder not at Lovelace's saucy answer, saucy as it really is. If he loves you as he ought, he must be vexed at so great a disappointment.

The fruits of my inquiry after your abominable wretch's behaviour and baseness at the paltry alehouse, which he calls an inn, prepare to hear.

Wrens and sparrows are not too ignoble a quarry for this villanous goshawk !—His assiduities ; his watchings ;

his nightly risks; the inclement weather he journeys in; must not be all placed to your account. He has opportunities of making everything light to him of that sort. A sweet pretty girl, I am told—innocent till he went thither—Now! (Ah! goor girl!) who knows what?

But just turned of seventeen!—His friend and brother rake (a man of humour and intrigue) as I am told, to share the social bottle with. And sometimes another disguised rake or two. No sorrow comes near their hearts. Be not disturbed, my dear, at his hoarsenesses! His pretty Betsey, his Rosebud, as the vile wretch calls her, can hear all he says.

He is very fond of her. They say she is innocent even yet—her father, her grandmother, believe her to be so. He is to fortune her out to a young lover!—Ah! the poor young lover!—Ah! the poor simple girl!

He appears to the people, as a military man in disguise, secreting himself on account of a duel fought in town; the adversary's life in suspense. They believe he is a great man. His friend passes for an inferior officer; upon a foot of freedom with him. He, accompanied by a third man, who is a sort of subordinate companion to the second. The wretch himself with but one servant.

O my dear, how pleasantly can these devils, as I must call them, pass their time, while our gentle bosoms heave with pity for their supposed sufferings for us!

I have sent for this girl and her father; and am just now informed that I shall see them. I will sift them thoroughly. I shall soon find out such a simple thing as this, if he has not corrupted her already—and if he has, I shall soon find that out too.—If more art than nature appears either in her or her father, I shall give them both up—but depend upon it, the girl's undone.

He is said to be fond of her. He places her at the upper end of his table. He sets her a-prattling. He keeps his friend at a distance from her. She prates



away. He admires for nature all she says. Once was heard to call her charming little creature! A hundred he has called so no doubt. He puts her upon singing. He praises her wild note.—Oh, my dear, the girl's undone!—must be undone!—The man, you know, is Lovelace.

Let them bring Wyerley to you, if they will have you married—anybody but Solmes and Lovelace be yours!—

So advises

Your

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Friday, 3 o'clock.*



YOU incense, alarm, and terrify me, at the same time.—Hasten, my dearest friend, hasten to me, what further intelligence you can gather about this vilest of men.

I long to hear the result of your intelligence. You shall see the simple creature, you tell me.—Let me know what sort of a girl she is.—A sweet pretty girl! you say. A sweet pretty girl, my dear!—They are sweet pretty words from your pen. But are they yours or his of her? If she be so simple, if she have ease and nature in her manner, in her speech, and warbles prettily her wild notes, why, such a girl as that must engage such a profligate wretch (as now indeed I doubt this man is) accustomed perhaps, to town-women, and their confident ways—must deeply and for a long season engage him: since perhaps when her innocence is departed, she will endeavour by art to supply the loss of the natural charms which now engage him. But never talk of innocence—of simplicity and this unhappy girl together! Must she not know that such a man as that, dignified in his very aspect, and no disguise able to conceal his being of condition, must mean too much, when he places her at the upper end of his table and calls her by such tender names?

Fine hopes of such a wretch's reformation! I would

not, my dear, for the world have anything to say—but I need not make resolutions. I have not opened, nor will I open, his letter. A sycophant creature! With his hoarse-nesses—got perhaps by a midnight revel, singing to his wild-note singer, and only increased in the Coppice!

To be already on a foot!—In his esteem, I mean: for myself, I despise him. I hate myself almost for writing so much about him, and of such a simpleton as this sweet pretty girl as you call her: but no one can be either sweet or pretty, that is not modest, that is not virtuous.

And now, my dear, I will tell you how I came to put you upon this inquiry.

This vile Joseph Leman had given a hint to Betty, and she to me, as if Lovelace would be found out to be a very bad man, at a place where he had been lately seen in disguise. But he would see further, he said, before he told her more; and she promised secrecy in hope to get at further intelligence. I thought it could be no harm, to get you to inform yourself, and me, of what could be gathered. And now I see, his enemies are but too well warranted in their reports of him: and, if the ruin of this poor young creature be his aim, and if he had not known her but for his visits to Harlowe Place, I shall have reason to be doubly concerned for her; and doubly incensed against so vile a man.

I think I hate him worse than I do Solmes himself.

But I will not add one other word about him; after I have told you, that I wish to know, as soon as possible, what further occurs from your inquiry. I have a letter from him; but shall not open it till I do: and then, if it come out, as I daresay it will, I will directly put the letter unopened into the place I took it from, and never trouble myself more about him. Adieu, my dearest friend.

CL. HARLOWE.

## MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Friday Noon, March 31.*

**J**USTICE obliges me to forward this after my last on the wings of the wind, as I may say. I really believe the man is innocent. Of this one accusation, I think he must be acquitted; and I am sorry I was so forward in despatching away my intelligence by halves.

I have seen the girl. She is really a very pretty, a very neat, and, what is still a greater beauty, a very innocent young creature. He who could have ruined such an undesigning home-bred, must have been indeed infernally wicked. Her father is an honest simple man; entirely satisfied with his child, and with her new acquaintance.

I am almost afraid for your heart, when I tell you, that I find, now I have got to the bottom of this inquiry, something noble come out in this Lovelace's favour.

The girl is to be married next week; and this promoted and brought about by him. He is resolved, her father says, to make one couple happy, and wishes he could make more so (there's for you, my dear!). And having taken a liking also to the young fellow whom she professes to love, he has given her an hundred pounds: the grandmother actually has it in her hands, to answer to the like sum given to the youth by one of his own relations: while Mr. Lovelace's companion, attracted by the example, has given twenty-five guineas to the father, who is poor, towards clothes to equip the pretty rustic.

Mr. Lovelace and his friend, the poor man says, when they first came to his house, affected to appear as persons of low degree; but now he knows the one (but mentioned it in confidence) to be Colonel Barrow, the other Captain Sloane. The colonel he owns was at first very sweet

upon his girl: but upon her grandmother's begging of him to spare her innocence, he vowed, that he never would offer anything but good counsel to her. He kept his word; and the pretty fool acknowledged, that she never could have been better instructed by the minister himself from the Bible-book!—the girl pleased me so well, that I made her visit to me worth her while.

Upon the whole, Mr. Lovelace comes out with so much advantage from this inquiry, that were there the least room for it, I should suspect the whole to be a plot set on foot to wash a blackamoor white. Adieu, my dear.

ANNA HOWE.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Saturday, April 1.*

**H**ASTY censurers do indeed subject themselves to the charge of variableness and inconsistency in judgment: and so they ought; for, if you, even you, my dear, were so loth to own a mistake, as in the instance before us you pretend you were, I believe I should not have loved you so well as I really do love you.

I must needs own, that as I should for ever have despised this man, had he been capable of such a vile intrigue in his way to Harlowe Place, and as I believed he was capable of it, it has indeed (I own it has) proportionably engaged my generosity, as you call it, in his favour: perhaps more than I may have reason to wish it had. And, rally me as you will, pray tell me fairly, my dear, would it not have had such an effect upon you?

Then the real generosity of the act. I protest, my beloved friend, if he would be good for the rest of his life from this time, I would forgive him a great many of his past errors, were it only for the demonstration he has given in this, that he is capable of so good and bountiful a manner of thinking.

You may believe I made no scruple to open his letter, after the receipt of your second on this subject: nor shall I of answering it, as I have no reason to find fault with it. An article in his favour, procured him, however, so much the easier (I must own) by way of amends for the undue displeasure I took against him; though he knows it not.

You will see how passionately he presses me to oblige "him with a few lines, before the interview between Mr. Solmes and me take place (if, as he says, it must take place) to confirm his hope, that I have no view, in my present displeasure against him, to give encouragement to Solmes. An apprehension, he says, that he must be excused for repeating; especially as the interview is a favour granted to that man, which I have refused to him; since, as he infers, were it not with such an expectation, why should my friends press it?"

I have written; and to this effect: "That I have submitted to this interview with Mr. Solmes, purely as an act of duty, to show my friends, that I will comply with their commands as far as I can; and that I hope, when Mr. Solmes himself shall see how determined I am, he will cease to prosecute a suit, in which it is impossible he should succeed with my consent.

"I tell him, that if I am obliged to go to my Uncle Antony's, it is not to be inferred, that I must therefore necessarily be Mr. Solmes' wife: since I may not be so sure perhaps that the same exceptions lie so strongly against my quitting a house to which I shall be forcibly carried, as if I left my father's house: and, at the worst, I may be able to keep them in suspense till my cousin Morden comes, who will have a right to put me in possession of my grandfather's estate, if I insist upon it."

This, I doubt, is somewhat of an artifice; which can only be excusable, as it is principally designed to keep him out of mischief. For I have but little hope, if carried thither, whether sensible or senseless, if I am left to the

mercy of my brother and sister, but they will endeavour to force the solemn obligation upon me.

I see not any of my family, nor hear from them in any way of kindness. This looks as if they themselves expected no great matters from that Tuesday's conference which makes my heart flutter every time I think of it.

My uncle Antony's presence on the occasion I do not much like : but I had rather meet him than my brother or sister : yet my uncle is very impetuous. I can't think Mr. Lovelace can be much more so ; at least he cannot look anger, as my uncle, with his harder features, can. These sea-prospered gentlemen, as my uncle has often made me think, not used to any but elemental control, and even ready to buffet that, bluster often as violently as the winds they are accustomed to be angry at.

I believe Mr. Solmes will look as much like a fool as I shall do, if it be true, as my uncle Harlowe writes, and as Betty often tells me, that he is as much afraid of seeing me, as I am of seeing him.

*Tuesday Morning, 6 o'clock.*

The day is come !—I wish it were happily over. I have had a wretched night. Hardly a wink have I slept, ruminating upon the approaching interview. The very distance of time to which they consented, has added solemnity to the meeting, which otherwise it would not have had.

A thoughtful mind is not a blessing to be coveted, unless it had such a happy vivacity with it as yours : a vivacity which enables a person to enjoy the present, without being over anxious about the future.

*Tuesday Evening ; and continued through the Night.*

Well, my dear, I am alive, and here ! But how long I shall be either here, or alive, I cannot say. I have a vast deal to write ; and perhaps shall have little time for it. Nevertheless, I must tell you how the saucy Betty again discomposed me, when she came up with this Solmes's

message ; although, as you will remember from my last, I was in a way before that wanted no additional surprises.

Miss ! miss ! miss ! cried she, as fast as she could speak, with her arms spread abroad, and all her fingers distended, and held up, will you be pleased to walk down into your own parlour ?—There is everybody, I will assure you, in full congregation !—And there is Mr. Solmes, as fine as a lord, with a charming white peruke, fine laced shirt and ruffles, coat trimmed with silver, and a waistcoat standing an end with lace !—Quite handsome, believe me !—You never saw such an alteration !—Ah ! miss, shaking her head, 'tis pity you have said so much against him !—But you know how to come off, for all that !—I hope it will not be too late !—

Impertinence ! said I—Wert thou bid to come up in this fluttering way ?—And I took up my fan, and fanned myself.

Bless me ! said she, how soon these fine young ladies will be put into flusterations !—I meant not either to offend or frighten you, I am sure.

Everybody there, do you say ?—Who do you call everybody ?—

Why, miss, holding out her left palm opened, and with a flourish, and a saucy leer, patting it with the fore-finger of the other, at every mentioned person, there is your papa !—there is your mamma !—there is your uncle Harlowe !—there is your uncle Antony !—your aunt Hervey !—my young lady !—and my young master !—and Mr. Solmes, with the air of a great courtier, standing up, because he named you : Mrs. Betty, said he (then the ape of a wench bowed and scraped, as awkwardly as I suppose the person did whom she endeavoured to imitate), pray give my humble service to miss, and tell her, I wait her commands.

Say, I can't go !—But yet when 'tis over, 'tis over !—Say, I'll wait upon—I'll attend—I'll come presently—say anything ; I care not what—But give me my fan, and fetch me a glass of water—

She went, and I fanned myself all the time ; for I was in a flame ; and hemmed, and struggled with myself all I could ; and, when she returned, drank my water ; and finding no hope presently of a quieter heart, I sent her down, and followed her with precipitation ; trembling so, that, had I not hurried, I question if I could have gone down at all.—O my dear, what a poor, passive machine is the body when the mind is disordered !

There are two doors to my parlour, as I used to call it. As I entered at one, my friends hurried out at the other. I saw just the gown of my sister, the last who slid away. My uncle Antony went out with them ; but he stayed not long, as you shall hear : and they all remained in the next parlour, a wainscot partition only parting the two. I remember them both in one : but they were separated in favour of us girls, for each to receive her visitors in at her pleasure.

Mr. Solmes approached me as soon as I entered, cringing to the ground, a visible confusion in every feature of his face.

He hemmed five or six times, as I had done above ; and these produced a sentence—That I could not but see his confusion. This sentence produced two or three more. I believe my aunt had been his tutoress ; for it was his awe, his reverence for so superlative a lady (I assure you !). And he hoped—he hoped—three times he hoped, before he told me what—at last it came out, that I was too generous (generosity, he said, was my character) to despise him for such—for such—for such—true tokens of his love.

I do indeed see you under some confusion, sir ; and this gives me hope, that although I have been compelled, as I may call it, to give way to this interview, it may be attended with happier effects than I had apprehended from it.

He had hemmed himself into more courage.



You could not, madam, imagine any creature so blind to your merits, and so little attracted by them, as easily to forego the interest and approbation he was honoured with by your worthy family, while he had any hope given him, that one day he might, by his perseverance and zeal, expect your favour.

I am but too much aware, sir, that it is upon the interest and approbation you mention, that you build such hope. It is impossible, otherwise, that a man, who has any regard for his own happiness, would persevere against such declarations as I have made, and think myself obliged to make, in justice to you, as well as to myself.

It is hoped, madam, that your consent may in time be obtained—that is the hope; and I shall be a miserable man if it cannot.

Better, sir, give me leave to say, you were miserable by yourself, than that you should make two so.

I don't see, madam, how you would be happy, if I were to discontinue my address: for—

That is nothing to you, sir, interrupted I: do you but withdraw your pretensions: and if it be thought fit to start up another man for my punishment, the blame will not lie at your door. You will be entitled to my thanks; and most heartily will I thank you.

He paused, and seemed a little at a loss: and I was going to give him still stronger and more personal instances of my plain-dealing; when in came my Uncle Antony.

So, niece, so!—sitting in state like a queen, giving audience! haughty audience!—Mr. Solmes, why stand you thus humbly? Why this distance, man? I hope to see you upon a more intimate footing before we part.

I arose, as soon as he entered—and approached him with a bent knee: Let me, sir, reverence my uncle, whom I have not for so long time seen!—let me, sir, bespeak your favour and compassion.

You will have the favour of everybody, niece, when you know how to deserve it.

If ever I deserved it, I deserve it now.—I have been hardly used—I have made proposals that ought to be accepted, and such as would not have been asked of me. What have I done, that I must be banished and confined thus disgracefully? That I must not be allowed to have any free-will in an article that concerns my present and future happiness?—

Miss Clary, replied my uncle, you have had your will in everything till now; and this makes your parents' wills sit so heavy upon you.

My will, sir! Be pleased to allow me to ask, what was my will till now, but my father's will, and yours and my uncle Harlowe's will?—Has it not been my pride to obey and oblige?—I never asked a favour, that I did not first sit down and consider, if it were fit to be granted.

I will engage never to marry any man, without my father's consent, and yours, sir, and everybody's. Did I ever give you cause to doubt my word?—And here I will take the solemnest oath that can be offered me—

That is the matrimonial one, interrupted he, with a big voice—and to this gentleman. It shall, it shall, cousin Clary!—And the more you oppose it, the worse it shall be for you.

This, and before the man, who seemed to assume courage upon it, highly provoked me.

Then, sir, you shall sooner follow me to the grave indeed—I will undergo the cruellest death—I will even consent to enter into the awful vault of my ancestors, and to have that bricked up upon me, rather than consent to be miserable for life. And, Mr. Solmes, turning to him, take notice of what I say: this or any death, I will sooner undergo (that will be quickly over) than be yours and for ever unhappy.

How could I avoid making these strong declarations, the man in presence ?

I was going out at the door I came in at ; the gentlemen looking upon one another, as if referring to each other what to do, or whether to engage my stay, or suffer me to go ; and whom should I meet at the door but my brother, who had heard all that had passed !

He bolted upon me so unexpectedly, that I was surprised. He took my hand, and grasped it with violence : Return, my pretty miss, said he ; return, if you please. You shall not yet be bricked up.—Your instigating brother shall save you from that !—O thou fallen angel, said he, peering up to my down-cast face—such a sweetness here !—and such an obstinacy there ! tapping my neck—O thou true woman—though so young.

He had led me up to meet Mr. Solmes, whose hand he took, as he held mine. Here, sir, said he, take the rebel daughter's hand : I give it you now : she shall confirm the gift in a week's time ; or will have neither father, mother, nor uncles, to boast of.

I snatched my hand away.

How now, miss !—

And how now, sir !—What right have you to dispose of my hand ?—If you govern everybody else, you shall not govern me ; especially in a point so immediately relative to myself, and in which you neither have, nor ever shall have, anything to do.

I would have broken from him ; but he held my hand too fast.

Let me go, sir !—Why am I thus treated ?—You design, I doubt not, with your unmanly gripings, to hurt me, as you do : but again I ask, wherefore is it that I am to be thus treated by you ?

He tossed my hand from him with a whirl, that pained my very shoulder. I wept, and held my other hand to the part.

Mr. Solmes blamed him. So did my uncle.

He had no patience, he said, with such a perverse one ; and to think of my reflections upon himself, before he entered. He had only given me back the hand I had not deserved he should touch. It was one of my arts to pretend to be pained.

Mr. Solmes said, he would sooner give up all his hopes of me, than that I should be used unkindly : and he offered to plead in my behalf to them both ; and applied himself with a bow, as if for my approbation of his interposition.

Mr. Solmes, said I, if you have any regard for your own happiness (mine is out of the question with you : you have not generosity enough to make that any part of your scheme), prosecute no further your address, as my brother calls it. It is but just to tell you, that I could not bring my heart so much as to think of you, without the utmost disapprobation, before I was used as I have been:—and can you think I am such a slave, such a poor slave, as to be brought to change my mind by the violent usage I have met with ?

And you, sir, turning to my brother, if you think that meekness always indicates tameness ; and that there is no magnanimity without bluster ; own yourself mistaken for once : for you shall have reason to judge from henceforth, that a generous mind is not to be forced ; and that—

No more, said the imperious wretch, I charge you, lifting up his hands and eyes. Then turning to my uncle, Do you hear, sir ? This is your once faultless niece ! This is your favourite !

Mr. Solmes looked as if he knew not what to think of the matter ; and had I been left alone with him, I saw plainly I could have got rid of him easily enough.

My uncle came to me, looking up also to my face, and down to my feet : And is it possible this can be you ? All this violence from you, Miss Clary ?

Excuse me, sir, to my uncle—to you, as to my father's brother, I owe duty. I beg your pardon that I cannot obey you: but as for my brother; he is but my brother; he shall not constrain me: and (turning to the unnatural wretch—I will call him wretch) knit your brows, sir, and frown as you will, I will ask you, Would you, in my case make the sacrifices I am willing to make, to obtain everyone's favour? If not, what right have you to treat me thus; and to procure me to be treated as I have been for so long a time past?

I had put myself by this time into great disorder: they were silent, and seemed by their looks to want to talk to one another, walking about (in violent disorders too) between whiles. I sat down fanning myself (as it happened, against the glass) and I could perceive my colour go and come; and being sick to the very heart, and apprehensive of fainting, I rung.

Betty came in. I called for a glass of water, and drank it: but nobody minded me. I heard my brother pronounce the words, *Art! female art!* to Solmes; which, together with the apprehension that he would not be welcome, I suppose kept him back. Else I could see the man was affected. And (still fearing I should faint) I arose, and taking hold of Betty's arm, *Let me hold by you, Betty,* said I: *let me withdraw.* I moved with trembling feet towards the door, and then turned about, and made a courtesy to my uncle—*Permit me, sir,* said I, *to withdraw.*

*Whither go you, niece?* said my uncle: *We have not done with you yet. I charge you depart not. Mr. Solmes has something to open to you, that will astonish you—and you shall hear it.*

*Only, sir, by your leave, for a few minutes into the air. I will return, if you command it. I will hear all that I am to hear; that it may be over now and for ever—You will go with me, Betty?*

And so, without any further prohibition, I retired into

the garden ; and there, casting myself upon the first seat, and throwing Betty's apron over my face, leaning against her side, my hands between hers, I gave way to a violent burst of grief, or passion, or both ; which, as it seemed, saved my heart from breaking ; for I was sensible of an immediate relief.

It was near an hour before I was sent for in again. The messenger was my cousin Dolly Hervey, who, with an eye of compassion and respect (for Miss Hervey always loved me, and calls herself my scholar, as you know) told me, my company was desired.

Miss accompanied me into the parlour, and left me, as a person devoted, I then thought.

Nobody was there. I sat down, and had leisure to weep ; reflecting upon what my cousin Dolly had told me

They were all in my sister's parlour adjoining : for I heard a confused mixture of voices, some louder than others, which drowned the more compassionating accents.

I believe I was above a quarter of an hour enjoying my own comfortless contemplations, before anybody came in to me ; for they seemed to be in full debate. My aunt looked in first ; O my dear, said she, are you there ? and withdrew hastily to apprise them of it.

And then (as agreed upon I suppose) in came my uncle Antony, crediting Mr. Solmes with the words, Let me lead you in, my dear friend, having hold of his hand ; while the new-made beau awkwardly followed, but more edgingly, as I may say, setting his feet mincingly, to avoid treading upon his leader's heels. Excuse me, my dear, this seeming levity ; but those we do not love, appear in everything ungraceful to us.

I stood up. My uncle looked very surly.—Sit down ! sit down, girl, said he—And drawing a chair near me, he placed his dear friend in it, whether he would or not, I having taken my seat. And my uncle sat on the other side of me.

He then was pleased to hint what great things he had designed to do for me ; and that it was more for my sake, after he returned from the Indies, than for the sake of any other of the family, that he had resolved to lead a single life.—But now, concluded he, that the perverse girl despises all the great things it was once as much in my will, as it is in my power, to do for her, I will change my measures.

I told him, that I most sincerely thanked him for all his kind intentions to me : but that I was willing to resign all claim to any other of his favours than kind looks, and kind words.

He looked about him this way and that.

Mr. Solmes looked pitifully down.

But both being silent, I was sorry, I added, that I had too much reason to say a very harsh thing, as it might be thought ; which was, that if he would but be pleased to convince my brother and sister, that he was absolutely determined to alter his generous purposes towards me, it might possibly procure me better treatment from both, than I was otherwise likely to have.

My uncle was very much displeased. But he had not the opportunity to express his displeasure, as he seemed preparing to do ; for in came my brother in exceeding great wrath ; and called me several vile names. His success hitherto, in his devices against me, had set him above keeping even decent measures.

Was this my spiteful construction ? he asked—Was this the interpretation I put upon his brotherly care of me, and concern for me, in order to prevent my ruining myself ?

And, as to your care and concern for me, sir, turning to my brother ; once more I desire it not. You are but my brother. My father and mother, I bless God, are both living ; and, were they not, you have given me abundant reason to say, that you are the very last person I would wish to have any concern for me.

How, niece ! And is a brother, an only brother, of so

little consideration with you, as this comes to? And ought he to have no concern for his sister's honour, and the family's honour?

My honour, sir!—I desire none of his concern for that! It never was endangered till it had his undesired concern!—Forgive me, sir—But when my brother knows how to act like a brother, or behave like a gentleman, he may deserve more consideration from me than it is possible for me now to think he does.

I thought my brother would have beat me upon this: but my uncle stood between us.

Violent girl, however, he called me— Who, said he, would have thought it of her?

Then was Mr. Solmes told, that I was unworthy of his pursuit.

Then was I a rude, an ungrateful, an unworthy creature.

I own it all,—all, all you can call me, or think me, brother, do I own. I own my unworthiness with regard to this gentleman. But yet I cannot thank him for his mediation: for who sees not, looking at my uncle, that this is giving himself a merit with everybody at my expense?

Then turning to my brother, who seemed surprised into silence by my warmth, I must also acknowledge, sir, the favour of your superabundant care for me. But I discharge you of it; at least, while I have the happiness of nearer and dearer relations. You have given me no reason to think better of your prudence, than of my own. I am independent of you, sir; though I never desire to be so of my father: and although I wish for the good opinion of my uncles, it is all I wish for from them: and this, sir, I repeat, to make you and my sister easy.

Instantly almost came in Betty, in a great hurry, looking at me as spitefully, as if she were my sister: Sir, said she to my brother, my master desires to speak with you this moment at the door.



He went to that which led into my sister's parlour; and this sentence I heard thundered from the mouth of one who had a right to all my reverence: Son James, let this rebel be this moment carried away to my brother's—the very moment—she shall not stay one hour more under my roof!

I trembled; I was ready to sink. Yet, not knowing what I did, or said, I flew to the door, and would have opened it: but my brother pulled it to, and held it close by the key—O my papa!—my dear papa! said I, falling upon my knees, at the door—admit your child to your presence!—Let me but plead my cause at your feet!—O reprobate not thus your distressed daughter!

My uncle put his handkerchief to his eyes: Mr. Solmes made a still more grievous face than he had before. But my brother's marble heart was untouched.

I will not stir from my knees, continued I, without admission.—At this door I beg it!—O let it be the door of mercy! and open it to me, honoured sir, I beseech you!—But this once, this once! although you were afterwards to shut it against me for ever!

The door was endeavoured to be opened on the inside, which made my brother let go the key on a sudden; and I pressing against it (all the time remaining on my knees) fell flat on my face into the other parlour; however without hurting myself. But everybody was gone, except Betty, who I suppose was the person that endeavoured to open the door. She helped to raise me up; and when I was on my feet, I looked round that apartment, and seeing nobody there, re-entered the other, leaning upon her; and then threw myself into the chair which I had sat in before; and my eyes overflowed, to my great relief: while my uncle Antony, my brother, and Mr. Solmes, left me, and went to my other relations.

What passed among them, I know not: but my brother came in by the time I had tolerably recovered myself,

with a settled and haughty gloom upon his brow—"your father and mother command you instantly to prepare for your uncle Antony's. You need not be solicitous about what you shall take with you. You may give Betty your keys—take them, Betty, if the perverse one has them about her, and carry them to her mother. She will take care to send everything after you that you shall want—But another night you will not be permitted to stay in this house."

"I don't choose to give my keys to anybody, except to my mother, and into her own hands. You see how much I am disordered. It may cost me my life, to be hurried away so suddenly. I beg to be indulged till next Monday at least."

"That will not be granted you. So prepare for this very night. And give up your keys. Give them to me, miss. I'll carry them to your mother."

In came Miss Dolly Hervey: I am sorry, madam, to be the messenger—but your mamma insists upon your sending up all the keys of your cabinet, library, and drawers.

Tell my mother, that I yield them up to her commands: tell her, I make no conditions with my mother: but if she find nothing she shall disapprove of, I beg that she will permit me to tarry here a few days longer.—Try, my Dolly (the dear girl sobbing with grief); try, if your gentleness cannot prevail for me.

She wept still more, and said, it is sad, very sad, to see matters thus carried!

Shall I give you the particulars of a ridiculously spiteful conversation that passed between my brother and me, in the time that he (with Betty) was in office to keep me in the parlour while my closet was searching?—but I think I will not. It can answer no good end.

I desired several times, while he stayed, to have leave

to retire to my apartment ; but was denied. The search, I suppose, was not over.

Bella was one of those employed in it. They could not have a more diligent searcher. How happy it was they were disappointed !

But when my sister could not find the cunning creature's papers, I was to stand another visit from Mr. Solmes—preceded now by my aunt Hervey, sorely against her will, I could see that ; accompanied by my uncle Antony, in order to keep her steady, I suppose.

But being a little heavy (for it is now past two in the morning) I will lie down in my clothes, to indulge the kind summons, if it will be indulged.

*Three o'clock, Wednesday Morning.*

I could not sleep—only dozed away one half-hour.

My aunt Hervey accosted me thus—O my dear child, what troubles do you give to your parents, and to everybody !—I wonder at you !

I am sorry for it, madam.

Sorry for it, child !—Why then so very obstinate ?—Come, sit down, my dear. I will sit next you ; taking my hand.

My uncle placed Mr. Solmes on the other side of me : himself over-against me, almost close to me. Was I not finely beset, my dear ?

Your brother, child, said my aunt, is too passionate—his zeal for your welfare pushes him on a little too vehemently.

Very true, said my uncle : but no more of this. We would now be glad to see if milder means will do with you—though, indeed, they were tried before.

I asked my aunt, if it were necessary that that gentleman should be present ?

There is a reason that he should, said my aunt, as you will hear by-and-by. But I must tell you, first, that,

thinking you were a little too angrily treated by your brother, your mother desired me to try what gentler means would do upon a spirit so generous as we used to think yours.

Nothing can be done, madam, I must presume to say, if this gentleman's address be the end.

She looked upon my uncle, who bit his lip; and looked upon Mr. Solmes, who rubbed his cheek; and shaking her head, good, dear creature, said she, be calm. Let me ask you, if something would have been done, had you been more gently used, than you seem to think you have been?

No, madam, I cannot say it would, in this gentleman's favour. You know, madam, you know, sir, to my uncle, I ever valued myself upon my sincerity: and once indeed had the happiness to be valued for it.

Your mother and Mr. Solmes, said my aunt, have prevailed, that your request to stay here till Monday next shall be granted, if you will promise to go cheerfully then.

Let me but choose my own visitors, and I will go to my uncle's house with pleasure.

Well, niece, said my aunt, we must waive this subject, I find. We will now proceed to another, which will require your utmost attention. It will give you the reason why Mr. Solmes's presence is requisite—

Ay, said my uncle, and show you what sort of a man somebody is. Mr. Solmes, pray favour us, in the first place, with the letter you received from your anonymous friend.

He began to read; and there seemed to be a heavy load of charges in this letter against the poor criminal: but I stopped the reading of it, and said, it will not be my fault, if this vilified man be not as indifferent to me, as one whom I never saw. If he be otherwise at present, which I neither own nor deny, it proceeds from the strange

methods taken to prevent it. Do not let one cause unite him and me, and we shall not be united. If my offer to live single be accepted, he shall be no more to me than this gentleman.

Still—proceed, Mr. Solmes—hear it out, niece, was my uncle's cry.

Permit me to observe further, that Mr. Solmes himself may not be absolutely faultless. I never heard of his virtues. Some vices I have heard of—excuse me, Mr. Solmes, I speak to your face—the text about casting the first stone affords an excellent lesson.

He looked down ; but was silent.

Mr. Lovelace may have vices you have not. You may have others, which he has not.—I speak not this to defend him, or to accuse you. No man is bad, no one is good, in everything. Mr. Lovelace, for example, is said to be implacable, and to hate my friends : that does not make me value him the more : but give me leave to say, that they hate him as much. Mr. Solmes has his antipathies, likewise ; very strong ones, and those to his own relations ; which I don't find to be the other's fault ; for he lives well with his—yet he may have as bad :—worse, pardon me, he cannot have, in my poor opinion : for what must be the man, who hates his own flesh ?

They all three gazed upon one another in silence.

My aunt, I saw (at least I thought so) looked as if she would have been glad she might have appeared to approve of what I said. She but feebly blamed me when she spoke, for not hearing what Mr. Solmes had to say. He himself seemed not now very earnest to be heard. My uncle said, there was no talking to me. And I should have absolutely silenced both gentlemen, had not my brother come in again to their assistance.

This was the strange speech he made at his entrance, his eyes flaming with anger ; This prating girl has struck you all dumb, I perceive. Persevere, however, Mr. Solmes.

I have heard every word she has said : and I know no other method of being even with her, than, after she is yours, to make her as sensible of your power, as she now makes you of her insolence.

Fie, Cousin Harlowe ! said my aunt—could I have thought a brother would have said this to a gentleman, of a sister ?

Not more unbrotherly than all the rest of his conduct to me, of late, madam, said I. I see, by this specimen of his violence, how everybody has been brought into his measures. Had I any the least apprehension of ever being in Mr. Solmes's power, this might have affected me. But you see, sir, to Mr. Solmes, what a conduct is thought necessary to enable you to arrive at your ungenerous end. You see how my brother courts for you !

I disclaim Mr. Harlowe's violence, madam, with all my soul. I will never remind you—

Silence, worthy sir ! said I ; I will take care you never shall have the opportunity.

Less violence, Clary, said my uncle. Cousin James, you are as much to blame as your sister.

In then came my sister. Brother, said she, you kept not your promise. You are thought to be to blame within, as well as here. Were not Mr. Solmes's generosity and affection to the girl well known, what you have said would be inexcusable. My father desires to speak with you ; and with you, aunt ; and with you, uncle ; and with you, Mr. Solmes, if you please.

They all four withdrew into the next apartment.

I stood silent, as not knowing presently how to take this intervention of my sister's. But she left me not long at a loss—O thou perverse thing, said she (poking out her angry face at me, when they were all gone, but speaking spitefully low)—what troubles do you give to us all !

You and my brother, Bella, said I, give trouble to your-

selves ; yet neither you nor he have any business to concern yourselves about me.

She threw out some spiteful expressions, still in a low voice, as if she chose not to be heard without ; and I thought it best to oblige her to raise her tone a little, if I could. If I could, did I say ? It is easy to make a passionate spirit answer all one's views upon it.

She accordingly flamed out in a raised tone : And this brought my cousin Dolly in to us. Miss Harlowe, your company is desired.

Go in before me, child, said Bella (vexed to see her concern for me) with thy sharp face like a new moon : what dost thou cry for ? Is it to make thy keen face look still keener ?

I believe Bella was blamed, too, when she went in ; for I heard her say, the creature was so provoking, there was no keeping a resolution.

Mr. Solmes, after a little while, came in again by himself, to take leave of me : full of scrapes and compliments ; but too well tutored and encouraged, to give me hope of his declining his suit. He begged me not to impute to him any of the severe things to which he had been a sorrowful witness. He besought my compassion, as he called it.

I assured him, that, were I to be carried to my uncle's, it should answer no end ; for I would never see him ; nor receive a line from him ; nor hear a word in his favour, whoever were the person who should mention him to me.

Dearest madam, what can I say ?—On my knees I beg—

And down the ungrateful wretch dropped on his knees.

Let me not kneel in vain, madam : let me not be thus despised.—And he looked most odiously sorrowful.

At that instant, again came in my brother—Leave her, leave her, Mr. Solmes : her time is short. You'll find her humble and mortified enough very quickly—then, how like a little tame fool will she look, with her conscience

upbraiding her, and begging of you (with a whining voice, the barbarous brother spoke) to forgive and forget!—

More he said, as he flew out, with a glowing face, upon Shorey's coming in to recall him on his violence.

I removed from chair to chair, excessively frightened and disturbed at this brutal treatment.

The man attempted to excuse himself, as being sorry for my brother's passion.

Leave me, leave me, sir, fanning—or I shall faint. And indeed I thought I should.

He recommended himself to my favour with an air of assurance; augmented, as I thought, by a distress so visible in me; for he even snatched my trembling, my struggling hand; and ravished it to his odious mouth.

I flung from him with high disdain: and he withdrew, bowing and cringing; self-gratified, and enjoying, as I thought, the confusion he saw me in.

The wretch is now, methinks, before me; and now I see him awkwardly striding backward, as he retired, till the edge of the opened door, which he ran against, remembered him to turn his welcome back upon me.

Upon his withdrawing, Betty brought me word, that I was permitted to go up to my own chamber: and was bid to consider of everything: for my time was short. Nevertheless, she believed I might be permitted to stay till Saturday.

She made this further speech to me on quitting my chamber—You have had amazing good luck, miss, I must tell you, to keep your writings concealed so cunningly. Yet one hint I must conclude with; that your pen and ink (soon as you are to go away) will not be long in your power, I do assure you, miss. And then, having lost that amusement, it will be seen, how a mind so active as yours will be able to employ itself.

This hint alarms me so much, that I shall instantly begin to conceal, in different places, pens, ink, and paper;



and to deposit some in the ivy summer-house, if I can find a safe place there; and, at the worst, I have got a pencil of black, and another of red lead, which I use in my drawings; and my patterns shall serve for paper, if I have no other.

How lucky it was, that I had got away my papers! They made a strict search for them; that I can see, by the disorderly manner they have left all things in.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Thursday Night.*

**M**R. LOVELACE has contrived that our family should have private intimation of his insolent resolution (insolent I must call it) to prevent my being carried to my uncle's.

The rash man has indeed so far gained his point, as to intimidate them from attempting to carry me away: but he has put them upon a surer and a more desperate measure: and this has driven me also into one as desperate; the consequence of which, although he could not foresee it, may perhaps too well answer his great end, little as he deserves to have it answered.

In short, I have done, as far as I know, the most rash thing that I ever did in my life.

But let me give you the motive, and the action will follow of course.

About six o'clock this evening, my aunt (who stays here all night; on my account, no doubt) came up, and tapped at my door; for I was writing; and had locked myself in. I opened it; and she entering, thus delivered herself:

I come once more to visit you, my dear; but solely against my will; because it is to impart to you matters of the utmost concern to you, and to the whole family.

What, madam, is now to be done with me? said I, wholly attentive.

She then told me, that they had had undoubted information, that a certain desperate ruffian (I must excuse her that word, she said) had prepared armed men to way-lay my brother and uncles, and seize me, and carry me off. Surely, she said, I was not consenting to a violence that might be followed by murder on one side or the other ; perhaps on both.

That therefore my father (still more exasperated than before) had changed his resolution as to my going to my uncle's ; and was determined next Tuesday to set out thither himself with my mother ; and that (for it was to no purpose to conceal a resolution so soon to be put in execution)—I must not dispute it any longer—on Wednesday I must give my hand—as they would have me.

She proceeded, that orders were already given for a licence : that the ceremony was to be performed in my own chamber, in presence of all my friends, except of my father and mother ; who would not return, nor see me, till all was over, and till they had a good account of my behaviour.

The very intelligence, my dear !—the very intelligence this, which Lovelace gave me !

I was dumb—only sighing, as if my heart would break.

Strange, my dear, such silence !—your concern is infinitely more on this side the day, than it will be on the other.—But let me ask you, and do not be displeased, Will you choose to see what generous stipulations for you there are in the settlements ? You have knowledge beyond your years—give the writings a perusal : do, my dear : they are engrossed, and ready for signing, and have been for some time.—Excuse me, my love—I mean not to disorder you :—your father would oblige me to bring them up, and to leave them with you. He commands you to read them.—But to read them, niece—since they are ingrossed, and were before you made them absolutely hopeless.

And then, to my great terror, out she drew some parchments from her handkerchief, which she had kept (unobserved by me) under her apron ; and, rising, put them in the opposite window. Had she produced a serpent, I could not have been more frightened.

Oh ! my dearest aunt, turning away my face, and holding out my hands : hide from my eyes those horrid parchments ! Let me conjure you to tell me—by all the tenderness of near relationship, and upon your honour, and by your love for me, say, are they absolutely resolved, that, come what will, I must be that man's ?

My dear, you must have Mr. Solmes : Indeed you must.

Indeed I never will ! This, as I have said over and over, is not originally my father's will.—Indeed I never will—and that is all I will say !

It is your father's will now, replied my aunt : and, considering how all the family is threatened by Mr. Lovelace, and the resolution he has certainly taken to force you out of their hands, I cannot but say that they are in the right, not to be bullied out of their child.

Well, madam, then nothing remains for me to say. I am made desperate. I care not what becomes of me.

She withdrew ; leaving me full of grief and indignation :—and as much out of humour with Mr. Lovelace as with anybody ; who, by his conceited contrivances, has made things worse for me than before ; depriving me of the hopes I had of gaining time to receive your advice, and private assistance to get to town ; and leaving me no other choice, in all appearance, than either to throw myself upon his family, or to be made miserable for ever with Mr. Solmes. But I was still resolved to avoid both these evils, if possible.

At one time, what have I to do, thought I, but to throw myself at once into the protection of Lady Betty Lawrence ?—But then, in resentment of his fine contrivances, which had so abominably disconcerted me, I soon resolved

to the contrary : and at last concluded to ask the favour of another half-hour's conversation with my aunt.

I sent Betty to her with my request.

She came.

I put it to her, in the most earnest manner, to tell me whether I might not obtain the favour of a fortnight's respite ?

She assured me, it would not be granted.

Would a week ? surely a week would ?

She believed a week might, if I promised two things : the first, upon my honour, not to write a line out of the house, in that week : for it was still suspected, she said, that I found means to write to somebody. And, secondly, to marry Mr. Solmes, at the expiration of it.

Impossible ! impossible ! I said with passion. What ! might I not be obliged with one week, without such a horrid condition as the last ?

My aunt chid me in a higher strain than ever she did before.

While I, in a half-frenzy, insisted upon seeing my father ; such usage, I said, set me above fear. I would rejoice to owe my death to him, as I did my life.

I did go down half-way of the stairs, resolved to throw myself at his feet wherever he was. My aunt was frightened. She owned, that she feared for my head. Indeed I was in a perfect frenzy for a few minutes. But hearing my brother's voice, as talking to somebody in my sister's apartment just by, I stopped ; and heard the barbarous designer say, speaking to my sister, this works charmingly, my dear Arabella !

It does ! it does ! said she, in an exulting accent.

Let us keep it up, said my brother. The villain is caught in his own trap ! Now must she be what we would have her be.

Do you keep my father to it ; I'll take care of my mother, said Bella.

Never fear, said he ! And a laugh of congratulation to each other, and derision of me (as I made it out) quite turned my frantic humour into a vindictive one.

My aunt then just coming down to me, and taking my hand, led me up ; and tried to soothe me.

My raving was turned into sullenness.

She preached patience and obedience to me.

I was silent.

At last she desired me to assure her, that I would offer no violence to myself.

God, I said, had given me more grace, I hoped, than to permit me to be guilty of so horrid a rashness. I was his creature, and not my own.

She then took leave of me ; and I insisted upon her taking down with her the odious parchments.

Seeing me in so ill an humour, and very earnest that she should take them with her, she took them ; but said, that my father should not know that she did : and hoped I would better consider of the matter, and be calmer next time they were offered to my perusal.

I revolved after she was gone all that my brother and sister had said. I dwelt upon their triumphings over me ; and found rise in my mind a rancour that was new to me, and which I could not withstand. And putting everything together, dreading the near day, what could I do ?—am I in any manner excusable for what I did do ? If I shall be condemned by the world, who know not my provocations, may I be acquitted by you ? If not, I am unhappy indeed ! For this I did.

Having shaken off the impertinent Betty, I wrote to Mr. Lovelace, to let him know, “ That all that was threatened at my uncle Antony’s, was intended to be executed here. That I had come to a resolution to throw myself upon the protection of either of his two aunts, who would afford it me—in short, that by endeavouring to obtain leave on Monday to dine in the ivy summer-house, I would, if pos-

sible, meet him without the garden-door, at two, three, four, or five o'clock on Monday afternoon, as I should be able. That in the meantime he should acquaint me, whether I might hope for either of those ladies' protection : and if I might, I absolutely insisted that he should leave me with either, and go to London himself, or remain at Lord M.'s. I added, that if he could prevail upon one of the Misses Montague to favour me with her company on the road, it would make me abundantly more easy in the thoughts of carrying into effect a resolution which I had not come to, although so driven, but with the utmost reluctance and concern ; and which would throw such a slur upon my reputation in the eye of the world, as perhaps I should never be able to wipe off."

This was the purport of what I wrote ; and down into the garden I slid with it in the dark, which at another time I should not have had the courage to do ; and deposited it, and came up again unknown to anybody.

My mind so dreadfully misgave me when I returned, that to divert in some measure my increasing uneasiness, I had recourse to my private pen ; and in a very short time ran this length.

Although it is now near two o'clock, I have a good mind to slide down once more, in order to take back my letter. Our doors are always locked and barred up at eleven ; but the seats of the lesser hall windows being almost even with the ground without, and the shutters not difficult to open, I could easily get out.

Yet why should I be thus uneasy, since, should the letter go, I can but hear what Mr. Lovelace says to it ? His aunts live at too great a distance for him to have an immediate answer from them ; so I can scruple going to them till I have invitation. I can insist upon one of his cousins meeting me, as I have hinted, and accompanying me in the chariot ; and he may not be able to obtain that favour from either of them. Twenty things

may happen to afford me a suspension at least: why should I be so very uneasy?

Adieu, my dearest friend, adieu!

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Friday Morning, 8 o'Clock.*

**T**HE man, my dear, has got the letter! What a strange diligence! I wish he mean me well, that he takes so much pains! Yet, to be ingenuous, I must own that I should be displeas'd if he took less—I wish, however, he had been a hundred miles off! What an advantage have I given him over me!

My dearest friend, tell me, have I done wrong? Yet do not say I have, if you think it; for should all the world besides condemn me, I shall have some comfort, if you do not. The first time I ever besought you to flatter me. That of itself is an indication that I have done wrong, and am afraid of hearing the truth. Oh, tell me (but yet do not tell me) if I have done wrong!

*One o'Clock.*

I have a letter from Mr. Lovelace, full of transports, vows, and promises. I will send it to you enclosed. You will see how “he engages in it for Lady Betty’s protection and for Miss Charlotte Montague’s accompanying me. I have nothing to do but to persevere, he says, and prepare to receive the personal congratulations of his whole family.”

But you will see, how he presumes upon my being his, as the consequence of throwing myself into that lady’s protection.

The chariot and six is to be ready at the place he mentions. You will see as to the slur upon my reputation about which I am so apprehensive, how boldly he argues. Generously enough, indeed, were I to be his; and had

given him to believe that I would. But that I have not done.

However, I have replied to the following effect: That although I had given him room to expect, that I would put myself into the protection of one of the ladies of his family; yet as I have three days to come between this and Monday, and as I still hope that my friends will relent, or that Mr. Solmes will give up a point they will find it impossible to carry; I shall not look upon myself as absolutely bound by the appointment: and expect therefore, if I recede, that I shall not again be called to account for it by him.

This I will deposit as soon as I can. And as he thinks things are near their crisis, I dare say it will not be long before I have an answer to it.

*Friday, 4 o'Clock.*

I am really ill. I was used to make the best of any little accidents that befell me, for fear of making my then affectionate friends uneasy: but now I shall make the worst of my indisposition, in hopes to obtain a suspension of the threatened evil of Wednesday next. And if I do obtain it, will postpone my appointment with Mr. Lovelace.

Betty has told them that I am very much indisposed. But I have no pity from anybody.

I believe I am become the object of every one's aversion; and that they would all be glad I were dead. Indeed, I believe it. "What ails the perverse creature?" cries one. "Is she love-sick?" another.

*Friday, 6 o'Clock.*

My aunt, who again stays all night, has just left me. She came to tell me the result of my friends' deliberations about me. It is this.

Next Wednesday morning they are all to be assembled: to wit, my father, mother, my uncles, herself, and my



uncle Hervey; my brother and sister of course: my good Mrs. Norton is likewise to be admitted: and Dr. Lewen is to be at hand to exhort me, it seems, if there be occasion: but my aunt is not certain whether he is to be among them, or to tarry till called in.

When this awful court is assembled, the poor prisoner is to be brought in, supported by Mrs. Norton; who is to be first tutored to instruct me in the duty of a child; which it seems I have forgotten.

Oh, my dear! what a trial will this be! How shall I be able to refuse to my father the writing of my name? To my father, from whose presence I have been so long banished? He commanding and entreating perhaps in a breath! How shall I be able to refuse this to my father!

They are sure, she says, something is working on Mr. Lovelace's part, and perhaps on mine: and my father would sooner follow me to the grave than see me his wife.

I said I was not well: that the very apprehensions of these trials were already insupportable to me; and would increase upon me as the time approached; and I was afraid I should be extremely ill.

They had prepared themselves for such an artifice as that, was my aunt's unkind word; and she could assure me, it would stand me in no stead.

Artifice! repeated I.

My dear, you will not offer any violence to your health? I hope God has given you more grace than to do that.

There is violence enough offered, and threatened, to affect my health; and so it will be found, without my needing to have recourse to any other, or to artifice either.

I will only tell you one thing, my dear: and that is; ill or well, the ceremony will probably be performed before Wednesday night:—but this, also, I will tell you, although beyond my present commission, that Mr. Solmes will be under an engagement (if you should require it of him as a favour) after the ceremony is passed, and Lovelace's

hopes thereby utterly extinguished, to leave you at your father's, and return to his own house every evening, until you are brought to a full sense of your duty, and consent to acknowledge your change of name.

There was no opening of my lips to such a speech as this. I was dumb.

*Friday, 9 o'Clock.*

And now my dear, what shall I conclude upon? You see how determined—but how can I expect your advice will come time enough to stand me in any stead? For here I have been down, and already have another letter from Mr. Lovelace (the man lives upon the spot, I think): and I must write to him, either that I will or will not stand to my first resolution of escaping hence on Monday next. If I let him know, that I will not (appearances so strong against him, and for Solmes, even stronger than when I made the appointment) will it not be justly deemed my own fault, if I am compelled to marry their odious man? And if any mischief ensue from Mr. Lovelace's rage and disappointment, will it not lie at my door?—Yet, he offers so fair!—Yet, on the other hand to incur the censure of the world—but that, as he hints, I have already incurred.—What can I do?—Oh, that my cousin Morden—but what signifies wishing?

He begs my pardon for writing with so much assurance; attributing it to his unbounded transport, and entirely acquiesces in my will. He offers to attend me directly to Lady Betty's; or, if I had rather, to my own estate; and that my Lord M. shall protect me there (He knows not, my dear, my reasons for rejecting this inconsiderate advice). In either case, as soon as he sees me safe, he will go up to London, or whither I please; and not come near me, but by my own permission; and till I am satisfied in everything I am doubtful of, as well with regard to his reformation, as to settlements, &c.

He conjures me, in the most solemn manner, if I

would not throw him into utter despair, to keep to my appointment.

However, instead of threatening my relations, or Solmes, if I recede, he respectfully says, that he doubts not but that, if I do, it will be upon such reasons, as he ought to be satisfied with ; upon no slighter, he hopes, than their leaving me at full liberty to pursue my own inclinations : in which (whatever they shall be) he will entirely acquiesce ; only endeavouring to make his future good behaviour the sole ground for his expectation of my favour.

Mr. Lovelace concludes, “with repeatedly begging an interview with me ; and that this night, if possible : an honour, he says he is the more encouraged to solicit for, as I had twice before made him hope for it.”

He renews all his vows and promises on this head in so earnest and so solemn a manner, that (his own interest, and his family’s honour, and their favour for me co-operating) I can have no room to doubt of his sincerity.

*Saturday Morning.*

Whether you will blame me or not, I cannot tell, but I have deposited a letter confirming my resolution to leave this house on Monday next, within the hours mentioned in my former, if possible. I have not kept a copy of it. But this is the substance.

I tell him, “that I have no way to avoid the determined resolution of my friends in behalf of Mr. Solmes, but by abandoning this house by his assistance.”

I have not pretended to make a merit with him on this score ; for I plainly tell him, “That could I, without an unpardonable sin, die when I would, I would sooner make death my choice, than take a step, which all the world, if not my own heart, will condemn me for taking.”

I tell him, “That I shall not try to bring any other clothes with me, than those I shall have on ; and those but my common wearing apparel ; lest I should be sus-

pected. That I must expect to be denied the possession of my estate ; but that I am determined never to consent to a litigation with my father, were I to be reduced to ever so low a state : so that the protection I am to be obliged for to any one, must be alone for the distress sake. That, therefore, he will have nothing to hope for from this step that he had not before : and that, in every light, I reserve to myself to accept or refuse his address, as his behaviour and circumspection shall appear to me to deserve.

“That I must, however, plainly tell him, that if in this treaty my friends insist upon my resolving against marrying him, I will engage to comply with them ; provided they will allow me to promise him, that I will never be the wife of any other man while he remains single, or is living : that this is a compliment I am willing to pay him, in return for the trouble and pains he has taken, and the usage he has met with on my account : although I intimate, that he may, in a great measure, thank himself (by reason of the little regard he has paid to his reputation) for the slights he has met with.”

I tell him, “that I may, in this privacy, write to my cousin Morden, and, if possible, interest him in my cause.

“As to the meeting he is desirous of, I think it by no means proper ; especially as it is so likely that I may soon see him. But that if anything occurs to induce me to change my mind, as to withdrawing, I will then take the first opportunity to see him, and give him my reasons for that change.”

This, my dear, I the less scrupled to write, as it might qualify him to bear such a disappointment, should I give it him ; he having, besides, behaved so very unexceptionably when he surprised me some time ago in the lonely wood-house.

Finally, “I commend myself, as a person in distress, and merely as such, to his honour, and to the protection of the ladies of his family. I repeat (most cordially, I am sure !)

my deep concern for being forced to make a step so disagreeable, and so derogatory to my honour. And having told him, that I will endeavour to obtain leave to dine in the ivy summer-house, and to send Betty on some errand when there, I leave the rest to him; but imagine that about four o'clock will be a proper time for him to contrive some signal to let me know he is at hand, and for me to unbolt the garden-door."

I added, by way of postscript, "That their suspicions seeming to increase, I advise him to contrive to send or come to the usual place, as frequently as possible, in the interval of time till Monday morning ten or eleven o'clock; as something may possibly happen to make me alter my mind."

Oh, my dear Miss Howe!—what a sad, sad thing is the necessity, forced upon me, for all this preparation and contrivance!—But it is now too late!—But how!—Too late, did I say?—What a word is that!—What a dreadful thing, were I to repent, to find it to be too late to remedy the apprehended evil!

*Saturday, 10 o'Clock.*

Mr. Solmes is here. He is to dine with his new relations, as Betty tells me he already calls them.

He would have thrown himself in my way once more: but I hurried up to my prison, in my return from my garden-walk, to avoid him.

I had, when in the garden, the curiosity to see if my letter were gone: I cannot say with an intention to take it back again if it were not, because I see not how I could do otherwise than I have done; yet, what a caprice! when I found it gone, I began (as yesterday morning) to wish it had not: for no other reason, I believe, than because it was out of my power.

A strange diligence in this man!—He says he almost lives upon the place; and I think so too.

Here I will deposit what I have written. Let me have

your prayers, my dear ; and your approbation, or your censure, of the steps I have taken : for yet it may not be quite too late to revoke the appointment. I am,

Your most affectionate and faithful

CL. HARLOWE.

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MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Saturday Afternoon.*



KNOW not what to write, fit to send you.

But one thing, in your present situation and prospects, let me advise : it is this, that if you do go off with Mr. Lovelace, you take the first opportunity to marry. Why should you not, when everybody will know by whose assistance, and in whose company, you leave your father's house, go whithersoever you will ?—you may indeed keep him at distance, until settlements are drawn, and such-like matters are adjusted to your mind : but even these are matters of less consideration in your particular case, than they would be in that of most others : and first, because, be his other faults what they will, nobody thinks him an ungenerous man : next, because the possession of your estate must be given up to you as soon as your cousin Morden comes ; who, as your trustee, will see it done ; and done upon proper terms : 3rdly, because there is no want of fortune on his side : 4thly, because all his family value you, and are extremely desirous that you should be their relation : 5thly, because he makes no scruple of accepting you without conditions. You see how he has always defied your relations (I, for my own part, can forgive him for that fault : nor know I, if it be not a noble one) : and I daresay, he had rather call you his, without a shilling, than be under obligation to those whom he has full as little reason to love, as they have to love him. You have heard, that his own relations cannot make his proud spirit submit to owe any favour to them.

Give this matter your most serious consideration. Considering Lovelace's character, I repeat my opinion, that your reputation in the eye of the world requires that no delay be made in this point when once you are in his power.

I need not, I am sure, make a stronger plea to you.

From this critical and distressful situation, it shall be my hourly prayers, that you may be delivered without blemish to that fair fame, which has hitherto, like your heart, been unspotted.

With this prayer, twenty times repeated, concludes

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

[*The preceding letter not received.*]

*Saturday Afternoon.*

**A**LREADY have I an ecstatic answer, as I may call it, to my letter.

“He will this afternoon, he says, write to Lord M. and to Lady Betty and Lady Sarah, that he is now within view of being the happiest man in the world, if it be not his own fault; since the only woman upon earth that can make him so, will be soon out of danger of being another man's; and cannot possibly prescribe any terms to him that he shall not think it his duty to comply with.

“He flatters himself now (my last letter confirming my resolution) that he can be in no apprehension of my changing my mind, unless my friends change their manner of acting by me; which he is too sure they will not. And now will all his relations, who take such a kind and generous share in his interests, glory and pride themselves in the prospects he has before him.”

Thus artfully does he hold me to it.

“He assures me, that I shall govern him as I please,

with regard to anything in his power towards effecting a reconciliation with my friends :” a point he knows my heart is set upon.

“ He is afraid, that the time will hardly allow of his procuring Miss Charlotte Montague’s attendance upon me at St. Alban’s, as he had proposed she should ; because, he understands, she keeps her chamber with a violent cold and sore throat. But both she and her sister, the first moment she is able to go abroad, shall visit me at my private lodgings ; and introduce me to Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, or those ladies to me, as I shall choose ; and accompany me to town, if I please ; and stay as long in it with me, as I shall think fit to stay there.”

So, my dear, the enterprise requires courage and high spirits, you see !—and indeed it does !—what am I about to do !—

He himself, it is plain, thinks it necessary that I should be accompanied with one of my own sex. He might, at least, have proposed the woman of one of the ladies of his family. Lord bless me !—what am I about to do !—

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After all, far as I have gone, I know not but I may still recede : and if I do, a mortal quarrel I suppose will ensue. And what if it does ? Could there be any way to escape this Solmes, a breach with Lovelace might make way for the single life to take place, which I so much prefer : and then I would defy the sex. For I see nothing but trouble and vexation that they bring upon ours : and when once entered, one is obliged to go on with them, treading, with tender feet, upon thorns, and sharper thorns, to the end of a painful journey.

Forgive these indigested self-reasonings. I will close here : and instantly set about a letter of revocation to Mr. Lovelace ; take it as he will. It will only be another trial of temper to him. To me of infinite importance. And



has he not promised temper and acquiescence, on the supposition of a change in my mind ?

*Sunday Morning, April 9.*

Nobody it seems will go to church this day. No blessing to be expected perhaps upon views so worldly, and in some so cruel.

This is the substance of my letter to Mr. Lovelace :

“That I have reasons of the greatest consequence to myself (and which, when known, must satisfy him) to suspend, for the present, my intention of leaving my father’s house : that I have hopes that matters may be brought to a happy conclusion, without taking a step, which nothing but the last necessity could justify : and that he may depend upon my promise, that I will die, rather than consent to marry Mr. Solmes.”

And so, I am preparing myself to stand the shock of his exclamatory reply. But be that what it will, it cannot affect me so much, as the apprehensions of what may happen to me next Tuesday or Wednesday ; for now those apprehensions engage my whole attention, and make me sick at the very heart.

*Sunday, 4 in the Afternoon.*

My letter is not yet taken away—if he should not send for it, or take it, and come hither on my not meeting him to-morrow, in doubt of what may have befallen me, what shall I do ! Why had I any concerns with this sex !—I, that was so happy till I knew this man !

I dined in the ivy summer-house. My request to do so, was complied with at the first word. To show I meant nothing, I went again into the house with Betty, as soon as I had dined. I thought it was not amiss to ask this liberty ; the weather seeming to be set in fine. Who knows what Tuesday or Wednesday may produce ?

*Monday Morning, April 10, Seven o’Clock.*

Oh, my dear ! there yet lies the letter, just as I left it !

*Nine o'Clock.*

My cousin Dolly Hervey slid the inclosed letter into my hand, as I passed by her, coming out of the garden.

DEAREST MADAM,—I have got intelligence from one who pretends to know everything, that you must be married on Wednesday morning to Mr. Solmes. Perhaps, however, she says this only to vex me ; for it is that saucy creature Betty Barnes. A licence is got, as she says : and so far she went as to tell me (bidding me say nothing ; but she knew I would) that Mr. Brand is to marry you. For Dr. Lewen, I hear, refuses, unless your consent can be obtained ; and they have heard that he does not approve of their proceedings against you. Mr. Brand, I am told, is to have his fortune made by uncle Harlowe and among them.

Yet, sick or well, alas ! my dear cousin ! you must be married. But your husband is to go home every night without you, till you are reconciled to him. And so illness can be no pretence to save you.

They are sure you will make a good wife. So would not I, unless I liked my husband. And Mr. Solmes is always telling them how he will purchase your love by rich presents. A sycophant man ! I wish he and Betty Barnes were to come together ; and he would beat her every day.

After what I have told you, I need not advise you to secure everything you would not have seen.

Once more let me beg that you will burn this letter : and pray, dearest madam, do not take anything that may prejudice your health : for that will not do. I am,

Your truly loving cousin,  
D. H.

When I first read my cousin's letter, I was half inclined to resume my former intention ; especially as my countermanding letter was not taken away : and as my heart

ached at the thoughts of the conflict I must expect to have with him on my refusal. For, see him for a few moments I doubt I must, lest he should take some rash resolutions ; especially, as he has reason to expect I will see him. But here your words, that all punctilio is at an end, the moment I am out of my father's house, added to the still more cogent considerations of duty and reputation, determined me once more against taking the rash step. And it will be very hard (although no seasonable fainting, or wished-for fit, should stand my friend) if I cannot gain one month, or fortnight, or week. And I have still more hopes that I shall prevail for some delay, from my cousin's intimation that the good Dr. Lewen refuses to give his assistance to their projects, if they have not my consent, and thinks me cruelly used : since, without taking notice that I am apprised of this, I can plead a scruple of conscience, and insist upon having that worthy divine's opinion upon it : in which, enforced as I shall enforce it, my mother will surely second me : my aunt Hervey, and my Mrs. Norton will support her : the suspension must follow : and I can but get away afterwards.

But, if they will compel me : if they will give me no time : if nobody will be moved : if it be resolved that the ceremony shall be read over my constrained hand—why then—alas ! what then !—I can but—but what ? Oh, my dear ! This Solmes shall never have my vows, I am resolved ! And I will say nothing but no, as long as I shall be able to speak. And who will presume to look upon such an act of violence as a marriage ?—it is impossible, surely, that a father and mother can see such a dreadful compulsion offered to their child—but if mine should withdraw, and leave the talk to my brother and sister, they will have no mercy.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Ivy Summer-house, Eleven o'Clock.*

**H**E has not yet got my letter; and while I was contriving here how to send my officious gaoleress from me, that I might have time for the intended interview, and had hit upon an expedient, which I believe would have done, came my aunt, and furnished me with a much better. She saw my little table covered, preparative to my solitary dinner; and hoped, she told me, that this would be the last day that my friends would be deprived of my company at table.

She proceeded—I am come, I doubt, upon a very unwelcome errand. Some things that have been told us yesterday, which came from the mouth of one of the most desperate and insolent men in the world, convince your father, and all of us, that you still find means to write out of the house. Mr. Lovelace knows everything that is done here, and that as soon as done; and great mischief is apprehended from him, which you are as much concerned as any body to prevent. Your mother has also some apprehensions concerning yourself, which yet she hopes are groundless; but, however, cannot be easy, nor will be permitted to be easy, if she would, unless (while you remain here in the garden, or in this summer-house) you give her the opportunity once more of looking into your closet, your cabinet, and drawers. It will be the better taken, if you give me cheerfully your keys. I hope, my dear, you won't dispute it. Your desire of dining in this place was the more readily complied with for the sake of such an opportunity.

I thought myself very lucky to be so well prepared by my cousin Dolly's means for this search; but yet I artfully made some scruples, and not a few complaints of this treatment: after which, I not only gave her the keys

of all, but even officiously emptied my pockets before her, and invited her to put her fingers in my stays, that she might be sure I had no papers there.

This highly obliged her; and she said, she would represent my cheerful compliance as it deserved, let my brother and sister say what they would. My mother, in particular, she was sure, would rejoice at the opportunity given her to obviate, as she doubted not would be the case, some suspicions that were raised against me.

Here comes Betty Barnes with my dinner—

The wench is gone. The time of meeting is at hand. O that he may not come!—but should I, or should I not, meet him? How I question, without possibility of a timely answer!

Betty, according to my leading hint to my aunt, boasted to me, that she was to be employed, as she called it, after she had eat her own dinner.

She should be sorry, she told me, to have me found out. Yet 'twould be all for my good. I should have it in my power to be forgiven for all at once, before Wednesday night. The confident creature then, to stifle a laugh, put a corner of her apron in her mouth, and went to the door; and on her return to take away, as I angrily bid her, she begged my excuse—but—but—and then the saucy creature laughed again, she could not help it; to think how I had drawn myself in by my summer-house dinnering; since it had given so fine an opportunity, by way of surprise, to look into all my private hoards. She thought something was in the wind, when my brother came in to my dining here so readily. Her young master was too hard for everybody. 'Squire Lovelace himself was nothing at all at a quick thought, to her young master.

But why do I trouble you (and myself, at such a crisis) with these impertinences? Yet I would forget, if I could, the nearest evil, the interview; because, my apprehensions

increasing as the hour is at hand, I should, were my attention to be engrossed by them, be unfit to see him, if he does come; and then he will have too much advantage over me, as he will have seeming reason to reproach me with change of resolution.

The upbraider, you know, my dear, is in some sense a superior; while the upbraided, if with reason upbraided, must make a figure as spiritless as conscious.

I know that this wretch will, if he can, be his own judge, and mine too. But the latter he shall not be.

I dare say we shall be all to pieces. But I don't care for that. It would be hard if I, who have held it out so sturdily to my father and uncles, should not—but he is at the garden door—

I was mistaken!—how many noises unlike, be made like to what one fears! Why flutters the fool so!—

I will hasten to deposit this. Then I will, for the last time, go to the usual place, in hopes to find that he has got my letter. If he has, I will not meet him. If he has not, I will take it back, and show him what I have written. That will break the ice, as I may say, and save me much circumlocution and reasoning: and a stedfast adherence to that my written mind is all that will be necessary. The interview must be as short as possible; for should it be discovered, it would furnish a new and strong pretence for the intended evil of Wednesday next.

Perhaps I shall not be able to write again one while. Perhaps not till I am the miserable property of that Solmes!—but that shall never, never be, while I have my senses.

In that case, pity and pray for me, my beloved friend; and continue to me that place in your affection, which is the pride of my life, and the only comfort left to

Your

CL. HARLOWE.



CLARISSA.



*Part Second.—Her Flight from Home.*






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*Part Second.—Her Flight from Home.*

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*St. Alban's, Tuesday Morning, past 1 o'Clock.*

H, MY DEAREST FRIEND,—After what I had resolved upon, as by my former, what shall I write? What can I? With what consciousness, even by letter, do I approach you? You will soon hear (if already you have not heard from the mouth of common fame) that your Clarissa Harlowe is gone off with a man!

But will you receive, shall you be permitted to receive my letters, after what I have done?

The bearer comes to you, my dear, for the little parcel of linen which I sent you with far better and more agreeable hopes.

Send not my letters. Send the linen only: except you will favour me with one line, to tell me you love me still, and that you will suspend your censures till you have the whole before you. I am the readier to send thus early, because if you have deposited anything for me, you may cause it to be taken back, or withhold anything you had but intended to send.

Adieu, my dearest friend! I beseech you to love me still! But, alas! what will your mother say? What will mine? What my other relations? and what my dear Mrs. Norton? And how will my brother and sister triumph!

I cannot at present tell you how, or where, you can direct to me. For very early shall I leave this place, harassed and fatigued to death. But, when I can do nothing else, constant use has made me able to write. Long, very long, has that been all my amusement and pleasure : yet could not that have been such to me, had I not had you, my best-beloved friend, to write to. Once more adieu. Pity and pray for your

CL. HARLOWE.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Tuesday, Nine o'Clock.*

**W**RITE, because you enjoin me to do so. Love you still! How can I help it, if I would? You may believe how I stand aghast, your letter communicating the first news—Good God of Heaven and Earth! But what shall I say? I am all impatience for particulars.

Lord have mercy upon me! But can it be?

My mother will indeed be astonished! How can I tell it her! It was but last night (upon some jealousies put into her head by your foolish uncle) that I assured her, and this upon the strength of your own assurances, that neither man nor devil would be able to induce you to take a step that was in the least derogatory to the most punctilious honour.

But, once more, Can it be? What woman, at this rate! But, God preserve you!

Let nothing escape you in your letters. Direct them for me, however, to Mrs. Knollys's, till further notice.

Observe, my dear, that I don't blame you by all this—your relations only are in fault! Yet how you came to change your mind is the surprising thing.

How to break it to my mother, I know not. Yet, if she hear it first from any other, and find I knew it before, she

will believe it to be by my connivance! Yet, as I hope to live, I know not how to break it to her.

But this is teasing you.—I am sure, without intention.

Let me now repeat my former advice—if you are not married by this time, be sure delay not the ceremony. Since things are as they are, I wish it were thought that you were privately married before you went away.

Your brother and sister (that vexes me almost as much as anything!) have now their ends. Now, I suppose, will go forward alterations of wills, and such like spiteful doings.

I send what you write for. If there be anything else you want that is in my power, command, without reserve,

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Tuesday Night.*



THINK myself obliged to thank you, my dear Miss Howe, for your condescension, in taking notice of a creature who has occasioned you so much scandal.

I am grieved on this account, as much, I verily think, as for the evil itself.

Tell me—but yet I am afraid to know—what your mother said.

Self-accusation shall flow in every line of my narrative where I think I am justly censurable. If anything can arise from the account I am going to give you, for extenuation of my fault (for that is all a person can hope for, who cannot excuse herself) I know I may expect it from your friendship, though not from the charity of any other: since by this time I doubt not every mouth is opened against me; and all that know Clarissa Harlowe condemn the fugitive daughter.

After I had deposited my letter to you, written down to the last hour, as I may say, I returned to the ivy summer-house ; first taking back my letter from the loose bricks : and there I endeavoured, as coolly as my situation would permit, to recollect and lay together several incidents that had passed between my aunt and me. And thus I argued with myself.

Wednesday cannot possibly be the day they intend, although to intimidate me they may wish me to think it is : for the settlements are unsigned : nor have they been offered me to sign. I can choose whether I will or will not put my hand to them ; hard as it will be to refuse if my father tender them to me—besides, Did not my father and mother propose, if I made compulsion necessary, to go to my uncle's themselves, in order to be out of the way of my appeals ? Whereas they intend to be present on Wednesday. And however affecting to me the thought of meeting them and all my friends in full assembly is, perhaps it is the very thing I ought to wish for : since my brother and sister had such an opinion of my interest in them, that they got me excluded from their presence, as a measure which they thought previously necessary to carry on their designs.

Resolving cursorily these things, I congratulated myself, that I had resolved against going away with Mr. Lovelace.

As the above kind of reasoning had lessened my apprehensions as to the Wednesday, it added to those I had of meeting Mr. Lovelace—now, as it seemed, not only the nearest, but the heaviest evil ; principally indeed because nearest ; for little did I dream (foolish creature that I was, and every way beset !) of the event proving what it has proved. I expected a contention with him, 'tis true, as he had not my letter : but I thought it would be very strange, as I mentioned in one of my former, if I, who had so steadily held out against characters so venerable,

against authorities so sacred, as I may say, when I thought them unreasonably exerted, should not find myself more equal to such a trial as this ; especially as I had so much reason to be displeased with him for not having taken away my letter.

When the bell rang to call the servants to dinner, Betty came to me, and asked, if I had any commands before she went to hers ; repeating her hint, that she should be employed ; adding, that she believed it was expected, that I should not come up till she came down, or till I saw my aunt or Miss Hervey.

I asked her some questions about the cascade, which had been out of order, and lately mended ; and expressed a curiosity to see how it played, in order to induce her (How cunning to cheat myself, as it proved !) to go thither, if she found me not where she left me ; it being at a part of the garden most distant from the ivy summer-house.

She could hardly have got into the house when I heard the first signal—O how my heart fluttered ! But no time was to be lost. I stepped to the garden-door ; and seeing a clear coast, unbolted the already unlocked door—and there was he, all impatience, waiting for me.

A panic next to fainting seized me when I saw him. My heart seemed convulsed ; and I trembled so, that I should hardly have kept my feet, had he not supported me.

Recovering my spirits a little, as he kept drawing me after him, O Mr. Lovelace, said I, I cannot go with you—indeed I cannot—I wrote you word so—let go my hand, and you shall see my letter. It has lain there from yesterday morning, till within this half-hour. I bid you watch to the last for a letter from me, lest I should be obliged to revoke the appointment ; and had you followed the direction, you would have found it.

I have been watched, my dearest life, said he, half out

of breath—I have been watched in every step I took : and my trusty servant has been watched too, ever since Saturday ; and dared not to come near your wall. And here we shall be discovered in a moment. Speed away, my charmer—this is the moment of your deliverance—if you neglect this opportunity, you never can have such another.

As you value me, Mr. Lovelace, urge me no farther. I come fixed and resolved. Let me give you the letter I had written. My further reasons shall follow ; and they will convince you, that I ought not to go.

Nothing, madam, can convince me—by all that's sacred, I will not leave you. To leave you now, would be to lose you for ever—

Am I to be thus compelled ? interrupted I, with equal indignation and vehemence—let go my hands. I am resolved not to go with you—and I will convince you, that I ought not.

What can have possessed my angel, said he (quitting my hands, and with a gentler voice) that after so much ill-usage from your relations ; vows so solemn on my part ; an affection so ardent ; you stab me with a refusal to stand by your own appointment ?

We have no time to talk, Mr. Lovelace. I will give you my reasons at a better opportunity. I cannot go with you now—and, once more, urge me no farther—surely I am not to be compelled by everybody !

I see how it is, said he, with a dejected, but passionate air—What a severe fate is mine—at length your spirit is subdued ! Your brother and sister have prevailed ; and I must give up all my hopes to a wretch so truly despicable—

Once more I tell you, interrupted I, I never will be his—all may end on Wednesday differently from what you expect—

And it may not ! And then, good heaven !—

It is to be their last effort, as I have reason to believe—

And I have reason to believe so too—since, if you stay, you will inevitably be Solmes's wife.

Not so, interrupted I—I have obliged them in one point. They will be in good humour with me. I shall gain time at least. I am sure I shall. I have several ways to gain time.

And what, madam, will gaining time do? It is plain you have not a hope beyond that—it is plain you have not, by putting all upon that precarious issue. Oh my dearest, dearest life, let me beseech you not to run a risk of this consequence. I can convince you, that it will be more than a risk if you go back, that you will on Wednesday next be Solmes's wife.—Prevent, therefore, now that it is in your power to prevent, the fatal mischiefs that will follow such a dreadful certainty.

And then he pathetically enumerated the different instances of the harsh treatment I had met with; imputing all to the malice and caprice of a brother, who set everybody against him: and insisting, that I had no other way to bring about a reconciliation with my father and uncles, than by putting myself out of the power of my brother's inveterate malice.

Your brother's whole reliance, proceeded he, has been upon your easiness to bear his insults. Your whole family will seek to you, when you have freed yourself from this disgraceful oppression. When they know you are with those who can and will right you, they will give up to you your own estate. Why then, putting his arm round me, and again drawing me with a gentle force after him, do you hesitate a moment?—now is the time—fly with me then, I beseech you, my dearest creature! Trust your persecuted adorer. Have we not suffered in the same cause? If any imputations are cast upon you, give me the honour (as I shall be found to deserve it) to call you



mine ; and, when you are so, shall I not be able to **protect** both your person and character.

Whither, sir, do you draw me ?—leave me this moment—do you seek to keep me till my return shall grow dangerous or impracticable ? This moment let me go, if you would have me think tolerably of you.

I will obey you, my dearest creature !—and quitted my hand with a look full of tender despondency, that, knowing the violence of his temper, half-concerned me for him. Yet I was hastening from him, when, with a solemn air, looking upon his sword, but, catching, as it were, his hand from it, he folded both his arms, as if a sudden thought had recovered him from an intended rashness.

Stay, one moment—but one moment stay, oh, best beloved of my soul !—your retreat is secure, if you will go : the key lies down at the door.—But oh, madam, next Wednesday, and you are Mr. Solmes's !—fly me not so eagerly—hear me but a few words.

When near the garden-door, I stopped ; and was the more satisfied, as I saw the key there, by which I could let myself in again at pleasure. But, being uneasy lest I should be missed, I told him I could stay no longer. I had already stayed too long. I would write to him all my reasons. And depend upon it, Mr. Lovelace, said I (just upon the point of stooping for the key, in order to return) I will die, rather than have that man. You know what I have promised, if I find myself in danger.

One word, madam, however ; one word more (approaching me, his arms still folded, as if, as I thought, he would not be tempted to mischief). Remember only, that I come at your appointment, to redeem you, at the hazard of my life, from your gaolers and persecutors, with a resolution, God is my witness, or may he for ever blast me ! (that was his shocking imprecation) to be a father, uncle, brother, and, as I humbly hoped, in your own good time, a husband to you, all in one. But since I find you are so ready to

cry out for help against me, which must bring down upon me the vengeance of all your family, I am contented to run all risks. I will not ask you to retreat with me; I will attend you into the garden, and into the house, if I am not intercepted. Nay, be not surprised, madam. The help you would have called for, I will attend you to; for I will face them all: but not as a revenger, if they provoke me not too much. You shall see what I can further bear for your sake—and let us both see, if expostulation, and the behaviour of a gentleman to them, will not procure me the treatment due to a gentleman from them.

Had he offered to draw his sword upon himself, I was prepared to have despised him for supposing me such a poor novice, as to be intimidated by an artifice so common. But this resolution, uttered with so serious an air, of accompanying me in to my friends, made me gasp with terror.

What can you mean, Mr. Lovelace?—said I—would you thus expose yourself? Would you thus expose me?—is this your generosity? Is everybody to take advantage thus of the weakness of my temper?

And I wept. I could not help it.

He threw himself upon his knees at my feet. Who can bear, said he (with an ardour that could not be feigned, his own eyes glistening), who can bear, to behold such sweet emotion?—oh, charmer of my heart (and, respectfully still kneeling, he took my hand with both his, pressing it to his lips), command me with you, command me from you; in every way I am all implicit obedience—I appeal to everything you know, to all you have suffered, whether you have not reason to be apprehensive of that Wednesday, which is my terror!—whether you can possibly have such another opportunity—the chariot ready: my friends with impatience expecting the result of your own appointment: a man whose will shall be entirely your will, imploring you, thus, on his

knees, imploring you—to be your own mistress; that is all: nor will I ask for your favour, but as upon full proof I shall appear to deserve it. Fortune, alliance, unobjectible!—oh, my beloved creature! pressing my hand once more to his lips, let not such an opportunity slip. You never, never will have such another.

I bid him rise.

I was sure, I said, of procuring a delay at least. Many ways I had to procure delay. Nothing could be so fatal to us both, as for me now to be found with him. My apprehensions on this score, I told him, grew too strong for my heart. I should think very hardly of him, if he sought to detain me longer. But his acquiescence should engage my gratitude.

And then stooping to take up the key to let myself into the garden, he started, and looked as if he had heard somebody near the door, on the inside; clapping his hand on his sword.

This frightened me so, that I thought I should have sunk down at his feet. But he instantly reassured me; he thought, he said, he had heard a rustling against the door: but had it been so, the noise would have been stronger. It was only the effect of his apprehension for me.

I was once more offering the key to the lock, when, starting from his knees, with a voice of affrightment, loudly whispering, and as if out of breath,—They are at the door, my beloved creature! And taking the key from me he fluttered with it, as if he would double-lock it. And instantly a voice from within cried out, bursting against the door, as if to break it open, the person repeating his violent pushes, are you there?—come up this moment!—this moment!—here they are—here they are both together!—your pistol this moment!—your gun!—then another push, and another. He at the same moment drew his sword, and clapping it naked under his arm, took

both my trembling hands in his ; and, drawing me swiftly after him—Fly, fly, my charmer ; this moment is all you have for it, said he. Your brother!—your uncles!—or this Solmes!—they will instantly burst the door—fly, my dearest life, if you would not be more cruelly used than ever—if you would not see two or three murders committed at your feet, fly, fly, I beseech you.

Oh, Lord!—help, help, cried the fool, all in amaze and confusion, frightened beyond the power of controlling.

Now behind me, now before me, now on this side, now on that, turned I my affrighted face, in the same moment ; expecting a furious brother here, armed servants there, an enraged sister screaming, and a father armed with terror in his countenance more dreadful than even the drawn sword which I saw, or those I apprehended. I ran as fast as he ; yet knew not that I ran ; my fears adding wings to my feet, at the same time that they took all power of thinking from me—my fears, which probably would not have suffered me to know what course to take, had I not had him to urge and draw me after him : especially as I beheld a man, who must have come out of the door, keeping us in his eye, running now towards us ; then back to the garden ; beckoning and calling to others, whom I supposed he saw, although the turning of the wall hindered me from seeing them ; and whom I imagined to be my brother, my father, and their servants.

Thus terrified, I was got out of sight of the door in a very few minutes : and then, although quite breathless between running and apprehension, he put my arm under his, his drawn sword in the other hand, and hurried me on still faster : my voice, however, contradicting my action ; crying, no, no, no, all the while ; straining my neck to look back, as long as the walls of the garden and park were within sight, and till he brought me to the chariot : where, attending, were two armed servants of his own, and two of Lord M.'s on horseback.

But if it shall come out, that the person within the garden was his corrupted implement, employed to frighten me away with him, do you think, my dear, that I shall not have reason to hate him and myself still more? I hope his heart cannot be so deep and so vile a one: I hope it cannot! But how came it to pass, that one man could get out of the garden-door, and no more? How, that that man kept aloof, as it were, and pursued us not; nor ran back to alarm the house? My fright, and my distance, would not let me be certain; but really this man, as I now recollect, had the air of that vile Joseph Leman.

Tell me, my dear Miss Howe, tell me truly, if your unbiassed heart does not despise me?—it must! for your mind and mine were ever one; and I despise myself!—and well I may: for could the giddiest and most inconsiderate girl in England have done worse than I shall appear to have done in the eye of the world? Since my crime will be known without the provocations, and without the artifices of the betrayer too; while it will be a high aggravation, that better things were expected from me, than from many others.

You charge me to marry the first opportunity—ah! my dear! another of the blessed effects of my folly—that's as much in my power now as—as I am myself!—and can I besides give a sanction immediately to his deluding arts?—can I avoid being angry with him for tricking me thus, as I may say (and as I have called it to him) out of myself?—for compelling me to take a step so contrary to all my resolutions and assurances given to you; a step so dreadfully inconvenient to myself; so disgraceful and so grievous (as it must be) to my dear mother, were I to be less regardful of any other of my family of friends—you don't know, nor can you imagine, my dear, how I am mortified!—how much I am sunk in my own opinion!—I, that was proposed for an example, truly, to others!—oh, that I were again in my father's house, stealing down

with a letter to you ; my heart beating with expectation of finding one from you !

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This is the Wednesday morning I dreaded so much, that I once thought of it as the day of my doom : but of the Monday, it is plain, I ought to have been most apprehensive. Had I stayed, and had the worst I dreaded happened, my friends would then have been answerable for the consequences, if any bad ones had followed :—but now, I have this only consolation left me (a very poor one, you'll say !) that I have cleared them of blame, and taken it all upon myself !

The lodgings I am in, are inconvenient. I shall not stay in them : so it signifies nothing to tell you how to direct to me hither. And where my next may be, as yet I know not.

He knows that I am writing to you ; and has offered to send my letter, when finished, by a servant of his. But I thought I could not be too cautious, as I am now situated, in having a letter of this importance conveyed to you. Who knows what such a man may do ? So very wicked a contriver ! The contrivance, if a contrivance, to get me away, so insolently mean !—but I hope it is not a contrivance neither !—yet, be that as it will, I must say, that the best of him, and of my prospects with him, are bad : and yet, having enrolled myself among the too late repenters, who shall pity me ?

Nevertheless, I will dare to hope for a continued interest in your affections (I shall be miserable indeed if I may not !) and to be remembered in your daily prayers. For neither time nor accident shall ever make me cease to be

Your faithful and affectionate  
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOSEPH LEMAN.

*Saturday, April 8.*

**H**ONEST JOSEPH,—At length your beloved young lady has consented to free herself from the cruel treatment she has so long borne. She is to meet me without the garden-door at about four o'clock on Monday afternoon. I told you she had promised to do so. She has confirmed her promise. Thank heaven, she has confirmed her promise.

I shall have a chariot-and-six ready in the bye-road fronting the private path to Harlowe Paddock; and several of my friends and servants not far off, armed to protect her, if there be occasion: but every one charged to avoid mischief. That, you know, has always been my principal care.

All my fear is, that when she comes to the point, the over-niceness of her principles will make her waver, and want to go back: although her honour is my honour, you know, and mine is hers. If she should, and I should be unable to prevail upon her, all your past services will avail nothing, and she will be lost to me for ever: the prey then of that cursed Solmes, whose vile stinginess will never permit him to do good to any of the servants of the family.

Contrive to be in the garden, in disguise if possible, and unseen by your young lady. If you find the garden-door unbolted, you will know that she and I are together, although you should not see her go out at it. It will be locked, but my key shall be on the ground just without the door, that you may open it with yours, as it may be needful.

If you hear our voices parleying, keep at the door till I cry Hem, hem, twice: but be watchful for this signal; for I must not hem very loud, lest she should take it for a

signal. Perhaps, in struggling to prevail upon the dear creature, I may have an opportunity to strike the door hard with my elbow, or heel, to confirm you ; then you are to make a violent burst against the door, as if you would break it open, drawing backward and forward the bolt in a hurry : then, with another push, but with more noise than strength, lest the lock give way, cry out (as if you saw some of the family), Come up, come up, instantly ! Here they are ! Here they are ! Hasten ! This instant hasten ! And mention swords, pistols, guns, with as terrible a voice as you can cry out with. Then shall I prevail upon her, no doubt, if loth before, to fly. If I cannot, I will enter the garden with her, and the house too, be the consequence what it will. But so affrighted, there is no question but she will fly.

When you think us at a sufficient distance (and I shall raise my voice urging her swifter flight, that you may guess at that) then open the door with your key : but you must be sure to open it very cautiously, lest we should not be far enough off. I would not have her know you have a hand in this matter, out of my great regard to you.

When you have opened the door, take your key out of the lock, and put it in your pocket : then, stooping for mine, put it in the lock on the inside, that it may appear as if the door was opened by herself, with a key, which they will suppose of my procuring (it being new) and left open by us.

They should conclude she is gone off by her own consent, that they may not pursue us : that they may see no hopes of tempting her back again. In either case, mischief might happen, you know.

But you must take notice, that you are only to open the door with your key, in case none of the family come up to interrupt us, and before we are quite gone : for, if they do, you'll find by what follows, that you must not



open the door at all. Let them, on breaking it open, or by getting over the wall, find my key on the ground, if they will.

If they do not come to interrupt us, and if you, by help of your key, come out, follow us at a distance ; and, with uplifted hands, and wild and impatient gestures (running backward and forward, for fear you should come too near us ; and as if you saw somebody coming to your assistance) cry out for help, help, and to hasten. Then shall we be soon at the chariot.

Tell the family, that you saw me enter a chariot with her : a dozen, or more, men on horseback, attending us ; all armed ; some with blunderbusses, as you believe ; and that we took the quite contrary way to that we shall take.

But, if our parley should last longer than I wish ; and if any of her friends miss her before I cry, Hem, hem, twice ; then in order to save yourself (which is a very great point with me, I assure you) make the same noise as above : but as I directed before, open not the door with your key. On the contrary, wish for a key with all your heart ; but for fear any of them should by accident have a key about them, keep in readiness half a dozen little gravel stones, no bigger than peas, and thrust two or three slyly into the keyhole ; which will hinder their key from turning round. It is good, you know, Joseph, to provide against every accident in such an important case as this. And let this be your cry, instead of the other, if any of my enemies come in your sight, as you seem to be trying to burst the door open, Sir ! sir ! or madam ! madam ! O Lord, hasten ! O Lord, hasten ! Mr. Lovelace !—Mr. Lovelace !—And very loud—and that shall quicken me more than it shall those you call to.—If it be Betty, and only Betty, I shall think worse of your art of making love, than of your fidelity, if you can't find a way to amuse her, and put her upon a false scent.

You must tell them that your young lady seemed to run as fast off with me, as I with her. This will also confirm to them that all pursuit is in vain. An end will be hereby put to Solmes's hopes : and her friends, after a while, will be more studious to be reconciled to her, than to get her back. So you will be a happy instrument of great good to all round. And this will one day be acknowledged by both families. You will then be every one's favourite ; and every good servant for the future will be proud to be likened to honest Joseph Leman.

If she should guess at you, or find you out, I have it already in my head to write a letter for you to copy ; which occasionally produced, will set you right with her.

This one time be diligent, be careful: this will be the crown of all ; and once more depend for a recompense upon the honour of

Your assured friend,

R. LOVELACE.

You need not be so much afraid of going too far with Betty. If you should make a match with her, she is a very likely creature, though a vixen, as you say. I have an admirable receipt to cure a termagant wife.—Never fear, Joseph, but thou shalt be master of thine own house. If she be very troublesome, I can teach thee how to break her heart in a twelvemonth ; and honestly too ;—or the precept would not be mine.

I enclose a new earnest of my future favour.

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MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*St. Alban's, Monday Night.*



SNATCH a few moments while my beloved is retired (as I hope, to rest) to perform my promise. No pursuit—nor have I apprehensions of any ; though I must make my charmer dread that there will be one.

And now, let me tell thee, that never was joy so complete as mine! But let me inquire—is not the angel flown away?

O no! she is in the next apartment!—securely mine!—mine for ever!

O ecstasy!—My heart will burst my breast,  
To leap into her bosom!

I knew, that the whole stupid family were in a combination to do my business for me. I told thee that they were all working for me, like so many underground moles; and still more blind than the moles are said to be, unknowing that they did so. I myself, the director of their principal motions; which falling in with the malice of their little hearts, they took to be all their own.

But did I say, my joy was perfect? O no!—it receives some abatement from my disgusted pride. For how can I endure to think, that I owe more to her relations' persecutions, than to her favour for me?—or even, as far as I know, to her preference of me to another man?

But let me not indulge this thought. Were I to do so, it might cost my charmer dear. For, let me tell thee, dearly as I love her, if I thought there was but the shadow of a doubt in her mind, whether she preferred me to any man living, I would show her no mercy.

*Tuesday, Day Dawn.*

But, on the wings of love, I fly to my charmer, who perhaps by this time is rising to encourage the tardy dawn. I have not slept a wink of the hour and half I lay down to invite sleep. It seems to me, that I am not so much body, as to require such vulgar renovation.

But why, as in the chariot, as in the inn, at alighting, all heart-bursting grief, my dearest creature? So persecuted as thou wert persecuted!—so much in danger of the most abhorred compulsion!—yet grief so unsuspectably sincere for an escape so critical! Take care—take care,



O beloved of my soul! for jealous is the heart in which Love has erected a temple to thee.

She comes! she comes! And the sun is just rising to attend her! Adieu!—Be half as happy as I am (for all diffidences, like night-fogs before the sun, disperse at her approach) and, next myself, thou wilt be the happiest man in the world.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Wednesday, April 12.*



WILL pursue my melancholy story.

Being thus hurried to the chariot, it would have been to no purpose to have refused entering into it, had he not in my fright lifted me in, as he did: and it instantly drove away a full gallop, and stopped not till it brought us to St. Alban's; which was just as the day shut in.

I thought I should have fainted several times by the way. With uplifted hands and eyes, "God protect me," said I often to myself! "Can it be I, that am here!"—my eyes running over, and my heart ready to burst with sighs as involuntary as my flight.

How different, how inexpressibly different, the gay wretch; visibly triumphing (as I could not but construe his almost rapturous joy) in the success of his arts! But overflowing with complimentary flourishes, yet respectfully distant his address, all the way we flew; for that, rather than galloping, was the motion of the horses; which took, as I believe, a roundabout way, to prevent being traced.

Think, my dear, what were my thoughts on alighting from the chariot; having no attendant of my own sex; neither hood nor hat, nor anything but a handkerchief about my neck and shoulders: and in such a foam the horses, that every one in the inn we put up at guessed (they could not do otherwise) that I was a young giddy creature, who had run away from her friends. This it was,

easy to see, by their whispering and gaping ; more of the people of the house also coming in by turns, than were necessary for the attendance.

The mistress of the house, whom he sent in to me, showed me another apartment ; and, seeing me ready to faint, brought me hartshorn and water ; and the moment she was gone, fastening the door, I threw myself into an old great chair, and gave way to a violent flood of tears ; which a little relieved me.

Mr. Lovelace, sooner than I wished, sent up the gentlewoman, who pressed me, in his name, to admit my brother, or to come down to him : for he had told her, I was his sister ; and that he had brought me, against my will, and without warning, from a friend's house, where I had been all the winter, in order to prevent my marrying against the consent of my friends ; to whom he was now conducting me ; and that, having given me no time for a travelling dress, I was greatly offended at him.

The room I was in being a bedchamber, I chose to go down, at his repeated message, attended by the mistress of the house, to that in which he was. He approached me with great respect, yet not exceeding a brotherly politeness, where a brother is polite ; and, calling me his dearest sister, asked after the state of my mind ; and hoped I would forgive him ; for never brother half so well loved a sister, as he me.

A wretch ! How naturally did he fall into the character, although I was so much out of mine !

When we were alone, he besought me (I cannot say but with all the tokens of a passionate and respectful tenderness) to be better reconciled to myself, and to him : he repeated all the vows of honour and inviolable affection that he ever made me : he promised to be wholly governed by me in every future step : he asked me to give him leave to propose, whether I chose to set out next day to either of his aunts ?



I was silent. I knew not what to say, nor what to do.

Whether I chose to have private lodgings procured for me, in either of those ladies' neighbourhood, as were once my thoughts?

In lodgings, I said, anywhere, where he was not to be.

If he might deliver his opinion, he said, it was, that, since I declined going to any of his relations, London was the only place in the world to be private in. Every new-comer in a country town or village excited a curiosity: a person of my figure (and many compliments he made me) would excite more. Even messages and letters, where none used to be brought, would occasion inquiry. He had not provided a lodging anywhere, supposing I would choose to go either to London, where accommodations of that sort might be fixed upon in an hour's time, or to Lady Betty's; or to Lord M.'s Hertfordshire seat, where was housekeeper an excellent woman, Mrs. Greme, such another as my Norton.

To be sure, I said, if I were pursued, it would be in their first passion; and some one of his relations' houses would be the place they would expect to find me at—I knew not what to do.

My pleasure should determine him, he said, be it what it would. Only that I were safe, was all he was solicitous about. He had lodgings in town; but he did not offer to propose them. He knew I would have more objection to go to them, than I could have to go to Lord M.'s, or to Lady Betty's.

No doubt of it, I replied, with such an indignation in my manner, as made him run over with professions, that he was far from proposing them, or wishing for my acceptance of them. And again he repeated, that my honour and safety were all he was solicitous about; assuring me, that my will should be a law to him in every particular.

I was too peevish, and too much afflicted, and indeed

too much incensed against him, to take well anything he said.

I thought myself, I said, extremely unhappy. I knew not what to determine upon: my reputation now, no doubt, utterly ruined: destitute of clothes; unfit to be seen by anybody: my very indigence, as I might call it, proclaiming my folly to every one who saw me; who would suppose that I had been taken at advantage, or had given an undue one; and had no power over either my will or my actions: that I could not but think I had been dealt artfully with:—that he had seemed to have taken, what he might suppose, the just measure of my weakness, founded on my youth and inexperience: that I could not forgive myself for meeting him: that my heart bled for the distresses of my father and mother, on this occasion: that I would give the world, and all my hopes in it, to have been still in my father's house, whatever had been my usage: that, let him protest and vow what he would, I saw something low and selfish in his love, that he could study to put a young creature upon making such a sacrifice of her duty and conscience: when a person actuated by a generous love, must seek to oblige the object of it, in everything essential to her honour, and to her peace of mind.

Then he began again to vow the sincerity of his intentions.

But I took him up short: I am willing to believe you, sir. It would be insupportable but to suppose there were a necessity for such solemn declarations. (At this he seemed to collect himself, as I may say, into a little more circumspection.) If I thought there were, I would not sit with you here, in a public inn, I assure you, although cheated hither, as far as I know, by methods (you must excuse me, sir) which but to suspect, will hardly let me have patience either with you or with myself. But no more of this just now: let me, I beseech you, good sir,

bowing (I was very angry!) let me only know whether you intend to leave me; or whether I have only escaped from one confinement to another?

Cheated hither, as far as you know, madam! Let you know if you have only escaped from one confinement to another—amazing! perfectly amazing! And can there be a necessity for me to answer this? You are absolutely your own mistress. It were very strange, if you were not. The moment you are in a place of safety, I will leave you. To one condition only, give me leave to beg your consent: it is this: that you will be pleased, now you are so entirely in your own power, to renew a promise voluntarily made before; voluntarily, or I would not now presume to request it; for although I would not be thought capable of growing upon concession, yet I cannot bear to think of losing the ground your goodness had given me room to hope I had gained; “that, make up how you please with your relations, you will never marry any other man, while I am living and single, unless I should be so wicked as to give new cause for high displeasure.”

I hesitate not to confirm this promise, sir, upon your own condition. In what manner do you expect me to confirm it?

Only, madam, by your word.

Then I never will.

He had the assurance (I was now in his power) to salute me as a sealing of my promise, as he called it. His motion was so sudden, that I was not aware of it. It would have looked affected to be very angry; yet I could not be pleased, considering this as a leading freedom, from a spirit so audacious and encroaching: and he might see, that I was not.

I broke from him to write to you my preceding letter; but refused to send it by his servant, as I told you. The mistress of the house helped me to a messenger, who was to carry what you should give him to Lord M.'s seat in



Hertfordshire, directed for Mrs. Greme the housekeeper there. And early in the morning, for fear of pursuit, we were to set out that way: and there he proposed to exchange the chariot-and-six for a chaise-and-pair of his own, which he had at that seat, as it would be a less noticed conveyance.

I looked over my little stock of money; and found it to be no more than seven guineas and some silver: the rest of my stock was but fifty guineas, and that five more than I thought it was, when my sister challenged me as to the sum I had by me: and those I left in my escritoire, little intending to go away with him.

Before five o'clock (Tuesday morning) the maid-servant came up to tell me my brother was ready, and that breakfast also waited for me in the parlour. I went down with a heart as heavy as my eyes, and received great acknowledgments and compliments from him on being so soon dressed, and ready (as he interpreted it) to continue our journey.

He had the thought which I had not (for what had I to do with thinking, who had it not when I stood most in need of it?) to purchase for me a velvet hood, and a short cloak, trimmed with silver, without saying anything to me. He must reward himself, the artful encroacher said, before the landlady and her maids and niece, for his forethought; and would salute his pretty sullen sister! He took his reward; and, as he said, a tear with it. While he assured me, still before them (a vile wretch!) that I had nothing to fear from meeting with parents who so dearly loved me.

He proposed, and I consented, to put up at an inn in the neighbourhood of the Lawn (as he called Lord M.'s seat in this county) since I chose not to go thither. And here I got two hours to myself; which I told him I should pass in writing another letter to you (meaning my narrative, which, though greatly fatigued, I had begun at

St. Alban's) and in one to my sister, to apprise the family (whether they were solicitous about it or not) that I was well ; and to beg that my clothes, some particular books, and the fifty guineas I had left in my escritoire, might be sent me.

He asked, if I had considered whither to have them directed ?

Indeed not I, I told him : I was a stranger to ——

So was he, he interrupted me ; but it struck him by chance ——

Wicked story-teller !

But, added he, I will tell you, madam, how it shall be managed. If you don't choose to go to London, it is, nevertheless, best that your relations should think you there ; for then they will absolutely despair of finding you. If you write, be pleased to direct, to be left for you, at Mr. Osgood's, near Soho Square. Mr. Osgood is a man of reputation : and this will effectually amuse them.

Amuse them, my dear ! Amuse whom ?—My father ! —my uncles ! But it must be so !—All his expedients ready, you see !

I had no objection to this : and I have written accordingly. But what answer I shall have, or whether any, that is what gives me no small anxiety.

Mr. Lovelace staid out about an hour and half ; and then came in ; impatiently sending up to me no less than four times, to desire admittance. But I sent him word as often, that I was busy ; and at last, that I should be so, till dinner were ready. He then hastened that, as I heard him now and then, with a hearty curse upon the cook and waiters.

Mrs. Greme came to pay her duty to me, as Mr. Lovelace called it ; and was very urgent with me to go to her lord's house ; letting me know what handsome things she had heard her lord, and his two nieces, and all the family,

say of me ; and what wishes for several months past they had put up for the honour she now hoped would soon be done them all.

This gave me some satisfaction, as it confirmed from the mouth of a very good sort of woman all that Mr. Lovelace had told me.

Upon inquiry about a private lodging, she recommended me to a sister-in-law of hers, eight miles from thence—where I now am. And what pleased me the better was, that Mr. Lovelace (of whom I could see she was infinitely observant) obliged her, of his own motion, to accompany me in the chaise ; himself riding on horseback, with his two servants, and one of Lord M.'s. And here we arrived about four o'clock.

The people of the house here are very honest-looking industrious folks : Mrs. Sorlings is the gentlewoman's name. The farm seems well stocked, and thriving. She is a widow ; has two sons, men grown, who vie with each other which shall take most pains in promoting the common good ; and they are both of them, I already see, more respectful to two modest young women, their sisters, than my brother was to his sister.

I believe I must stay here longer than at first I thought I should.

I have not the better opinion of Mr. Lovelace for his extravagant volubility. He is too full of professions. He says too many fine things of me, and to me. True respect, true value, I think, lies not in words : words cannot express it : the silent awe, the humble, the doubting eye, and even the hesitating voice, better show it by much, than, as our beloved Shakespeare says,

—The rattling tongue  
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

The man indeed at times is all upon the ecstatic ; one of his phrases : but, to my shame and confusion, I must say, that I know too well to what to attribute his trans-

ports. In one word, it is to his triumph, my dear. And, to impute it to that perhaps equally exposes my vanity, and condemns my folly.

I shall send this, as my former, by a poor man, who travels every day with pedlary matters. He will leave it at Mrs. Knollys's, as you direct.

If you hear anything of my father and mother, and of their health, and how my friends were affected by my unhappy step, pray be so good as to write me a few lines by the messenger, if his waiting for them can be known to you.

I am afraid to ask you, whether, upon reading that part of my narrative already in your hands, you think any sort of extenuation lies for

Your unhappy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

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MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*Tuesday, Wednesday, April 11, 12.*

**Y**OU claim my promise, that I will be as particular as possible, in all that passes between me and my goddess. Indeed, I never had a more illustrious subject to exercise my pen upon. And, moreover, I have leisure ; for by her good will, my access would be as difficult to her, as that of the humblest slave to an eastern monarch.

I told thee my reasons for not going in search of a letter of countermand. I was right ; for if I had, I should have found such a one ; and had I received it, she would not have met me. Did she think, that after I had been more than once disappointed, I would not keep her to her promise ; that I would not hold her to it, when I had got her in so deeply ?

The moment I heard the door unbolt, I was sure of her. That motion made my heart bound to my throat. But

when that was followed with the presence of my charmer, flashing upon me all at once in a flood of brightness, sweetly dressed, though all unprepared for a journey, I trod air, and hardly thought myself a mortal.

Thou shalt judge of her dress, as, at the moment I first beheld her, she appeared to me, and as, upon a nearer observation, she really was. I am a critic, thou knowest, in women's dresses. Many a one have I taught to dress, and helped to undress. But there is such a native elegance in this lady, that she surpasses all that I could imagine surpassing. But then her person adorns what she wears, more than dress can adorn her ; and that's her excellence.

Expect, therefore, a faint sketch of her admirable person with her dress.

Her wax-like flesh (for, after all, flesh and blood I think she is) by its delicacy and firmness, answers for the soundness of her health. Thou hast often heard me launch out in praise of her complexion. I never in my life beheld a skin so illustriously fair. The lily and the driven snow it is nonsense to talk of: her lawn and her laces one might indeed compare to those: but what a whited wall would a woman appear to be, who had a complexion which would justify such unnatural comparisons? But this lady is all glowing, all charming flesh and blood ; yet so clear, that every meandering vein is to be seen in all the lovely parts of her which custom permits to be visible.

Thou hast heard me also describe the wavy ringlets of her shining hair, needing neither art nor powder ; of itself an ornament, defying all other ornaments ; wantoning in and about a neck that is beautiful beyond description.

Her head-dress was a Brussels-lace mob, peculiarly adapted to the charming air and turn of her features. A sky-blue riband illustrated that. But, although the weather was somewhat sharp, she had not on either hat or hood ; for, besides that she loves to use herself hardily (by which means, and by a temperance truly exemplary,

she is allowed to have given high health and vigour to an originally tender constitution) she seems to have intended to show me, that she was determined not to stand to her appointment. O Jack ! that such a sweet girl should be a rogue !

Her morning-gown was a pale primrose-coloured parduasoy : the cuffs and robings curiously embroidered by the fingers of this ever-charming Arachne, in a running pattern of violets and their leaves ; the light in the flowers silver ; gold in the leaves. A pair of diamond snaps in her ears. A white handkerchief wrought by the same inimitable fingers, concealed—O Belford ! what still more inimitable beauties did it not conceal !—And I saw, all the way we rode, the bounding heart (by its throbbing motions I saw it!) dancing beneath the charming umbrage.

Her ruffles were the same as her mob. Her apron a flowered lawn. Her coat white satin, quilted : blue satin her shoes, braided with the same colour, without lace ; for what need has the prettiest foot in the world of ornament ? Neat buckles in them : and on her charming arms a pair of black velvet glove-like muffs, of her own invention ; for she makes and gives fashions as she pleases.—Her hands velvet of themselves, thus uncovered the freer to be grasped by those of her adorer.

By her dress, I saw, as I observed before, how unprepared she was for a journey ; and not doubting her intention once more to disappoint me, I would have drawn her after me. Then began a contention the most vehement that ever I had with woman. It would pain thy friendly heart to be told the infinite trouble I had with her. I begged, I prayed ; on my knees, yet in vain, I begged and prayed her to answer her own appointment : and had I not happily provided for such a struggle, knowing whom I had to deal with, I had certainly failed in my design ; and as certainly would have accompanied her in, without

thee and thy brethren: And who knows what might have been the consequence?

But my honest agent answering my signal, though not quite so soon as I expected, in the manner thou knowest I had prescribed, They are coming! They are coming!—Fly, fly, my beloved creature, cried I, drawing my sword with a flourish, as if I would have slain half a hundred of the supposed intruders; and, seizing her trembling hands, I drew her after me so swiftly, that my feet, winged by love, could hardly keep pace with her feet, agitated by fear.—And so I became her emperor.

I'll tell thee all, when I see thee: and thou shalt judge then of my difficulties, and of her perverseness. And thou wilt rejoice with me at my conquest over such a watchful and open-eyed charmer.

But seest thou not now (as I think I do) the wind-outstripping fair one flying from her love to her love?—Is there not such a game?—Nay, flying from friends she was resolved not to abandon, to the man she was determined not to go off with?—The sex! the sex, all over!—Charming contradiction!—Hah, hah, hah, hah!—I must here—I must here, lay down my pen, to hold my sides; for I must have my laugh out now the fit is upon me.

“Thou wilt not dare, methinks I hear thee say, to attempt to reduce such a goddess as this, to a standard unworthy of her excellencies. It is impossible, Lovelace, that thou shouldst intend to break through oaths and protestations so solemn.”

That I did not intend it, is certain. That I do intend it, I cannot (my heart, my reverence for her, will not let me) say. But knowest thou not my aversion to the state of shackles?—And is she not in my power?

“And wilt thou, Lovelace, abuse that power, which”—

Which what, Belford?—Which I obtained not by her own consent, but against it.

Then I fancy, by her circumspection, and her continual

grief, that she expects some mischief from me. I don't care to disappoint anybody I have a value for.

How it swells my pride, to have been able to outwit such a vigilant charmer! I am taller by half a yard in my imagination than I was. I look down upon everybody now. Last night I was still more extravagant. I took off my hat, as I walked, to see if the lace were not scorched, supposing it had brushed down a star; and, before I put it on again, in mere wantonness, and heart's ease, I was for buffeting the moon.

In short, my whole soul is joy. When I go to bed, I laugh myself asleep: and I awake either laughing or singing—Yet nothing nearly in view, neither—For why?—I am not yet reformed enough!

O my charmer, look to it! Abate of thy haughty airs. Value not thyself upon thy sincerity, if thou art indifferent to me! I will not bear it now. Art thou not in my power?—Nor, if thou lovest me, think, that the female affectation of denying thy love, will avail thee now, with a heart so proud and so jealous as mine? Remember, moreover, that all thy family sins are upon thy head!—

But ah! Jack, when I see my angel, when I am admitted to the presence of this radiant beauty, what will become of all this vapouring?

But, be my end what it may, I am obliged, by thy penetration, fair one, to proceed by the sap. Fair and softly. A wife at any time! Marriage will be always in my power.

But how I ramble!—This it is to be in such a situation that I know not what to resolve upon.



MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Wednesday Night, April 12.*



HAVE your narrative, my dear. You are the same noble creature you ever were. Above disguise, above art, above attempting to extenuate a failing.

You lay the blame so properly and so unsparingly upon your meeting him, that nothing can be added to that subject by your worst enemies, were they to see what you have written.

I am not surprised, now I have read your narrative, that so bold, and so contriving a man—I am forced to break off——

You stood it out much better and longer—Here again comes my bustling, jealous mother!

But I should think myself the unworthiest of creatures, could I be brought to slight a dear friend, and such a meritorious one, in her distress.—I would die first—And so I told my mother. And I have desired her not to watch me in my retired hours; nor to insist upon my lying with her constantly, which she now does more earnestly than ever. 'Twere better, I told her, that the Harlowe-Betty were borrowed to be set over me.

Mr. Hickman, who greatly honours you, has, unknown to me, interposed so warmly in your favour with my mother, that it makes for him no small merit with me.

I cannot, at present, write to every particular, unless I would be in set defiance.—Teaze, teaze, teaze, for ever! The same thing, though answered fifty times over, in every hour to be repeated—Lord bless me! what a life must my poor father—But let me remember to whom I am writing.

Your father is all rage and violence. He ought, I am sure, to turn his rage inward. All your family accuse you

of acting with deep art ; and are put upon supposing that you are actually every hour exulting over them, with your man, in the success of it.

They all pretend now, that your trial of Wednesday was to be the last.

Advantage would indeed, my mother owns, have been taken of your yielding, if you had yielded. But had you not been to be prevailed upon, they would have given up their scheme, and taken your promise for renouncing Lovelace—Believe them who will !

They own, however, that a minister was to be present—Mr. Solmes was to be at hand—and your father was previously to try his authority over you, in order to make you sign the settlements—all of it a romantic contrivance of your wild-headed foolish brother, I make no doubt. Is it likely, that he and Bell would have given way to your restoration to favour, supposing it in their power to hinder it, on any other terms than those their hearts had been so long set upon ?

How they took your flight, when they found it out, may be better supposed than described.

Your brother, at first, ordered horses and armed men to be got ready for a pursuit. Solmes and your uncle Tony were to be of the party. But your mother and your aunt Hervey dissuaded them from it, for fear of adding evil to evil ; not doubting but Lovelace had taken measures to support himself in what he had done ; and especially when the servant declared, that he saw you run with him as fast as you could set foot to ground ; and that there were several armed men on horseback at a small distance off.

My mother's absence was owing to her suspicion, that the Knollyses were to assist in our correspondence. She made them a visit upon it. She does everything at once. And they have promised, that no more letters shall be left there, without her knowledge.

But Mr. Hickman has engaged one Filmer, a husband-

man in the lane we call Finch-lane, near us, to receive them. Thither you will be pleased to direct yours, under cover, to Mr. John Soberton; and Mr. Hickman himself will call for them there; and there shall leave mine. It goes against me too, to make him so useful to me.—He looks already so proud upon it!—I shall have him [who knows?] give himself airs.—He had best consider, that the favour he has been long aiming at, may put him into a very dangerous, a very ticklish situation. He that can oblige, may disoblige.—Happy for some people not to have it in their power to offend!

As this letter will apprise you of an alteration in the place to which you must direct your next, I send it by a friend of Mr. Hickman, who may be depended upon. He has business in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Sorlings; and he knows her. He will return to Mr. Hickman this night, and bring back any letter you shall have ready to send, or can get ready. It is moonlight. He'll not mind waiting for you. I choose not to send by any of Mr. Hickman's servants—at present, however. Every hour is now, or may be, important; and may make an alteration in your resolutions necessary.

Adieu, my dear. May Heaven preserve you, and restore you with honour as unsullied as your mind, to

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Thursday Afternoon, April 13.*



AM infinitely concerned, my ever-dear and ever-kind friend, that I am the sad occasion of the displeasure between your mother and you.—How many persons have I made unhappy!

I will acquaint you, as you desire, with all that passes between Mr. Lovelace and me. Hitherto I have not dis-

covered anything in his behaviour that is very exceptionable. Yet I cannot say, that I think the respect he shows me, an easy, unrestrained, and natural respect, although I can hardly tell where the fault is.

Indeed, indeed, my dear, I could tear my hair, on reconsidering what you write (as to the probability that the dreaded Wednesday was more dreaded than it needed to be) to think, that I should be thus tricked by this man; and that, in all likelihood, through his vile agent Joseph Leman. So premeditated and elaborate a wickedness as it must be!—Must I not, with such a man, be wanting to myself, if I were not jealous and vigilant?—Yet what a life to live for a spirit so open, and naturally so unsuspecting, as mine?

I am obliged to Mr. Hickman for the assistance he is so kindly ready to give to our correspondence. He is so little likely to make to himself an additional merit with the daughter upon it, that I shall be very sorry, if he risk anything with the mother by it.

I enclose the copy of my letter to my sister, which you are desirous to see. You will observe, that although I have not demanded my estate in form, and of my trustees, yet that I have hinted at leave to retire to it. How joyfully would I keep my word, if they would accept of the offer I renew?—It was not proper, I believe you will think, on many accounts, to own that I was carried off against my inclination. I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever-obliged and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

TO MISS ARABELLA HARLOWE.

[*Inclosed to Miss Howe in the preceding.*]

*St. Alban's, April 11.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have, I confess, been guilty of an action which carries with it a rash and undutiful appearance. And I should have thought it an inexcusable one, had I been used with

less severity than I have been of late ; and had I not had too great reason to apprehend, that I was to be made a sacrifice to a man I could not bear to think of. But what is done, is done—perhaps I could wish it had not ; and that I had trusted to the relenting of my dear and honoured parents.—Yet this from no other motives, but those of duty to them.—To whom I am ready to return (if I may not be permitted to retire to *The Grove*) on conditions which I before offered to comply with.

Nor shall I be in any sort of dependence upon the person by whose means I have taken this truly reluctant step, inconsistent with any reasonable engagement I shall enter into, if I am not farther precipitated. Let me not have it to say, now at this important crisis ! that I have a sister, but not a friend in that sister. My reputation, dearer to me than life (whatever you may imagine from the step I have taken), is suffering. A little lenity will, even yet, in a great measure, restore it, and make that pass for a temporary misunderstanding only, which otherwise will be a stain as durable as life, upon a creature who has already been treated with great unkindness, to use no harsher a word.

For your own sake therefore, for my brother's sake, by whom (I must say) I have been thus precipitated, and for all the family's sake, aggravate not my fault, if, on recollecting everything, you think it one ; nor by widening the unhappy difference, expose a sister for ever—prays

Your affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

I shall take it for a very great favour, to have my clothes directly sent me, together with fifty guineas, which you will find in my *escritoire* (of which I enclose the key) ; as also the divinity and miscellany classes of my little library ; and, if it be thought fit, my jewels—directed for me, to be left, till called for, at *Mr. Osgood's*, near *Soho Square*.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*April 12.*

BEGIN to stagger in my resolutions. Ever averse as I was to the hymeneal shackles, how easily will old prejudices recur! Heaven give me the heart to be honest to my Clarissa!—There's a prayer, Jack! If I should not be heard, what a sad thing would that be, for the most admirable of women!—Yet, as I do not often trouble Heaven with my prayers, who knows but this may be granted?

But there lie before me such charming difficulties, such scenery for intrigue, for stratagem, for enterprise—what a horrible thing, that my talents point all that way!—When I know what is honourable and just; and would almost wish to be honest?—Almost, I say; for such a varlet am I, that I cannot altogether wish it, for the soul of me!—Such a triumph over the whole sex, if I can subdue this lady!—My maiden vow, as I may call it!—For did not the sex begin with me?—And does this lady spare me?—Thinkest thou, Jack, that I should have spared my rosebud, had I been set at defiance thus?—Her grandmother besought me, at first, to spare her rosebud; and when a girl is put, or puts herself, into a man's power, what can he wish for further? while I always considered opposition and resistance as a challenge to do my worst.

Then she cuts me short in all my ardours. To vow fidelity, is by a cursed turn upon me, to show, that there is reason, in my own opinion, for doubt of it.—The very same reflection upon me once before. In my power, or out of my power, all one to this lady.—So, Belford, my poor vows are crammed down my throat, before they can well rise to my lips. And what can a lover say to his mistress, if she will neither let him lie nor swear?

One little piece of artifice I had recourse to : when she pushed so hard for me to leave her, I made a request to her, upon a condition she could not refuse ; and pretended as much gratitude upon her granting it, as if it were a favour of the last consequence.

And what was this ? but to promise what she had before promised, “ Never to marry any other man, while I am living, and single, unless I should give her cause for high disgust against me.” This, you know, was promising nothing, because she could be offended at any time ; and was to be the sole judge of the offence. But it showed her, how reasonable and just my expectations were ; and that I was no encroacher.

She consented ; and asked, what security I expected ?

Her word only.

She gave me her word : but I besought her excuse for sealing it : and in the same moment (since to have waited for consent would have been asking for a denial) saluted her. And, believe me, or not, but, as I hope to live, it was the first time I had the courage to touch her charming lips with mine. And this I tell thee, Belford, that that single pressure (as modestly put too, as if I were as much a virgin as herself, that she might not be afraid of me another time) delighted me more than ever I was delighted by the ultimatum with any other woman.—So precious do awe, reverence, and apprehended prohibition, make a favour !

And now, Belford, I am only afraid, that I shall be too cunning ; for she does not at present talk enough for me. I hardly know what to make of the dear creature yet.

She must needs be unprovided of money : but has too much pride to accept of any from me. I would have had her to go to town (to town, if possible, must I get her to consent to go) in order to provide herself with the richest of silks which that can afford. But neither is this to be assented to. And yet, as my intelligence acquaints me,

her implacable relations are resolved to distress her all they can.

These wretches have been most gloriously raving, ever since her flight ; and still, thank heaven, continue to rave ; And will, I hope, for a twelvemonth to come. Now, at last, it is my day !

I hope I shall be honest, I once more say : but as we frail mortals are not our own masters at all times, I must endeavour to keep the dear creature unapprehensive, until I can get her to our acquaintance's in London, or to some other safe place there. Should I, in the interim, give her the least room for suspicion ; or offer to restrain her ; she can make her appeals to strangers, and call the country in upon me ; and, perhaps, throw herself upon her relations on their own terms. And were I now to lose her, how unworthy should I be to be the prince and leader of such a confraternity as ours !—How unable to look up among men ! or to show my face among women !

As things at present stand, she dare not own, that she went off against her own consent ; and I have taken care to make all the implacables believe, that she escaped with it.

She has received an answer from Miss Howe, to the letter written to her from St. Alban's.

Whatever are the contents, I know not ; but she was drowned in tears on the perusal of it. And I am the sufferer.

Miss Howe is a charming creature too ; but confoundedly smart and spiritfui. I am a good deal afraid of her.

Mrs. Howe is impatient of contradiction. So is Miss. A young lady who is sensible that she has all the maternal requisites herself, to be under maternal control ;—fine ground for a man of intrigue to build upon !—A mother over-notable ; a daughter over-sensible ; and their Hickman, who is—over-neither ; but merely a passive—

Only that I have an object still more desirable !—



Yet how unhappy, that these two young ladies lived so near each other, and are so well acquainted ! Else how charmingly might I have managed them both !

But one man cannot have every woman worth having—pity though—when the man is such a very clever fellow !

Never was there such a pair of scribbling lovers as we ;—yet perhaps whom it so much concerns to keep from each other what each writes. She won't have anything else to do. I would, if she'd let me. I am not reformed enough for a husband.—Patience is a virtue, Lord M. says. Slow and sure, is another of his sentences. If I had not a great deal of that virtue, I should not have waited the Harlowes' own time of ripening into execution my plots upon themselves, and upon their goddess-daughter.

My charmer has written to her sister for her clothes, for some gold, and for some of her books. What books can tell her more than she knows ? But I can. So she had better study me.

I proposed, and she consented, that her clothes, or whatever else her relations should think fit to send her, should be directed to thy cousin Osgood's. Let a special messenger, at my charge, bring me any letter, or portable parcel, that shall come. If not portable, give me notice of it. But thou'lt have no trouble of this sort from her relations, I dare be sworn.

Another thing remember ; I have changed my name : changed it without an act of Parliament. " Robert Huntingford " it is now. " To be left, till called for, at the pot-house at Hertford."

Upon naming thee, she asked thy character. I gave thee a better than thou deservest, in order to do credit to myself. Yet I told her, that you wert an awkward fellow ; and this to do credit to thee, that she may not, if ever she be to see thee, expect a cleverer man than she'll find.

Yet thy apparent awkwardness befriends thee not a little ; for wert thou a sightly mortal, people would discover nothing extraordinary in thee, when they conversed with thee : whereas seeing a bear, they are surprised to find in thee anything that is like a man. Felicitate thyself then upon thy defects ; which are evidently thy principal perfections ; and which occasion thee a distinction which otherwise thou wouldst never have.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Thursday Night, April 13.*



HAVE had another very warm debate with Mr. Lovelace. It brought on the subject which you advised me not to decline, when it handsomely offered. And I want to have either your acquittal or blame for having suffered it to go off without effect.

The impatient wretch sent up to me several times, while I was writing my last to you, to desire my company.

When I had finished the letter, and given it to Mr. Hickman's friend, I was going up again, and had got up half a dozen stairs ; when he besought me to stop, and hear what he had to say.

Nothing, as I said, to any new purpose had he to offer ; but complainings ; and those in a manner, and with an air, as I thought, that bordered upon insolence. He could not live, he told me, unless he had more of my company, and of my indulgence too, than I had yet given him.

Hereupon I stepped down, and into the parlour, not a little out of humour with him ; and the more, as he has very quietly taken up his quarters here, without talking of removing, as he had promised.

I told him, that I desired his absence, of all things. I saw not, I said, that my friends thought it worth their while to give me disturbance : therefore, if he would set

out for London, or Berkshire, or whither he pleased, it would be most agreeable to me, and most reputable too.

He would do so, he said, he intended to do so, the moment I was in a place to my liking—in a place convenient for me.

I told him plainly that I should never be in humour with myself for meeting him ; nor with him, for seducing me away : that my regrets increased, instead of diminished : that my reputation was wounded : that nothing I could do would now retrieve it : and that he must not wonder, if I every hour grew more and more uneasy both with myself and him : that upon the whole, I was willing to take care of myself ; and when he had left me, I should best know what to resolve upon, and whither to go.

He wished, he said, he were at liberty, without giving me offence, or being thought to intend to infringe the articles I had stipulated and insisted upon, to make one humble proposal to me. But the sacred regard he was determined to pay to all my injunctions (reluctantly as I had on Monday last put it into his power to serve me) would not permit him to make it, unless I would promise to excuse him, if I did not approve of it.

I asked, in some confusion, what he would say ?

He prefaced and paraded on ; and then out came, with great diffidence, and many apologies, and a bashfulness which sat very awkwardly upon him, a proposal of speedy solemnization : which, he said, would put all right ; and make my first three or four months (which otherwise must be passed in obscurity and apprehension) a round of visits and visitings to and from all his relations ; to Miss Howe ; to whom I pleased : and would pave the way to the reconciliation I had so much at heart.

Your advice had great weight with me just then, as well as his reasons, and the consideration of my unhappy situation : But what could I say ? I wanted somebody to speak for me.

The man saw I was not angry at his motion. I only blushed ; and that I am sure I did up to the ears ; and looked silly, and like a fool.

He wants not courage. Would he have had me catch at his first, at his very first word ?—I was silent too—and do not the bold sex take silence for a mark of favour ?—Then, so lately in my father's house ! Having also declared to him in my letters, before I had your advice, that I would not think of marriage till he had passed through a state of probation, as I may call it—how was it possible I could encourage, with very ready signs of approbation, such an early proposal ? especially so soon after the free treatment he had provoked from me. If I were to die, I could not.

He looked at me with great confidence ; as if (notwithstanding his contradictory bashfulness) he would look me through ; while my eye but now and then could glance at him.—He begged my pardon with great humility : he was afraid I would think he deserved no other answer, but that of a contemptuous silence. True love was fearful of offending (take care, Mr. Lovelace, thought I, how yours is tried by that rule). Indeed so sacred a regard (foolish man !) would he have to all my declarations made before I honoured him—

I would hear him no further ; but withdrew in a confusion too visible, and left him to make his nonsensical flourishes to himself.

I will only add, that, if he really wishes for a speedy solemnization, he never could have had a luckier time to press for my consent to it. But he let it go off ; and indignation has taken place of it : and now it shall be a point with me, to get him at distance from me.

I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever faithful and obliged

CL. H.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*Thursday, April 13.*

**I** SHALL need nothing but patience, in order to have all power. What if all these complaints of a character wounded; these declarations of increasing regrets for meeting me; of resentments never to be got over for my seducing her away; these angry commands to leave her:—What shall we say if all were to mean nothing but matrimony? And what if my forbearing to enter upon that subject come out to be the true cause of her petulance and uneasiness?

I had once before played about the skirts of the irrevocable obligation; but thought myself obliged to speak in clouds, and to run away from the subject, as soon as she took my meaning, lest she should imagine it to be ungenerously urged, now she was in some sort in my power, as she had forbid me, beforehand, to touch upon it, till I were in a state of visible reformation, and till a reconciliation with her friends were probable. But now, out-argued, out-talented, and pushed so vehemently to leave one whom I had no good pretence to hold, if she would go; and who could so easily, if 'I had given her cause to doubt, have thrown herself into other protection, or have returned to Harlowe Place and Solmes; I spoke out upon the subject, and offered reasons, although with infinite doubt and hesitation (lest she should be offended at me, Belford!) why she should assent to the legal tie, and make me the happiest of men. And O how the mantled cheek, the down-cast eye, the silent, yet trembling lip, and the heaving bosom, a sweet collection of heightened beauties, gave evidence that the tender was not mortally offensive!

But let me tell thee, charming maid, if thy wishes are at all to be answered, that thou hast yet to account to me for thy reluctance to go off with me, at a crisis when thy

going off was necessary to avoid being forced into the nuptial fetters with a wretch, that were he not thy aversion, thou wert no more honest to thy own merit, than to me.

I am accustomed to be preferred, let me tell thee, by thy equals in rank too, though thy inferiors in merit ; but who is not so ? And shall I marry a woman, who has given me reason to doubt the preference she has for me ?

No, my dearest love, I have too sacred a regard for thy injunctions, to let them be broken through, even by thyself. Nor will I take in thy full meaning by blushing silence only. Nor shalt thou give me room to doubt whether it be necessity or love, that inspires this condescending impulse.

Upon these principles, what had I to do, but to construe her silence into contemptuous displeasure ? And I begged her pardon for making a motion, which I had so much reason to fear would offend her : For the future I would pay a sacred regard to her previous injunctions, and prove to her by all my conduct the truth of that observation, that true love is always fearful of offending.

And what could the lady say to this ? methinks thou askest.

Say !—Why she looked vexed, disconcerted, teased ; was at a loss, as I thought, whether to be more angry with herself, or with me. She turned about, however, as if to hide a starting tear ; and drew a sigh into two or three but just audible quavers, trying to suppress it ; and withdrew—leaving me master of the field.

But is it not the divine Clarissa (Harlowe let me not say ; my soul spurns them all but her) whom I am thus by implication threatening ?—If virtue be the true nobility, how is she ennobled, and how would an alliance with her ennoble, were not contempt due to the family from which she sprung, and prefers to me !

But again, let me stop.—Is there not something wrong,

has there not been something wrong, in this divine creature? And will not the reflections upon that wrong (what though it may be construed in my favour?) make me unhappy, when novelty has lost its charms, and when, mind and person, she is all my own? Libertines are nicer, if at all nice, than other men. They seldom meet with the stand of virtue in the women whom they attempt. And by the frailty of those they have triumphed over, they judge of all the rest. "Importunity and opportunity no woman is proof against, especially from a persevering lover, who knows how to suit temptations to inclinations:" this, thou knowest, is a prime article of the rake's creed.

To the test, then, as I said, since now I have the question brought home to me, whether I am to have a wife? And whether she be to be a wife at the first, or at the second hand?

I will proceed fairly. I will do the dear creature not only strict, but generous justice; for I will try her by her own judgment, as well as by our principles.

She blames herself for having corresponded with me, a man of free character; and one indeed whose first view it was, to draw her into this correspondence; and who succeeded in it, by means unknown to herself.

"Now, what were her inducements to this correspondence?" If not what her niceness makes her think blameworthy, why does she blame herself?

Well, but it will be said, that her principal view was, to prevent mischief between her brother and her other friends, and the man vilely insulted by them all.

But why should she be more concerned for the safety of others, than they were for their own? And had not the rencounter then happened? "Was a person of virtue to be prevailed upon to break through her apparent, her acknowledged duty, upon any consideration?" And if not was she to be so prevailed upon to prevent an apprehended evil only?

But shall we suppose another motive?—And that is love, a motive which all the world will excuse her for. “But let me tell all the world that do, not because they ought, but because all the world is apt to be misled by it.”

Let love then be the motive :—love of whom ? A Lovelace, is the answer.

“Is there but one Lovelace in the world ? May not more Lovelaces be attracted by so fine a figure ? By such exalted qualities ? It was her character that drew me to her : and it was her beauty and good sense, that riveted my chains : and now altogether make me think her a subject worthy of my attempts ; worthy of my ambition.”

“May there not be, I repeat, other Lovelaces ; other like intrepid persevering enterprizers ; although they may not go to work in the same way ?”

As to my Clarissa, I own, that I hardly think there ever was such an angel of a woman. But has she not, as above, already taken steps, which she herself condemns ? Steps, which the world and her own family did not think her capable of taking ? And for which her own family will not forgive her ?

Nor think it strange, that I refuse to hear anything pleaded in behalf of a standard virtue, from high provocations. “Are not provocations and temptations the tests of virtue ? A standard virtue must not be allowed to be provoked to destroy or annihilate herself.

“May not then the success of him, who could carry her thus far, be allowed to be an encouragement for him to try to carry her farther ?” ’Tis but to try. Is not then the whole sex concerned that this trial should be made ? And who is it that knows this lady, that would not stake upon her head the honour of the whole ?—Let her who would refuse it, come forth, and desire to stand in her place.

“What must that virtue be, which will not stand a trial ?—What that woman, who would wish to shun it ?”



Well then, a trial seems necessary for the further establishment of the honour of so excellent a creature.

But what, methinks thou askest, is to become of the lady, if she fail?

What?—Why will she not, “if once subdued, be always subdued?” Another of our libertine maxims.

And what an immense pleasure to a marriage-hater, what rapture to thought, to be able to prevail upon such a woman as Miss Clarissa Harlowe to live with him, without real change of name!

But if she resist—if nobly she stand her trial?—

Why then I will marry her; and bless my stars for such an angel of a wife.

But will she not hate thee?—Will she not refuse—

No, no, Jack!—Circumstanced and situated as we are, I am not afraid of that. And hate me! Why should she hate the man who loves her upon proof?

And then for a little hint at reprisal.—Am I not justified in my resolutions of trying her virtue; who is resolved, as I may say, to try mine? who has declared, that she will not marry me, till she has hopes of my reformation?

Nobody doubts, that she is to be my wife. Let her pass for such, when I give the word. “Meantime reformation shall be my stalking-horse; some one of the women in London, if I can get her thither, my bird.” And so much for this time.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Friday, April 14.*



WILL now give you the particulars of a conversation that has just passed between Mr. Lovelace and me; which I must call agreeable.

It began with his telling me, that he had just received intelligence, that my friends were on a sudden come to a

resolution, to lay aside all thoughts of pursuing me, or of getting me back: and that therefore he attended me to know my pleasure; and what I would do, or have him do?

Let me hear, said I, willing to try if he had any particular view, what you think most advisable?

'Tis very easy to say that, if I durst—if I might not offend you—if it were not to break conditions that shall be inviolable with me.

Say then, sir, what you would say. I can approve or disapprove, as I think fit.

Had not the man a fine opportunity here to speak out?—He had. And thus he used it.

To wave, madam, what I would say till I have more courage to speak out (more courage—Mr. Lovelace more courage, my dear!)—I will only propose what I think will be most agreeable to you—suppose, if you choose not to go to Lady Betty's, that you take a turn cross the country to Windsor?

Why to Windsor?

Because it is a pleasant place: because it lies in the way either to Berkshire, to Oxford, or to London: Berkshire, where Lord M. is at present: Oxford, in the neighbourhood of which lives Lady Betty: London, whither you may retire at your pleasure: or, if you will have it so, whither I may go, you staying at Windsor; and yet be within an easy distance of you, if anything should happen, or if your friends should change their new-taken resolution.

This proposal, however, displeased me not. But I said, my only objection was, the distance of Windsor from Miss Howe, of whom I should be glad to be always within two or three hours' reach by a messenger, if possible.

If I had thoughts of any other place than Windsor, or nearer to Miss Howe, he wanted but my commands, and would seek for proper accommodations: but, fix as I

pleased, farther or nearer, he had servants, and they had nothing else to do but to obey me.

A grateful thing then he named to me—to send for my Hannah, as soon as I should be fixed ; unless I would choose one of the young gentlewomen here to attend me ; both of whom, as I had acknowledged, were very obliging ; and he knew I had generosity enough to make it worth their while.

This of Hannah, he might see, I took very well. I said, I had thoughts of sending for her, as soon as I got to more convenient lodgings. As to these young gentlewomen, it were pity to break in upon that usefulness which the whole family were of to each other ; each having her proper part, and performing it with an agreeable alacrity : insomuch that I liked them all so well, that I could even pass my days among them were he to leave me ; by which means the lodgings would be more convenient to me than now they were.

This conversation was to be, all of it, in the main, agreeable. He asked, whether I would choose to lodge in the town of Windsor, or out of it ?

As near the castle, I said, as possible, for the convenience of going constantly to the public worship : an opportunity I had been long deprived of.

He should be very glad, he told me, if he could procure me accommodations in any one of the canons' houses ; which he imagined would be more agreeable to me than any other, on many accounts. And as he could depend upon my promise, never to have any other man but himself, on the condition to which he had so cheerfully subscribed, he should be easy ; since it was now his part, in earnest, to set about recommending himself to my favour, by the only way he knew it could be done. Adding, with a very serious air—I am but a young man, madam ; but I have run a long course : let not your purity of mind incline you to despise me for the acknowledgment. It is

high time to be weary of it, and to reform ; since, like Solomon, I can say, there is nothing new under the sun : but that it is my belief, that a life of virtue can afford such pleasures, on reflection, as will be for ever blooming, for ever new !

I was agreeably surprised. I looked at him, I believe, as if I doubted my ears and my eyes. His aspect however became his words.

I expressed my satisfaction in terms so agreeable to him, that he said, he found a delight in this early dawning of a better day to him, and in my approbation, which he had never received from the success of the most favoured of his pursuits.

Surely, my dear, the man must be in earnest. He could not have said this ; he could not have thought it, had he not. What followed made me still readier to believe him.

In the midst of my wild vagaries, said he, I have ever preserved a reverence for religion, and for religious men. I always called another cause, when any of my libertine companions, in pursuance of Lord Shaftesbury's test (which is a part of the rake's creed, and what I may call the whetstone of infidelity) endeavoured to turn the sacred subject into ridicule. On this very account I have been called by good men of the clergy, who nevertheless would have it, that I was a practical rake, the decent rake : and indeed I had too much pride in my shame, to disown the name of rake.

This, madam, I am the readier to confess, as it may give you hope, that the generous task of my reformation, which I flatter myself you will have the goodness to undertake, will not be so difficult a one as you may have imagined ; for it has afforded me some pleasure in my retired hours, when a temporary remorse has struck me for anything I have done amiss, that I should one day take delight in another course of life : for unless we can, I dare say, no

durable good is to be expected from the endeavour. Your example, madam, must do all, must confirm all.

The divine grace, or favour, Mr. Lovelace, must do all, and confirm all. You know not how much you please me, that I can talk to you in this dialect.

I hope, my dear Miss Howe, I shall not have occasion, in my future letters, to contradict these promising appearances. Should I have nothing on his side to combat with, I shall be very far from being happy, from the sense of my fault, and the indignation of all my relations.—So shall not fail of condign punishment for it, from my inward remorse on account of my forfeited character. But the least ray of hope could not dart in upon me, without my being willing to lay hold of the very first opportunity to communicate it to you, who take so generous a share in all my concerns.

Mr. Lovelace is gone to Windsor, having left two servants to attend me. He purposes to be back to-morrow.

I have written to my aunt Hervey, to supplicate her interest in my behalf, for my clothes, books, and money; signifying to her, "That, if I may be restored to the favour of my family, and allowed a negative only, as to any man who may be proposed to me, and be used like a daughter, a niece, and a sister, I will stand on my offer to live single, and submit, as I ought, to a negative from my father." Intimating nevertheless, "That it were perhaps better, after the usage I have received from my brother and sister, that I may be allowed to be distant from them, as well for their sakes as for my own" (meaning, as I suppose it will be taken, at my dairy-house)—offering, "to take my father's directions, as to the manner I shall live in, the servants I shall have, and in everything that shall show the dutiful subordination to which I am willing to conform."

Had I owned, that I was over-reached, and forced away against my intention, might they not, as a proof of

the truth of my assertion, have insisted upon my immediate return to them? And if I did not return, would they not have reason to suppose, that I had now altered my mind (if such were my mind) or had not the power to return?—Then were I to have gone back, must it not have been upon their own terms?

But, after all, must it not give me great anguish of mind, to be forced to sanctify, as I may say, by my seeming after-approbation, a measure I was so artfully tricked into, and which I was so much resolved not to take?

How one evil brings on another, is sorrowfully witnessed to, by

Your ever-obliged and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

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MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*He acquaints his friend with what passed between him and the lady, in relation to his advices from Harlowe Place, and to his proposal about lodgings, pretty much to the same purpose as in her preceding letter.*

*When he comes to mention his proposal of the Windsor lodgings, thus he expresses himself:*

**N**OW, Belford, can it enter into thy leaden head, what I meant by this proposal!—I know it cannot. And so I'll tell thee.

To leave her for a day or two, with a view to serve her by my absence, would, as I thought, look like confiding in her favour. I could not think of leaving her, thou knowest, while I had reason to believe her friends would pursue us. But now that they had declared against it, and that they would not receive her if she went back (a declaration she had better hear first from me, than from Miss Howe, or any other) what should hinder me from giving her this mark of my obedience; especially as I

could leave Will, who is a clever fellow, and can do anything but write and spell, and Lord M.'s Jonas (not as guards, to be sure, but as attendants only); the latter to be despatched to me occasionally by the former, whom I could acquaint with my motions?

Then I wanted to inform myself, why I had not congratulatory letters from Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, and from my cousins Montague, to whom I had written, glorying in my beloved's escape; which letters, if properly worded, might be made necessary to show her as matters proceed.

As to Windsor, I had no design to carry her particularly thither: but somewhere it was proper to name, as she condescended to ask my advice about it. London, I durst not; but very cautiously; and so as to make it her own option: for I must tell thee, that there is such a perverseness in the sex, that, when they ask your advice, they do it only to know your opinion, that they may oppose it, though had not the thing in question been your choice, perhaps it had been theirs.

I could easily give reasons against Windsor, after I had pretended to be there; and this would have looked the better, as it was a place of my own nomination; and shown her, that I had no fixed scheme. Never was there in woman such a sagacious, such an all-alive apprehension, as in this. Yet it is a grievous thing to an honest man to be suspected.

Then, in my going or return, I can call upon Mrs. Greme. She corresponds by pen and ink with her farmer-sister where we are: something may possibly arise that way, either of a convenient nature, which I may pursue; or of an inconvenient, which I may avoid.

Always be careful of back-doors, is a maxim with me in all my exploits. Whoever knows me, knows that I am no proud man. I can talk as familiarly to servants as to principals, when I have a mind to make it worth their

while to oblige me in anything. Then servants are but as the common soldiers in an army; they do all the mischief; frequently without malice, and merely, good souls! for mischief's sake.

Now, Belford, canst thou imagine what I meant by proposing Hannah, or one of the girls here, for her attendant? I'll give thee a month to guess.

Thou wilt not pretend to guess, thou sayest.

Well, then, I'll tell thee.

Believing she would certainly propose, to have that favourite wench about her, as soon as she was a little settled, I had caused the girl to be inquired after, with an intent to make interest, somehow or other, that a month's warning should be insisted on by her master or mistress, or by some other means, which I had not determined upon, to prevent her coming to her. But fortune fights for me. The wench is luckily ill; a violent rheumatic disorder, which has obliged her to leave her place, confines her to her chamber. Poor Hannah! How I pity the girl! These things are very hard upon industrious servants!—I intend to make the poor wench a small present on the occasion—I know it will oblige my charmer.

And so, Jack, pretending not to know anything of the matter, I pressed her to send for Hannah. She knew I had always a regard for this servant, because of her honest love to her lady: but now I have a greater regard for her than ever. Calamity, though a poor servant's calamity, will rather increase than diminish goodwill, with a truly generous master or mistress.

As to one of the young Sorlings's attendance, there was nothing at all in proposing that; for if either of them had been chosen by her, and permitted by the mother (two chances in that!) it would have been only till I had fixed upon another. And if afterwards they had been loth to part, I could easily have given my beloved a



jealousy, which would have done the business; or to the girl, who would have quitted her country dairy, such a relish for a London one, as would have made it very convenient for her to fall in love with Will; or perhaps I could have done still better for her with Lord M.'s chaplain, who is very desirous of standing well with his lord's presumptive heir.

A blessing on thy honest heart, Lovelace! thou'lt say; for thou art for providing for everybody.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Saturday Evening, April 15.*

**M**R. LOVELACE has seen divers apartments at Windsor; but not one, he says, that he thought fit for me, and which at the same time answered my description.

I remember, my dear, in one of your former letters, you mentioned London, as the most private place to be in: and I said, that since he made such pretences against leaving me here, as showed he had no intention to do so; and since he engaged to go from me, and to leave me to pursue my own measures, if I were elsewhere; I should not be disinclined to go to London, did I know anybody there.

As he had several times proposed London to me, I expected, that he would eagerly have embraced that motion from me. But he took not ready hold of it: yet I thought his eye approved of it.

And I looked at him with steadfastness. But nothing could I gather from his looks.

At first, madam, said he, I was for proposing London, as I was then more apprehensive of pursuit. But as your relations seem cooler on that head, I am the more indifferent about the place you go to—So as you are pleased, so as you are easy, I shall be happy.

This indifference of his to London, I cannot but say, made me incline the more to go thither. I asked him (to hear what he would say) if he could recommend me to any particular place in London?

No, he said: none that was fit for me, or that I should like. His friend Belford, indeed, had very handsome lodgings near Soho Square, at a relation's, whose wife was a woman of virtue and honour. These, as Mr. Belford was generally in the country, he could borrow till I were better accommodated.

I was resolved to refuse these at the first mention, as I should any other he had named. Nevertheless, I will see, thought I, if he has really thoughts of these for me. If I break off the talk here, and he resume this proposal with earnestness in the morning, I shall apprehend, that he is less indifferent than he seems to be, about my going to London; and that he has already a lodging in his eye for me.—And then I will not go at all.

And so I retired from him. As I do from my pen; hoping for better rest for the few hours that remain of this night, than I have had of a long time.

*Monday Morning, April 17.*

Mr. Lovelace, who is an early riser, as well as I, joined me in the garden about six; and, after the usual salutations, asked me to resume our last night's subject. It was upon lodgings at London, he said.

I think you mentioned one to me, sir—did you not?

Yes, madam, but (watching the turn of my countenance) rather as what you would be welcome to, than perhaps approve of.

We had a good deal of discourse upon the same topic. But, at last, the result was this—He wrote a letter to one Mr. Doleman, a married man, of fortune and character (I excepting to Mr. Belford) desiring him to provide decent apartments ready furnished (I had told him what they

should be) for a single woman; consisting of a bed-chamber; another for a maidservant, with the use of a dining-room or parlour. This letter he gave me to peruse; and then sealed it up, and despatched it away in my presence, by one of his own servants, who having business in town, is to bring back an answer.

I attend the issue of it; holding myself in readiness to set out for London, unless you, my dear, advise the contrary.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Tuesday, April 18.*

**Y**OU have a most implacable family. Another visit from your uncle Antony has not only confirmed my mother an enemy to our correspondence, but has almost put her upon treading in their steps.

But, to other subjects:

You plead generously for Mr. Hickman. Perhaps, with regard to him, I may have done, as I have often done in singing, begun a note or key too high; and yet, rather than begin again, proceed, though I strain my voice, or spoil my tune. But this is evident, the man is the more observant for it; and you have taught me, that the spirit which is the humbler for ill usage, will be insolent upon better. So, good and grave Mr. Hickman, keep your distance a little longer, I beseech you. You have erected an altar to me; and I hope you will not refuse to bow to it.

But you ask me, if I would treat Mr. Lovelace, were he to be in Mr. Hickman's place, as I do Mr. Hickman? Why really, my dear, I believe I should not. I have been very sagely considering this point of behaviour (in general) on both sides in courtship; and I will very candidly tell you the result. I have concluded, that politeness, even to excess, is necessary on the men's part, to bring us to listen to their first addresses, in order to

induce us to bow our necks to a yoke so unequal. But, upon my conscience, I very much doubt whether a little intermingled insolence is not requisite from them, to keep up that interest, when once it has got footing. Men must not let us see, that we can make fools of them. And I think, that smooth love, that is to say, a passion without rubs ; in other words, a passion without passion ; is like a sleepy stream that is hardly seen to give motion to a straw. So that, sometimes to make us fear, and even, for a short space, to hate the wretch, is productive of the contrary extreme.

Your frequent quarrels and reconciliations verify this observation : and I really believe, that, could Hickman have kept my attention alive after the Lovelace manner, only that he had preserved his morals, I should have married the man by this time. But then he must have set out accordingly. For now he can never, never recover himself, that's certain ; but must be a dangler to the end of the courtship chapter ; and, what is still worse for him, a passive to the end of his life.

Poor Hickman ! perhaps you'll say.

I have been called your echo—poor Hickman ! say I.

I think there can be no objection to your going to London. There, as in the centre, you will be in the way of hearing from everybody, and sending to anybody. And then you will put all his sincerity to the test, as to his promised absence, and such like.

But indeed, my dear, I think you have nothing for it but marriage. You may try (that you may say you have tried) what your relations can be brought to : but the moment they refuse your proposals, submit to the yoke, and make the best of it.

All the world, in short, expect you to have this man. They think that you left your father's house for this very purpose. The longer the ceremony is delayed, the worse appearance it will have in the world's eye. And it will

not be the fault of some of your relations, if a slur be not thrown upon your reputation, while you continue unmarried. Your uncle Antony in particular, speaks rough and vile things, grounded upon the morals of his brother Orson. But hitherto your admirable character has antidoted the poison; the detractor is despised, and every one's indignation raised against him.

Your Hannah cannot attend you. The poor girl left her place about a fortnight ago, on account of a rheumatic disorder, which has confined her to her room ever since. She burst into tears when Kitty carried to her your desire of having her with you; and called herself doubly unhappy, that she could not wait upon a mistress whom she so dearly loved.

Your next, I suppose, will be from London. Pray direct it, and your future letters, till further notice, to Mr. Hickman, at his own house. He is entirely devoted to you. Don't take so heavily my mother's partiality and prejudices. I hope I am past a baby.

Heaven preserve you, and make you as happy as I think you deserve to be, prays

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

*Wednesday, April 19.*

**I** AM unhappy that I cannot have my worthy Hannah. I am as sorry for the poor creature's illness as for my own disappointment by it. Come, my dear Miss Howe, since you press me to be beholden to you, and would think me proud if I absolutely refused your favour, pray be so good as to send her two guineas in my name.

Mr. Lovelace's servant is already returned with an answer from his friend Mr. Doleman, who has taken pains in his inquiries, and is very particular. Mr. Lovelace

brought me the letter as soon as he had read it ; and as he now knows that I acquaint you with everything that offers, I desired him to let me send it to you for your perusal. Be pleased to return it by the first opportunity. You will see by it that his friends in town have a notion that we are actually married.

“ TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

*Tuesday Night, April 18.*

“ DEAR SIR,—I am extremely rejoiced to hear that we shall so soon have you in town, after so long an absence. You will be the more welcome still, if what report says be true ; which is, that you are actually married to the fair lady upon whom we have heard you make such encomiums. Mrs. Doleman, and my sister, both wish you joy if you are ; and joy upon your near prospect if you are not.

“ I have been in town for this week past, to get help, if I could, from my paralytic complaints ; and am in a course for them—which, nevertheless, did not prevent me from making the desired inquiries. This is the result.

“ Mrs. Doleman has seen lodgings in Norfolk Street, and others in Cecil Street ; but though the prospects to the Thames and Surrey hills look inviting from both these streets, yet I suppose they are too near the City.

“ You may have good accommodations in Dover Street, at a widow’s, the relict of an officer in the Guards, who dying soon after he had purchased his commission (to which he had good title by service, and which cost him most part of what he had) she was obliged to let lodgings.

“ This may possibly be an objection. But she is very careful, she says, that she takes no lodgers but of figure and reputation. She rents two good houses, distant from each other, only joined by a large handsome passage. The inner house is the genteelest, and is very elegantly

furnished ; but you may have the use of a very handsome parlour in the outer house, if you choose to look into the street.

“ A little garden belongs to the inner house, in which the old gentlewoman has displayed a true female fancy ; having crammed it with vases, flower-pots, and figures without number.

“ A dignified clergyman, his wife, and maiden daughter, were the last who lived in them. They have but lately quitted them, on his being presented to a considerable church preferment in Ireland.

“ I had some knowledge of the colonel, who was always looked upon as a man of honour. His relict I never saw before. I think she has a masculine air, and is a little forbidding at first : but when I saw her behaviour to two agreeable maiden gentlewomen, her husband’s nieces, whom, for that reason, she calls doubly hers, and heard their praises of her, I could impute her very bulk to good humour ; since we seldom see your sour peevish people plump. She lives respectably, and is, as I find, beforehand in the world.

“ As we suppose you married, but that you have reason, from family differences, to keep it private for the present, I thought it not amiss to hint as much to the widow (but as uncertainty, however) ; and asked her, if she could, in that case, accommodate you and your servants, as well as the lady and hers ? She said she could ; and wished, by all means, it were to be so ; since the circumstance of a person’s being single, if not as well recommended as this lady, was one of her usual exceptions.

“ Let me add, that the lodgings at the mercer’s, those in Cecil Street, those at the widow’s in Dover Street, any of them, may be entered upon at a day’s warning.

“ I am, my dear sir,

“ Your sincere and affectionate friend and servant,

“ THO. DOLEMAN.”

I fixed upon the widow's; and he has written accordingly to Mr. Doleman, making my compliments to his lady and sister, for their kind offer.

I am to have the dining-room, the bedchamber with the light closet (of which, if I stay any time at the widow's, I shall make great use) and a servant's room; and we propose to set out on Saturday morning. As for a maid-servant, poor Hannah's illness is a great disappointment to me: but, as he observes, I can make the widow satisfaction for one of hers, till I can get a servant to my mind. And you know, I want not much attendance.

Mr. Lovelace has just now, of his own accord, given me five guineas for poor Hannah. I send them inclosed. Be so good as to cause them to be conveyed to her; and to let her know from whom they came.

He has obliged me much by this little mark of his considerateness. Indeed I have had the better opinion of him ever since he proposed her return to me.

And now, my dear, lest anything should happen, in so variable a situation as mine, to overcloud my prospects (which at present are more promising than ever yet they have been since I quitted Harlowe Place) I will snatch the opportunity to subscribe myself

Your not unhoping and  
Ever obliged friend and servant,

CL. HARLOWE.

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MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*Thursday, April 20.*

**T**HOU knowest the widow; thou knowest her nieces; thou knowest the lodgings: and didst thou ever read a letter more artfully couched, than this of Tom Doleman? Every possible objection anticipated! Every accident provided against! Every tittle of it plot-proof!



But, Belford, didst thou not mind that sly rogue Doleman's naming Dover Street for the widow's place of abode? What dost think could be meant by that? 'Tis impossible thou shouldst guess. So, not to puzzle thee about it, suppose the widow Sinclair's in Dover Street should be inquired after by some officious person, in order to come at characters (Miss Howe is as sly as the devil, and as busy to the full); and neither such a name, nor such a house, can be found in that street, nor a house to answer the description; then will not the keenest hunter in England be at a fault?

But how wilt thou hinder the lady from apprising her friend of the real name?

She must first know it herself, monkey, must she not?

Well, but how wilt thou do to hinder her from knowing the street, and her friend from directing letters thither; which will be the same thing as if the name were known?

Let me alone for that too.

If thou further objectest, that Tom Doleman is too great a dunce to write such a letter in answer to mine;—canst thou not imagine, that, in order to save honest Tom all this trouble, I, who know the town so well, could send him a copy of what he should write, and leave him nothing to do but transcribe?

What now sayest thou to me, Belford?

And suppose I had designed this task of inquiry for thee; and suppose the lady excepted against thee for no other reason in the world, but because of my value for thee? What sayest thou to the lady, Jack?

This it is to have leisure upon my hands!—What a matchless plotter thy friend!—Stand by, and let me swell!—I am already as big as an elephant; and ten times wiser!—Mightier too by far!—Have I not reason to snuff the moon with my proboscis! Lord help thee for a poor—for a very poor creature!—Wonder not that I despise

thee heartily; since the man who is disposed immoderately to exalt himself, cannot do it but by despising everybody else in proportion.

I shall make good use of the Dolemanic hint of being married. But I will not tell thee all at once. Nor, indeed, have I thoroughly digested that part of my plot. When a general must regulate himself by the motions of a watchful adversary, how can he say beforehand what he will, or what he will not, do?

Widow Sinclair!—Didst thou not say, Lovelace?—

Ay, Sinclair, Jack!—Remember the name! Sinclair, I repeat. She has no other. And her features being broad, and full blown, I will suppose her to be of Highland extraction; as her husband the Colonel (mind that too) was a Scot, as brave, as honest.

Thou wouldst wonder if thou knewest one-half of my providences. To give thee but one—I have already been so good as to send up a list of books to be procured for the lady's closet, mostly at second-hand. And thou knowest, that the women there are all well read. But I will not anticipate—Besides, it looks as if I were afraid of leaving anything to my old friend Chance; which has many a time been an excellent second to me; and ought not to be affronted or despised; especially by one, who has the art of making unpromising incidents turn out in his favour.

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MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Wednesday, April 19.*



HAVE a piece of intelligence to give you, which concerns you much to know.

Your brother having been assured, that you are not married, has taken a resolution to find you out, waylay you, and carry you off. A friend of his, a captain of a ship, undertakes to get you on ship-board; and to sail

away with you, either to Hull or Leith, in the way to one of your brother's houses.

They are very wicked : for in spite of your virtue they conclude you to be ruined. But if they can be assured when they have you, that you are not, they will secure you till they can bring you out Mrs. Solmes. Meantime, in order to give Mr. Lovelace full employment, they talk of a prosecution which will be set up against him, for some crime they have got a notion of, which they think, if it do not cost him his life, will make him fly his country.

It is amazing to me, what your relations can mean by distressing you as they seem resolved to do. I see they will throw you into his arms, whether you will or not.

Adieu, my dearest friend. Believe me ever

Your affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

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MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.



R. LOVELACE communicated to me this morning early, from his intelligencer, the news of my brother's scheme. I like him the better for making very light of it; and for his treating it with contempt. And, indeed, had I not had the hint of it from you, I should have suspected it to be some contrivance of his, in order to hasten me to town where he has long wished to be himself.

I have seen Singleton. He has been twice entertained at Harlowe Place, as my brother's friend. He has the air of a very bold and fearless man; and I fancy it must be his project; as my brother, I suppose, talks to everybody of the rash step I have taken; for he did not spare me before he had this seeming reason to censure me.

This Singleton lives at Leith; so, perhaps, I am to be carried to my brother's house not far from that port.

I asked Mr. Lovelace, seeing him so frank and cool, what he would advise me to do?

You condescended, dearest creature, said he, to ask my advice. It is very easy, give me leave to say, to advise you what to do. I hope I may, on this new occasion, speak without offence, notwithstanding your former injunctions—You see that there can be no hope of reconciliation with your relations. Can you, madam, consent to honour with your hand, a wretch whom you have never yet obliged with one voluntary favour ?

What a recriminating, what a reproachful way, my dear, was this, of putting a question of this nature !

I expected not from him, at the time, and just as I was very angry with him, either the question or the manner. I am ashamed to recollect the confusion I was thrown into ; all your advice in my head at the moment : Yet his words so prohibitory. He confidently seemed to enjoy my confusion (indeed, my dear, he knows not what respectful love is!) ; and gazed upon me, as if he would have looked me through.

He was still more declarative afterwards indeed, as I shall mention by-and-bye : But it was half extorted from him.

My heart struggled violently between resentment and shame, to be thus teased by one who seemed to have all his passions at command, at a time when I had very little over mine ; till at last I burst into tears, and was going from him in high disgust : when, throwing his arms about me, with an air, however, the most tenderly respectful, he gave a stupid turn to the subject.

It was far from his heart, he said, to take so much advantage of the fright, which the discovery of my brother's foolish project had brought me into, as to renew, without my permission, a proposal which I had hitherto discountenanced ; and which for that reason—

And then he came with his half-sentences, apologising for what he had not so much as half proposed.

Surely, he had not the insolence to intend to tease me,

to see if I could be brought to speak what became me not to speak—But, whether he had or not, it did tease me; insomuch that my very heart was fretted, and I broke out at last into fresh tears, and a declaration that I was very unhappy. And just then recollecting how like a tame fool I stood with his arms about me, I flung from him with indignation. But he seized my hand, as I was going out of the room, and upon his knees besought my stay for one moment: And then, in words the most clear and explicit, tendered himself to my acceptance, as the most effectual means to disappoint my brother's scheme, and set all right.

But what could I say to this?—Extorted from him, as it seemed to me, rather as the effect of his compassion, than of his love? What could I say? I paused. I looked silly—I am sure I looked very silly. He suffered me to pause, and look silly; waiting for me to say something: and at last (ashamed of my confusion, and aiming to make an excuse for it) I told him, that I desired he would avoid such measures as might add to the uneasiness, which it must be visible to him I had, when he reflected upon the irreconcilableness of my friends, and upon what might follow from this unaccountable project of my brother.

He promised to be governed by me in everything. And again the wretch, instead of pressing his former question, asked me, if I forgave him for the humble suit he had made to me? What had I to do, but to try for a palliation of my confusion, since it served me not?

I told him, I had hopes it would not be long before Mr. Morden arrived; and doubted not, that that gentleman would be the readier to engage in my favour, when he found, that I made no other use of his (Mr. Lovelace's) assistance, than to free myself from the addresses of a man so disagreeable to me as Mr. Solmes; I must therefore wish, that everything might remain as it was, till I could hear from my cousin.

This, although teased by him as I was, was not, you see, my dear, a denial. But he must throw himself into a heat, rather than try to persuade; which any other man, in his situation, I should think, would have done: And this warmth obliged me to adhere to my seeming negative.

This was what he said, with a vehemence that must harden any woman's mind, who had a spirit above being frightened into passiveness.

Good God!—And will you, madam, still resolve to show me, that I am to hope for no share in your favour, while any the remotest prospect remains, that you will be received by my bitterest enemies, at the price of my utter rejection?

This was what I returned, with warmth, and with a salving art too—You have seen, Mr. Lovelace, how much my brother's violence can affect me: But you will be mistaken, if you let loose yours upon me, with a thought of terrifying me into measures the contrary of which you have acquiesced with.

One word more he begged me to hear—He was determined studiously to avoid all mischief, and every step that might lead to mischief, let my brother's proceedings short of a violence upon my person, be what they would: But if any attempt that should extend to that, were to be made, would I have him to be a quiet spectator of my being seized, or carried back, or on board, by this Singleton; or, in case of extremity, was he not permitted to stand up in my defence?

Stand up in my defence, Mr. Lovelace!—I should be very miserable, were there to be a call for that. But do you think I might not be safe and private in London? By your friend's description of the widow's house, I should think I might be safe there.

The widow's house, he replied, as described by his friend, being a back house within a front one, and looking to a

garden, rather than to a street, had the appearance of privacy : But if, when there, it was not approved, it would be easy to find another more to my liking—Though, as to his part, the method he would advise should be, to write to my uncle Harlowe as one of my trustees, and wait the issue of it here at Mrs. Sorlings's, fearlessly directing it to be answered hither. To be afraid of little spirits, was but to encourage insults, he said. The substance of the letter should be, "to demand as a right, what they would refuse if requested as a courtesy : to acknowledge, that I had put myself (too well, he said, did their treatment justify me) into the protection of the ladies of his family (by whose orders, and Lord M.'s, he himself would appear to act) : But that upon my own terms ; which were such, that I was under no obligation to those ladies for the favour ; it being no more than they would have granted to anyone of my sex, equally distressed." If I approved not of this method, happy should he think himself, he said, if I would honour him with the opportunity of making such a claim in his own name—But this was a point (with his buts again in the same breath !) that he durst but just touch upon. He hoped however, that I would think their violence a sufficient inducement for me to take such a wished-for resolution.

Inwardly vexed, I told him, that he himself had proposed to leave me when I was in town : that I expected he would : and that, when I was known to be absolutely independent, I should consider what to write, and what to do : But that, while he was with me, I neither would nor could.

He would be very sincere with me, he said : this project of my brother's had changed the face of things. He must, before he left me, see whether I should or should not approve of the London widow, and her family, if I chose to go thither. They might be people whom my brother might buy. But if he saw they were persons of integrity,

he then might go for a day or two, or so. But he must needs say, he could not leave me longer at a time.

Do you propose, sir, said I, to take up your lodgings in the house where I shall lodge ?

He did not, he said ; as he knew the use I intended to make of his absence, and my punctilio—and yet the house where he had lodgings was new-fronting, and not in a condition to receive him : but he could go to his friend Belford's, in Soho ; or perhaps he might reach to the same gentleman's house at Edgware, overnight, and return on the mornings, till he had reason to think this wild project of my brother's laid aside. But to no greater distance till then should he care to venture.

The result of all was, to set out on Monday next for town. I hope it will be in a happy hour.

CL. HARLOWE.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

*As it was not probable, that the lady could give so particular an account of her own confusion, in the affecting scene she mentions on Mr. Lovelace's offering himself to her acceptance ; the following extracts are made from his letter of the same date.*

**A**ND now, Belford, what wilt thou say, if like the fly buzzing about the bright taper, I had like to have singed the silken wings of my liberty ? Never was man in greater danger of being caught in his own snares : all my views anticipated ; all my schemes untried ; the admirable creature not brought to town ; nor one effort made to know if she be really angel or woman.

I offered myself to her acceptance, with a suddenness, 'tis true, that gave her no time to wrap herself in reserves ; and in terms less tender than fervent, tending to upbraid her for her past indifference, and to remind her of her injunctions ; for it was the fear of her brother, not her



love of me, that had inclined her to dispense with those injunctions.

I never beheld so sweet a confusion. What a glory to the pencil, could it do justice to it, and to the mingled impatience which visibly informed every feature of the most meaning and most beautiful face in the world! She hemmed twice or thrice: her look, now so charmingly silly, then so sweetly significant; till at last the lovely teaser, teased by my hesitating expectation of her answer, out of all power of articulate speech, burst into tears, and was turning from me with precipitation, when, presuming to fold her in my happy arms—O think not, best beloved of my heart, said I, think not, that this motion, which you may believe to be so contrary to your former injunctions, proceeds from a design to avail myself of the cruelty of your relations: if I have disoblged you by it (and you know with what respectful tenderness I have presumed to hint it) it shall be my utmost care for the future—there I stopt—

Then she spoke; but with vexation—I am—I am—very unhappy—tears trickling down her crimson cheeks; and her sweet face, as my arms still encircled the finest waist in the world, sinking upon my shoulder; the dear creature so absent that she knew not the honour she permitted me.

But why, but why unhappy, my dearest life? said I:—all the gratitude that ever overflowed the heart of the most obliged of men—

Justice to myself there stopt my mouth: for what gratitude did I owe her for obligations so involuntary?

Then recovering herself, and her usual reserves, and struggling to free herself from my clasping arms, How now, sir! said she, with a cheek more indignantly glowing, and eyes of a fiercer lustre.

I gave way to her angry struggle; but, absolutely overcome by so charming a display of innocent confusion, I caught hold of her hand as she was flying from me; and,

kneeling at her feet, O my angel, said I, (quite destitute of reserve, and hardly knowing the tenor of my own speech ; and had a parson been there, I had certainly been a gone man) receive the vows of your faithful Lovelace. Make him yours, and only yours, for ever. This will answer every end. Who will dare to form plots and stratagems against my wife ? That you are not so, is the ground of all their foolish attempts, and of their insolent hopes in Solmes's favour.—O be mine !—I beseech you (thus on my knee I beseech you) to be mine. We shall then have all the world with us. And everybody will applaud an event that everybody expects.

Was the devil in me ! I no more intended all this ecstatic nonsense, than I thought the same moment of flying in the air ! All power is with this charming creature. It is I, not she, at this rate, that must fail in the arduous trial.

Well, but what was the result of this ?—Wouldst thou not think, I was taken at my offer ?—An offer so solemnly made, and on one knee too ?

No such thing !—The pretty trifler let me off as easily as I could have wished.

Another letter was to be sent, or had been sent, to her aunt Hervey ; to which she hoped an answer.

Yet sometimes I think, that fainter and fainter would have been her procrastinations, had I been a man of courage.—But so fearful was I of offending !

A confounded thing the man to be so bashful ; the woman to want so much courting !—How shall two such come together ; no kind mediatrix in the way ?

But, O the charming creature, again of herself to mention London ! Had Singleton's plot been of my own contriving, a more happy expedient could not have been thought of to induce her to resume her purpose of going thither ; nor can I divine what could be her reason for postponing it.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MRS. HERVEY.

[*Enclosed in her last to Miss Howe.*]

*Thursday, April 20.*

HONOURED MADAM,

**H**AVING not had the favour of an answer to a letter I took the liberty to write to you on the 14th, I am in some hopes that it may have miscarried ; for I had much rather it should, than to have the mortification to think that my aunt Hervey deemed me unworthy of the honour of her notice.

Whatever be the determination at Harlowe Place, do not you, my dearest Aunt, deny me the favour of a few lines, to inform me if there can be any hope of a reconciliation upon terms less shocking than those heretofore endeavoured to be imposed upon me, or if (which God forbid !) I am to be for ever reprobated.

At least, my dear Aunt, procure for me the justice of my wearing apparel, and the little money and other things which I wrote to my sister for, and mention in the enclosed to you ; that I may not be destitute of common conveniences, or be under a necessity to owe an obligation for such, where (at present, however) I would least of all owe it.

Allow me to say, that had I designed what happened, I might (as to the money and jewels at least) have saved myself some of the mortifications which I have suffered, and which I still further apprehend, if my request be not complied with.

If you are permitted to encourage an eclaircissement of what I hint, I will open my whole heart to you, and inform you of everything.

If it be any pleasure to have me mortified, be pleased to let it be known, that I am extremely mortified : and yet it is entirely from my own reflections that I am so ;

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having nothing to find fault with, in the behaviour of the person from whom every evil was apprehended.

The bearer having business your way, will bring me your answer on Saturday morning, if you favour me according to my hopes. I knew not that I should have this opportunity till I had written the above.

I am, my dearest Aunt,

Your ever-dutiful

CL. HARLOWE.

Be pleased to direct for me, if I am to be favoured with a few lines, to be left at Mr. Osgood's near Soho Square ; and nobody shall ever know of your goodness to me, if you desire it to be kept a secret.

END OF VOL. I.











