

The Life of Harriot Stuart. Written by Herself.

Charlotte Lennox

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Vol. 1

You ask me, my dear Amanda, to give you the relation of my life. Your request has always the force of a command with me, and I obey you, notwithstanding the affliction the remembrance of my past misfortunes raises

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in my soul. You know my family is noble. My father added to the advantage of an illustrious extraction a greatness of soul, and regular behaviour, which gained him the respect and esteem of all who conversed with him. His father, who was vice-treasurer of Ireland, and commanded a troop of horse in King Charles the II'd's reign, died when he was yet an infant; and his eldest brother, being destined for the church, was, in the reign of King William, made chaplain-general and judge-advocate of the fleet.

My father, whose inclinations led him to the army, purchased a commission in a regiment commanded by a near relation; and, some time after, rising to the command of a company, he married a lady of a considerable family in Ireland, with whom he was so passionately in love as to take her without the consent of her relations; by which means he forfeited all right to her fortune, which, however, was far from being considerable.

Of all the children my mother brought into the world, there remained but four; three daughters and a son. As I shall have frequent occasion to speak of my brother and sisters in the course of my history, permit me to give you a short sketch of their characters. My brother, with a nice sense of honour, and a behaviour regulated by the exactest probity, discovered a hastiness and impetuosity which very much affected the ease of all about him: yet his fine sense, and inimitable wit, rendered him, notwithstanding the frequent sallies of his temper, the delight as well as ornament of our family. My eldest sister was thought perfectly handsome: she had a vivacity in her words and actions, which, to those who are captivated by external appearances, had a charm beyond the most exalted understanding. She was obliging, affable, and very often sincere: her temper, indeed, was naturally violent, and impatient of contradiction; but, upon the least submission, would subside into a perfect calm. She knew so well how to disguise her disapprobation of the follies of those she conversed with, and to fall in with their different humours and inclinations, that she was generally beloved. Her vanity was excessive; and the constant indulgence of her taste for dress and gay amusements, contributed to keep it alive; yet she was one of the best oeconomists in the world: the management of the family was committed to her care; and she acquitted herself of this office so well, as to merit, in every one's opinion, the partial fondness my mother discovered for her. My sister Fanny, who was a year younger than myself, possessed all those qualities of mind and person, which serve to make one of her sex esteemed and admired. We loved each other with the utmost tenderness, and our friendship surprised the whole family, as it was much superior to what the nearness of blood generally inspires. My brother, finding something in me agreeable to his taste, took incessant pains in the improvement of my mind. I was scarce past my infancy, when I applied myself to reading with such an eager sollicitude, as amazed every one who was concerned in my education.

My mother, who thought knowledge a useless acquisition for one of her own sex, beheld my attachment to study with concern. I was not so happy in her affection as the rest of her children; and I believe the bent of my inclinations to intellectual improvements, was the ground of the indifference she always expressed for me. I hardly reached my tenth year when I began to be taken some notice of, and my dawning wit filled my brother with the highest transports. Will you not think me vain, my dear Amanda, in giving you this account of myself? But you have commanded me to be sincere, and I must therefore dispense with any little punctilios that would prevent me from obeying you in this particular. And, indeed, that you may be able to comprehend the reality of those adventures I was engaged in, at an age when others of my sex are hardly observed, it is necessary you should know the advantageous opinion that was conceived of me.

I had as yet employed my pen in no other way than by writing to a young lady, for whom I had contracted an extravagant friendship. As my notions of this passion were mightily refined and delicate, my letters were filled with an enthusiastic tenderness, which gave birth to the most lively flights of imagination. I wrote in a kind of poetic prose; but I did not attempt a line in verse, tho' poetry was my favourite study. But the æra of my commencement was at hand: I had a heart so formed to receive tender impressions, that it was impossible I could long remain in a state of insensibility. I became in love, my dear Amanda, in love at eleven years old; and to that inspiring passion my muse first owed its existence. Give me leave to relate this adventure, not so much for its importance, as to give you an example of my early proficiency in gallantry, and enable you to account for the future actions of my life. My sister Fanny and myself had obtained permission to see a play, represented by large

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figures of wax, which was then reckoned a sort of curiosity. The servant who conducted us, withdrew when we were seated; and a great number of the Westminster-scholars coming in, we immediately formed ourselves to the best advantage, in order to be taken notice of. The desire of pleasing is natural to the sex. I was a child, 'tis true; but I had the latent seeds of coquetry in my heart: and, as Pope has it,

"Ev'n infant cheeks a hidden blush can show,
"And little hearts will flutter at a beau."

I first discovered my propensity to gallantry upon this occasion; for I managed my looks with such art, that I soon had the eyes of some of these young gentlemen upon me. Among the rest a youth about fifteen, drest in deep mourning, considered me attentively. He was lovely, I may say, to a fault; for his beauty had something too sweet and delicate in it for one of his sex. However, I found a secret pleasure in meeting his glances; and could not forbear enquiring of a young lady, who sat next me, and seemed to know him, who he was. She told me he was called Lord S . My heart bounded at the knowledge of his quality, and I felt an increase of transport whenever I surprised him gazing on me, which he did almost every moment. His companions, who, for particular reasons, came only with a design to demolish the little theatre, interrupted the soft intercourse of our eyes, by calling upon him to aid their premeditated mischief. The curtain was no sooner drawn up than they flung stones and all sorts of rubbish on the stage with such violence, that the scenes were torn down, the lights almost all extinguished, and the heroes of wax lay mangled on the ground before their time. My sister and I were extremely frightened at the first onset; but we had more reason, when some of the candles falling near the scenes set them on fire, and the stage seemed all in flames. Every one now was concerned for his life: they prest with such eager haste to the door, that some had like to be crushed to death in the crowd. Poor Fanny and I never stirred from our places, rather more terrified at the rude multitude that was pressing to get out, than at the flames, which we expected every moment would approach us. The man, who had been sent with us, came to the doors at the cry of fire, but could not get in to assist us. He called us aloud by our names; but we, drowned in tears, sat motionless, without making the least effort to save ourselves. Lord S , notwithstanding the noise and confusion, observed us heedfully; and coming up to us, with another of his companions, begged I would allow him to conduct us out of that dangerous place. I took the liberty to reproach him a little for the mischief he had engaged in. He expressed the utmost concern for it; but still insisting upon my putting myself under his protection, I suffered him to take me in his arms, while his companion did the same by my sister; and thus freighted, they made their way thro' the crowd, and brought us safely out. I thanked my young preserver in the most grateful terms; and was preparing to go home immediately with our servant, whom we found at the door, when his lordship insisted upon accompanying us, that he might know (as he said) where to wait on me the next day. During our little walk he entertained me with a thousand encomiums on my person, assuring me I had made an absolute conquest of his heart, and that he should think it an age till to-morrow, when he proposed to make me a visit, and have the pleasure of describing to me the tenderness I had inspired him with. Methinks I see you smile, Amanda, at this gallantry addressed to a girl of eleven years old: however, it was not quite so ridiculous as you may imagine. I was not only very tall of my age, but I had likewise all the coquet inclinations of fifteen; and not only knew the full value of a smile, a sigh, or a blush, but could practise them all upon occasion. My young lover took his leave at the door of our house; and Fanny being impatient to relate our adventure, without regarding my confusion, repeated all that had passed. My thoughts found sufficient employment most part of the night: I spent the hours in recalling to my mind all the words and actions of my young admirer: I compared my adventure with some of those I had read in novels and romances, and found it full as surprising. In short, I was nothing less than a Clelia or Statira. These reflections had such an effect on my looks and air next day, that it was very visible I thought myself of prodigious importance. When the hour approached that I expected his lordship, I felt all those little flutters and perturbations which might have agitated a much older bosom: I looked every moment in the glass, adjusted my hair and dress, and determined in what manner I should behave to him. I was born a coquet, and what would have been art in others, in me was pure nature. My brother and sister, who were resolved to share the visit, received his lordship with many compliments upon the services Fanny and I had received from him. He answered them with a graceful ease;

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and, after tea, being left to ourselves, we spent the evening in diversions suitable to our age. As soon as he had taken his leave, I wrote to my female friend, whom I called Sylvia; and, in a truly romantic style, related the whole adventure. But, when I came to describe the person of my lover, an involuntary impulse made me throw my thoughts into verse; and this first attempt in poetry was thought so tender and passionate, that it procured me the name of Sappho, a distinction which agreeably soothed my vanity. From this moment I took so much delight in writing, that my mother was extremely offended at it. My brother, however, took my part; he could not bear to check my genius, by restraining it from an amusement, which, under his regulation, was far from corrupting my mind. It is certain, that he lost no opportunity of improving my morals, as well as my understanding: he instilled an early love for virtue into my soul; and, as I grew older, the strength and beauty of his arguments, fixed that principle so deeply in my heart, that no trials, no distresses, nor all the softening power of love, were ever able to erase it.

But, to my infinite regret, he was now preparing to leave us. A thousand pounds had been lest him by an uncle, which, thro' his partiality, was at his own disposal at fifteen. This introduced him to an early acquaintance with the fashionable excesses of the town, in an indulgence to which he spent most of that money, which was designed to establish him in the world; for my father, thro' a mistaken tenderness, would not suffer him to purchase a commission in the army, for which he had a great inclination: but, in order to have him near him, placed him with a surgeon. My brother, being now out of his apprenticeship, with the remains of his little fortune, determined to go a trading-voyage to Jamaica: and it was in vain, that my father and mother, who loved him with an excess of fondness, opposed this resolution. My ardent affection for this dear brother, made me look upon the moment of his departure, as that which brought the end of my life. I hung upon his arms in a speechless agony of grief, and it was with the greatest difficulty he forced himself from me. It was several days before the violence of my transports were abated; he was continually in my thoughts. My pen was now employed in bewailing his absence, and describing the painful fond emotions, with which my soul was agitated upon his account. My father being soon after preferred to a very considerable post in America, acquainted his family with his design of settling there. My eldest sister heard this resolution with grief; but I, as my lover was now sent upon his travels, and I had nothing in England to leave with regret, saw, with a childish pleasure, the preparations that were making for our departure. A man of war was ordered to transport us thither: and several gentlemen, whose affairs called them to that country, procuring a passage in the same ship, we had very agreeable company to soften the fatigues of the voyage.

As we were accommodated with the best apartments in the ship, and perfectly at ease, my mother, who loved company, permitted the gentlemen to visit us frequently. Their visits, however, I had at first no share in; for being extremely sea-sick, I was confined to my bed; and should have had a very melancholly time of it, but for the company of an agreeable lady, the wife of one of my pappa's lieutenants.

Mrs. Villars, for that was her name, was very young; and, being deeply read in romances, had her head filled with adventures of gallantry, tender confidances, and delicate friendships. She had conceived a very strange affection for me; and tho' I was then but just entered into my thirteenth year, conversed with me upon equal terms. I was fond of being considered as a woman: she hit my foible; and the conformity between our thoughts and inclinations, produced a very tender friendship between us. This lady, one day, expressing pressing her concern at my not being able to partake of their amusements, told me, with a smile, she had been endeavouring to deprive my sister of an admirer. "He is, continued she, (with a certain eagerness that was natural to her) one of the most lovely youths I ever beheld; and so worthy to be a lover of your's, that, to disengage him from his assiduities to your sister, I gave him a description of you: and, finding he was passionately fond of wit, allowed him to read all the little poetical pieces you gave me in London. You cannot imagine, my dear, (pursued she) what an effect your writings had upon him! He has read them over a thousand times; and longs, with the utmost impatience, to see you." My sister came in at these words, and guessing by them the subject of our conversation, "Upon my word, (said she to Mrs. Villars) you'll spoil Harriot, and make her mind run so much upon gallantry, that she'll think of nothing else." She spoke this with such apparent chagrin, that I was convinced she was piqued at what Mrs. Villars had done; and I was therefore resolved to finish my conquest next day, by shewing myself to my new

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admirer.

My mother, at my request, had permitted me to come into the state-room to drink tea. I had dressed myself with more than ordinary care, and was preparing to go, when Mrs. Villars came running to me, "Oh, my dear, said she, (quite out of breath) we have fallen upon a new diversion to-day: Dumont, the gentleman I mentioned to you, has promised to entertain us, by reading one of Otway's tragedies; and I have engaged my word, that you shall read the womens' parts." I would fain have excused myself from this task; but my friend assuring me she had positive orders from my mother to bring me for that purpose, I was obliged to comply. I came into the room covered over with blushes, which tho' imputed to a bashfulness common to girls of my age, yet was, in reality, the effect of Mrs. Villars's information. My mother, perceiving my embarrassment, introduced me, with her usual politeness, to the company; which consisted of the captain of the ship, and several other gentlemen, among whom I soon distinguished the lovely Dumont.

I needed not the circumstance of his earnestly gazing on me, to point him out: his whole person was one continued charm. There was such a mixture of sweetness and sensibility in his countenance, such enchanting loveliness in his eyes, so many nameless graces in his mein, that it was impossible to look on him, and not feel something more than bare admiration. My eyes, by an involuntary motion, were often turned upon his face; but, being always met by an earnest and sparkling glance of his, I drew them away with a confusion, which, no doubt, convinced him I observed the pleasure he took in gazing on me. After the task which the company had imposed upon Dumont and me, of reading the Orphan, was over, I received the general thanks of our hearers, for having so exquisitely touched the tender distress of Monimia. Dumont, without regarding the compliments that were paid to him, was wholly employed in lavishing praises on me. "Never, said he, (in a kind of transport) have I heard a voice so harmonious as Miss Harriot's; yet the graces of her utterance, inimitable as they are, merits our admiration less than her judgment, by which she gave so exactly the true sense and spirit of the poet." "It must be confessed also, interrupted Mrs. Villars, (who was willing to spare me the confusion of replying to this compliment) that Dumont has succeeded very happily in expressing the passion of Castalio." "'Tis certain, madam, (aid a young gentleman who stood near her) that Dumont has had great advantages under the character of Castalio; since he has been authorized, for a few moments, to think himself beloved by a more lovely Monimia than Otway's. Had I been in his place, (continued he, with a freedom peculiar to his profession, for he was a lieutenant of a man of war) I should have forgot the personated lover, and told the fair Monimia, in my own character, how much I was charmed with her." "That, replied I, (with a look that expressed some little resentment) might have turned the tragedy into a farce, and given the company an opportunity to laugh at your expence." My mother, who thought my tongue run too fast upon a subject she was not willing I should be so soon acquainted with, interrupted us here, by desiring Dumont to sing, and dispel the gloomy ideas the tragedy had raised in her. He immediately complied, with a grace which was inseparable from him; and tho' the sweetness and harmony of his voice was sufficient to engross all my attention, yet I could not help observing, that he had chose some very passionate lines; and his eyes, while he was singing, were often fixed with a soft languishment on me. When he ended, the whole company was employed in lavishing their praises upon him, which gave me an opportunity to write with a pencil the following lines:

The poets say, when Orpheus wak'd his lyre,
The savage beasts wou'd round him list'ning stand,
The tuneful beauties of his voice admire,
And the soft touch of his harmonious hand.
But had they heard a voice so sweet as thine,
Did such soft strains their ravish'd senses bless,
The heavenly music of the sacred Nine,
And the fam'd Orpheus, wou'd have charm'd them less.

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I had just finished these verses, when Mrs. Villars, snatching them out of my hand, communicated them to the company. Dumont blushed at hearing them read, and bowing profoundly low to me, "Tho' I am very far, miss, said he, from thinking I merit your praises in the least degree, yet I am extremely glad I have given you this opportunity of exerting your genius." Without answering him, I wrote again as follows:

Unconscious of your merit, you refuse
The early tribute of an infant muse;
Or think, perhaps, unequal to your praise,
My verse but lessens what it meant to raise.
So charming was your voice, that while you sung
My list'ning soul on ev'ry accent hung!
To kindred harmony my thoughts aspire:
But what I must not praise, I'll silently admire.

I gave him the paper with a smile; and after reading it two or three times, he tore off the last words, and presented them to me, with a look which I thought very mysterious. Every person present applauded the gallantry of this return to my compliment; but I was apt enough to imagine there was something more than mere gallantry in it.

Mrs. Villars, as soon as she could speak to me apart, congratulated me upon the conquest I had made. "I knew, said she smiling, that Dumont would forsake your sister, when he saw you; for, without flattery, my dear, you are more than equal to her in the charms of your person; and then, the superiority of your understanding gives you such prodigious advantage over her, that, in all probability, she'll make but few conquests when you are by." "But, said I, interrupting this flow of compliments, can you inform me who Mr. Dumont is, and what affairs carry him to America?" "Oh! returned she, I am perfectly well acquainted with his whole history. Mr. Maynard, whom you answer'd so pertly, just now told me some very extraordinary particulars about him. He is the only son of one of the richest merchants in N. His father, who is a rigid papist, contracted him, while yet an infant, to the daughter of a near relation. This young lady will have an immense fortune; and it is not to be doubted but that Mr. Dumont's father did all that was possible, to inspire his son with an affection for her. Her picture was sent from England to N; but her charms made little impression on his heart. If one may believe Mr. Maynard, the ladies of N are extremely susceptible of love; and the graceful form of Dumont had captivated a great number of hearts. Yet still he found means to preserve his liberty, against the united attacks of so many languishing beauties; and was never capable of a serious engagement till he saw Mrs. B, the eldest daughter of the governor. This lady was married when Dumont was a boy of about fifteen years of age. Her husband, being master of a very large estate, carried his young bride to England, where her beauty soon gained her such a number of admirers, that Mr. B, growing uneasy, insisted upon returning to America. The lady, however, not at all disgusted with the homage that was paid to her charms, and having an extreme fondness for the expensive pleasures of London, absolutely refused to go. Mr. B, enraged almost to madness at her behaviour, left her immediately, and went in the first ship that sailed to America. Mrs. B remained near three years after him in London, so intoxicated with gallantry, and the admiration paid to her charms, that she quite forgot what she owed to her husband and her fame; and it is probable would not have thought of returning in a long time, had not the arrival of one of her brothers in England obliged her to come to a resolution. This young gentleman, having obtained what he came to solicit for, which was the command of one of the independent companies in N, used every argument with his sister, to prevail upon her to return home. The lady, understanding that her husband was retired to his estate in Jamaica, protested that her health would not permit her to live in that country; but offered to return to her father, which her brother consented to with joy. Mrs. B accordingly went to N, so altered in her person, manners, and dress, that she was hardly to be known. As she had conversed much with people of the first rank, she had contracted all the easy assurance of a woman of quality. The ladies of N began to copy her manner as well as dress, and listened with an eager attention to her accounts of plays, masquerades, operas, the drawing-room, ridottos, and all the round of polite amusements. Mrs. B, willing to make them comprehend that her intimacies were only with people of the

first rank, would frequently speak of the dear duke of , and the charming marquis of . Nay, she carried this kind of affectation so far, as to call her favourite black foot–man by the stile of one of the first peers in England. This excess of folly did not hinder her from appearing lovely in the eyes of Dumont; yet his respect prevented him from disclosing a passion, which, as she was married, might be an offence to her virtue. But the lady, not quite so scrupulous, having conceived a violent passion for the beautiful youth (as she called him,) let him know his happiness by a very gallant billet; and thus secured to herself a heart, which the handsomest ladies in N were in vain disputing the possession of. This intrigue was managed with so little caution on both sides, that Dumont was often seen to come out of Mrs. B 's apartments at break of day. The centinels were feed when they opened the gates to let him out, yet they communicated their discovery to their companions; by which means the whole city was acquainted with their interviews: the governor alone was ignorant of an affair, that furnished so much scandal and diversion to the town. Mrs. B had several sisters, each of whom had felt a tender inclination for Dumont: they had long discovered his nightly visits, but had not courage enough to inform their father of them, as he was extremely fond of Mrs. B . At last, the youngest of these ladies, having watched Dumont as he went one night into her apartment, flew immediately to her father, and, in few words, related all she knew of the affair. The governor, in a violent rage, demanded to know what proof she had for so scandalous an aspersion; and being answered, that Dumont was now in his daughter's apartment, he ran down stairs with so much precipitation, that he was at the door of her chamber before her maid, who was in waiting in an outer room, could get in to inform her. Mrs. B , ready to die with fear, knew not how to dispose of her lover. There was no closet in the room. The governor knocked hastily at the door, and they had not time to consult what excuse to make for Dumont's being found at that late hour in her bedchamber; when Dumont, taking notice of a carpet that lay carelessly rolled up in one corner of the room, immediately laid himself down upon it; and his mistress, covering him up in a moment, made no scruple to open the door to her father, and, in a submissive tone, asked him, what had procured her a visit from him at that time of night. The governor, without answering her, threw his eyes eagerly round the room; and, not seeing the person he looked for, cast a look full of reproach upon his youngest daughter, who had followed him in. The girl, whose wit was animated by the extreme envy she bore her sister, and this disappointment of its gratification, cast her eyes upon the carpet; and imagining, by its being more bulky than usual, that the lover might be concealed there, pushed it gently with her foot, and was immediately convinced her suspicions were but too just. The governor, having observed this action, and no longer in doubt of his daughter's indiscretion, went out of her apartment, without explaining the cause of his coming; and, charging the young incendiary to keep the unhappy secret safe, by the most refined policy imaginable, he lavished so many favours upon Dumont and his family, that people were at a loss what to think of the reports they had heard, not being able to imagine the governor could be so fond of a man who had dishonoured his daughter. However, he took his measures so effectually with the father of Dumont, that he was sent to England, upon no very agreeable errand; since he was ordered to make his addresses to his cousin. How he has obeyed these commands, I am yet to learn," said Mrs. Villars, concluding her long tale; "but, if I am not mistaken, he is at liberty still to devote himself to you." "And I shall take care, returned I, (laughing) to fix this inconstant heart, if I can; for it would give me a very sensible pleasure to have a lover like Dumont, for whom I should be so greatly envied." "But envy is a very dangerous passion, replied Mrs. Villars; and if it could produce such terrible effects in the heart of a sister, as to make her relate the shocking particulars I have told you, it might have very dangerous consequences for you." I was beginning to rally Mrs. Villars upon this grave reflection, when Mr. Maynard came up to us; and, notwithstanding my aversion to this gentleman, which commenced from the moment I saw him, I was obliged to suffer a great deal of gallantry from him, which ended, at last, in a very frank declaration of love. If I had consulted my vanity alone, I might possibly have found something to sooth it, in this new proof of the power of my charms. But, prepossessed as I was against his person and manner, which afforded an unpleasing contrast to the too lovely Dumont, I treated him with so much contempt and disdain, that he appeared quite astonished at my behaviour. Alas! my dear Amanda, I was then ignorant of the miseries this man was to cause me; but the unreasonable aversion I felt for him, was too sure a presage of them. While Maynard thus seized every opportunity of persecuting me with his addresses, all my attention was fix'd upon Dumont, whose behaviour threw me into the greatest perplexity imaginable. Tho' he industriously avoided all occasions of speaking to me alone, yet his eyes were almost constantly fixed upon my face, with looks so tender and passionate, as often embarrassed me extremely. He would eagerly embrace every occasion of serving me; and never pronounced my name without a

visible emotion, visible, at least, to an observation so interested as mine. Yet while he still continued to observe a silence, which might as well be imputed to indifference as respect, I remained in an uncertainty that gave me a great deal of pain. It is possible, my dear Amanda, by thus laying open my heart, with all its weaknesses and foibles, I may hazard the loss of your esteem. You have often rallied me upon my extreme fondness for applause; yet, perhaps, you have never observed this inclination in me in its full extent: and when, in the course of my history, you find it introducing me into many inconveniences, I shall not be surprised, if you are more inclined to blame than pity me. Thus then, tho' I had no other sentiments for Dumont, than what his uncommon merit must necessarily inspire in every one who conversed with him, yet his mysterious behaviour gave me a thousand inquietudes; and my anxiety to know if he really loved me, was as great as if the happiness of my life depended upon it. Mr. Maynard, whose apprehension, tho' naturally slow, was at this time quickened by jealousy, began to take notice of the soft language of Dumont's eyes; and guessing by what he had discovered, that a great deal more remained to be known, set himself to observe, with the utmost vigilance, all our looks and actions. I don't doubt but you have found, my dear, that my eyes have a natural faculty of discovering all that passes in my heart; which would have been a bad quality for a coquet, if I had not used them to such a perfect obedience as to make them express whatever I had a mind. It was not difficult for Maynard to find out by these tattlers, that I interested myself very much in every look and word of Dumont's: but his judgment, infallible as he thought it, deceived him, when it persuaded him I was deeply in love with him. However, he discovered enough to make him rally me very impertinently, and to give continual increase to my aversion for him. "How happy, said he to me one day, (when he observed me looking on Dumont, who was at some distance) will the ladies in N think themselves, when their admired Dumont returns to them! If they formerly disputed with so much animosity for his heart, they will have much severer contests now, so improved as he is with the additional graces he has acquired in London." "I am not ignorant, returned I, of your talent in scandal; and, notwithstanding your malicious representations, I can't believe the ladies in N are very indiscreet." "I see you are very incredulous, said he; and it would be a difficult matter to persuade you to believe, that Mr. Dumont is not only the most insensible person in the world, but capable of shewing a great deal of contempt for ladies, who load him with undesired favours." "I shall never, interrupted I, take the trouble to examine into the truth of what you say; but if you mean this as an aspersion on the character of Mr. Dumont, I shall be the less inclined to believe it, as I know you are extremely fond of defamation." Saying these words, I rose from my seat; and mixing in conversation with Mrs. Villars and Dumont, with as much gaiety as I could possibly assume, had the satisfaction of seeing Maynard ready to die with vexation. Alas, how much reason had I to repent this short triumph! Mr. Maynard, despairing to gain upon my inclinations, without the interposition of parental authority, disclosed his passion to my mother, and met with a very favourable reception. He was, in reality, a very advantageous offer for me; for tho' my father had held a considerable post in the army, yet his income was much too small to support his family in a manner suitable to their birth: and my mother's little fortune was entirely spent, when he was preferred to this post in America; which, as it was a very lucrative one, gave him hopes of leaving his children tolerably provided for. Mr. Maynard had not only a very genteel fortune, but was lieutenant of a man of war; and, as he had great interest, was in daily expectation of being preferred to the command of a ship. My mother saw too many advantages in such a match to be capable of rejecting it; and assured Mr. Maynard, she would mention his proposal to my father, and endeavour to gain his consent. In the mean time, she permitted him to see me frequently; and I soon found the effects of that fatal permission, for I was perpetually exposed to his detested addresses. My mother had hired a decayed gentlewoman, in the quality of governess to Fanny and me. She was a woman of good sense, and a very amiable temper; and, as she very much regretted the partiality my mother discovered to my prejudice, she endeavoured to soften my uneasiness by the most tender and obliging behaviour. Mrs. Blandon (for that was her name) appearing one evening more thoughtful than usual, I eagerly enquired the cause. "I must confess, my dear, said she, (with an affectionate look) that I am under some inquietude about you; and I foresee a great many troubles that you must necessarily suffer from the present disposition of your mother's mind. She just now acquainted me, that Mr. Maynard had desired her permission to make his addresses to you, and commanded me to dispose you to receive him favourably." "Alas, dear Mrs. Blandon, returned I, what is it you tell me! Has that odious man made my mother approve of his importunities? He has persecuted me incessantly these two days, and I was thinking to complain to her; but I now perceive it will be in vain. What shall I do, cried I? (bursting into tears:) I hate him mortally; and, tho' my mother was to punish me ever so severely, I shall never be able to use him with common civility." "I am not ignorant of

your aversion to Mr. Maynard, interrupted she; and tho' I cannot help thinking it a little unreasonable, yet, upon that account, I could wish your mother was less inclined to favour him than she is. However, miss, pursued she, (in a severer tone) I have often condemned that inordinate desire of admiration which I have discovered in you. You see the consequence of indulging that folly. Mr. Maynard has mistaken, perhaps, that complaisance in your behaviour, when you aim at inspiring love; and what was the effect of a general thirst of praise, he has attributed to a particular desire of pleasing him: hence he indulged a growing passion for you, out of a belief that you would not reject it." "But, madam, replied I, (blushing extremely at her reproof) I never gave Mr. Maynard leave to imagine his addresses would please me: on the contrary, I have always expressed the utmost dislike both to his person and behaviour." My mother coming in at this moment, prevented Mrs. Bandon from replying; who rose from her seat, and was going out: "Sit still, Mrs. Bandon, said my mother; I would have you be present at my discourse with Harriot: I suppose you have prepared her for the proposal I am going to make her." "I have, indeed, madam, answered my governess, mentioned Mr. Maynard to miss, as a person whose addresses you approve of; but I find the poor child so extremely averse to all thoughts of that gentleman, that I despair of making her receive your commands with the obedience you require." At any other time Mrs. Bandon giving me the epithet of child, would have mortified me extremely; but now I was certain she had a particular reason for doing so; and, therefore, improving the hint, "Sure, mamma, said I, you did but jest when you spoke of Mr. Maynard paying his addresses to me. I am persuaded he can have no serious thoughts of a girl of my age; and if I thought otherwise, 'tis probable you would chide me severely for being so forward." "Come, come, miss, interrupted my mother, (with a satirical smile) tho' you are, in reality, much younger than you would be thought, yet you are old enough to give me pain for your behaviour. You are certainly extremely vain, Harriot, continued she, (looking stedfastly on me) and take so much pleasure in the ridiculous compliments that are paid you, that, in order to stop your career of coquetry, I am determined to make choice of a husband for you myself. Mr. Maynard is a more advantageous offer than you could possibly expect, and you ought to think yourself extremely happy in the prospect of so genteel an establishment." "But I hate him, madam, replied I: how, then, can I think myself happy? Alas, I shall be absolutely miserable, if you don't change your intentions." "These horrid romances, interrupted my mother, has turned the girl's brain. The heroines of these books are always disobedient: and I suppose she intends to copy their example. However, Harriot, continued she, (rising and taking my hand) I expect you'll treat Mr. Maynard with more civility; and look upon him as a man, who, one day, may be your husband." I made no reply, but suffered my mother to lead me into the room where we were to sup; and, to my infinite mortification, I saw Maynard among the company. There remained some traces of my sorrow upon my countenance, which every person present took notice of with concern; for it was no secret, that my mother would often use me very harshly. When supper was over, I retired to one corner of the room with Mrs. Villars, who was impatient to know the cause of my uneasiness. I could not inform her of my mother's cruel commands without tears. Dumont, that moment, came up to us; and, observing the disorder I was in, asked me the occasion of it, with so much emotion in his looks and accent, that I was disconcerted; and, not knowing what to answer, Mrs. Villars, who was very indiscreet, told him all; adding a great many invectives against the person and manners of Maynard. I now expected some very soothing compliment from Dumont; but was greatly disappointed to find he made no reply. A silence of three or four minutes ensued: at last, I ventured to list up my eyes, and, at that instant, encountered a glance of Dumont's, which expressed so many nameless tender things, that, quite confused, I hastily turned away my face, lest he should imagine I took any notice of the alteration that appeared in his. "You see, miss, said he, (with a sigh he was not able to suppress) that it is sometimes a misfortune to be too lovely; and since Maynard is so unhappy as to be disagreeable to you, I could pity him, if he had not made use of very ungenerous methods to obtain you. A man who seeks the possession of you by the arbitrary commands of a parent, is unworthy so great a blessing; and I find in myself so strong a disposition to hate him upon this account, that I shall with difficulty restrain myself from expressing my indignation." "I should be sorry, sir, replied I, that your concern for my interests should engage you to show any resentment to a person for whom you seemed to have a friendship; but, if you have any influence over Mr. Maynard, you would extremely oblige me, by persuading him to cease his persecutions, and leave me at liberty." "Depend upon it, miss, said he, I'll execute this commission with the utmost fidelity; and you could not have laid a greater obligation on me." These words were accompanied with a most expressive look, and he immediately took his leave. "Poor Dumont! said Mrs. Villars, (laughing) I dare engage he'll obey you; but from a motive very different from what he was pleased to own." "Whatever is his motive, replied I, I shall be glad if he

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succeeds; but I fear there is no great likelihood his argument should effect, what all the coldness of my behaviour has failed to do. My mother, who by no means approv'd my long conversation with Mrs. Villars, called me; and, for the remainder of the evening, obliged me to sit near her; with a view, no doubt, of pleasing my lover, for he was then engaged in a conversation with her. For some days I lived thus, in a perpetual restraint; but not all the respect owed my mother, could hinder me from treating Mr. Maynard with contempt: he grew every moment more odious to me, and indeed his behaviour was more calculated to raise aversion than love.

Proud of his success in obtaining my mother's consent, he took but little care to gain my inclinations; possibly he thought it was in vain to attempt it, and continued to pursue me rather thro' spite than affection. Dumont, who had been indispos'd, and had discontinued his visits for some days, came in one afternoon, just as my ill humour had discharg'd itself in some very injurious expression to Maynard: the paleness of his looks, and the profound melancholy that appear'd in his eyes, immediately drew every one's attention. My sister, who, as I have observ'd, was extremely vain, and very often mistook a little unmeaning gallantry for love, while Dumont was receiving the condolance of the company upon the alteration in his looks, observed a profound silence, hardly daring to lift up her eyes, unless it was sometimes to exchange a transient glance with him. Immediately, as if conscious of the mutual intelligence of their looks, she hastily turned away her eyes, blushing at the same time, with such an appearance of confusion, as must have given great surprize to Dumont, if his attention had not been otherways engaged. Maynard, who was talking to me, was the only person in the room who seemed to attract his notice: He kept his eyes constantly fix'd upon him, not without betraying in his looks a very extraordinary emotion. That instant the ship giving a violent turn, almost threw me off my chair: I push'd away Maynard with great scorn, who endeavoured to support me, and a second shock made me fall into the arms of Dumont, who extended them to hold me up: this action however was not observed by any one in the cabin, who were busy in saving themselves: but as soon as we were resettled Maynard, casting a look full of rage upon Dumont, went to my mother, with whom he soon entered into a private conversation. This interval Dumont made use of to tell me, that he thought himself very unfortunate, in not being able to serve me better the first time I had favoured him with my commands. "Your chains, miss, continued he sighing, are not so easily broken; and I am not surprized that Maynard seems resolved to continue your slave, in spite of all your rigours: however, I have not fail'd to represent to him the cruelty and baseness of endeavouring, by your mother's authority, to force your inclinations; and tho' my arguments did not produce the effect I desir'd, yet they have made us irreconcilable enemies." My sister coming up to us, hinder'd me from replying: by this time she had pretty well recovered the confusion that Dumont's apparent melancholy had caused in her, and we were beginning to converse pretty freely, when my mother called to me in an angry tone, and bid me get into her cabin, for she wanted to speak with me there. I obey'd her immediately, and had scarce waited three minutes when my sister came in. I express'd some surprize at her leaving Dumont, who had reason to be offended with my mother's rude manner of calling me away." "The dull creature, said she, with an air of triumph, can't speak without sighing, I think he seem'd to be shock'd at my mother's behaviour, and went away immediately. But I came to ask you what he was saying to you, when I interrupted you, I thought I heard him mention my name;" "No, no, replied I, you are quite mistaken: but hush, here's my mother; how angry she looks! what can be the matter I wonder!" "So Miss, said she entering, I have discovered, at last, the reason of your aversion to Mr. Maynard. What, you are in love with Dumont, are you? My dear, upon my word, if you go on at this rate you'll make a shining figure in the records of gallantry: you have two or three intrigues upon your hands already: but pray, continued she, throwing herself into a chair and fixing her eyes stedfastly upon me, be pleased to inform me how long you have dared to encourage this papist?" "Dear mamma, replied I in the utmost surprize, how unjustly do you accuse me! Who has been so cruel to persuade you I am in love with Dumont? That such a little forward creature, interrupted my mother, should speak so confidently of love, I have no patience with her." "Since you have been pleas'd, madam, answer'd I, to speak to me of marriage, it is not at all surprizing if I should accustom myself to think of love; and, in obedience to your commands, I wou'd have loved Mr. Maynard if I could." "So then you really confess you love Dumont, said my mother?" "No madam, I absolutely deny it, said I." "Indeed, madam, said my sister, smiling, it wou'd be very ridiculous if Harriot was in love with Dumont, for I am persuaded she has no reason to think he is in love with her." "You are mistaken, replied my mother; they have, no doubt, a very good intelligence with one another, or else Dumont would not have behaved in the manner he did to Mr. Maynard." "How, dear mother, interrupted my

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sister eagerly, how has he behaved to him?" "He has had the insolence, returned she, to forbid Mr. Maynard to continue his addresses to her, and threatens to call him to an account for it when they come on shore, if ever he persecutes her again." 'Tis impossible to express the effect these words had on my sister; she continued immoveable as a statue, with her eyes fix'd on the ground; and when she ventur'd to look up, spite, shame, and disappointment, were so visible in her face, that I could not chuse but pity her. But in order to divert my mother's attention, I confess'd that Dumont had heard me complain of Maynard's importunities; and that I believed he had friendship enough for me to endeavour to persuade him from persisting in a behaviour so disgusting to me: but I protested, with the utmost sincerity, that Dumont had never made me any declaration of love. "Well, said my mother, as a proof of the truth of what you say, from this moment, resolve to use Mr Maynard better; and when your father and I think proper to dispose of you, take care to obey us without murmuring." "Suffer me, madam, replied I, (bursting into tears) to expostulate with you upon your cruelty, in precipitating me so early into the married state: I cannot resolve to make myself miserable by marrying Maynard: I hate him with the utmost inveteracy, and I can never look upon him as any other than a base incendiary, who endeavours to deprive me of the small part I possess of your affection." "After this insolent declaration, said my mother, Can you ever hope I should afford you the smallest esteem? nothing shall persuade me, that you have not a correspondence with Dumont; but I'll take care to prevent your seeing him any more. You must look upon this cabin as your prison, continued she, and never stir out of it without first asking me leave: when I have acquainted your father with my reasons for treating you in this manner, I am persuaded he will approve of it." My sister offer'd a word in my favour, but my mother absolutely commanding her to be silent, obliged her to go out of the room with her, repeating her orders to me to stay there till she sent for me. This confinement but ill agreed with one of my sprightly disposition: my mother's back was scarce turned, when I threw myself on the bed, and with a shower of tears, deplor'd my unhappy situation. In these moments of reflection, I accused myself for having ever allow'd Dumont to speak to me in private, and thought, with infinite regret, upon the commission I had given him, with regard to Maynard. I blush'd, when I considered the motive of this imprudence, a silly desire of seeing what effect the certainty of a rival would produce in him: and when I had trac'd the full extent of my power in his heart, did I find in myself the least inclination to answer his passion? 'Twas impossible to resolve this behaviour into any thing but a fantastic desire of giving pain. Sure, thought I, I am justly punished by my mother's suspicions! These reflections were followed by a resolution of correcting a folly, productive of so many misfortunes. Alas! my repentance was far from being sincere, and I relaps'd into all my former indiscretions, the moment I had it in my power to indulge them. I remain'd alone, 'till the evening was pretty far advanced: Mrs. Blandon, at last, appear'd with my supper, followed by my dear Fanny, who would not allow me to eat alone. My governess inform'd me that my mother allowed me to take a walk upon the deck, if I desir'd it, for the benefit of the air; but she had orders not to leave me. I immediately made use of the privilege, and perceiving my father alone, leaning on the rails, I resolved to take that opportunity of clearing myself to him; for I did not doubt but he was greatly prejudiced against me. My father, observing the fear and confusion I was in as I approached him, took hold of my hand, and, with a smile full of sweetness, ask'd me for what fault my mother had confin'd me to my room that day? This question convinced me he was yet unacquainted with her view; and I therefore ingenuously related all that had past, protesting my innocence, and imploring his protection against Maynard's persecutions, for whom I candidly own'd, I had an unalterable aversion. My father heard me with the utmost complaisance and attention; and, after a little pause, ask'd me several questions, with regard to Dumont's behaviour to me. I answer'd them all very sincerely. "Well, said he, (seeming pleased with my frankness) I am satisfied it was thro' a childish imprudence, you contributed to Dumont's indiscretion, and I am willing to pardon it, provided you promise me never to give that young gentleman any encouragement: for know, Harriot, (continued he in a tone that made me tremble) I would rather follow you to a grave than see you married to one of the religion he professes: nothing but misery can attend the union of two persons, whose principles are so different; and the fatal consequence of such a marriage already in my family, has confirm'd me in my abhorrence of it. As for Maynard, tho' I really think him an advantageous offer, yet I shall take care you suffer no more restraint upon his account; for as I expect my children will consult me in the disposal of their affections, I am also determin'd never to force their inclinations." Finishing these words, he call'd Mrs. Blandon, and desir'd her to let my mother know he wanted to speak with her. Alas Sir! said I, my mother will imagine I have been complaining of her severity to you." "Fear not, said he, I'll make your peace, I warrant you." Notwithstanding this assurance, I cou'd not help trembling when I saw my

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mother approach. "Madam, said my dear father, (advancing, and holding me by the hand) you must not refuse to receive Harriot into favour again, at my request; I am persuaded she has no design to offend you, by entertaining any thoughts of Dumont: and I have engaged my word, she shall suffer no violence in favour of Mr. Maynard, to whom I find she has an invincible dislike." My mother, who seem'd to be greatly disconcerted, only replied, that she wish'd I might not give him occasion to repent his indulgence; and then ordering me to go down stairs, I obey'd, making a very low obeysance, and highly delighted to find myself at liberty; for four hours confinement had sat very uneasily upon me. I still flatter'd myself, that I should be able to maintain the resolution I had taken, during my short disgrace, of conquering my coquettish inclinations: but an accidental sight of Dumont, (who bow'd to me as I pass'd, giving me, at the same time, a passionate look) immediately roused my sleeping vanity; and, by the lively sensation I felt, convinced me that the desire of pleasing was my predominant passion. However, the exact deference I paid to my father's commands, made me avoid, with care, all occasions of conversing with Dumont, and preserved my heart from being too sensible of the tender and respectful passion he felt for me, which, notwithstanding his endeavours to conceal it, was but too visible in every look and action. I past my time agreeably enough, during the remainder of our voyage; my mother contenting herself with giving Maynard frequent opportunities of conversing with me, and, by gentle methods, endeavouring to persuade me to entertain some esteem for him. At last, after a tedious voyage of nine weeks, we came in sight of N . That city making a delightful appearance from the water, I stood some moments contemplating it with great pleasure. When Dumont, observing no one near us, approach'd me, and beholding me with a languishing air, "how differently, Miss, (said he sighing) are we two affected with the sight of that place! you seem to feel nothing but pleasure at your nearer approach to it, while I suffer the most racking uneasiness." "That is very surprising indeed, interrupted I, and I think you are much to be blamed, for having so little affection for the place that gave you birth." "This dear vessel, replied he, contains what I most value in the world; and when I leave it, it is probable, I shall never more have the pleasure of beholding what I shall ever love with the most lasting passion. But may I presume, miss, continued he, to ask if your mother still persecutes you in favour of Maynard? I shall never entertain a moment's ease, till I am assured you are freed from his sollicitations." "I am much obliged to you, sir, said I, for so generously interesting yourself in my happiness: I believe I have nothing to fear from Maynard's importunities, as my father seems resolved never to force my inclinations." I gave him no leisure to reply to these words; for I got away as fast as possible, not without some apprehensions of having been seen talking to him.

Next morning the ship was crowded with gentlemen, who came to receive my father, and conduct us on shore. As soon as we were drest, we went into the barge that waited for us, and were quickly rowed to land; where we found the governor's coach, ready to carry us to the lodgings he had appointed for us. It was some days before my mother was sufficiently recovered from the fatigue of so long a voyage, so as to be able to see company; but, as soon as we were settled, all the principal ladies of R came to visit us; among whom were the governor's lady and daughters, and the two lovely sisters of Dumont. I did not fail to examine the whole person of Mrs. B , with the utmost attention; and found it so infinitely charming, that I could not help reproaching Dumont, in my own thoughts, for being able to like any one after her. The ladies, to whom Dumont had represented me as a miracle of wit, lavished the most endearing caresses upon me; and Mrs. B , little suspecting her lover's revolt, was one of the most forward in publishing my praises. Our stay in this city was made so agreeable, by the balls and entertainments that were continually made for us, that it was with great regret we were obliged to leave it. My father had determined to fix his residence at A , a city near two hundred miles distant from , where he was to command in chief. The day before we went, I was at the governor's, with my mother and sisters. Lady Belmein, who was extremely fond of me, told the governor, smiling, "That she could not help being apprehensive for her son's heart. The captain, continued she, will carry so much beauty into , that it will be a miracle if poor Belmein continues unhurt; and this little charmer (pressing my hand, which she held between her's) has received so many advantages from nature, that, if he escapes the charms of her eldest sister, he'll certainly fall into her's." These instances of gallantry were so common in N , that I was not at all disconcerted at this extraordinary compliment: but, as I had heard very advantageous accounts of the young gentleman she mentioned, I found something very soothing to my vanity in her prediction. My mother, who had not abandoned her design of marrying me to Maynard, gave him an invitation to visit us at A , as soon as we were settled. I was present when she granted him this favour; and the alteration that it caused in my countenance, sufficiently betrayed the uneasiness it gave me. A

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great deal of company attended us to the sloop, which was fitted up in a very elegant manner for our little voyage. Dumont found means to lead me to the waterside, notwithstanding Maynard's endeavours to prevent him: however, he walked close enough to us to prevent any particular discourse; and Dumont could no otherways acquaint me with his concern at this separation, than by his frequent sighs, and the tender melancholy in his eyes, which I could not behold without some sensibility. We had a favourable wind, and reached A in two days, infinitely delighted with the prospect of several fine country-seats on each side of the river. My father was received with much respect by the inhabitants of A, who had impatiently expected us. We were saluted by all the ships in the harbour, who had their flags and streamers out; and the mayor, with the principal persons of the city, waited our landing, and conducted us to the fort, in which was a very fine house, where the commanding officer always resided. I longed impatiently for a sight of captain Belmein; but he was not then in town. The next day, however, he came up to the fort: I happened to be in my mother's apartment when my father introduced him, and was not a little pleased to find I had fixed his looks immediately. He seemed to be about four and twenty, tall, and finely shaped: his features had a remarkable regularity in them; and such an air of grandeur was diffused over his whole person, as commanded respect from all who beheld him. I could not help examining his person with a particular attention; but observing his eyes constantly fixed on me, with a look more soft and expressive than can be well imagined, I hastily turned away my face, to conceal the confusion I was not able to suppress. My father made him an offer of an apartment in the fort, which he accepted with great pleasure; and, being soon settled in the same house with us, he had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with me: for my father would not allow him to keep a separate table. My mother, from the first sight of captain Belmein, had entertained hopes that he would like my sister. She watched his glances continually; and, finding them always directed to me, conceived so much spite and resentment at the disappointment, as made me often suffer severely. Thus, for very inconsiderable faults, I was frequently confined to my room a whole day; and some pretence or other was always found out, to prevent my dining at table. I bore this restraint with much impatience; and, entering into my mother's views, which were only to keep me out of Belmein's sight, I begged her permission to make a visit to Mrs. Villars, who lived in a village about twenty miles distant from A. As I foresaw, she readily granted my request; and, ordering Mrs. Blandon to get every thing ready for my journey next day, as soon as I was told the chaise waited for me, I went into my father's apartment, to take my leave of him, and found captain Belmein there, who, till that moment, had heard nothing of my intended journey. He looked uneasy, when he understood I should not return in less than a month; but, immediately recollecting himself, begged my father's permission to wait on me to Mrs. Villars's; which, after some apology for the trouble it would give him, was granted. Captain Belmein, who flattered himself he should take the place designed for Mrs. Blandon in the chaise, was greatly mortified to find my mother would not allow me to go without her. He expostulated with her about it; but it was in vain to contest a point, which, for particular reasons, she had already resolved on. He was obliged to mount his horse, which he did with a visible dissatisfaction in his countenance; and, only attended by his servant, and one of my father's, we took our way towards S. He rode by the chaise some time without speaking; at last he came close up to us, and, after enquiring how I did, galloped away so fast that we soon lost sight of him. I expressed some surprize at his sudden disappearing; but Mrs. Blandon telling me, she imagined we should meet him at the half-way house, which his servant informed us was near, we continued our journey, without being in any apprehensions about him. In about half an hour we came to the house, and captain Belmein, who was waiting for us at the door, advanced to hand me out of the chaise. He had ordered a very genteel entertainment for us; but appeared so melancholy and indisposed, that Mrs. Blandon asked him the occasion of it. He told her, he had had the misfortune to fall off his horse, and found himself a little uneasy by a blow he had received on his head; but he hoped to be able to attend us again in a little time. Mrs. Blandon, who was extremely good-natured, desired him to accept of her place in the chaise with me; alledging, that it was very improper for him to ride his horse in that condition. He accepted this offer, after much importunity; and she took a place in the caravan, which was just then setting out for the village we were going to. When we had gone a few paces, I enquired after his health: "Never better in my life, he replied." "How, cried I, is your head-ach gone already?" "What a question that is! said he, (laughing) Gone! why it was only a pretence to be near you." "Oh! mighty well, sir, interrupted I; since you are capable of sitting your hotse, I'll send and let Mrs Blandon know you are better, that she may take her place again." As I finished these words, I looked out, as if I intended to call one of the servants; but Belmein, with a countenance quite altered, prevented me. "Is it possible, miss, said he, you can be offended with me, for having,

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by this innocent stratagem, procured the pleasure of entertaining you alone? I have long languished for an opportunity of telling you, I love you with a sincere and ardent passion. My flame is not more violent than it is respectful: I adored you from the first moment I saw you; and if I make this declaration first to you, it is because I would not use a father's authority, to gain a blessing I would rather owe to your inclination than his command. I am sensible, he would not think my birth and fortune unworthy of you; but, if I am so unfortunate as to be disagreeable to you, these advantages shall be of no use to me: I would suffer a thousand deaths rather than cause you the least uneasiness." He paused here, expecting my reply; but my confusion was so great, at this frank declaration from a man, whose rank and fortune intitled him to my respect, and whose agreeable person had already began to make some impression on my heart, that I was unable, for several moments, to return him any answer. "Good God, resumed he, (looking fixedly upon me) what am I to think of this silence! speak, I conjure you, and let me know my fate." "I know not what to say to you, replied I, (blushing excessively:) I am so little used to such discourse, that I am at a loss to know whether I ought to believe you, or not. My youth, I think, might secure me from this kind of raillery; but, if you are really sincere, I am obliged to you for your good opinion. Yet you ought to consider, I am not at liberty to listen to such professions, much less engage my inclinations, without my father's consent." "I am charmed with your discretion, returned he, my little enchanting angel! you are, indeed, a miracle. So much wit, such a depth of thought, in one so young! Suffer me to indulge the dear hope, that I am not disagreeable to you; and that, if your father should authorise my vows, you will not hear me with aversion."

In this manner he entertained me, during the remainder of our journey; but, tho' my heart spoke greatly in his favour, I behaved with so much reserve, that it was impossible for him to form either hopes or fears from my replies. When the chaise stopped at the house of my friend, she, who had espied me from a window, flew immediately to the door, and clasped me fast in her arms, in such a transport of joy, that I was convinced absence had rather heightened than diminished her friendship. Mrs. Blandon arrived an hour after us: she seemed quite pleased to find captain Belmein so well recovered, and he made her many compliments for the favour she had allowed him. Belmein had promised to return to A the next day; but when Mrs. Blandon set out, he charged her with some compliments of excuse to my father, resolving to stay a few days at Mr. Villars's house, who was not a little proud of the honour he did him. This time was spent in the most agreeable manner imaginable. We made several little excursions up the country; and went so far as to visit one of the Indian nations, who had a castle, as they called it, near S y. One of my father's lieutenants commanded a fort which was erected there to keep the Indians in awe. He took great pleasure in making me acquainted with the manners and customs of this people; who, notwithstanding they were converted to the Christian religion, had an air so savage and frightful, that I could not look on them without trembling. I visited the houses of their chiefs, who paid me a great many honours; and, when we departed, loaded me with presents of toys and trinkets of their own making: for they are extremely ingenious, and fond of learning the European arts.

Captain Belmein had spent a fortnight with us, and, during that time, his tender and respectful behaviour had gained so far upon my inclinations, that I could not see him prepare for returning to A without pain. However, I had insisted upon his going; and was proof to all the sollicitations he made me, to allow him to stay and conduct me home. When he was gone, an unusual disquiet seized me; I was restless and uneasy, sauntered from place to place, without knowing what I sought, and was incapable of mixing in any discourse, if Belmein was not the subject. I sighed involuntarily, was become passionately fond of solitude, and found no other entertainment but what my own thoughts afforded me, which were continually taken up with the idea of this gentleman. Such an alteration in my temper, which used to be all gay and sprightly, drew a great many railleries from Mrs. Villars and her husband, who were not ignorant of captain Belmein's passion for me. They had some difficulty to persuade me to stay with them the time allotted by my mother. I saw, with transport, the hour approach that was fixed for my return; and was but little moved with the reproaches my friend made me, on my eagerness to leave her. Mr. Villars took the care of conducting me home: but I was seized with some touches of a fever on the road; and Mr. Villars, judging it highly improper I should proceed, endeavoured to prevail upon me to return. I insisted upon going forward; and the fatigue of travelling had so increased my disorder, that, when the chaise stopped at the gate, I fainted away in Mr. Villars's arms, as he was endeavouring to help me out. When I recovered my senses, I found myself in bed, with the room darkened, and my mother and sisters busy in administering remedies to me.

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"Alas, where am I! said I, (sighing, and looking round me with surprize.) "O heavens! she lives, cried captain Belmein, (advancing in a thoughtless transport to the bed-side.)" I raised my eyes at these words, and fixing them upon his face, observed it all bathed in tears. This sight caused so strong an emotion in me, that I was very near relapsing into my swoon. My mother, who observed it, desired captain Belmein to withdraw, in so peevish a tone, that he obeyed immediately. The physician that moment entering, after feeling my pulse, pronounced me in a high fever. I was soon after seized with a delirium that held me several days, in which my life was despaired of. My father, who was extremely fond of me, never stirred from my bed-side. My mother and sisters were also much afflicted, particularly Fanny, who wept by me continually. My youth, however, and the strength of my constitution, conquered the disease. In three weeks I was perfectly recovered from the fever; but still so weak, that I was obliged to keep my bed. As captain Belmein was not permitted to make me a visit in that situation, he contented himself with sending, almost every hour, to enquire after my health. One day, observing none but Fanny near me, I ventured to ask her some news of Belmein: she told me, that his grief, during my illness, had been so excessive, that no one in the family was any longer ignorant of his passion for me; that my mother had appeared much chagrined at it, and had endeavoured to persuade my father to give him a refusal, in case he discovered his inclinations to him. "Well, but, dear Fanny, interrupted I, (all alarmed) what does my father say to it?" "If I can judge, said she, by his behaviour to captain Belmein, he is far from being displeased at his regard for you; and, I am persuaded, he will not refuse his consent when the captain demands it." This flattering assurance had so great an effect on my countenance, that Fanny, being convinced my affections were really engaged, congratulated me upon my good fortune in being beloved by so fine a gentleman. "My mother, continued she, will be greatly disappointed if captain Belmein marries you; for I am sensible, she has omitted nothing in her power to engage him to love my sister." In a few days after this conversation, being quite recovered, there was no longer any pretence for hindering Belmein to see me. He was so fortunate as to find only my father in the room with me, when he came to pay his first visit. After expressing the pleasure my recovery gave him, with a countenance and accent wholly composed of transport, "Sir, said he, (turning to my father, with a respectful action) you are, no doubt, surprized at my behaviour during your daughter's illness: you cannot be ignorant that I love her; but you know not yet with what violence I do so. I shall be the most miserable man in the world, if you refuse me your consent. Dear, dear sir, continued he, (eagerly pressing his hand) if you do not think my rank and fortune unworthy your alliance, suffer me to hope you will make me your son. If I have no other merit to intitle me to this honour, I have at least this, that I esteem and reverence you equal to my own father." My father, while my lover was speaking, kept his eyes fixed on the ground. What he had said made a deep impression on him: he was truly sensible of the advantages of such an offer; but, at the same time, foresaw obstacles that would not be easily surmounted. Possessed with this thought, he looked earnestly upon captain Belmein: "Have you considered, sir, said he, the consequence of the proposal you make me? Do you reflect, that this child has no fortune; and tho' heaven should please to spare my life for some years, yet all that I could save for her would be greatly below what you might expect? Will the governor, think you, approve your choice? She is scarce past a child, and in nothing, but her birth, a proper wife for you." "Ah sir! replied Belmein, why do you mention the want of fortune! I passionately love your daughter. I have sufficient to maintain her genteelly: more is not necessary to our happiness. I am persuaded my father will not oppose our union, when he knows how deeply my affections are engaged. Do not, then, I conjure you, sir, raise any more objections." "You may be assured, interrupted my father, that I will do all in my power to promote your happiness. Harriot is yours, provided your father consents to it, and she is not averse; for not, even to have the honour of your alliance, would I, in the least, constrain her inclinations." My lover, who had no reason to believe I would oppose my father's commands in this particular, was so transported at his success, that he would have thrown himself at his feet, to thank him for his goodness, if he would have suffered it. As for me, I was in the utmost confusion: I had naturally a respectful awe upon me in my father's presence. This discourse covered me with blushes; and not being able to meet the looks of either my father or Belmein, I kept my eyes fastened on the ground. "What do you say, Harriot, said my father, are you willing to follow my advice in this affair?" "Sir, replied I, since you are so good to give me the liberty of declaring my sentiments; I will confess, that since Capt. Belmein is your choice, I shall find no difficulty in obeying your commands."

My lover thanked me, with an excess of rapture: but my mother coming in, relieved me from the confusion of a reply, when Capt. Belmein retired; and my father acquainted her with all that had passed. "I think, said she, this match is very precipitately concluded upon: there is no probability that the governour, who has the character of being one of the most avaritious men in the world, will give his consent to it. A refusal must be a very sensible mortification to you, and this affair may probably cause animosities no way favourable to your interest." My mother would not have reasoned in this manner, if Belmein had address'd my sister; this was the height of her wishes; besides, she had in view her engagements to Maynard: however, my father's resolution was fixed; and, for this time, broke all her measures. My sister being soon after married to a gentleman of a very considerable estate in that country, my mother remitted some part of her resentment against me; and suffered me, without any appearance of displeasure, to listen to the addresses of Belmein. My lover had wrote to the governour for his consent to our union, which he endeavoured to gain, by the most affecting arguments his love could suggest. While we were in expectation of an answer, my father received an account that my brother was come to N , and preparing for his journey to A . No words can describe the excess of my transport at this news. I counted the days with an eager impatience; and labour'd, by displaying the merits of this dear brother, and the obligations I owed him, to inspire my lover with an esteem and friendship for him. At length he arrived, and was welcomed by my father and mother, with the greatest expressions of tenderness: the dear, engaging Fanny melted into tears of joy; and as for me, my transports were as unbounded as the affection I had for him. Capt. Belmein, after paying his compliments to my brother, retired to his own apartment, with a young gentleman, who, just then, arrived from N , and who was charg'd with some commands from the governour to him. My brother embraced this opportunity, to enquire into my affairs, having heard some slight reports of Belmein's affection for me. I took an infinite pleasure in relating to him my little adventures, and dwelt with a lover's fondness upon every particular concerning Belmein. I did not fail to represent, in the most advantageous light, his generous and disinterested passion for me: but I had the mortification to find my brother not near so sensible of his merits as I expected. "I am sorry, Harriot, (said he) to find, by the emotion with which you speak of Belmein, that your heart has received a much deeper impression than is consistent with your future peace. I heard, while I staid at N , some reports of Capt. Belmein's affection for you; and the interest I take in every thing that concerns you, made me enquire, very minutely, into his character; which, I found, labour'd under some imputations that render him unworthy the tenderness you feel." "Alas! my dear brother, replied I, (trembling) what do you mean?" "You are too much discompos'd, said he, (smiling) to hear me now." "For heaven's sake, resumed I, don't trifle with my anxiety: my esteem, for Capt. Belmein was sounded upon the delicacy of his sentiments, and the sincere and honourable passion he profest for me. If he has impos'd upon my credulity, I know how to despise and hate him, as much as ever I loved him." "Dear Harriot, said my brother, (embracing me) how this becoming spirit charms me. I am shock'd, continued he, at my father's acting so precipitately in this affair; by which he has drawn upon himself the mortification of meeting with a refusal from the governour. Capt. Belmein has already made his addresses to several young ladies, successively; and his father's opposition was always a sufficient excuse for his forsaking them. His infidelity is become almost a proverb in N and I am concerned you have added one to the number of those, who have been deceived by him." This discourse was far from producing the effect my brother expected. My uneasiness insensibly vanished. Few women are concerned at the former infidelities of their lovers: we always fancy our own charms a sufficient security for their constancy, and a little self-love and vanity came to my aid upon this occasion, and placed my own merits in such advantageous lights, as fully persuaded me had, absolutely, the heart of Belmein in my possession. My father coming into the room, prevented me from making any reply to my brother, who seem'd impatiently to expect it. He was followed by the same young gentleman, whom I observed had withdrawn with Capt. Bellmein; and who was surgeon to the troops under my father's command. When I recollected that he had told Capt. Belmein he had some commands to deliver to him from the governour, I eagerly examin'd his countenance, to discover, if possible, whether or not his commission had been favourable to me: his looks, which were often directed to me, had something so reserved and serious in them, that I drew from thence no good omen to my wishes; and not able to conceal the agitation I was in, I left the parlour, and retired to my own room, expecting (with the utmost anxiety) a visit from Belmein. I sat alone near two hours without his appearing, involved in the deepest uneasiness; at last, the dinner bell rung: I went down stairs, fully determin'd to express some resentment at his neglect; but what was my surprise, when his servant coming into the room, a moment after me, delivered an apology for his master's not appearing at table. My brother, at this message, cast a

satirical smile at me: I blush'd, and held down my eyes; my heart beat, as if it would force a passage thro' my breast: what pain did I suffer, by endeavouring to conceal my uneasiness! the observing doctor was at table, and seemed to watch every motion. Dinner was just over, when Belmein's servant came in, a second time, and whispered to my father, who immediately left the room. I seized this opportunity, and retired again to my own room, where I gave free vent to my tears. Alas! I had but too much cause for grief. My father (some time after) sent me word to come into his apartment; I found my mother and brother there, and observed in their countenances all the marks of a violent displeasure. My father, who was walking across the room, (with much discomposure) took my hand, when I entered, and related (in a few words) the whole of my misfortune. Capt. Belmein, it seems, had been imprudent enough to shew him the letter he had received from the governour, in which, he refused his consent to our marriage, in very disrespectful terms. My father, in whom the pride of birth inspired noble and generous sentiments, could not read the governour's haughty letter without disdain: he express'd his dissatisfaction at it to my lover, tho' in very gentle terms; and concluded with telling him, that his father's refusal having disengaged him from his word, he must not be surprised, if he obliged me to change my behaviour: my father condescended to add, that Belmein had thrown himself at his feet, and conjur'd him, in the most affecting language, to consent to a private marriage between us, which he had positively refused; and that it was to acquaint me with this resolution, that he had sent for me. Alas! sir, said I, (bursting into tears) pardon me, if I do not receive this cruel news with all the indifference that is expected from me. I cannot teach my heart immediately to forget Capt. Belmein. Give some allowance, I conjure you, to my weakness; and be not offended, if I lament the inevitable bar, which the governour's avarice, and your (perhaps) too rigid honour has put between us. "Degenerate girl, (interrupted my brother, in a rage) are you not ashamed to own so much tenderness for a man who has deceived you? by heaven, 'tis all artifice in Belmein, continued he: secure of his father's opposition whenever he solicited his consent, he has all this time diverted himself with your weakness; and, according to his custom, made you the dupe of a personated passion." My father, observing this language affected me with the deepest concern, gently reproved my brother; protesting, at the same time, that he believed Capt. Belmein's professions had always been very sincere. Then turning to me, with a look full of the softest benevolence, he explained to me the reasons, which obliged him to a conduct I seemed to think so severe; and endeavoured to make me comprehend the fatal consequences that would follow a marriage with Belmein, while the governour continued so averse; the severe reflections which would be justly made on him if he countenanced a clandestine marriage; and the uneasiness the governour's inveterate malice, which was well known, might give him, by thwarting him in all his affairs: he represented all this in such strong colours, that tho' I was sorry to be convinced, yet I found myself so. "Oh! sir, replied I, (all in tears) you are too good, to justify your conduct thus to me; I have not deserved this condescension. I wish I could as easily conquer my weakness, in favour of Bellmein, as I can submit to your reasons." "Poor child, said my father, (moved at my grief) I pity you: your heart is too tender: I did not imagine it had received so deep an impression. However, there is a necessity for your bearing this disappointment with moderation, your reputation requires it: as a friend I give you this advice, and as a father I enforce it, with all the authority I have over you." My father concluded these words with so stern an accent, that I did not dare to reply. My brother, during his short stay at N , had contracted an intimacy with Maynard: he acquainted him with his passion for me, and my strange aversion for him. As he was then in very genteel circumstances, and in daily expectation of being prefer'd to the command of a man of war, my brother looked upon his proposal as very advantageous for me, and promised to mention it to my father: the present situation of my affairs facilitated his proposal. He represented to my father, that he ought to embrace this opportunity of marrying me to Mr. Maynard, and convince the governour he was not ambitious of his alliance. My father (extreamly piqued against the governour) listened to this advice. "I wish, (said he to him) your sister could be persuaded to lay aside her unreasonable aversion to this gentleman. Nothing would give me more pleasure, than to see her happily married at this time." My mother, who saw her favourite scheme again on the carpet, renewed her solicitations for Maynard, with so much vehemence, that not able (in the present state of my mind) to listen with any composure, I begg'd leave to retire. In my way to my apartment, I met Capt. Belmein; who was to leave the fort that night, by the governour's orders, and resume his former lodgings in the town. He begged, in the most submissive manner, for a moment's audience; I permitted him to follow me into my room, not without expressing some fears, lest he should be seen. "Alas! my dear angel, said he, (in a moving tone) is it come to this at last? and is it only by stealth then that I am permitted to see you?" "Certainly, sir, replied I, you had prepared your self well

for an accident like this; and the governour's avaritious temper was too well known to you, to suffer you to hope for his consent." The visible emotion, with which I spoke these words, convinced my lover my heart laboured under some suspicions injurious to him: he omitted nothing that the most ardent passion could suggest, to persuade me of his unalterable affection; assuring me his mother, lady Belmein, had promised to solicit the governour in his favour, and endeavour to procure his consent: he then mentioned a distant wish, that I would marry him privately, which I rejected with the utmost disdain; commanding him, if he valued my esteem, never to expect I would do any thing contrary to my duty, and the affection I owed the best of fathers. 'Twas with the utmost difficulty, that I persuaded him to leave me: but after a thousand repeated vows of eternal constancy, he (at last) quitted the room, and the fort soon after. My mother and brother having allowed a few days to the first sallies of my grief for Belmein's departure, again renewed their remonstrances in favour of Maynard; I was given to understand, that my marriage with him was absolutely resolved on, and that he was expected soon in A . I had no body in this distress to apply to but my father; I depended upon the promises he had given me, never to force my inclinations: tho' my tears and sighs seemed greatly to affect him, yet he commanded me to endeavour to vanquish my aversion to Maynard, and think of obeying both him and my mother, who wished nothing more earnestly, than to see me well disposed of, at a time, when I had received so mortifying an affront from the governour. Capt. Belmein continued to come frequently to the fort, but as I was not permitted to receive a particular visit from him, he never saw me but in my mother's apartment: the gloomy sorrow that appeared in his eyes, convinced me, this restraint very sensibly afflicted him; and he had the satisfaction to find by my looks, that my heart also was far from being at ease. One day, when I was more than ordinarily affected at my unhappy situation, the doctor, who visited in the family, (with the utmost freedom) approached me, as I sat pensively leaning near a window, and (with the greatest caution) slipped a letter into my hand, which (by the first glance) I knew came from Belmein: I hastily concealed it in my pocket, not without feeling an inconceivable surprize at the doctor's being employed to deliver it, whom I always looked on to be a creature of the governour's, and directed, by him, to watch the actions of Belmein. "I see you are surprised, Miss, said he, (speaking very low, for fear of being heard) at the commission Capt. Belmein has favoured me with: I have been obliged to be guilty of a little treachery to the governour, to gratify the Captain's desires. There are few things so difficult, continued he, that I would not undertake to serve you; and by thus conveying to you the sentiments of a happy favoured lover, I make you no very inconsiderable sacrifice." I had been too well acquainted with the language of gallantry, not to comprehend the secret meaning of these words; however, I avoided making any other reply than a slight bow with my head, and retired immediately to read my letter.

I will not trouble you, dear Amanda, with a repetition of it; for, tho' it was very long, it was only filled with tender complaints, and assurances of everlasting fidelity. He added a postscript, which recommended to me an entire confidence in the doctor, conjuring me to return an answer by him; which, however, I did not think it was prudent to comply with, not caring to put in that gentleman's power so undeniable a proof of my correspondence with Belmein, which, if he had an inclination to deceive us, he might either shew to the governor, or my father. My new confidant, taking advantage of the frequent messages he brought from Belmein, seized every opportunity that offered, to entertain me apart. As he was master of an infinite deal of wit and humour, his conversation diverted my melancholy: he perceived it, and often forgetting the part he was to act, of confidant to Belmein, would entertain me with the tender sentiments I had inspired him with. These declarations were made in so delicate a manner, as left me the liberty of disguising my knowledge of them: and I must confess, to my confusion, that, notwithstanding the melancholy that then preyed upon my heart, I was sensible to some degree of pleasure, at this new proof of the power of my charms; and the gratifications my vanity was always sure to receive, spread such an air of complaisance over my countenance, whenever the doctor approached me, as gave him but too much reason for indulging hopes, which, soon after, produced such fatal consequences. While I was thus wearing away my hours, in expectation of some favourable change in my affairs, fortune was preparing new miseries for me.

Captain Belmein had bribed a servant in our family, who acquainted him with every thing that passed which related to me. He understood by her, that my brother was endeavouring to force me to marry Maynard, and that he was shortly expected in A for that purpose. This intelligence inflamed him with resentment against my brother. I was wakened one night out of my sleep by a loud shriek of my mother's; and, at the same time, heard my father

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calling out of his window to the guard to stop my brother, and not suffer him to go out of the gates. I rose immediately, and, throwing on a loose gown, ran to my father's apartment. I met him just as I entered; when, with a look full of fury, he pushed me aside, and went hastily down stairs. My mother seemed to lie breathless and without motion in Mrs. Blandon's arms, surrounded by the other servants, whom her fearful cries had drawn to her apartment. "Tell me, for heaven's sake, cried I, (staring wildly about the room) what is the meaning of all this disorder?" My mother hearing my voice, opened her eyes, and casting a reproachful look at me, "Oh thou disturber of my family! said she, see the effects of your ungovernable passion! Your beloved Belmein has by this time, no doubt, murdered my son." The wild despair that seized me at these words, deprived me instantly of my senses: I fell down in a swoon at my mother's feet; and continued so long in that condition, that they despaired of ever seeing me return to life. The moment I recovered my senses, the terrible words my mother had uttered rushed upon my memory. The image of a brother murdered by the man I loved, wrought so strongly upon my imagination, that I was very near relapsing again into my swoon. "Compose yourself, my dear, said Mrs. Blandon, (who held me in her arms) your brother is safe." "Is my brother alive? cried I, (in a transport of joy.)" "Yes, dear Harriot, said he, (advancing towards me) I am alive; but most sensibly afflicted at the condition I see you in. My mother's unnecessary fears has caused all this disturbance. I never was in any danger." "Have you not quarrelled with captain Belmein? interrupted I, (in the utmost surprize.) Alas! what meant my mother by the terror she expressed, and the cruel words she uttered to me!" "It is certain, said my brother, (taking my hand, which he affectionately pressed) that captain Belmein and I have quarrelled: however, the consequence has been far from fatal, tho' very ridiculous; and I am persuaded it gives him, as well as myself, some reason to be ashamed of it, especially as your mother suffered herself to be so much alarmed. I own, Harriot, continued he, I was most sensibly touched at the sarcastic reflections Belmein threw on my father. He ridiculed his romantic honour (as he called it), in not allowing you to marry him without the governor's consent, with so much apparent malice, that, losing all patience, I retaliated the affront, by loading the governor with the most satirical reproaches, whose sordid avarice, and unjustifiable pride, had rejected an alliance that would have done him honour. In short, in the heat of our fury, each of us gave and received a challenge. We looked for our swords; but the doctor, who had been present at some part of the dispute, conveyed them unperceived out of the room. I remembered my father had always a brace of pistols loaded in his bed-chamber: I desired Belmein to wait for me behind the fort; when, getting unseen into my father's chamber, I took down the pistols, and got out of the gates before the guards, alarmed by my father's orders to stop me, could execute their commission. Guess my surprize, dear Harriot, when, delivering one of the pistols to Belmein, after examining it, he told me, it was not charged; and, supposing mine was, exclaimed against me for the design I apparently had to take away his life unfairly. By this time I found my own pistol in the same harmless condition, and, struck with the reproaches he made me, obliged him to examine it: he did so, and was convinced I had no dishonourable intention. Certainly, never did two fellows make a more ridiculous figure: we stood, for a minute, divided between rage and a strong inclination to laugh, when the appearance of some soldiers, with a serjeant at their head, obliged us to separate. I followed this officer, who had orders to bring me to the fort; where the first object that I cast my eyes upon was my father's man, who, when he saw me, jumped about like one distracted. The rogue had a mind to be witty too, upon my disappointment: Thank heaven, sir, said he, and my negligence for once, that you are safe. If I had loaded the pistols, as my master ordered me, when I cleaned them, it might have been fatal to one or the other. Thus was the whole mystery unravelled. However, my father is so offended, that I despair of appeasing him this long time." In effect, my brother, for some days, was almost as much in disgrace as myself. I was looked upon as an incendiary, who introduced nothing but disorder and confusion into the family. My father was greatly incensed against captain Belmein for this last rashness; and, thro' my mother's continual insinuations, was irritated so highly against me, that he was prevailed on to enter into the most violent measures to oblige me to marry Maynard. I had kept my room three or four days, during which time I was never favoured with a visit from either of them, who were contented with enquiring slightly after me. At last, when I least expected it, my father entered my chamber, and, in a most determined manner, told me, that Mr. Maynard was within two days journey of A , and that I must resolve to accept him for a husband immediately; protesting, he would never own me as his child, if I refused. It was in vain that I put him in mind of his promise never to force my inclinations: my mother's arguments had steeled his heart: he was proof to all my prayers and tears, and left me, repeating his protestations of eternal displeasure, if I did not resolve to obey him. As soon as he was gone, I flung myself on the floor in a transport of

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grief and rage: the idea of the detested Maynard, to whom I was to be sacrificed, rose to my imagination with such additional aversion, that (almost distracted with despair at my approaching misery) I, all at once, took a resolution of flying with Belmein. Reason, duty, honour, all oppos'd this wild scheme: but I was capable of listening to nothing but what my dread of being the wife of Maynard inspired me with. Having fixed my resolution, I grew more calm, and wrote a billet to Belmein; in which I told him, in few words, the danger that threatened me, and my purpose of marrying him privately, as he had often requested. When I had finished this, I waited impatiently for the hour of the doctor's visiting me: for my late indisposition had furnished him with a pretence for seeing me twice a day. When he came, I put the billet into his hand, desiring him to convey it immediately to Capt. Belmein. I observed that he seemed greatly surprised at this commission, as I had always refused writing to Belmein before; however he received it with much respect, promising to deliver it directly to my lover. I had appointed him to be at the garden-gate the next evening, from whence I proposed making my escape: my lover had, some time before, received orders from the governour to come immediately to N , from whence he was to set out with general B , who was then at , to enter as a voluntier in the expedition against Carthagena. He had delayed his journey on various pretences, in order to gain my consent to engage myself to him, before he went away. This, however, I had constantly refused; and nothing but the cruel persecution I suffered upon Maynard's account, could have obliged me to take a step so contrary to my duty.

I passed that night in the utmost perturbation of mind; and, tho' my heart often reproached me, for the fatal resolution I had taken, yet I still continued firm in it: when Mrs. Blandon entering my room, very early, desired me to rise, in a tone and manner so altered from her usual sweetness, that I was greatly surprised. I obeyed her, however, and was scarce dress'd, when my brother peep'd into the room: "Is she ready, said he, to Mrs. Blandon?" who replied, "I should come to him immediately." Amaz'd at this, I eagerly enquired what business my brother had with me so early. Mrs. Blandon (with a mixture of anger and concern) told me, that my father had discovered something in my conduct that had greatly offended him; and that he was going to send me into the country, 'till Capt. Belmein was gone. Are you sure, said I, (trembling with the agitation that I was in) that I am not going to meet Maynard? Heaven is my witness, that I will never dispute my father's commands to abandon Capt. Belmein; but I cannot, without being miserable to the last degree, consent to marry that wretch. "Alas! my dear, said Mrs. Blandon (touched at the anguish she saw me in) be persuaded I would not be accessory to betraying you into the power of Mr. Maynard. Your father has been inform'd, that you intended to go away with Capt. Belmein, and 'tis to prevent, from him, any attempts to that purpose, that you are sent away." These words a little reassured me, and I went down with Mrs. Blandon to the gate, where I found my brother waiting for me; he helped me into the chaise, and came in after me, and, I found, took the road to S . I struggled to conceal my grief, and, tho' by suppressing my sighs and tears, I was almost choaked; yet I affected a serenity in my looks that surprised him. He talked to me of indifferent things, and I answered him with a suitable composure. This painful disguise continued a long while; at last, charm'd with my behaviour, and taking my hand, which he tenderly press'd between his, "I always expected, said he, uncommon fruits from that good sense you possess in so eminent a degree. Such an absolute resignation to a design which opposes your wishes, is a convincing proof of it." I affected not to understand him. "Ah! (resumed he) don't forfeit your sincerity; I am no stranger to Capt. Belmein's scheme: what have I done to deserve the little confidence you allow me!" This reproach made me blush, when my brother (without seeming to take any notice of my confusion) went on: "Be assured, my dear Harriot, I would not take so much pains to cross your inclination, was I not certain, that what I do is for your advantage. I do not absolutely condemn either Belmein or you, for the design you have formed: 'tis the effect of an inconsiderate passion, always productive of misfortunes to those who give themselves up to its influence. This fatal love has obscured your understanding, and presented you with only the fair side of things: I, who am not infatuated like you, view them as they really are: and, in your lover's proposals, I see nothing for you but ruin and dishonour." I could not help interrupting him here, by an exclamation that testified my surprize. "I advance nothing, continued he, but what is very reasonable: captain Belmein would marry you privately; he is certainly in the right, he secures your heart and person, and is therefore able to support the pain of absence; but he leaves you to stem the torrent of rage, which this action must raise in the governour and your father: and what alteration may not time and absence make in his sentiments! he may grow indifferent; and the governour would not fail to take all possible measures to prevent your ever meeting more. You depend upon his promises of returning to claim you: don't deceive your self, child:

it may not be in his power, suppose he is willing to keep his word: don't you think it probable, that his father will endeavour to have him detained? 'tis all one whether absence be forced or voluntary; its effects are still the same. Our desires naturally cool towards an object we no longer behold: reflection and remembrance but ill supply the place of a substantial bleffing. Experience will convince you of this truth: absence will produce the same effect upon you, and the idea of Belmein will shortly afford you a very inconsiderable uneasiness. I think I need not use many arguments to persuade you, that you was engaging in a very dangerous scheme: you have sense and penetration: you know the governour is capable of any thing that is bad to serve his designs; he may exclaim against the validity of such a clandestine marriage, effected by indirect methods. Consider how deeply this would wound your honour and my father's: you know his nice regard for his reputation: could he support such an injurious insult with patience? and might not such a shocking affliction even endanger his life?" There was no occasion for this last terrible thought to make the desired impression upon my heart. I was not only persuaded, but convinced, by my brother's way of reasoning: he had opened my eyes; and I beheld, with shame and grief, the indiscreet lengths my passion, and the dread of Maynard, had hurried me into: a certain elevation of mind, which I always flattered myself I possessed, made me reflect (with a pleasing kind of pride) on the sacrifice I made to duty. "Alas! dear brother, said I, my father's commands are sufficient to make me abandon all thoughts of Belmein, whom (I solemnly declare) I will never receive for a husband, without his consent. But now I have made this promise, continued I, (weeping) who will secure me from the importunities of the detested Maynard? why was I forced upon the cruel extremity of disobeying my father, to avoid marrying a man I hate? There was no necessity for hurrying me from A to prevent my being the wife of Belmein. My heart never swerved from its duty, without the most painful reluctance." "I dare believe you, dear Harriot, (interrupted my brother) and it was not from any apprehension, that my arguments could not have effected this alteration in A, that made me bring you from thence: but, in reality, dear sister, I thought there was an indispensable necessity for your leaving it before Belmein: we must have some regard to public censure: had you staid till your lover went away, it would have been difficult to persuade the would you was not abandoned and forsaken by him: how mortifying must such a reflection be to you, who have so quick a sense of honour, and that decorum your sex is obliged to preserve!" Thus well skill'd was this dear brother in the art of persuasion. He had alarmed my pride: I found myself sensibly touched by this last reflection; and tho' my heart felt a violent pang, at the thoughts of never seeing Belmein more, yet I affected the utmost tranquility in my looks and behaviour. I found our journey terminated at Mrs. Villars's house, who was made acquainted with the occasion of my coming. You may possibly wonder, dear Amanda, that I was committed to the care of Mrs. Villars, who (I have often told you) was greatly in my interests. Is there any thing more frail than female friendships? a conformity of temper, an equal attachment to some darling foible first cements them; a trifle, as invaluable, dissolves the brittle tye: pardon me this observation, 'tis but too just, and will admit of very few exceptions Mrs. Villars, tho' married, had conceived a fort of liking for Capt. Belmein; she became my rival, and consequently my enemy. By methods not very favourable to me, during a visit she made us at A, she had insinuated herself into my mother's confidence, and was now looked upon as a proper person to watch my conduct upon this occasion. However, my brother never left me; he was continually endeavouring, by the most solid reasons, to fortify my mind against the approaches of a melancholy, which began to spread a settled gloom upon my countenance. The fear of being forced to marry Maynard, and the tender remembrance of Belmein alike tormented me: but alas! these disquiets received a considerable augmentation by the arrival of a messenger from my father, who, without the least precaution, informed us that Capt. Belmein had killed the doctor in a duel, and had made his escape. He brought orders from my father to the lieutenant, who commanded there, to arrest Capt. Belmein, in case he could be found; and told my brother, my father desired he would return with me to A the next day. The agony of grief this news threw me into, made me incapable of asking the messenger any questions: my brother (who was impatient to know whatever related to this affair) obliged him to inform us of every circumstance that had come to his knowledge. "Sir, said he, it was the doctor's own servant who first discovered it; he had overheard Capt. Belmein and his master at very high words, in the evening; and observing that Capt. Belmein went abroad very early the next day, and that his master (who had ordered his horse to be made ready) took the same road, he followed, as fast as he could, on foot, never losing sight of him, 'till he struck into the woods. He then wandered some time, uncertain what path to take. Chance, at last, brought him to the very place, where his master lay bleeding on the ground, having received several large wounds. The man (who had some little knowledge of his master's profession) tore off his own linnen and made bandages of it, to stop the

blood; and, perceiving some small remains of life in him (as he thought) having placed him under the shade of a tree, flew back, with the utmost speed, to town, in order to get some assistance to convey him home: he procured a chair, and took one of the surgeons of the town to the place where he had left his master, but found the body gone, being (as is imagined) stripp'd by the Indians, and buried to conceal their theft. They all returned in great affliction to A , and alarming the fort, there was immediate orders issued out for the seizing Captain Belmein, and for strict search to be made for the body of the unfortunate doctor." My brother dismissed the man, when he had finished his relation, and turning to me (who sat all in tears beside him) "What fatal accidents, said he, has Belmein's wild passion occasioned! let this, dear Harriot, prevail upon you to marry Maynard; and, by taking away all hopes from Belmein, put an end to his extravagant schemes, which (one way or other) will certainly involve you in misery." I know, cried I, (weeping excessively) that whatever happens, I must be the victim; but death, I hope, will shortly free me from the tyranny I groan under. Unhappy doctor! continued I, (in the utmost anguish) wretched Belmein! but far more wretched Harriot!" Here my grief rose almost to madness; I tore my hair, and acted so many extravagances, that my brother (fearing the consequence of such violent agonies) employed every soothing art to calm the frenzy that possessed me. The wretched doctor weltring in blood, Belmein (distracted with remorse) flying from justice, my father menacing me with the most dreadful wrath, were the sad images that rose to my tortured imagination, and never left me a moment's ease. Next morning, tho' my violent transports soon abated, yet a gloomy sorrow took possession of my soul, I hardly ever spoke, or listened to any thing that was said to me; and, during our journey home, sighs and tears were all the returns I made to my brother's obliging efforts to comfort me. When the chaise stopped at the gates, the first objects that presented themselves to my eyes, were my father and the much dreaded Maynard: I hastily turned my eyes from that detested object, not without having first observed he was hastening to help me out; but to avoid his assistance, I jump'd down myself with so little caution, that I fell to the ground, and received a sprain in my ankle, which obliged me to be carried, groaning, up stairs to my chamber. I affected indeed to be much worse than I really was, and confined myself to my bed, for two days, to prevent receiving a visit from Maynard, whose presence I dreaded more than death: however, my father and mother (who loaded me with reproaches, for the melancholy accident that had happened) insisted upon my conforming to their intentions of marrying me to Maynard, with the utmost expedition, to prevent any further mischief. I begged them (with tears in my eyes) to grant me a few months delay; promising, to endeavour (in that time) to obey them with less reluctance. My mother (who was extremely obstinate) fearing lest this artifice, as she called it, should incline my father to grant me the favour I asked; possessed him with an opinion, that I was meditating some new stratagem, and possibly had intelligence with Belmein. This so incensed him, that he pretested he would give me to Maynard, tho' he was immediately after to follow me to the grave. I was obliged to suffer his visits, and to listen, with a seeming composure, to his assurances of a passion which had cost me so many tears. Is it possible, said I to him one day, (when he was most profuse of his protestations of tenderness) that I can look on this passion you profess for me, as any other than a cruel persecution, which has deprived me of what I most value in the world, the affection of my dearest friends. Do you not observe the uneasiness you cause me? Instead of that tenderness and esteem with which I used to be treated, I meet with nothing but anger and reproaches; and am in danger of being for ever abandoned by those who gave me birth. Such is the consequence of your affection! and is it by making me miserable, that you hope to be possessor of my heart? "How unjustly do you accuse me, miss, said he! am I to be blamed, if, loving you as I do, I take advantage of the consent your father has given me, and press you to be mine, to have it in my power to make you happy?" Ah! cried I (in a violent emotion) how egregiously do you mistake the means. Would you make me happy, leave me to myself; cease a persecution that only exposes you to my hate; restore me to the good opinion of my dear father; and tell him generously, that you will not be the cause of that force which is put upon my inclinations: do this, and tho' I can never love you, yet I will not refuse you my esteem: "Sure, miss, replied he (with a provoking calmness) you have formed very mistaken notions of that passion you have inspired me with: was I able to conquer it, your scorn and aversion would be the surest arms I could employ against it, and your intreaties would be useless; but I am fated to love you, in spite of all your rigour: and since your father approves of my pretensions, no power on earth shall oblige me to resign them." "Inhuman wretch! returned I (bursting into tears) do not flatter yourself, that even my father's authority can force me to be yours. Heaven has not yet abandon'd me, and will, I hope, interpose its power against the violence you would do me." In effect, I had taken a resolution which I will not presume to say was inspir'd by heaven, since it certainly express'd too much contempt

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for the authority of my parents. As I saw there was great preparations for my marriage, which my father had his own reasons for making as public as possible, I determin'd to allow myself to be led to the altar; but when the priest requir'd me to pronounce the irrevocable words which were to bind me for ever to Maynard, I would declare (before all that were present) my aversion to this marriage; and falling at my father's feet, conjure him not to force me to be the wife of a man my foul detested. As wild and romantic as this scheme may appear, I believe I should have put it in execution: but providence interposed in my favour, and by very extraordinary, and (as I then thought) terrible means, spared me the horror of committing an action, which must necessarily offend my father beyond all possible hopes of pardon. The five Indian nations, with whom we were in alliance, were accustomed to come every third year to A , and were met by the governour of N to renew a treaty of peace with them, which was confirmed by presents to the extent of several hundred pounds, allowed by the government of Britain for that purpose. These savage people were assembled in great numbers, on the large plain behind the fort: they had brought with them their wives and children, and none but the aged and infirm were left behind. We saw, with astonishment, a new sort of city raised in the compass of a few hours: for these people, when they travel, carry with them the materials for building their houses, which consist of the bark of trees, and two or three wooden poles, with some bear skins to lye on: thus a square of ten feet will serve to contain a very large family; and it being now the middle of summer, their hutts were decorated with the boughs of trees on the outside, to keep out the sun, which (on account of their different verdure) formed a very new and beautiful prospect. I constantly spent some hours every evening in the garden, which was at a small distance from the fort, where I took great pleasure in viewing the Indians at a distance; for I was too much terrified at them, to walk out among their hutts, as several gentlemen and ladies who were come from N did. The governour's intended interview with the Indians, drew great numbers of people from all parts of the country: my father was preparing to receive him with the usual formalities; but resolving to have me married before his arrival, he told me, in two days he would bestow me on Maynard, and omitted no arguments that could prevail upon me to obey him, without reluctance. I answered only with sighs and tears; and when my father left me, I retired into the garden alone, meditating on the difficult and dangerous part I had to act. My thoughts were so much employ'd, that I staid later than usual; night stole upon me unawares, and just as I was preparing to return, three or four Indians rushed into the garden; the gate, thro' the carelessness of the gardner, being left unfasten'd, they seized me immediately. The terror I was in facilitated their design of carrying me away: I fell into a swoon the moment I perceived them, and, when I recovered my senses, I found myself in a boat, rowing (with the utmost expedition) up the river. I gave a loud shriek the moment I opened my eyes, when one of the company, who supported me in his arms, begged me to compose myself; but, O heavens! what was my surprize, when the first word I heard informed me, it was the well-known voice of Belmein. May I believe my senses, cried I (trembling with astonishment and joy) is it Captain Belmein that I hear and see? am I not then abandoned entirely to the mercy of these savages? My first emotions were all joy, but recollecting the violence that had been used to me, I hastily drew away my hand, which Belmein had all this time kept glewed to his lips. "But is it possible, resum'd I, that Belmein (forgetting the respect he owed me) has acted the part of a brutal ravisher, and snatched me, with violence, from my family." "Ah! too cruel Harriot, interrupted he, I have indeed taken you away without your consent; but have I not snatched you from a man whom you detested, and whom, notwithstanding, you were upon the point of marrying? Do I merit reproaches for having delivered you from so great a misfortune, at the hazard of my life; and must the excess of my love be imputed to me as a crime?" "If you have hazarded your life, replied I, by this action, you have also hazarded my reputation, which ought to be infinitely dearer to me than either your life or my own. Alas! continued I (melting into tears) what affliction is the family involved in upon my account! I am either lamented as unhappily lost, or reproach'd and detested for my criminal flight." "What do I hear, interrupted Belmein (in a transport of rage) is it my ador'd Harriot that utters these injurious complaints; has she forgot the everlasting tenderness she promised me? Maynard, the once detested Maynard, is the loss you deplore. Perfidious sex, continued he, why did I suffer myself to be deceived into an opinion, that any woman was capable of truth?" "You had my vows, replied I, and I would have been yours, but for the avarice of your father, and the honour of mine. I cannot follow the dictates of my heart, without disobeying a parent, who has ever loved me with the utmost tenderness; and tho' I saw myself on the point of being forced to marry a man I hated, yet the governour's insolent behaviour, and the fatal accidents in consequence of it, made my father resolve to sacrifice me to the quiet of his family. Ah! Belmein, I only am the victim; my father will never be persuaded that I did not go away voluntarily with you; and however this affair

may end, it will be a lasting blot upon my character." "But, tell me miss, replied my lover, did you not (once in thought) consent to be mine, without your father's acquiescence? That fatal billet you gave the doctor, which has cost him his life, and me everlasting remorse; did not that bring a command from you, that I should meet and convey you away? Have I done any thing now which your orders have not authorised? why then these reproaches, this unkind behaviour?" "'Tis true, I replied, that in the first transports of my soul, when I received my father's commands to marry Maynard, I did write the billet you mentioned, and gave it to the unhappy doctor; but in my cooler moments I reflected with horror, on the indiscretion I had committed. But, oh! cried I (weeping with more violence than before) did that horrid billet occasion the quarrel between you and the doctor? tell me, I conjure you, how it happened." "Ah! miss, said Belmein, the doctor was my rival, and concealed his passion for you under the appearance of joining in our common interest, against the arbitrary proceedings of both our fathers. That billet you sent he never gave me; I discovered it by meer accident, having fallen out of his pocket with other papers. I knew your dear characters, and, seizing it immediately, taxed him with his treachery: he then pretended to throw off the mask; talked of his zeal for the governour, and confessed he had betrayed our correspondence to your brother, who (by his advice) had removed you from the fort. Alas! dear miss, you know the rest. Do not, by your cruelty, add to the affliction I feel at his unhappy fate. Let me think of nothing but the transporting pleasure of having rescued you from the unworthy husband you were destin'd for, and the prospect of having you mine for ever." "That sir, I answered, depends as much as ever upon the will of my father. You have been pleased to make me your prisoner, 'tis true, but no force can compel me to make you my husband without his consent." The Indians who rowed us had all this time observed a profound silence, gazing upon us with a fix'd attention. The moon was now risen, and discovered to me the whole person of Belmein, so altered by his Indian dress, that it was impossible to know him: he wore the same kind of fandals, an Osnabrig's vest which reached to his knees, and a mantle of blue cloth trim'd with several rows of worsted lace; his face was painted, and his hair, which he had been obliged to cut short, was combed into their frightful fashion, and sprinkled, in the divisions, with a kind of fine red sand which looks like blood, and which the Indians affect, in order to give them a more tremendous appearance. You may imagine, dear Amanda, that a lover thus disfigured, was no very agreeable object in the eyes of his mistress: however, the fine shape and regular features of Belmein, shone thro' the savageness of his disguise; and tho' it would have been difficult to have believed him any other than an Indian, yet it must be confess'd he was a very handsome one. Having express'd some apprehensions of the Indians who rowed us, he informed me they were young men of quality in their own nation, the Mohocks, who were all converted to Christianity, and whom he had bound to his interests by large gifts and promises of future reward. These people being most religious observers of their oaths, he had exacted one from each of them, which made him quite secure of their secrecy. When they observed Belmein and I to be upon better terms than we were at first, they made me some complements in the Dutch language, which most of the Mohock Indians can speak fluently. Capt. Belmein explained what they said to me, and I should have fancied it was him who gave their expressions that gallant turn, had I not heard this nation frequently celebrated for its politeness. The whole night the Indians continued to row with all their strength; and captain Belmein had so well fenced me against the air by several bearskins, which he had disposed advantageously about me, that I was in no danger of taking cold. The summer nights in this country are more pleasant and refreshing than can be well express'd; there is just coolness enough in the air to be agreeable, after the excessive heats of the day. The river we were upon is one of the finest in the world; and the shore, on each side, presented nothing but thick woods to our view; yet there was such a beautiful variety of greens, and so romantic a wildness in the whole prospect, as forcibly attracted my observation, notwithstanding the confusion and distress of my mind. It was soon day, and the Indians still continuing their hasty progress up the river, I ask'd Belmein, in a tone that express'd the utmost resentment, where he intended to carry me. "You know, continued I, my resolution is fix'd, I will never be yours without my father's consent: amidst all the persecutions I suffered, upon Maynard's account, I still reserved my heart for you; but this unjustifiable action has so entirely effaced that tenderness I once felt for you, that you are now both equally the objects of my aversion." Belmein, who expected I should have judged more favourably of his attempt, was so disconcerted at the determined manner in which I spoke, that he continued some time without answering, in a posture which express'd the greatest perturbation of mind. At last, raising his eyes, (with a sigh, which seemed to proceed from the very bottom of his heart) "I see plainly, miss, (said he) I never was so happy as to make any impression on your heart; you have, no doubt, reserved that glorious conquest for one more deserving than Belmein: no! I can never believe you felt one

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tender sentiment for me. That savage virtue you so obstinately profess, is nothing more than a proud insensibility, which triumphs at the torments you make me suffer. Cruel and ungrateful as you are, I will give you back to that Maynard you prefer before me: I will no longer be an obstacle to these detested nuptials: with my own hands I will deliver you to your father, and by resigning myself to justice, expiate my guilt in giving death to an unhappy man, whose treachery was the effect of those enchanting arts, which have been so fatal to my quiet. Come, miss, continued he, if you can bear the fatigue of returning back, you shall have the pleasure of leading your prisoner in triumph to your father." Alas! the artful Belmein, who knew too well the tender sensibility of my soul, took this way to work upon my passions, and dispose me to submit patiently to his purpose. "Ah! cried I, (bursting into tears) do you bid me lead you to my father? Shall I deliver you up to justice, and load myself with the guilt of your death? Into what a miserable extremity am I driven! I must either dishonourably accompany you to whatever place you are pleased to convey me, or be accessory to your imprisonment, and perhaps death. Good God! cried I, (lifting up my eyes swimming in tears) relieve me from this insupportable affliction, and let thy providence find the means to restore me to my family, without hastening the fate of this unworthy man, who has abused the tenderness I had for him." I pronounced these words with so strong an emotion, that Belmein, who seemed greatly affected, conjured me in the tenderest and most respectful terms, to compose myself; protesting that he was only taking me to his brother's farm, which I remembered to hear spoken of frequently, as one of the most beautiful seats in the province. He told me, he would only intreat me to remain there concealed for a few days, till he had fully acquainted me with his designs; and that, if I did not approve of them, he solemnly protested he would have me conducted safe to Fort H , where a lieutenant of my father's commanded: I could then acquaint him where I was, and have an opportunity of reconciling myself to him by the sacrifice I might make to duty. The artful Belmein concluded these promises by a thousand assurances of an inviolable performance; and I suffered myself to be persuaded to what, indeed, there was scarcely a possibility of avoiding.

In about an hour's time we discovered some fine corn-fields and meadows, which Belmein told me belonged to his brother, whose house was near the water-side, to which we soon arrived, and landed immediately. Belmein led me thro' a most beautiful wood to a back-entrance into the house, which seemed large and magnificent. A young gentleman, whom I had never seen, but whose resemblance to Belmein easily persuaded me he was his brother, received us with the greatest transports of joy; and, supposing I was there by my own consent, made me many compliments on the generous passion I had for his brother. "Had you come half an hour sooner, said he to Belmein, I should have had some apprehensions of your being discovered. A party of soldiers have been here to enquire for this young lady: they set out from A soon after she was missing, and have rode all night. There are several other parties dispatched to different places in search of her. However, miss, continued he, don't be concerned; it is very easy to conceal you in this house, tho' they should take it in their heads to search it again." I made very little reply to these words, when Belmein desired his brother to call his house-keeper to attend me to a chamber, where I might take some repose after my fatiguing voyage. The moment this young woman appeared, I conceived no very favourable opinion of her. She had an air of levity and assurance; and the circumstance of her being house-keeper to a gay gentleman of two and twenty, prepossessed me a little against her discretion, and made me resolve to treat her with great reserve. She approached me, however, with much respect, and told me she had prepared a chamber for my reception. I followed her, making a cool courtesy to Belmein and his brother, who waited on me to the door. When I came into the room, which was indeed a very elegant one, Mrs. Saunders (for that I found was the house-keeper's name) begged me to repose myself on the bed, and she would return immediately with some chocolate. I chose, however, to wait her return in an easy chair, where I had some difficulty to keep from sleeping. The busy house-keeper presently returned, followed by a black woman, who brought the chocolate and several sorts of cakes. The slave retired as soon as she had placed the things on a table; when Mrs. Saunders, seating herself near me, pressed me very officiously to eat, assuring me the cakes were made by herself, and she had been instructed in all sorts of pastry at N , where she was born and educated. The place of her birth accounted immediately for the insipid lightness of her behaviour. There is no place in the world where the women labour so much to attract the eyes of the men. But this extreme fondness for creating love, is accompanied with a very strange disposition to receive it; and if a woman there has half a dozen lovers, one may be assured half of them at least are very much favoured. I was greatly alarmed at the loose mein and behaviour of this woman, and, as I drank my chocolate, could not help observing her with a fixed attention. "Indeed, miss, said

she, (with an affected lisp) I think captain Belmein is extremely happy in having gained your affection. I don't wonder the men make such a rout about you: I never saw any one so pretty and genteel in my life; and they say you have a world of wit. But, dear miss, how did you contrive to escape? I am sure poor captain Belmein has run a great hazard to get you. For all he is the governor's son, they say, if they can get him, he'll be tried, and condemned too, for killing the doctor, tho' it was in a fair duel." To all this I made very little answer; but observing she continued to treat me with great familiarity, on the supposition that I had made a voluntary elopement from my family, I thought proper to undeceive her in that point. "I am of opinion, said I, that captain Belmein is far from being safe here, tho' disguised in his Indian habit. It would have been the safest way to have escaped directly to N , where his father's power might have sheltered him, till the most favourable circumstances of his duel with the doctor were known, and his pardon secured: now, if he is taken, the affair may have worse consequences. The rash action he has been guilty of, in forcing me away, will subject him to a great many censures, and possibly be a means of discovering him." "Bless me, miss, said Mrs. Saunders, (in surprize) has captain Belmein forced you away? I thought you had consented to make your escape with him. Lord! how people may be mistaken!" "No, replied I, (with some emotion) my esteem for captain Belmein should never oblige me to an action so contrary to my duty and honour. When he took me away, he had no time to consult my inclinations, which, it is possible, he thought were favourable to his designs. My fright at being seized by four Indians, made me fall into a swoon; and when I recovered, it was too late to restore me without danger. But I have captain Belmein's promise to send me to Fort H , from whence I may return home; and 'tis the dependence I have upon his honour, that makes me support my present situation with patience." Mrs. Saunders, who did not seem to relish this grave discourse, observing I had breakfasted, made haste to remove the things; and then asked me, if I chose to repose myself on the bed for a few hours, which I refused, telling her I should take a short sleep in the easy chair. She then retired with a sort of dissatisfaction in her looks, that persuaded me the sentiments I discovered were far from exalting me in her opinion. I rose and fastened the door, and seating myself in my chair, notwithstanding the uneasy situation of my mind, I fell into a profound sleep, which lasted some hours, and from which I was waked by a gentle rap at the door. I opened it immediately, and perceiving it was Belmein, I reproached him with having disturbed me. "You are very happy, miss, said he, that can sleep with so much tranquillity, and yet give disquiets that deprive others of all repose. I find by Mrs. Saunders's discourse, that you have represented your lover as a strange fellow, who has forced you from your friends. Ah! miss Harriot, was that well done? Might you not have depended upon the promise I gave you to send you back, without exposing me in this manner?" "Sure, Sir, I replied, you ought not to be surprised, if I am impatient to clear myself from being accessory to an action, which must inevitably wound my reputation. If my fame was dear to you, the danger you expose it to would touch you sensibly; and, far from blaming me for seeking to justify myself, you ought to seize every opportunity of declaring my innocence." Belmein, who was naturally haughty, and vain enough to think very favourably of his accomplishments, had never despaired of making me at last approve the method he had taken to secure me to himself. He was amazed at so determined an opposition from a young girl, of whose affections he thought himself absolute master: and his disappointed hopes, joined to the resentment he conceived at my indifference, was possibly the motive for his assuming a behaviour very different from what he had always observed. For the present, however, he suppress his chagrin, and desired me to walk down stairs to dinner; telling me, he would afterwards acquaint me with his designs, in which I would find my honour was far from being indifferent to him. I suffered him to lead me to a parlour, where his brother was expecting us; and, dinner being immediately served, my lover told me, if it would be agreeable to me, Mrs. Saunders should sit at table. I accepted this proposal with great pleasure, as I was under an inconceivable confusion at being alone with two young gentlemen. After dinner she retired, and captain Belmein addressing himself to me, "Will you allow me, miss, said he, to make my brother judge of the dispute between us, and suffer me to relate my motives for his attempt on your liberty, as you are pleased to call it?" "I have no objection, sir, replied I, to hearing your brother's sentiments upon this occasion; but, added I, (smiling) tho' you have appointed him judge in this important cause, I shall reserve to myself the liberty of dissenting from his judgment, if it is contrary to my interest." "I am sorry, interrupted captain Belmein, that our interests are divided; and that it is possible for my brother to decide favourably for me, and yet against you. Was there ever any thing, dear Bob, said he, so cruel as this charmer! I hazarded my life to rescue her from being the wife of a man she hated. She even once commanded me to undertake her deliverance, which I have now effected, with infinitely more danger to myself; yet, instead of that

tenderness which I expected she would receive me with, she loads me with reproaches; and chuses rather to return, and be the victim of a forced marriage, than trust herself in the hands of an adoring and respectful lover." "There is certainly, said I, (blushing) some reason in the reproaches you have cast upon me. I confess I once consented you should deliver me from the persecution I suffered: when I took that resolution, Sir, I was almost distracted with the fear of being forced to marry Mr. Maynard; but when I reflected on the consequences that must necessarily follow an action, which expressed so much contempt for the commands of both our fathers, I could not help feeling the bitterest remorse. And as I opposed the will of my father, by refusing the husband he chose for me, my disobedience in marrying a gentleman, whom, for very essential reasons, he had commanded me to think of no more, would have been a double guilt. Tho' you had not taken me from A, I would never have been the wife of Maynard: I would have avoided that misfortune without consenting to a flight, which must irreparably wound my reputation." "But, miss, said Mr. Belmein, my brother intreats you to accept his hand, and, by making him your husband, silence the censures which you apprehend may be cast on your conduct. My sister B is preparing to return to her husband in Jamaica: she will receive you with the utmost tenderness, and you may remain there till your fathers are reconciled to your marriage." "But, Sir, replied I, tho' I was really inclined to marry captain Belmein, against the positive commands of my father; yet I must necessarily take a very long voyage with him; before he is at liberty to offer me his hand: and tho' I have a very great dependence upon your brother's honour, yet I am not of a temper to hazard my own, or give the world occasion to be justly severe upon my reputation." Captain Belmein interrupted me here, and seizing my hand, which he forcibly kissed, "No, my lovely angel, said he, your conduct shall never be questioned. Before we leave this house, I will engage my faith to you. 'Tis true, continued he, (with some hesitation) the person who shall read over the ceremony is not in holy orders; but, notwithstanding, our marriage will be as firm and indissoluble, as if it was celebrated with the usual formalities." My surprize at this insolent proposal, rendered me mute and immoveable for some moments: at last, recovering myself, and observing he waited for my answer, "How have you dared, said I, (with a look that had all the scorn I was capable of assuming) to imagine I would accept such base and dishonourable proposals! I would not give my father a moment's inquiet, to be your's in the most honourable manner; and have you the vanity to think my affection for you could influence me to so mean a condescension? Perfidious and defigining as you are! I now despise and hate you." Belmein, who had never seen me so enraged before, gave me a look which expressed at once the extremes of love, fear, and indignation. He started up, and walked about the room in a violent emotion, repeating my last words: then suddenly stopping, and fixing his eyes stedfastly upon me, after a pause, which lasted some moments, "You despise me then, miss, said he, (sighing) and the effects of a most tender and violent passion have drawn upon me your hate and indignation." "I never desire to hear more of your passion, interrupted I. Restore me to my family, I conjure you; and by that action atone, in some measure, for the insults you have offered me." Belmein, who was master of every tender and ensnaring art, practised them all to remove the resentment he had raised in me. The softest language that ever love inspired, attended with all the moving rhetoric of sighs and tears, had now, such was the pride of virtue, lost the power of moving me. I persisted in telling him, he had for ever forfeited my tenderness and esteem; and all the favour my heart would now allow him, was to think of him with indifference, without being either moved to hate or pity him. My enraged lover, at these words, snatching up a pen-knife that lay on the table, held it in a menacing posture; and darting a look at me, in which despair was visibly painted, "Know, miss, said he, (in a terrible voice) that I will not live to bear either your hate or indifference." Terrified to the last degree at this action, I gave a loud shriek, and springing to him, he eagerly seized hold of me, threw away the knife, and pressed me tenderly in his arms. Alas! dear Amanda, this menace, which had so much alarmed me, was only a stratagem of the designing Belmein, to know if I was really capable of that indifference I affected. A moment's reflection would possibly have convinced me my lover had no intention to execute his threats; but my disposition was naturally tender and compassionate, easily imposed on by appearances, and incapable of dissimulation. I could not suppress the first violent emotions this action caused in my soul. Belmein exulted in this discovery of my tender concern for him; his eyes wandered over me with a triumphant pleasure, as I sat all pale and silent in a chair where he had placed me. His brother, who had left the room some minutes before, came in, and, observing that I was extremely discomposed, asked me, in a most obliging manner, what had given me this new disturbance. My tears, which I had with difficulty restrained, burst forth with violence at this demand: I was not able to speak, and could only cast an upbraiding glance at Belmein, who was beholding me with a fixed attention: "Ah, miss, said he, I understand too well the meaning of those

reproachful looks. You think me a villain, and perhaps I have deserved to be thought so: but can you not, continued he, (throwing himself at my feet) pardon an error which excess of love has forced me to commit, when, to expiate it, I will obey your harsh commands; and, tho' I doom myself to the severest sorrow that ever tortured a faithful heart, part with you to-morrow for ever. My brother shall attend you to Fort H . I will condemn myself to a lasting absence from you; and if you will promise only to think of me without detestation, 'tis all that my presumptuous hopes shall ever aim at." These words, delivered with all that moving tenderness he so well knew how to assume, were far from producing the effect he designed they should: the artifice was too plain; he wanted to lull my virtue into a full security, in order to make his advantage of that affection my late terror, on his account, convinced him I still felt for him. Was it possible to imagine that a man, who, but some minutes before, had committed the greatest extravagancies on a supposition he was not beloved, should now so calmly give up his pretensions, when he had just received a convincing proof that he was? My brother had often told me, that it was very dangerous to trust a lover with the secret of our affection for him: such an acknowledgment destroys their solicitude to please, and creates a habit of offending, because they are sure of a pardon; it being almost a generally received maxim with that sex, That no woman can ever absolutely hate a man she has once passionately loved.

My virtue took the alarm at this sudden change: I saw nothing in his looks that spoke him so calm and moderate. His glances were tender and passionate, he grasped my hand with an eager pressure, and waited for my answer with a trembling impatience; all which spoke too much of the interested, designing lover, to leave me a possibility of doubting that he was meditating some stratagem to ensnare me. Tho' my heart laboured with the blackest suspicions, yet my delicacy suggested a behaviour that argued the utmost confidence in his promises. He desired his brother to give orders for the chaise to be got ready early in the morning to carry me to Fort H , which I found, by their discourse, was not many miles off. While he was gone to give the necessary orders for my journey, my artful lover, under the pretence of taking leave of me for ever, pressing me eagerly in his arms, snatched several kisses by force, without my being able to disengage myself. At last I got loose, and complaining, with tears which pride and affronted modesty forced from my eyes, of the unlicensed freedom he took with me, he fell again into his personated indifference; conjured me to pardon the last efforts of a passion he was resolved to suppress; and promised, for the short time he was to have the pleasure of beholding me, to behave with more reserve. Mr. Belmein now returned, and told me, he had given directions to have a chaise ready; and that he would attend me, at what hour I pleased, to Fort H . I named eight the next morning; and expressing an inclination to retire, Mrs. Saunders was called to attend me to my room? As I found there was a necessity for staying that night, which was now pretty far advanced, I resolved to pass it in reading, being determined not to undress myself and go to bed in that suspected place. I dismissed Mrs. Saunders, who offered to stay with me, not being desirous of having a companion of her stamp. When she was gone I fastened the door with great care, and sat down to meditate on the mysterious behaviour of Belmein. When I recollected all the inconsistencies he had been guilty of that day, I was convinced he had no intention of sending me home; and the dishonourable designs he had discovered, inflamed my resentment against him to the last degree. I shuddered with fear when I remembered I was in his power, and that he possibly proposed to send me out of the province, instead of restoring me to my family. If I accept of their proposal, thought I, how can I be sure that I am not precipitating myself into more certain danger; and if I continue here, what persecution may I not expect from Belmein, whose vanity will construe my voluntary stay as a secret approbation of his designs. In this distracting dilemma I fell on my knees, and recommended myself to the protection of heaven, with a fervour that drew tears from my eyes. While I was in this posture, a noise, which I heard on the other side of the room, made me start; and turning my eyes that way, I saw Belmein enter by a door which had escaped my notice. Terror and astonishment seized me! He made but one step from the door to the place where amazement kept me still kneeling. He raised me up, and kissing my hand, which I struggled in vain to draw from him, "Do not, my charming angel, said he, refuse me the liberty of seeing you a few moments, when I have consented to lose that blessing tomorrow for ever. "Yes, continued he, (clasping me in his arms) I will part with you, since you desire it: I will part with you, my adorable Harriot; and, tho' never man loved with that excess of violence that I do, and tho' by such a step I sacrifice all the quiet of my life, I will give this fatal proof of obedience to your will." Base and designing Belmein! Was this a proof that he meant me honourably, to invade my chamber at so late an hour, and treat me with such unlicensed freedoms? I struggled to suppress the rage that, for some moments, had wholly engrossed my soul; and knowing that it was to

The Life of Harriot Stuart. Written by Herself.

dissimulation alone I could owe my safety, I seemed to be moved at what he said, and asked him, in a faltering accent, if he was sure he could keep his word. His eyes sparkled with pleasure at this discovery of my unsettled resolution to leave him: "Yes, miss, said he, (in a transport he could ill disguise) I can keep my word, and part with you tomorrow; but, possibly, this cruel instance of my perfect submission to your commands, will prove fatal to a life I had wholly devoted to you." "If you had not determined, interrupted I, (smiling) to send me away in the morning, I would have taken this night and to-morrow to have considered of the proposal you made me; but perhaps you have now arrived to such a pitch of indifference, that you'll hardly condescend to treat with me upon any conditions." The tone with which I pronounced these words, convinced Belmein that I strove, under the appearance of raillery, to hide the confusion which my weakness, in not being able to keep my resolution, must necessarily cause. He threw himself at my feet in a transport of joy, kissing my hand a thousand times, which I suffered him to hold, without any attempt to withdraw it. "Oh, my adorable Harriot, cried he, how have you raised me, in a moment, from the deepest affliction to the greatest excess of happiness! Will you be mine, then, at last, my lovely angel? And, after all the misery you have made me suffer, will you then consent to make me happy?" "I have told you, replied I, that I will take some time to consider of what you proposed. At present I should be glad to be left alone: a little rest would be agreeable, after the fatigue I have suffered." Belmein, who now thought himself absolutely sure of my consent, made no scruple to comply instantly with my desires. He again put on the submissive lover, and, kissing my hand respectfully, took his leave. I followed him to the door by which he had entered, and observed it led to a pair of back-stairs. Having fastened it after him as well as I could, I sat down, oppressed with the most violent sorrow my heart had ever experienced. I saw no possibility of avoiding the dangerous snares my lover laid for my virtue, but by escaping from his power. I had learned that Fort H was but a few miles distant from the place where I now was; and I determined, as soon as it was day, to make an attempt to steal out of the house, and strike into the first road I saw, which, if it did not lead me to Fort H, might possibly conduct me to some farm-house, where I might be safe. As dangerous as this project might appear, it was infinitely less so than the cruel artifices of a lover; whom, notwithstanding the insults he had offered me, I could not bring myself to hate. But pride and resentment had so well fortified my heart, that, in the resolution I had taken to abandon him for ever, I felt at present no other pain than what the fear of not accomplishing it occasioned. My apprehensions of another visit from Belmein, together with the perplexity of my thoughts on the most probable means of escaping, kept me waking the whole night. I waited impatiently for day, and, when it appeared, stole softly down the back-stairs, which I imagined might lead to some part of the house, that would favour my design of getting out unobserved. Tho' it was very early, yet, by a noise which I heard in the house, I found some of the family were up. My heart fluttered with fear and anxiety: I trembled lest any one should meet me; and not daring either to go forward or return to my chamber, I stood a moment irresolute what to do. Immediately a servant, passing by at the bottom of the stairs, opened a pair of large folding-doors, and went out. I saw the prospect of a large court-yard and stables; and stepping to the door, to see if there was a possibility of getting thro' to the road that way, the man, who was at a little distance, turned at the noise I made in opening the door, which had clapped to, and stood still to observe me. As I was now discovered, I thought it would be in vain to attempt to hide my design, and was thinking of some means to engage this fellow to assist me in getting away, when he approached me. "I suppose, madam, said he, you are waiting for the chaise; but my master did not order me to get it ready till eight o'clock: however, I can put the horses to in a minute, if you intend to go so early." It is not easy to express the transport I felt at this lucky accident. I found Mr. Belmein had been really deceived in his brother's intentions; for he had no very strong head, and was not capable of entering into the captain's deep schemes.

I resolved to take advantage of the fellow's mistake, and asked him, with some surprize, if Mrs. Saunders had sent one to call him, for that there was a necessity for setting out immediately. The man who imagined there was another party coming to search the house, and that my being found there would be of the utmost prejudice to captain Belmein, went immediately to the stables, and left me trembling with fear, hope, and impatience. The moment I saw the chaise appear I flew towards it; oh! heavens, cried I (in a real terror which increased the man's apprehension) help me in, a moment's delay will ruin us. "Does not my master go with you miss, said he? (getting off the box to help me in)" "No, no, replied I, there will be other business for him: but drive away immediately:" he did as I commanded him, and, in a few minutes, I saw myself in the road to fort H, which, at the rate we

drove, I could not fail of reaching before it was possible my faithless lover could overtake me. While, in the exultings of my heart, I was offering up my most earnest thanks to that providence, which had so visibly succoured me; a stump of a tree, which lay cross the road, but had escaped the view of my precipitate driver, overturned the chaise and threw me to the ground. I was a little stunn'd with the fall: but what were my agonies, when the fellow informed me that it would be near half an hour before he could repair the damages the chaise had received, and make it fit to pursue our journey! I lifted up my eyes, swimming in tears, and begging heaven to continue its protection to me, sat down at the foot of a tree, recommending it to the man to make all possible dispatch I waited with the most torturing impatience, and my eyes were constantly turned towards the place I had left; when I discovered, at some distance, a person on horseback, riding very fast: and, concluding I was pursued, I rose with the utmost precipitation, and, striking into a path that led into the woods, ran as fast as my legs would carry me, 'till I was got to a very considerable distance. I stopp'd for a moment to take breath, and looking round me, to see if I could discover any signs of a habitation, I observed a countryman at some distance cutting wood. I immediately made towards him, with all the speed that fear could give me: the man, who was wholly engross'd by his employment, never saw me till I was come close to him, when starting and looking on me for a moment without speaking, "Bless me! young lady, said he at last (in a tone that express'd his surprize) what has brought you to this place?" "Do you know me, friend, said I, scarce recovering breath enough to speak?" "Yes, miss, replied he (bowing respectfully) I am one of your father's soldiers, and have a little plantation hard by." "Convey me thither instantly, said I; and if you can conceal me a few hours in your house, I promise you my father shall reward you liberally." The man express'd the utmost willingness to serve me, and observing I was so tired I could scarce stand, offered to carry me to his house, but I refused; and, summoning all my strength, suffered him only to lead me along, and thus got to the house, just when my weariness would hardly permit me to walk one step more. As I was going to enter it, a voice (which me—thought I was well acquainted with) struck my ears, that uttered in a transported accent, O! my God, there she is." I stood a minute in the utmost confusion, when the person who pronounced these words, advanced towards me, and whom I immediately knew, notwithstanding the disguise of a sailor's habit, and a large patch that hid part of his face, to be the doctor himself. Amazement seized me at this sight; my spirits, too weak to support the strong surprize, failed me in an instant, and I fell breathless into the arms of the good woman of the house, who eagerly ran to support me. When I recovered, I asked (trembling) where the stranger was that I had seen? Sure, said I, I could not be deceived, it was certainly the doctor himself. "Mercy on us, replied the woman, madam has seen a spirit, for certain: be comforted, dear young lady, there is no body here now but myself and my husband, and this honest sailor, who is going to the Indian castle to traffick for some of their toys." "What sailor, said I, looking round the room? When observing him stand fix'd in thought, at one corner, Ah cried I, screaming, how dare you impose upon me? I either see the doctor, or his ghost! Is not that he that stands yonder? The good couple, at these words, gave one another several significant looks, which seemed to say, I was certainly distracted; when the sailor advanced and threw himself on his knees before me. "Ah! miss, said he, you have indeed discovered me: but let me intreat you to be compos'd. I came here in search of you, and am transported to find (by all that I can collect from what this man told me, during your swoon and your own behaviour) that you have not left your father's house voluntarily. There is no occasion for me to conceal myself any longer, said he, tearing the plaister from off his face: if you will accept of me, miss, in this garb, to conduct you to fort H, this man and I will undertake to convey you safe; we shall there find a conveyance to carry you home; and then if captain Belmein has a mind to renew his pretensions, he may do it publicly. I was enough recovered from my surprize, to be able to ask the doctor some questions which might relieve me from the perplexity my thoughts were in about him; when the woman (clapping her hands) cried out, I protest there's the young squire! he's certainly come to seek you, miss: what shall we say? I rose immediately in the utmost agony, believing it was captain Belmein, and dreading the consequence of his meeting with the doctor, when, to my great satisfaction, I saw only Mr. Belmein, who entered the room with a smiling countenance, and reproached me for having gone away without him. I had not time to answer him: he had cast his eyes upon the doctor's face, and, starting back with an action that expressed the strongest surprize, remained for some moments immoveable as a statue. "Is it possible! said he at last: May I believe my eyes?" "Yes, sir, interrupted the doctor, (bowing) I am still alive; and it was in order to serve the governor more effectually, that I have suffered myself to be thought dead so long." Mr. Belmein, who was eager to enquire into this mystery, expressed a desire of retiring into a more private apartment. The people of the house, telling him that was the best they had, went out immediately, and left us to

ourselves. "I am strangely at a loss, sir, said Mr. Belmein, (the moment they were gone) to understand how your concealing yourself thus long could be of any use to my father. You have, indeed, taken a very ungenerous revenge of my brother, by allowing the world to suppose him guilty of your death, and obliging him to keep himself concealed, lest he should be called to account for it." "I know not, sir, replied the doctor, whether captain Belmein ever told you, that the governor had given me commission to break off his marriage with this young lady; but 'tis certain I had instructions from him to do every thing in my power to prevent it. Your brother thought proper to quarrel with me, for the opposition I had made to his carrying off miss Harriot; and all the respect I had for the governor, could not hinder me from accepting a challenge which he gave me, accompanied with insults not to be born by a man of honour. I followed him to the place appointed: we fought, and the event of our combat was very unfavourable for me. When I fell, the great quantity of blood which I had lost threw me into a swoon, which, I suppose, made captain Belmein conclude me dead. When I recovered I found there had been care taken of my wounds; for they were bound up, and the bleeding was stopped. I perceived they were far from being dangerous, being only in the flesh; and I was endeavouring to rise, and try if I could get home, when I saw a gentleman, who was nearly related to me, riding as fast as possible up to me. He expressed an infinite deal of surprize at finding me in so good a condition, when every one believed me almost dead; and told me, that there was assistance coming immediately. I enquired after captain Belmein, and being answered that he was not to be found, and that it was supposed he had made his escape, on a belief that I was dead, I earnestly intreated my friend to conceal me till I was able to go abroad; judging, that if the report of my death was confirmed, captain Belmein would be obliged to keep out of the way, and have no opportunities of renewing his designs upon miss Harriot. You see, sir, the motives of my concealing myself. I easily persuaded my friend to carry me to his country-house, which was at a small distance. He placed me before him on his horse, and took a by-path home. It being almost dark, he led me to a summer-house in the garden, of which he kept the key, and there disposed me, till he had an opportunity of conveying me unseen into the house. As soon as I was conveniently lodged in a chamber, I applied myself to cure my wounds, and in a very little time was perfectly recovered. I resolved not to appear till the governor arrived at A . My servant, whom I had trusted with my secret, brought me accounts of all that passed in the Fort-family. I understood that miss Harriot was carried off; and judging, that if captain Belmein had not left the province with her directly, he would certainly lie concealed at your house, I took the habit you see me in, and came to these people, knowing they rented a little farm of you. I was just arrived, and asking the good woman some questions in the character of a sailor who was going to the Indian-castle, when I saw miss Harriot enter. By what I learned from your tenant who brought her in, the young lady had fled from some place where she was unwillingly detained. I have offered her my service to conduct her to Fort H , where one of her father's lieutenants commands, and where she may remain with safety, till the captain sends proper persons to wait on her home." Mr. Belmein, who had listened attentively to all the doctor said, interrupted him here with a tartness, which shewed he was not quite satisfied with the artifice he had used. "I shall not, said he, pretend to determine whether you have acted generously or not by my brother: I leave the governor to decide that; but I reserve to myself the care of conducting this lady to Fort H ; and am concerned her distrust in my honour should occasion her so many inconveniences, as she must have endured by her unnecessary fears. I have left my brother, miss, said he, almost distracted; and, to prevent his following you himself, I was obliged to promise him to bring you back, if I overtook you. I thought him absolutely sincere in the resolution he had taken to let me conduct you to Fort H ; but your precipitate flight, and the transports of grief he discovered when we found you were gone, convinced me I had been deceived in his intentions. I beg you to believe, miss, continued he, that I will never join with my brother in laying any force on your inclinations. Since the doctor is discovered to be alive, he may appear again in public, and renew his-pretensions: and if you can venture to put so much confidence in my honour, the chaise is not far off, allow me to conduct you to Fort H ." There appeared so much good-nature and sincerity in this offer, that I made no scruple to comply with it; telling the doctor, I should be obliged to him if he would accompany us. Mr. Belmein understood this invitation to be the effect of some distrust I still entertained of him: however, he suppressed his resentment, and offered me his hand to lead me to the chaise. I gave the countryman what little money I had in my pocket, for the timely assistance he had afforded me, promising him he should be further rewarded; and taking leave of the good woman, who loaded me with blessings and praises, I walked, attended by my two protectors, to the place where Mr. Belmein had ordered the chaise to wait, not doubting, as he told me, but that he should find me at that house where I had took refuge, the man having informed him I had

gone that way. As soon as I was seated in the chaise, Mr. Belmein and the doctor mounted their horses, which the countryman had led after them. We reached Fort H in a little time; and the chaise had no sooner stopt at the gate than Mr. Belmein approached, and asked me if I had any commands for his brother. I told him I had not; but, in the most grateful manner, expressed my sense of the obligations he had laid upon me, by the generous part he had acted. "But, miss, replied he, consider how deeply this cruel indifference will affect my brother. I left him plunged in the most frightful despair: shall I add to it, by telling him you have resolved to forget him eternally?" "Sir, answered I, the governor is shortly expected in A : if my father and he consent to my marriage with your brother, I shall then consider whether it will be proper for me to pardon captain Belmein the insults he has presumed to offer me." Mr. Belmein, who seemed not to approve this haughty answer, took his leave with a very low bow, and, without speaking to the doctor, took the road to his own house. The centinels having informed their commander I was at the gates, he came out with his daughter to receive me. As soon as we were conducted to an apartment, the doctor discovered himself to Mr. Vere, so was the lieutenant called, and acquainted him with the whole story of his supposed death, suppressing only some circumstances which related to me. When he had an opportunity of speaking to me apart, he did not fail to insinuate, that the passion he felt for me had suggested to him the design of keeping concealed, to prevent captain Belmein's meeting me; and enquired, tho' with much caution, into the particulars of my being carried away. As it was not my business to conceal any part of that adventure, I related it without disguise, as well to the lieutenant and his daughter as to him; only my pride made me drop the circumstance of captain Belmein's insolent proposal. I had the satisfaction to hear my behaviour applauded with the highest marks of admiration; and the doctor, taking occasion to compliment me upon the address I discovered in getting out of the house, gave me a look which declared, in a very intelligible manner, how much he was interested in what I had done.

Tho' my impatience to return home was a little checked by the remembrance of Maynard, yet my heart, exulting with pride at the proof I had given of the exactest obedience to my father's will, longed to receive the praises I thought I had so justly merited. I was, with some difficulty, persuaded to inform my friends where I was, and wait till they sent for me. At last I consented, and wrote to my brother an exact detail of all that had happened to me, intreating him to procure me a favourable reception, unmixed with any persecutions on Maynard's account. Mr. Vere dispatched away a messenger with this letter immediately, and four days after I had the pleasure of seeing my dear brother, who embraced me with inexpressible joy, and presenting me with a billet from my father, left me at liberty to read it, while he congratulated the doctor on his return to the world, as he called it. I opened my father's letter with a mixture of hope and fear, and read as follows:

"It is not enough to tell you, my dear child, that I approve your conduct: I shall love and esteem you the better for it as long as I live. You may depend upon the promise I now give you, that you shall suffer no more uneasiness upon Mr. Maynard's account. I could wish, indeed, that gentleman was less disagreeable to you; but since you know so well how to maintain the honour of your family, I will wave the consideration of your interest, to leave your inclinations absolutely free."

When I had read this letter, I kissed the dear name at the bottom with the utmost reverence and affection; and running to my brother, embraced him a second time, for being the messenger of such good news. "It must be confessed, my dear Harriot, said he, (drawing me to a window) that you have acted with uncommon prudence, against the insolent attempts of your lover; and if you could be capable of refusing him, tho' offered by the governor himself for your husband, I should be almost ready to worship that noble pride in you, that would exalt you so far above the rest of your sex." "I am afraid, replied I, (laughing) the governor will never put it in my power to merit the adoration you offer me; but, however that may be, I can assure you my heart is at present entirely easy with respect to captain Belmein." My brother, to whom this assurance was infinitely agreeable, told me we should set out for A early in the morning, having left orders for a chaise and pair to follow him to Fort H . Accordingly, as soon as it was light, we rose, and, having breakfasted with the obliging miss Vere and her father, we prepared for our journey. My brother offered the doctor, who was going with us, a place in the chaise, on account of his late illness; but he very slightly refusing it, I made a sign to my brother not to press it any farther, and by that means had the pleasure of having him to myself the whole way. My brother having brought

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two servants with him, which, with the doctor and himself, made up a number sufficient to guard me, in case captain Belmein was mad enough to make any new attempt, I suffered no apprehensions upon that account. We arrived at A late at night. My father was in bed; but hearing I was come, he gave orders for me to come immediately into his chamber. I threw myself on my knees at his bed-side: he raised me up, and embracing me tenderly, gave the highest encomiums to my behaviour, which he said had endeared me to him in a very particular manner. My mother also condescended to kiss me, and assured me she was quite satisfied with my conduct. I was going to acquaint them with some particulars that had not come to their knowledge, but my father insisted upon my retiring immediately to my own chamber, being apprehensive that I was greatly fatigued. I obeyed instantly, and got to my room time enough to prevent my dear Fanny from rising to meet me, who was just told that I was come: she hung upon my neck in a transport of joy, and bathed my face with her tears. My governess, who tenderly loved me, drew me out of my sister's arms to embrace me in her turn. As she was a woman of extreme good sense, she placed the merit of my behaviour to my lover in so new a light, as quite charmed me; and, tired as I was, I could readily have listened to her all night upon so interesting a subject as my own praise. At last, however, I went to bed; and was scarce dressed next morning, when a servant came to tell me my mother expected me to breakfast. I enquired if there was any company with her, and being told Mr. Maynard and the doctor were there, I promised to attend her immediately. I did not fail, however, to consult the glass first several times, and was not displeased to find my charms had suffered no diminution from the fatigues I had gone through. How despicable, dear Amanda, have I since thought this vice, for which coquetry is too soft a name, that could make me take pleasure in appearing lovely to the eyes of a man whom I detested! Nothing but my strict regard to truth could induce me to confess how absolutely this folly engrossed me.

I went to my mother's apartment, full of that ill-natured pleasure which the consciousness of being able to give pain inspired. Mr. Maynard, the moment I appeared, turned pale; but recovering himself immediately, congratulated me on my safe return. I received his compliments with an indifference, which occasioned several significant frowns from my mother: however, she engaged the doctor in a conversation that left Maynard the liberty of entertaining me; and I was obliged to listen to several set-speeches, which I suppose had been studied the night before, that expressed the extreme joy he felt in seeing me again. When I was relieved from this uneasy situation I retired to my own chamber, not a little chagrined to find my mother absolutely bent to favour Mr. Maynard, in opposition to the generous promise my father had given me.

There was now great preparations making in A, for the reception of the governor. My father, whatever cause he had to be dissatisfied with him, took care he should be received with all possible respect. Every one was solicitous to see the manner of his reception, but myself: pride and resentment kept me at home; and tho' I might have seen part of the pageantry from my window, yet I never once offered to look out. It was evening before the governor could disengage himself from the great number of gentlemen that came to compliment him upon his arrival, and because he would not be outdone by my father in politeness, he resolved to make him a visit before he went to bed. Accordingly he came up to the Fort, attended by several gentlemen who came with him from N. My father, who was extremely surprised at this unexpected visit, had but just time to order the guard to draw out to receive him when he entered the gate. The moment the governor came into the hall I was passing thro' it, to retire into my own apartment, intending to avoid the sight of a person whom I could not chuse but hate, for the mortifications he had occasioned me; but the old gallant, who had been a widower scarce two months, no sooner saw me hastily running by him than he crossed in my way, and, making a false step, his head fell directly on my neck. I blushed excessively at this accident; but he recovering himself, looked earnestly at me for a moment, and then took occasion to say some smart things upon the happy position in which he fell. My confusion had been so great, that I had all this time continued silent; when the governor taking my hand to lead me into a parlour, I accidentally turned my eyes upon some of the gentlemen who accompanied him, and, to my great amazement, saw Dumont among them, whose eyes were riveted upon my face; and when he had fixed my attention, gave me one of those expressive looks, which of all men in the world he had the greatest command of. The sight of this lovely youth gave me an emotion, which, I believe, was very visible in my countenance; for my vanity immediately considered myself as the cause of that tender melancholy I observed in his looks. I took the first opportunity of retiring from the company; and, when I was at liberty to reflect, could not help admiring the fantastical effects of

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my destiny, which had no sooner deprived me of one lover than it gave me another to repair the loss. However, I had not levity enough to triumph greatly at this adventure: Dumont was too dangerously lovely to make it safe to trifle with his affection; and the inevitable bar, his religion, and his engagement to another lady, put between us, prevented my indulging any thoughts of a serious inclination for him. All this time I heard nothing of Belmein; and tho' I earnestly wish'd to know upon what terms he stood with his father, my pride would not stoop to ask the doctor any questions about him, notwithstanding his interest with the governor assured me he could satisfy my curiosity. However, he relieved my anxiety by introducing a conversation one day about captain Belmein; and took occasion to say carelessly, that he had been in N some days, from whence he was to go to Jamaica with general B , and make his first campaign in the quality of a voluntier. Tho' I had pretty well conquered my affection for Belmein, I could not hear that he was shortly to leave the province, with absolute indifference. The alteration this news made in my countenance did not escape the penetration of the doctor, who seemed to read my very soul. He was malicious enough to dwell upon the ungrateful subject, and I was obliged to quit him abruptly, in order to hide my concern. My brother met me as I was hastening to my own room, and seeing some tears steal down my cheeks, which I endeavoured in vain to conceal, he asked me tenderly the cause; adding, that he supposed I had heard some news of Belmein. As nothing but the strongest necessity could ever force me to tell a falshood, I immediately acknowledged my present uneasiness was owing to something the doctor had told me concerning captain Belmein. "Well, dear Harriot, said he, can you think this weakness you discover, for a man who has so unworthily forsaken you, pardonable?" "He is, indeed, gone to N , replied I, (a little vexed at my brother's insinuation;) but there is no certainty that he has, or can be able to forsake me, as you call it." "What, answered my brother, has not the doctor told you that the governor shewed him a letter from Belmein, in which he solemnly renounced all pretensions to you?" "Oh heavens! cried I, (lifting up my eyes) can there be so much perfidy in man!" "Alas, dear Harriot, said my brother, (smiling) there is nothing surprizing in all this: these violent passions prey upon themselves. Your lover's flame burnt too fiercely to last; and, but for the opposition it met with, would have died of itself." My brother knew enough of my temper to be assured the certainty of my lover's infidelity would, by a natural effect of my pride, entirely erase him from my heart.

The governor, however, satisfied with having prevented his son's marriage, took all opportunities of expressing the highest admiration of me. My father having invited him, together with the gentlemen who came from N , to dinner, he complained, in very gallant terms, of the disappointment it was to him that I did not appear at table; and being told by my mother, that I expected his excellency at the tea-table, as soon as dinner was over, he begged leave to wait on me in my apartment. As I had too much reason to imagine he hated me in his heart, I was horribly vex'd at his affectation of distinguishing me so particularly; and tho' I did not seem displeas'd with his seating himself near me, and endeavouring to engage me in a particular conversation, yet I could not avoid letting several satirical touches escape me: but this did not offend him. On the contrary, he seemed charmed with my wit; and, when he left me, told a gentleman who was near him, that I was certainly one of the finest girls in the world.

Dumont, who had watched for an opportunity of speaking to me, took the governor's place the moment he had left it. "I see, said he, (smiling) there is nothing impossible to a person of your merit; and the governor's advanced age will hardly defend him against the force of your attractions." "Would it were possible, returned I, (without minding his compliment) to make a conquest of that inexorable heart of his! I should take an infinite deal of pleasure in using him ill." "Ah, there is no one doubts it, interrupted Dumont: I am but too sensible of your abuse of power." According to the rules I had prescribed myself in my behaviour to this gentleman, there was a necessity for seeming displeas'd at this insinuation. I frowned in so intelligible a manner, that he did not dare to explain it any other way than by some very deep sighs, a sort of eloquence in love which I very well understood, and was always pleas'd with, as it gave me an opportunity of triumphing in a passion I was at liberty to dissemble the knowledge of.

Mr. Maynard, whose love was less delicate, and who aimed more at the possession of my person than my heart, had never ceased employing all the influence he had with my mother and father to force me to be his wife. My father, however, positively declared against violent measures; and my brother contented himself with only representing to me, mildly, the advantages I lost by refusing Maynard. He had now received letters from England,

which informed him he was appointed commander of a man of war. This news made him redouble his solicitations; and my father, at his and my mother's repeated instances, again prest me to receive him for a husband. I assumed courage enough to tell my father, that I would rather die than consent to be the wife of Maynard; and, throwing myself all in tears at his feet, put him in mind of the promise he had given me never to lay any constraint upon my inclinations. He raised me with much tenderness, and assuring me he meant to keep his word, went to Mr. Maynard, who waited the result of our conversation in another room with my mother, and, relating the unalterable aversion I had to an union with him, declared he could resolve to press me no farther. My mother broke into the most violent expressions of rage against me; and Maynard, after complaining bitterly of my obstinacy, took his leave, and set out immediately for N , from whence he designed to embark for England. His absence, for some days, brought me very little relief. Tho' I was no longer teized with his importunities, yet my mother's ill-humour, which shewed itself upon all occasions, left me but very little quiet. My father also seemed displeas'd with me; and my brother behaved with a reserve, that expressed his dissatisfaction at my conduct. The uneasiness this general resentment gave me, made me take no pleasure in the diversions that A was full of, during the governor's stay. I avoided going into company, where I was sure of meeting with severe looks, and distant reproaches, from my mother; and I kept my chamber so constantly, that Dumont had never any opportunity of seeing me. But as he attended the governor when he came to the Fort to pay his last visit, I could make no excuse for refusing to be present. The governor, keeping up the spirit of his admiration of me to the last, expressed himself in very respectful terms as he took his leave of me; but as I carefully avoided any discourse with Dumont, I could only understand by his looks how much my indifference affected him.

My whole care was now bent towards pleasing my father, and removing all traces of the resentment he might have conceived at my refusal of Maynard. I was so happy as to succeed in my endeavours, and he redoubled his fondness for me. But, alas, this felicity did not continue long! A short illness deprived me of the best of fathers, and the world of the best of men. He died universally lamented; but he left his family in a very unhappy situation. His death opened the door to those cruel adventures in which I have been since engaged, and from this fatal period my numberless misfortunes took their rise. Tho' my father's allowance from the government had been very large, yet as his affairs were pretty much involved when he left England, and he had enjoyed his post in America but a short time, he had not been able to save much for our support. My mother, upon examining his accounts, found there was about four hundred pounds in the agent's hands, which was a very trifling addition to her pension, and not sufficient to support any remains of that affluence we had always been used to. She did not fail to remind me frequently of my folly and disobedience, in refusing a husband in Mr. Maynard's genteel circumstances; but her reproaches were not confined to him. The doctor, who had long indulg'd a passion for me, made no scruple, upon my father's death, to address me openly; and my mother, who once would have thought it great insolence in him to pretend to me, was now offended in the highest degree at my absolutely refusing to give him any encouragement.

Having discharged most part of her servants, she set out for N with my sister Fanny and me. My brother, tho' determin'd to return to Jamaica, could not think of leaving my mother, in the deep affliction in which she was involved. He accompanied us to N , where we were received with all that politeness and humanity, which that place is distinguished for towards strangers. As there was no family in that city with whom we were so intimate as Dumont's, I saw myself expos'd every day to his assiduities; but they were attended with such an unwearied tenderness, such a distant respect, as was amazing in a person who had been always the object of general admiration. He was so much the darling of the ladies in N , that it seem'd as if all their endeavours to charm were for him; and happy was she, who could boast of having made the slightest impression on his heart. 'Tis no wonder if, blest with every advantage that nature and fortune could bestow on him, his numberless successes with the fair should raise in him a conscious sense of his superior merit: but it was, indeed, surprizing that this gay triumpher should so far forget his former pride, as to bear with the most servile patience all the froward, insolent humours of a girl, who possess'd no visible advantage over many that secretly sigh'd for him. But Dumont had a native delicacy of soul, which made those easy conquests disgustful to him; and that haughty indifference I discover'd, as it had all the charms of novelty, contributed more than any thing to increase the passion he felt for me. Tho' my father's death had given my mind a melancholy turn, yet I was not insensible to the pleasure of being admir'd. My

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little poetical productions gained me an applause I was far from thinking I deserved: but my youth and sex stamped a kind of unquestionable merit on my writings, and procured me the addresses of all the wits; an incident that did not fail to increase my vanity. N was the seat of love and gallantry; the whole business of the ladies was to please, as that of the men to persuade them they did so. Tho' it is possible I had as much the principle of coquetry in me as any of them, I could not approve the gay liberties they indulged themselves in. While I aimed at inspiring a delicate and respectful passion, they gloried in giving birth to the most boundless wishes. To correct this false taste I wrote several little pieces, which, tho' they missed the effect intended by them, produced a severe copy of verses on myself; and that you may have some notion of their satire, I'll insert them.

To Sappho.

Pr'ythee, poetic prude, give o'er
Thy vestal airs; they'll cheat no more.
Thy heart in each disguise we know;
Thou'rt woman, and a frail one too.
Thy eyes are honest, and reveal
The native warmth thy arts conceal;
And their fond languish what inspires
But those internal hidden fires,
Which the sort breath of love can raise
Into a fierce and boundless blaze!

There is much more ill-nature than wit in these verses; but I had the satisfaction to find my friends eager to answer them in kind, and I was as amply revenged as I could desire. But I dwell too long upon these trifling incidents; and, indeed, I should not have mentioned them at all, were it not to give you some idea of the gallantry practised at N , and of that spirit of emulation and envy which prevails among the ladies there.

We had been some months in this place, when my mother, uncertain whether to settle here or return to England, received a letter from a sister of her's, who was the widow of a baronet, and in very genteel circumstances. This lady had been my god-mother, and had conceived a very strong affection for me: she earnestly intreated my mother to send me over to England, promising to provide for me as her own child. My mother, who was extremely glad of this opportunity to lessen the expence of her family, by parting with one whom, of all her children, she least regarded, consented to send me over in the Spring, it being then the beginning of Winter. This delay at any other time would have been very mortifying to one of my precipitate temper; but it was now rendered agreeable, as I was no longer in a situation to make my leaving N indifferent to me. You may possibly wonder, my dear Amanda, that my heart, after being touched with a sincere tenderness for captain Belmein, should easily admit of another inclination. If this was levity, I must take shame to myself, and own I began to lose insensibly my indifference with regard to Dumont. I could not behold, without a secret pleasure, the silent passion which consumed him, and of which I knew myself the cause. I blushed when I met his tender glances; my eyes insensibly fixed themselves on his lovely face; I sighed by sympathy whenever he did, and yet was ignorant that I did so. He never approached me but my heart felt an involuntary transport, and a tender languor seized upon my spirits the moment he went away. I had often pretended to some judgment in matters of love, yet so blindly confident was I of myself, that these certain symptoms escaped my observation; and I suffered the encroaching passion to steal upon me by imperceptible degrees, and yet triumphed in the indifference with which I thought I repaid the passion of the most beautiful and deserving youth in the world. Had I in the least suspected I could have fallen again into a weakness, by which I had suffered so many disquiets, I would have summoned all my reason to oppose the growing flame; but, in the false security I then lived, I attributed all the emotions with which

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my heart was agitated, to a principle of self-love and vanity, which made me take a more than ordinary pleasure in the adorations of such an accomplished lover as Dumont. However, an accidental discovery of my sentiments to myself, drew me out of this dangerous security. One day when I was sitting with one of Dumont's sisters, with whom I had a particular friendship, a letter dropt out of her pocket, which I taking up and offering to give her, "Read it, said she, 'tis from miss Lucy Belmein." I read it accordingly, and found nothing in it which affected me till I came to the bottom, and saw it signed Emilia. As this was the name Dumont gave me in several copies of verses he addressed to me, I could not chuse but be surprized to find it assumed by another. At that instant an universal trembling seized me, my heart beat as if it would leave my breast, and, with a faltering accent, I enquired how long miss Belmein had bore that name: "Oh, a long time, she replied; it was given to her by a person who has endeavoured to render it famous. I'll shew you, continued she, some lines that he has addressed to her, on her hiding her face with her fan at the last assembly." Immediately she gave me a paper of verses in Dumont's hand-writing, and obliged me to read them aloud: a task, tho' I found myself very unfit for, I was obliged to comply with.

To Emilia, holding her fan before her face.

By Phoebus scorch'd on Lybia's sands
Lies poor expiring man,
'Till pitying Jove the clouds commands
To interpose their rain:
So to the bright Emilia's eyes,
Unscreen'd, the gazers yield;
But Pallas to this fan's disguise
Transforms her guardian shield;
In kind compassion spreads the shade
Before that angel face;
Too bright thy beauty, heavenly maid,
In one unclouded blaze!

While I was reading these lines I could scarce command my concern. Involuntary sighs rushed from my bosom, my eyes were filled with tears, I felt a painful anguish at my heart, and was surprized at it. Cou'd it be possible for disappointed pride to work such an effect! I dreaded looking into my own thoughts, lest I should discover the progress Dumont had made in my affection. Unwilling as I was to acknowledge my weakness to myself, yet I was but too sensible that I loved him. I was amazed how I could be so long ignorant of a passion, that was capable of giving me such torturing jealousy. I was convinced miss Belmein was the person he really loved, and his professions to me served only to conceal the real object of his affection. My behaviour to him now took a different turn: that laughing indifference I formerly assumed, was now changed to a settled, serious scorn. I never looked on him but with frowns; and when I was under a necessity of speaking to him, it was with such a constrained civility as seemed to cover a strong aversion. This treatment affected him with the deepest concern; but I was too prejudiced to perceive it. I was continually making discoveries, as I imagined, of his attachment to miss Belmein; and it is certain, there seemed to be a regular correspondence between them. What uneasy pangs have I suffered when I observed them talk apart, as they often did! How have I interpreted every look and motion, as my disordered fancy suggested! I envied her the possession of his heart; and yet, when I coolly examined my own thoughts, I found I was not so lost to reason as to promise myself any happiness from his love to me. The difference of our religion, and his engagement with another lady, upon which his whole fortune depended, made an honourable union impracticable: and could I think of encouraging a criminal passion? I trembled when I reflected on the dangers to which this fatal inclination exposed me. Alas! in spite of these reasonable reflections, I

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was still in love, and still unhappy. N became odious to me: I could not look upon Dumont without pain; I feared he would discover my weakness; and, to avoid seeing him, I accepted the invitation of a lady of my acquaintance to pass some days with her, at a house she had a few miles from town. The agreeable solitude I went to, seemed to nourish my flame. I passed whole hours alone, recalling the idea of Dumont. But as my passion increased, so did my apprehensions. The more he was beloved, the more dangerous he appeared; yet I could not help wishing he had continued to love me. How would it sooth my grief, thought I, to see him suffer the same disquiets with myself, and sacrifice a tender inclination to a principle of duty, as I do to a sense of honour and virtue.

I was lost in this kind of reflections one day, when I saw him advancing towards me. My heart felt an involuntary transport; as it was not unlikely but this visit to Mrs. Harvey, the lady with whom I was, might be only an excuse to see me; at least, I was willing to believe so. However, I received him with the same cool civility as formerly, and asked him, what had procured us the favour of this unexpected visit. "'Tis no difficult matter, answered he, to guess the motive." "Perhaps not, interrupted I; but I am the worst guesser in the world, and it is a thousand to one that I mistake." "Well, then, I'll tell you, replied he, with a bewitching tenderness in his voice and eyes." "No, no, said I, dreading as much as I liked this discourse, I hate to be burthened with people's confidences; for I am sure you designed it should be a secret." "I would have it a secret, replied he, to every one but you"

As he spoke these words, we perceived Mrs. Harvey, my rival, and miss Dumont, walking towards us. My jealous suspicions returned at this sight: the mystery of his visit was now explained. "Ah! cried I, (forcing a laugh) it is not so difficult as I imagined, to guess the motive of your coming here. I have found it out this moment." Dumont stared at me, as if he wished an explanation of these words; but the ladies were so near that he could not ask it. Miss Belmein, as soon as the first compliments at meeting were over, engaged him in a particular conversation: I blushed and turned pale alternately at this sight. Miss Dumont, who watched my looks, seemed to smile maliciously at the alteration which was visible in my countenance. As I knew not how to account for this seeming ill-nature, in one whom I had always regarded as a friend, I felt my uneasiness redoubled. The conversation beginning to languish, Mrs. Harvey, to divert us, led us to a small ascent in the garden, from whence we could behold the sea dashing its waves against the small rocks at the extremity of the shore. The other side afforded a delightful prospect of corn-fields and meadows, thick woods and winding valleys, with blue hills at a distance, which seemed to hide their heads in the clouds. "What a fine poetic landscape is here!" said Dumont, (turning to me.) "One would think, said Mrs. Harvey, you two, who are favourites of the Muses, might feel some inspiration from this charming place. Come, continued she, (pulling Dumont) sing us some extempore lines this moment." "Yes, do, added I, and borrow your ideas from that gay bank of flowers there." "A good hint, miss, replied he, I'll obey you immediately." And then sung the following lines:

See how that rose contracts her sweets,
And shyly turns her beauteous head!
So my coy Fair my passion meets,
And vainly lets my sorrows plead.

"Now, miss, said Dumont, pray exert your Muse." "O, with all my heart, I replied; I'll contribute to your triumph." Upon which I sung these words:

See how the roving bee incessant flies
From flow'r to flow'r, and each new fragrance tries!
Fantastic emblem of the lover's mind!
To change, and dear variety, inclin'd.

To Emilia, holding her fan before her face.

The Life of Harriot Stuart. Written by Herself.

I cast an upbraiding glance at Dumont, as I ended these words. "Come, now for the application," said miss Dumont. "Mine, said I, is to the whole lordly sex in general." "And your's," resumed she to her brother. "Let the fair one make it to herself, replied he; since she must certainly know her own picture." "Ah, then, interrupted Mrs. Harvey, 'tis to one in this company it seems," (looking on me with a smile.) "Nay, madam, replied I (blushing) 'tis unkind to tempt his discretion thus. Pray let us correct our curiosity, and consider, that few people are in love enough to own it." Dumont made no other reply to these words than by a look, which methought spoke a great deal.

When the ladies took their leave, he walked at a distance with miss Belmein; and I observed, with some pain, that he was engaged in a very serious conversation with her. After he had handed them into the coach, I expected he would have gone with them; but I was deceived: he made some excuse for staying longer. My resentment at his behaviour to miss Belmein was so great, that I hardly deigned to speak to him as we followed Mrs. Harvey to the house. "Dear miss Harriot, said he, (after breathing three or four sighs) will you not tell me what fault I have committed, that has drawn upon me your aversion? Tho' I have not dared to speak to you of the passion which consumes me, yet I am persuaded you are not ignorant of it. But is excess of love my fault? Tell me, I conjure you, do you hate me because I cannot help adoring you?" "Sure, interrupted I, you think 'tis miss Belmein you are talking to." "Miss Belmein! said he, (surprised) I don't understand you! For heaven's sake explain yourself!" "Nay, answered I, since you have a mind to be so very discreet, and make a secret of your affection for her, I have no intention to oblige you to confess it. But your behaviour to that young lady is so very particular, that it is no difficult matter to discover your sentiments." In spite of my endeavours to the contrary, I could not pronounce these words without a visible emotion. I saw joy sparkle in his eyes. He guessed the cause of my concern. "Oh! cried he, (seizing my hand) how unjustly do you suspect me! I must clear myself, tho' I betray the trust that is reposed in me. You know captain D , continued he: he has long loved miss Belmein, and has the happiness of being agreeable to her. When he left N he intrusted me with the secret of his passion. I convey all his letters to her, and this confidence creates an intimacy between us, which has given rise to your suspicions. Read this letter, said he, (taking one out of his pocket) 'tis from him, and you will be convinced I tell you nothing but truth." I took the letter without hesitation, and found it just as he had said. My anger vanished in a moment: I saw immediately thro' miss Dumont's artifice, and was convinced she had made use of miss Belmein's name to discover my sentiments with regard to her brother. That terrible jealousy which had taken possession of my heart, vanished in a moment: my first emotions were all joy. Dumont observed the unguarded transport: he watched my eyes, and read in them every motion of my soul. Emboldened by this discovery, he kissed my hand a thousand times, with an ardour that drew me out of the sweet reverie I was in. I hastily snatched my hand from his: "Oh forgive me, said he, (in the tenderest accent) if I have indulged a hope that you are not displeased to find me faithful." These words filled me with the utmost confusion: I trembled at the dangerous discovery I had made; and, resolving, if possible, to draw myself out of this perplexity, "If I had vanity enough, said I, (looking on him with a careless smile) to imagine you really loved me, I should certainly envy the prodigious happiness you enjoy this moment, at this imaginary discovery you have made of my sentiments. But, dear Dumont, pursued I, (laughing) confess that I have fairly outwitted you; and, for the future, don't let a little personated jealousy prevail upon you to give up the secrets of your friends." I saw he was quite disconcerted at this raillery, and I pursued it with so much art, that he took his leave of me in a disorder, which convinced me my behaviour had greatly perplexed him.

You may imagine, my dear friend, that I did not offer so great a violence to my inclinations without feeling a sensible pain. I loved the engaging Dumont, and was convinced I was beloved by him: yet I was under a sad necessity of flying from this dear object of my tenderness; and, to conceal my weakness, I forced myself to treat him with the utmost scorn and indifference, when every look, every tender word, sunk deep into my soul, and gave me agonies impossible to describe.

Such was the state of my mind when I was obliged to return to town. My brother being resolved to go back to Jamaica, where his affairs called him, intreated me to give him my company at home the few days he had to stay. I was struck with horror at the thoughts of parting with this dear brother, who had always discovered for me more than parental affection. My grief produced the most violent effects: I wept continually: and tho' he employed

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every soothing art he was master of, to calm my uneasiness; yet I could not behold the day approach, when he was to leave us, without almost sinking under the load of anguish that opprest me. "I must leave you, my dear Harriot, said he, (drawing me aside;) heaven only knows with what regret! But, before I part with you, suffer me to conjure you to persist in the just and becoming resolution you have taken, to avoid Dumont as much as possible. I see you are surprised, continued he; but I am not ignorant that he pretends to love you. Your whole behaviour hitherto, has been such as I cannot chuse but approve. I am charmed with that diffidence you have shewed of yourself, in flying the dangerous addresses of a man so formed to please. True virtue is never without a just distrust of itself. However specious his pretensions may seem, yet 'tis impossible he can have honourable views; and tho' I will not suppose he has dared to disclose his designs to you, yet as he endeavours, by all the appearances of a respectful passion, to make himself master of your affections, 'tis only by shuning him as you do, that you can promise yourself any security from his artifices." The confusion I was in, while my brother was speaking, might easily have convinced him how deeply I was interested in what he had said; but without taking notice of it, he pressed me tenderly in his arms. "My dearest sister, continued he, forgive my fears: I own my heart is perpetually alarmed upon your account. A girl of wit and spirit, like you, is exposed to numberless dangers; and were you going to live with a person less prudent than your aunt, lady L , I should tremble for the dangerous charms you possess, lest they should expose you to trials, to which all your prudence would be hardly equal." "Ah, my dear brother, interrupted I, (melting into tears) I hope my conduct shall never give you cause to blush that I am your sister. Whatever may be my situation in life, the instructions you have given me shall be the rule of my actions." My brother made no other answer to this than a most affectionate embrace, and then bade me farewell, with eyes swimming in tears. I was not able to speak: opprest with insupportable affliction, I fainted away in his arms; too sad presage of my misfortune! Alas! I never saw this dear, this worthy brother more.

Oh! my Amanda, scarce can I recall the remembrance of that fatal day, without feeling a renewal of all the pangs I suffered. But let me not tire you with a faint imperfect representation of my sorrows, of my wild despair, at parting with the best of friends and brothers. His absence gave me a reasonable excuse for the solitude and grief to which I devoted myself: but the dear, dangerous idea of Dumont intruded itself amidst my complainings for my brother, and claimed, in spite of me, part of the tears I shed. I persisted, however, in so severe a behaviour to him, that he never durst entertain me with discourses of his passion, tho' my intimacy with his sisters gave him frequent opportunities.

The time now approached when I was to leave N , and not all my resolution could enable me any longer to support an appearance of indifference to Dumont. The deep despair that was visible in his eyes, filled my whole soul with unutterable grief. I could no longer assume my haughty airs when he approached me. Spite of myself, my looks wore a sympathizing sorrow. He took advantage from this alteration in my behaviour to him; and having found me one day alone, when he came to make me a visit, he threw himself suddenly on his knees before me, and, in the tenderest and most affecting language, begged me not to leave him in that absolute despair, to which my cruelties had reduced him. "Alas, Dumont, said I, (obliging him to quit that posture) what is it you expect from me? If it be really true that you love me as much as you would have me believe, my situation and your's leave me only the power of pitying you." "I know, replied he, (eagerly) all the objections you can make against admitting my addresses: you may urge my engagement to my cousin, and the difference of our religion; but these obstacles are slight, in comparison of your insensibility. Oh! pursued he, (grasping my hand) little do you know with what excess of tenderness I love you. I became a captive to your almost infant-beauties; and, while we continued on board the same vessel, what torments did I not endure in my endeavours to vanquish my fatal passion! When the happy Belmein was upon the point of becoming your husband, the impossibility there appeared of ever making you mine, and the thousand arts I used to forget you, tho' they could not cure me, yet abated the violence of my anguish. But when I saw you again, cried he, (looking on me with eyes sparkling with tenderness) when I beheld you more lovely than ever, and heard you the universal object of every one's esteem and admiration, my smothered passion blazed with more violence than ever. I have adored you ever since; and if it had been possible for any thing to have conquered my affection for you, your uncommon severity would have done it." "Oh Dumont! interrupted I, (struggling to suppress my tears) leave me, I beg you: I cannot bear to hear your complaints. To what purpose do you endeavour to melt me thus? I have, indeed, as you say, treated you

To Emilia, holding her fan before her face.

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harshly; but my duty, my honour, obliged me to it." Dumont, who, from the moment I began to speak, had gazed on me with a fixed attention, observing the disorder I was in, which would scarce allow me to utter a word without stopping to take breath; "Is it possible, said he, that I could be mistaken in the cause of your ill-usage of me! Have you not hated me, then?" "Alas, replied I, (no longer able to restrain my tears) reproach me no more! Did you know what my soul feels this moment, you'd pity me." "Good God! said Dumont, (starting from his seat) what means this! You weep, my lovely, my adorable Harriot! I dare not suppose I can be the cause of this affliction." "Yet spare me, I conjure you, interrupted I, (half dead with shame and grief) spare me the confusion of telling you what I could wish you knew. Can you not give a name to this distress? But why do I trifle! I shall never see you more: I have given to virtue all that it can demand of me. I am going to leave you for ever: but shall I leave you in the cruel belief of my ingratitude? Yes, dear Dumont, cried I, (with precipitation) I love you. Oh, would to heaven I could say my passion was as justifiable as 'tis sincere." "Sure, said my transported lover, I do but dream! love me, do you say? But why do I doubt it! cried he, (clasping me eagerly in his arms) those dear enchanting eyes confess it: Never did I behold such softness in them before. My dear, lovely torment, continued he, (pressing me closer to his bosom) my bliss, my pain, why have you thus long persecuted me with an appearance of hatred?" "Oh Dumont! cried I, (breaking from his arms, and blushing at the liberty he had taken) how well does your behaviour reproach me for the confidence I repose in you!" "Ah, for heaven's sake, resumed he, forgive the transport of a man whom your rigours had reduced to the deepest despair; and now, made wild with joy, know not what he does or says." "Yet hear me calmly, I replied: 'tis true I love you, I will not blush to own it, since, in the resolution I have taken, I have nothing to reproach myself with. I acknowledge myself obliged to you for that excess of tenderness with which you have regarded me; nor could I defend my heart from feeling for you all that affection you could have wished to inspire me with. Fate has put a bar between us; but, inevitable as it is, it has not hindered me from loving you: and that I have concealed my sentiments with so much care, you must impute to my fixed resolution of conquering a passion I could never hope to indulge with innocence. Heaven knows, my heart did not suffer less than your's by the cruel constraint I put on myself; but my virtue demanded this sacrifice of me. Do not condemn me then, dear Dumont. Pity my distress, and the sad necessity which obliges me to fly you for ever." "Ah Harriot! returned he, (sighing) where have you learned this refined reasoning, and how long have you been governed by those false principles of honour and virtue, which teach you 'tis a less crime to precipitate a wretch, who adores you, into the extremest misery, than to grant the smallest concession to ascertain his happiness?" "What is it you say? interrupted I, (with some emotion) What concession can I possibly make you, without endangering my honour and reputation? Ah, know me better, Dumont! and do not imagine my tenderness for you can ever influence me to an action unworthy of my birth and sentiments." "By heaven you wrong me! said my lover. Your honour shall ever be sacred with me: I would lose my dearest blood in its defence. But oh, my lovely Harriot, is there not something due to love! Shall our mutual affection serve only to increase our misery! I will not suppose my charming angel can ever be influenced by views of interest, and tho', by refusing the lady to whom my infant-vows were engaged, I sacrifice all my expectations of a splendid fortune, and reduce myself to the small competency I hold independent of my father; yet sure my excess of love will, in some measure, compensate for my want of fortune. Suffer me then, my dearest Harriot, to hope you will consent to our union when we arrive in England. I will take a passage in the same ship with you: my father will readily consent to my going, if I tell him 'tis with an intention to visit my cousin. See, my dearest creature, how every thing favours us! But, alas, you frown, you seem displeased. Can it be possible, that, after having been happy enough to gain your heart, I should have any more obstacles to surmount." "Ah Dumont! returned I, do you think I am so little capable of governing an unhappy passion, as to consent to indulge it at the expence of your ruin and my own quiet? Shall I allow you to expose yourself to the resentment of all your relations, forsake a lady to whom you are solemnly contracted, and reduce yourself from a state of affluence, to one unworthy of your merit, for an unhappy girl, who can bring you nothing but herself? But, were I weak enough to consent you should involve yourself in this misery, know there is another powerful bar to our union. I never disobeyed my father while he lived: dying, he left me an absolute command never to marry any one of your religion, however advantageous it might be to my interests. Alas! continued I, (my eyes streaming with tears at the mention of that honoured name) I would suffer a thousand deaths rather than break the solemn vow I made, never to disobey him in so important a point. See, dear Dumont, the unsurmountable obstacles which fate has put between us! Call it not cruelty then, if I resolve to see you no more: if you do not desire to have me miserable,

To Emilia, holding her fan before her face.

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conquer this fatal passion, and do not interrupt my endeavours to restore myself to that tranquillity which you have deprived me of."

Dumont, who, all the time I had been speaking, had sat leaning his head upon one of his hands, looked up when I had finished, and shewed me his face all bathed in tears. "Oh heavens! cried he, you have indeed raised an unsurmountable bar to my happiness. Am I then doomed to lose you, because my principles in religion differ from your's? Alas, my lovely Harriot! said he, it is decreed that I must be miserable for ever. Tho' I look upon the possession of you to be the sublimest happiness that any man can arrive at in this world, yet I cannot consent to purchase it by changing my religion. The man who could basely forsake the principles he was bred in, from any other motive than a conviction that they are false, must render himself unworthy the blessing of being yours." "Do not imagine, interrupted I, that I could be capable of approving your change, if you only made a sacrifice of your religion to love. No, whenever that happens, may it be the effect of reason and conviction. But, believe me, dear Dumont, tho' you really profest the same principles with myself, I would never consent to your breaking thro' your engagement with your cousin, and sacrificing your fortune for me. Submit then patiently, I conjure you, to that cruel destiny which divides us. Conquer your passion, if you are able: but be assured, neither time or absence shall ever force me to forget you."

I was going on when I observed a mortal paleness overspread his face: he fixed his eyes on me with a look so full of sweet unutterable sorrow, that, quite melted with the sight, and fearing lest my resolution should fail me, I rose from my seat; "Farewell, dear Dumont, cried I, (bursting into tears) I cannot, dare not stay any longer: I am not able to support my own affliction, and the sight of yours." As I said these words I moved towards the door, when Dumont hastily following me, "At least, cried he, (spreading his arms) give me the comfort of a last embrace." I made no answer, but gently reclining my head upon his shoulder, suffered him to clasp me in his arms, while my tears and sighs left me not the power of uttering a word. "Oh heavens! said my lover, (pressing me to his bosom with inconceivable transport) shall this dear embrace be the last I must ever receive?" "Alas! interrupted I, (struggling to get loose) forget me, dear Dumont. All that we have both to do now is, to banish all hope of ever meeting again."

My mother calling me that instant, Dumont threw himself suddenly at my feet, "If you do not wish, said he, (eagerly) to see me breathe out my life the moment you prepare to leave me, grant me one favour, I conjure you." "Well, answered I, (with a voice interrupted with sighs) all that I can grant with honour, I will." "Promise me, pursued he, for one year to remain unmarried, and do not in that time endeavour to forget me." "Without inquiring into your reasons for making this request, replied I, I promise you, upon my honour, to comply with it." Dumont at these words rose up immediately, and was making an effort to fold me once more in his arms, when my sister Fanny opened the door. I immediately took notice that her eyes were red, as if she had been weeping; and hastily asking the cause, "My mother answered she, has just been informed that the ship, in which you are to go, sails in two days. Judge, continued she, (the tears streaming down her sweet face) if I can hear this news with indifference!"

Dumont that instant, making a hasty bow, rushed out of the room, and left us at liberty to indulge our mutual grief, for a parting which the excess of tenderness we had for each other made almost insupportable.

My mother having sent for me up to her chamber, after discoursing to me a long time, with her usual distance and reserve, upon the subject of my affairs, and the methods I should use to gain the favour of my aunt, who was in a condition to make me a very genteel fortune; told me, that she expected I should shew the utmost respect and obedience to my governess, under whose care I was to continue, 'till she delivered me up to my aunt. I promised her, with great readiness, to obey her most punctually in this particular; for, indeed, Mrs. Blandon had not only rendered herself dear to me, by the uncommon tenderness she discovered for me, but I revered and esteemed her good sense, and the many amiable qualities she possessed. I spent that night and the following day in endeavours to comfort my dear Fanny, who was almost inconsolable at the thoughts of parting; but my mother having promised to let her make a visit to my eldest sister, who lived in Philadelphia, she was a little composed.

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Dumont, who had often begged for another interview, which I constantly refused, at last wrote to me; and, in the most tender and moving terms imaginable, conjured me to give him a confirmation, under my hand, of the promise I had made him when we parted. I had scarce finished my answer to this billet, in which I made no scruple to comply with his request, when a servant came to tell me, the captain of the ship had sent to desire we would come on board immediately. My dearest Fanny threw herself, half dead, into my arms at these words. My own affliction was so great, that I was not able to comfort her. We continued weeping in this posture so long, that Mrs. Blandon came up to hasten me. "Alas, my dear children, said she, (excessively moved at the condition she found us in) why do you afflict yourselves in this manner for a short absence! Your mother will soon come to England herself, and then you'll meet again. Come, continued she, (embracing my sister) don't afflict miss Harriot too much with the sight of your grief. Consider, the weight of this parting falls heaviest upon her. You have your mother and eldest sister with you, but she, poor child! has only me to comfort her." Fanny, whose temper was truly generous, was so struck with Mrs. Blandon's remonstrance, that she composed herself immediately; and, after embracing me two or three times with an excess of tenderness, we followed Mrs. Blandon down stairs. I had just time, before I went into my mother's room, to give Fanny my billet to Dumont, conjuring her to deliver it with the utmost secrecy, which she faithfully promised. I then went in to take leave of my mother, with whom I found some company, who were come to go with me to the water-side. I kneeled to my mother to receive her blessing, kissing at the same time her hands, which I bathed with my tears. She blessed and kissed me several times, but with a composure that greatly astonished me. I left her at last, strongly affected with the indifference she discovered; and, with my sister Fanny, and the rest of the company, walked to the water-side, where a boat waited to carry us to the ship, which lay at some distance. My heart died within me, when the man held out his hand to help me in. I turned to take another embrace of my dear sister, who, remembering Mrs. Blandon's words, suppressed her tears, and recommended to me to be chearful and composed. The rest of the company saluted me with much tenderness, and I stept into the boat, followed by Mrs. Blandon; who, the moment we put off from shore, employed her utmost endeavours to comfort me. I kept my eyes constantly fixed on my dearest sister as long as I could see her; and being at last come close to the ship, I was helped up and received by the captain with much respect.

The extreme melancholly which wholly engrossed me, made me chuse to retire immediately to the cabbin allotted for my governess and me, which was the best in the ship. The first days of our voyage I spent in continual grief; but by degrees my temper returned to its natural sprightliness, and I began to reflect with pleasure on the agreeable and splendid life I was going to lead with my aunt.

We had been about ten days at sea, when the sailors, discovering a sail, threw us into the most dreadful apprehensions, by declaring, some time after, that it was a Spanish privateer. As the captain acknowledged he was incapable of making any defence, we saw no possibility of escaping the danger which threatned us. I will not pretend to describe the horrors with which I was seized: I fell on my knees, and, leaning my head on my governess's lap, implored the protection of heaven, and resolved in that posture to expect my fate. Mrs. Blandon endeavoured to calm my fears, by all the arguments her reason could suggest. But while she was thus employed, a horrid noise we heard upon deck so alarmed me, that, giving a loud shriek, I fainted away in the arms of my governess; and, when I recovered, found the cabbin full of men, who by their appearance, and speaking a language I did not understand, made me immediately conclude we were now in the power of the Spaniards.

At this dreadful sight I closed my eyes again, and, clinging round Mrs. Blandon's neck, expressed the terror of my soul by my cries and exclamations. The commander of the privateer, moved at the condition I was in, came up to my governess, and desired her, in bad French, to tell the young lady not to fear any thing. The tone of this man's voice had something so gentle and soft, that I ventured to raise my head and look upon him; while my governess, in the most moving language, begged him to protect us from any ill usage. But the moment the Spanish captain belied me, he started back; and, with an action that expressed some surprize, stood gazing on me attentively for two or three moments. I drew a good omen from the complaisance which appeared in his looks; and, as I spoke French pretty fluently, added my intreaties to those of my governess, that he would be pleased to treat us as favourably as our circumstances would permit. The captain, with a true Spanish politeness, after making me some

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romantic compliments on my youth and charms, which he said would render me absolute where—ever I was, gave me the most solemn assurances, that we should be treated with the greatest respect; and, ordering his men to leave every thing that belonged to us untouched, gave me his hand to lead me into his own ship. My tears, which his civility had suspended for a moment, flowed afresh at the mention of leaving the ship: however, I did not dare to refuse, but allowed him to help me into the privateer, which there was no great difficulty in doing, as we only passed over planks that were laid on each vessel. Every thing here had so dreadful an appearance, that I felt all my terrors renewed. The captain led my governess and me into a little place, which he called a cabin, as dismal as the lumber of war could make it: he caused it to be cleared a little, and told us, that all that was necessary for our lodging, &c. should be brought from our own ship; and that he would resign that little apartment entirely to us. I took courage to ask him where he intended to carry us; upon which he replied, that he would make directly for St. Sebastian, which he hoped to reach in two or three days. I would fain have asked him, how he intended to dispose of us when we arrived there; but he was obliged to leave us immediately, only begging us, with a respectful bow, not to be under any uneasy apprehensions. When he was gone, Mrs. Blandon, fastening the door, took me in her arms, and embracing me tenderly, "Do not afflict yourself, my dear child, said she: your virtue, I hope, is the care of heaven. This Spaniard's generous behaviour is a happy earnest of the interposition of providence in our favour. We are made prisoners, 'tis true; but without any of those hardships which usually accompany such a misfortune. Your youth and merit will procure us a favourable treatment at St. Sebastian; and 'tis probable we shall not long languish under captivity." My governess touched but slightly on the subject of my fears, that I might not be too much alarmed. The dangers to which my honour was exposed, amidst a crew of unlicensed wretches, to whom I was a prisoner, filled my whole soul with the most violent disquiets. We passed some hours in a very melancholy situation, the tumultuous noise upon deck keeping our fears constantly awake. All of a sudden it increased in such a manner, that we were under the most terrible consternation. The sailors seemed to run to and fro with the utmost precipitation, hallowing at the same time with so frightful a noise, that, concluding we were in some imminent danger, we cast ourselves upon our knees, imploring, with the utmost fervour, the assistance of heaven. That instant the door of our cabin was burst open; the captain appeared, and hastily raising us from the ground, "This is no place for you now, ladies, said he; I must conduct you to one where you will be less in danger." "Ah, cried I, whither do you mean to take us? I will not stir from this place, without you tell me your designs." "Alas, replied the captain, you must not stay here to be exposed to the fire of the enemy. We shall be attacked immediately by a man of war of your own nation. Come, miss, continued he, (taking me up in his arms) whatever is the event of our engagement, you will be safe." Saying this, he carried me thro' a dismal dark place into a little cabin, where there were some candles lighted, and two men, who were busy in preparing plaisters and bandages. He then opened a little door, which led to another of these miserable dwellings, and seating me upon a great chest, told Mrs. Blandon, who had followed us, that we were in no danger there from the firing; and, begging me to be composed, went away immediately.

He had not been gone many minutes, when, by the horrid noise of the guns, we found they were engaged. The agonies I was in deprived me of my senses: I fell into a swoon, which lasted so long that Mrs. Blandon thought me dead. When I recovered, I found the firing had ceased. My governess hearing me sigh, broke out in an exclamation of joy: "Be comforted, my dear, said she, we shall be freed from the power of these Spaniards: the ship is taken by the English." The sudden joy which rushed into my soul at this news, was very near depriving me again of life. Immediately the place was filled with the English sailors, who pressed in in the most tumultuous manner. As soon as they spied us, they gave a shout: "Here's a prize, cries one, (looking at me) well worth fighting for, i'faith." Mrs. Blandon, immediately rising, demanded, in an assured accent, to be led to their commander, telling them we were English, and made prisoners to the Spaniards but that morning. At these words, a gentleman, who seemed to have some authority over these fellows, advanced towards us: "I suppose, madam, said he to my governess, you were taken in that merchantman we have now recovered from the Spaniards. How fortunately has providence brought us to your relief, to prevent you and that charming young lady from suffering any longer the hardships of captivity! Permit me, ladies, continued he, to lead you out of this dismal place. My uncle, who commands the ship which has rescued you, will, I am persuaded, offer you all the service in his power." Saying this, he presented me his hand, and, begging Mrs. Blandon to follow us, led me upon deck, which was crowded with the officers and men belonging to the man of war, the Spaniards being all made prisoners, and

To Emilia, holding her fan before her face.

removed to close quarters.

As soon as the lieutenant (for so we found he was) appeared, leading me by the hand, followed by my governess, the eyes of every one were turned upon us. He presented us to a gentleman, whom we presently knew to be the commander; and, relating what he had heard of our circumstances, begged him to receive us into his protection. The captain listened very attentively to his nephew's discourse, keeping, at the same time, his eyes constantly fixed on me. When the young gentleman had done speaking, he bowed to us very complaisantly, assuring us we might depend upon his doing every thing in his power to serve us. He then inquired of Mrs. Blandon, if I was her daughter; and, being told by her who I was, he renewed his offers of service, with more politeness than before; and ordered the young lieutenant, his nephew, to convey us to his ship. He seemed to accept of this commission with great pleasure; and, as soon as we got on board the man of war, led us into a magnificent apartment, intreating us to repose ourselves, after the fatigue and uneasiness we had suffered.

My governess, who was anxious to know what had become of our ship, inquired of this gentleman man whether the captain was safe, and if he would not be at liberty to prosecute his voyage. "Madam, replied he, we came up with the privateer just as they had manned their prize, which it seems was the ship in which you were, with some of their own men, and were preparing to set sail. The captain and some of his crew were prisoners on board the privateer; but by this time, I imagine, he is restored to the command of his own ship; for the Spaniards on board surrendered it immediately. However, madam, continued he, we are returning to England ourselves, having been sent to convoy some ships to Jamaica; and, I hope, you will consent to finish your voyage with us, where you will be much safer than on board the ship from which you were taken." Mrs. Blandon replied to this no otherways than by a respectful bow with her head, and the young officer withdrew, leaving us at liberty to reflect on the offer he had made us.

As soon as we were alone, my governess, observing I was greatly indisposed, obliged me to lay myself down upon a couch that was in the room. She then told me, she had resolved to return to our own ship, alledging, that, as we might sail in company with the man of war, which would serve for a convoy to us, we should be as safe as if we continued on board. Tho' I did not see into Mrs. Blandon's reasons for taking this resolution, yet I would not pretend to oppose it. However, my illness increased every moment: the continual terrors I had suffered that whole day, worked so forcibly upon my constitution, that I had no longer any strength or spirits left. I was seized with faintings, which returned so frequently upon me, that they almost despaired of my life. The captain, in my intervals of sense, expressed the most obliging concern for my indisposition, and gave orders for his own chamber to be made ready for me. The surgeon having bled me before I was put to bed, and ordered me some proper medicines, I fell into a profound sleep; from which I did not awake till the next morning. I was so well recovered, that my governess was transported with joy: she assisted me to rise; and the doctor, coming in to make me a visit, was infinitely pleased to find his prescriptions had produced so advantageous a change in my health.

I was still too weak to venture out of my chamber; and Mrs. Blandon, upon that account, begged the captain, who had sent several times, to dispense with seeing me that day. Observing our trunks were placed in the room, I asked my governess if she had resolved to stay in this ship. She replied, that my illness had made it impossible to move me into our own; that as soon as the captain had settled every thing relating to the merchant-ship and the privateer, he had given orders to sail immediately: "So that, added she, we must be contented to let him carry us to England." "There is no great mortification in that, madam, interrupted I, (smiling): methinks we are much better situated here than in our own little paultry ship." "However, answered my governess, (gravely) I had much rather be there. We are under a necessity of seeing and conversing with a great many gentlemen here; and, as there is no other woman in the ship, besides ourselves, it must necessarily be very disagreeable." This thought, which had escaped me before, did not fail to make some impression on me now. But tho' I could have been very well satisfied to have had some of my own sex to converse with; yet the want of that satisfaction did not give me half so much pain, as the respect and assiduity, with which I was treated, gave me pleasure.

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The captain, who sent almost every hour to inquire after my health, had ordered the greatest delicacies the ship afforded to be brought to our table. I reflected, with pleasure, on the agreeable manner in which I was like to finish my voyage: and the next day, being perfectly recovered, my governess informed me it would be proper to give the captain my company at table; a favour he had earnestly requested. I readily consented; and Mrs. Bandon, at my desire, went to entertain the captain, till I was ready to make my appearance. Tho' I was always solicitous enough about my dress, yet to-day I was at more than ordinary pains in adorning myself; pleased with the thoughts of extending my conquests, and indulging my vanity, by an anticipation of the triumphs I expected to enjoy. Unhappy error! which I cannot enough lament. Fatal source of all my misfortunes! how little did I foresee that the admiration I was so fond of gaining, would be productive of the most cruel events! When I had finished dressing, I took a full survey of myself in the glass; and, after indulging a few moments contemplation, remained perfectly satisfied with my figure.

In the midst of these pleasing sensations, my governess tapped at the door: "Bless me, said she, (when I had opened it) you are extremely fine, miss Harriot! But why this exact care in your dress? Do you think there is a necessity for being so particularly nice, because you are to be seen by two or three gentlemen? Upon this occasion, pursued she, you ought to have diligently avoided extremes, which may possibly subject you to very unfavourable censures." As Mrs. Bandon did not insist upon my altering my dress, I listened with much good humour to a long lecture she gave me on prudence and reserve; declaring, that altho' she was absolutely convinced my virtue was proof to any temptation, yet my gay temper, and immoderate desire of pleasing, would insensibly lead me into errors. I was not, however, of my governess's opinion in this point: I had confidence enough in my wit, to believe it would defend me against all the impertinence of gallantry, without being obliged to suppress the natural sprightliness of my disposition.

When we came into the dining-room, we found two or three gentlemen, besides the captain and his nephew. As I was a good deal used to company, I was not disconcerted at the compliments I received from them all, upon the recovery of my health; but took my place at table with an easy gaiety, which seemed to please them infinitely. After dinner, I took a full survey of the captain's person, which I had not much considered before. He seemed to be between forty and fifty, his complexion was dark, and his thick black eye-brows hung in a formidable manner over his eye-lids: his eyes had a certain wanton fierceness in them, more apt to create terror than love; however, he seemed to correct their natural ferocity, and softened them into a look most odiously languishing, which would not have failed of exciting my mirth, had I not been restrained by a certain timidity, for which I could not account, as well as by respect. The rest of his face was answerable to what I have already described; and as we are too often ready to receive impressions from external appearances, I found in myself a much stronger inclination to hate than esteem this gentleman.

The captain seemed so perfectly pleased with my company, that he never quitted me the whole day, making me many compliments on the happy chance, as he called it, that had procured him the pleasure of meeting me. I made slight but complaisant answers to all he said; not without observing, that tho' his agreeable nephew scarce mixed in the conversation, yet his eyes spoke a great deal, and seemed to tell me, in very intelligible language, he sympathized with his uncle in the satisfaction my presence gave him.

The authority Mrs. Bandon assumed over my conduct, seemed to engage the attention of both the uncle and nephew. As they looked upon her as a person to whom I was intrusted, they treated her accordingly with the greatest complaisance. When evening approached, Mrs. Bandon insisted upon my returning to my chamber; alledging, that my late indisposition required that I should retire early to rest. The captain, after having, in vain, opposed our leaving him, led me to my apartment, with a profusion of compliments on my wit and charms. He took his leave at the door, with a most respectful how; and a little time after sent his servant with several kinds of sweetmeats and preserved fruits. My governess, when we entered the room, had thrown herself into a chair in a pensive posture, when breaking at last a silence which she had kept for some minutes, "I could wish, said she, (with an air of perplexity) that we were treated with less respect and ceremony than I find we are: it would argue a more disinterested kindness." "Is it possible, madam, interrupted I, (surprised at the mysterious manner in which

To Emilia, holding her fan before her face.

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she spoke) that the civilities we receive, can give you any apprehensions?" "It is certain, my dear, replied she, that I am not quite satisfied with the captain's extreme assiduities. I think he takes too much notice of you, for a person wholly indifferent; and, since our situation gives him so many opportunities of conversing with you, I wish he may always behave with the respect and distance he ought." "I cannot agree with you, madam, replied I, in believing the captain has any particular esteem for me: but sure, if it was so, that esteem would only influence him to continue this respectful treatment of me." "I know not, said my governess, why you have given the name of esteem to those sentiments, which I suspect the captain entertains for you. In generous minds, love often produces the most noble effects; but, in brutal dispositions, it is to be feared that passion is often mistaken for one infinitely worse."

Mrs. Blandon's way of reasoning had thrown me into a train of thought, which engrossed me intirely the remainder of the evening. I went to bed, however, a little dissatisfied with my governess's unreasonable apprehensions, and not at all disposed to repent of the effects which I found my charms had produced, in the hearts of both the uncle and nephew. The rolling of the ship in the night had discomposed me so much, that Mrs. Blandon made that an excuse for not allowing me to leave my chamber, till the afternoon. Upon my going into the dining-room, I found only my governess and Mr. Campbel (so was the captain's nephew called): he came hastily up to me, and, with an obliging concern, inquired after my health. "Mrs. Blandon, miss, pursued he, informed us, that you rested extremely ill last night; but one would not imagine it, from the bloom which fits on your cheeks this moment." "Nay, this is flattery, indeed, answer'd I, (smiling, and casting my eyes at the same time on the glass) I never looked so ill in my life." "And yet you are but too lovely still, resumed Mr. Campbel, (with a sigh); at least, all those who have the misfortune of seeing you to-day, will say so." "You certainly design this as a compliment, returned I; but you have succeeded so ill in this your second attempt to flatter, that for the future I would have you confine yourself to plain simple truth." "Will you allow me then, miss, interrupted he, (hastily) to tell you a plain truth?" "Yes, replied I, (adjusting my hair) provided you will not be tedious." "But what a careless air you put on! resumed he, (smiling, and taking my hand) is it possible you can be this dear indifferent creature you seem!" "I have met with no one yet to make me otherwise, resumed I, (snatching my hand from him) and 'tis probable my indifference will not be easily surmounted." "It is but too probable, indeed, said he, (sighing); and tho' I foresee I shall be unhappy, yet I cannot hinder myself from adoring you." "I did not expect these free declarations, interrupted I, (with some warmth); and the advantage you take of my present situation, gives me but an indifferent opinion of your generosity." With these words I turned scornfully from him. His uncle entering that moment, prevented his making me any reply; tho', by the extreme concern that appeared in his eyes, it was easy to see my behaviour had deeply affected him.

Itook this opportunity to inquire after the captain of the Spanish privateer, acknowledging myself much obliged to him for his generous treatment of us, the short time we were his prisoners. The captain very gallantly replied, that, upon that consideration, he should always think himself also greatly obliged to him; and would take care the civilities I had received from him should be amply returned. Then, changing the discourse, he made me observe the extreme melancholy which appeared too plainly upon Mr. Campbel's countenance. "Certainly, continued he, (smiling) 'tis not difficult to guess the cause of this alteration in my nephew's looks and temper. You have merit enough, miss, to produce stranger effects than transforming a gay sprightly young gentleman into a melancholy sighing lover." "Miss Harriot, interrupted my governess, is too young and unexperienced to be sensible of these alterations, or to know herself the cause." "She cannot be ignorant of her own charms, said the captain; and tho' she was so, yet the number of her votaries would make her but too sensible of the extent of her power." "I am confident, replied I, (smiling maliciously) were power in my hands, I should take an infinite delight in the abuse of it; and, knowing my own temper so well, I am very glad I have never found an object to exercise my severity upon." The captain continued to rally me upon my ill-natured principles, till it was time to retire: he would kiss my hand at parting; and, giving me a very intelligent look, declared he was interested in a particular manner in the cruel sentiments I had avowed. Mrs. Blandon insisting upon knowing what he had said to me softly, I repeated his words. "The aversion I have to this man, said she, is possibly very unjustifiable, yet I am not able to conquer it, or to think, without uneasiness, on the inclination he discovers for you." "Nay, madam, answered I, (smiling) he has certainly most reason to be uneasy; since, whatever inclinations he may have for me, I feel nothing for him but

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indifference or dislike."

My governess having brought it into a sort of custom not to dine out of our own chamber, I never saw the captain but in the afternoon, when we could not refuse making tea for him, at his earnest request. Mr. Campbel had been so much awed by the scorn with which I received his first declaration of love, that, for several days, he hardly dared to approach me. My heart triumph'd with conscious pride at the respectful passion I saw painted in his eyes; nor could I deny myself the ill-natured pleasure of increasing his confusion, by all the little perplexing arts I was mistress of. Tired, at last, with indulging my triumph, I desired him to reach me a book from his uncle's book-case, that stood in the room. Having left the choice of it intirely to him, he took down a volume of Prior's works, and, opening it at the poem of Henry and Emma, presented it to me, slipping at the same time a letter, very dextrously, between the leaves. I observed this action; but, if I had really an inclination to return it, he prevented me, by leaving me so suddenly, that I was obliged to take the first opportunity of concealing it in my pocket.

When Mrs. Blandon and I retired, I immediately acquainted her with what had happened, and asked her permission to read my letter. "I wish, said she, you could have avoided taking it; but, since it is so, let us see what it contains. Mr. Campbel has a modesty and sweetness in his behaviour, that makes it impossible for me to think he would say any thing in it to offend you." I obeyed her instantly, and, breaking the seal, found it as follows:

Madam,

"You have commanded me to be silent on the subject of my love, and I am determined to obey you, notwithstanding the torments which this painful restraint occasions me: but do not, I beg you, wound me with the cruel thought, that, in the declaration I made you, I took advantage of your present situation. Ah, madam! how ill are you acquainted with the purity of my sentiments! and how little are you sensible of your own power! Forgive me for this last insinuation: I will no more offend you on a theme so disagreeable. But not all your rigour can hinder me from soothing my soul, with the hope of one day convincing you of the sincerity and ardour of my passion; tho' at the expence of that life which I have devoted to you.

I am, with the truest respect,

Madam,

Your faithfully devoted

Campbel."

"If there be any truth in man, said Mrs. Blandon, this gentleman certainly loves you. But tho', for many reasons, I would not have you give him any encouragement while we are here; yet it will be necessary to treat him with respect, in case his pretensions are honourable." A sigh, which the remembrance of Dumont that moment forced from me, prevented me from answering for some time; when, recovering myself, "I shall not, madam, returned I, (with my usual vivacity) give myself the trouble to consider his pretensions: I never design to know what they are. I neither love him, nor hate him; but I cannot help owning, I feel a strange kind of pleasure in exercising a little tyranny over him." "What do you mean, child?" resumed she. "Why, madam, I replied, I think Mr. Campbel just cut out for a lover. He seems to possess a thousand old-fashioned amiable qualities, which would give a mistress such a charming advantage over him! How I could like to sport with the honest sincerity of his heart! Make him feel fear and hope, joy and grief, in such a swift vicissitude, that after loving, hating, soothing, and railing, by turns, fall into a languishing reverie for half a minute, gaze with a silent conviction of my power, and cry out in a rapture,

If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget them all."

To Emilia, holding her fan before her face.

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"Very fine, said Mrs. Blandon, (endeavouring to stifle a laugh) a pretty picture of a coquet, this! But you are very young, miss, to have so much judgment in these matters; and a very bad opinion of my prudence, to think I would indulge you in such an unjustifiable conduct." "But sure, madam, returned I, you cannot blame me, if, filled with resentment for the injuries many of my sex have received from men, I embrace any opportunity that is offered me, to revenge their wrongs, and retaliate the pain they have given." "Ah! interrupted my governess, you cannot impose upon me by these excuses. Was revenge your only motive, you would never make choice of the best and sincerest of the sex to practise your cruelties upon. But, pray, do you mean to take any notice of Mr. Campbel's letter? If you can write a few lines, without being tainted with the spirit of coquetry, I think it will not be amiss to answer it. Tho' I am afraid, continued she, (after a little pause) that writing will be giving him rather too much encouragement." "Not as I'll manage it, madam," replied I. And, taking a pen, I wrote the following answer:

Sir,

"Tho' I would be far from allowing a correspondence of this nature, yet, for once, I will break thro' the rule I prescribe myself, to acquaint you with my sentiments. To be plain, then, I cannot help considering the free declaration of love, which you made me at a time when it was not in my power to avoid such liberties, as an insult offered both to my person and understanding; and this being my opinion, the resentment I discovered ought neither to be a matter of surprize or complaint to you. I never desire to receive any proofs of your passion, occasioned either by your danger or my own: and, while you continue to treat me with the respect which is due to my sex and years, you may always depend upon the esteem of

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Mrs. Blandon, to whom I gave this billet as soon as I had finished it, conn'd over the word esteem. Then humming it over a second time to herself, paused for a minute, and at last declared it would do. Satisfied with her approbation, I sealed it; and, being told by her I might give it myself, I resolved to do so the first opportunity.

You must not imagine, my dear Amanda, that I was so intoxicated with the gallantry and homage I received, as to banish the dear idea of Dumont from my heart. Tho' absence was not capable to sink me into melancholy and despair, yet I still loved him with the same unabated tenderness, and made him the subject of all my little poetical pieces. I had reason, however, to repent the employing my pen so much on the subject of love: my style was rather too warm and passionate for one of my years; and the following poem was, perhaps, the first cause of one of the most cruel adventures of my life.

A Hymn to Venus.

Hail, daughter of immortal Jove,
Celestial Venus, queen of love!
Soft source of ev'ry pleasing woe,
From whom our choicest blessings flow!
Sweet troubler of the human heart!
Each age, each sex, receives thy dart;
Feels all thy fierce consuming fires,
And melts in new unnam'd desires.

Thee, goddess! thee, all hearts adore,
And heav'n itself reveres thy pow'r.

A Hymn to Venus.

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The awful fire of gods and men
Submits to thy enchanting pain;
And, tho' his thunders shake the world,
Is by thy mightier sway controul'd.

Touch'd by thy secret pow'rful charm,
The frozen breast of age grows warm;
The sweet intoxicating pain
Glides swiftly thro' each icy vein;
While love, and joy, and youth renew'd,
With pleasing raptures fire the blood.

Thou steal'st into the virgin-breast,
A painful, soft, unusual guest!
Hence the soft languish fills the eye,
The glowing blush, the heaving sigh,
The wish, by bashful fear restrain'd,
The pleasing hope by love maintain'd,
The thrilling pain, the lambent fire,
The sweetly new, yet check'd desire.

Thou in the hero's bosom glows,
And valour first from love arose;
Love, the reward and cause of strife!
Gave ev'ry kindred passion life;
Ambition's fever first inspires,
And anger's fierce destructive fires:
Bids the warm heart with friendship glow,
Or melt in pity's softer flow;
In chains our boasted reason bind,
And rule at will th' impassion'd mind.

I had finished this piece two or three days before, and the blotted copy was loose in my pocket; when, finding an opportunity to give Mr. Campbel my letter, I hastily drew it out, and with it my little manuscript, which dropt unperceived upon the floor. Mr. Campbel was standing with me at a window, making me observe the beautiful variety of colours which glittered on the backs of the Dolphins, that were sporting upon the surface of the sea. I kept the letter a minute or two in my hand, at a loss in what manner to deliver it: at last I vanquished my confusion, and, slipping it into his hand, went to the other end of the room, where Mrs. Blandon and the captain were sitting. I was so taken up with observing the restless anxiety of Mr. Campbel, who, impatient to read my letter, had quitted the room a few minutes after I had lest him, that I did not take notice of the captain, who was busily employed in reading the paper I had dropt. At last I turned my eyes that way, and perceiving the little poem, I mentioned, in his hand, I asked him hastily how he came by it, and insisted upon his returning it to me immediately. "No, miss, said he, (folding it up and putting it in his pocket) I cannot consent to restore this proof of the excellence of your genius, till I have taken a copy of it, that I may have the pleasure of frequently contemplating the wonders of your wit. Who would believe, continued he, (giving me a most penetrating look) that, under that coldness and reserve in your behaviour, there should lurk so much fire and strength of imagination! How happy, pursued he, (with eyes still more expressive) will that man be, who shall be able to transfer all that stock of soft bewitching tenderness to himself! A heart so capable of feeling all the force of love, must be a conquest worthy the most ardent pursuits." "You are greatly deceived, sir, replied I, (blushing) if you imagine I have described the effects of love from its influence on my own heart: no, I glory in that insensibility which preserves my freedom; and, I believe, I shall not be easily induced to part with it." "Ah, miss, resumed the

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captain, you shall never persuade me you are so insensible as you would be thought; and you have too admirably described your own heart—felt sentiments, to leave a doubt of their being genuine." I was so mortified at the captain's application of my poem, that I could hardly hide my ill—humour; and, making some excuse for retiring sooner than usual, he followed me to the door, pressing my hand in such a manner, as seemed a frightful earnest of his future addresses.

I made no secret of my apprehensions to my governess. "I shall think myself very unhappy, said I, if the captain assumes the liberty of talking to me in the strain his nephew has done, as I am persuaded he will not bear, with the same moderation, a reply so full of resentment." Mrs. Blandon heard me with some concern, and only answered, she wished we were well out of his ship.

Next day, finding myself a little indisposed, I resolved to keep my room; and begged Mrs. Blandon to make my excuses to the captain. She complied; and, leaving me to myself, I indulged the growing melancholly my soul was full of, by reading the letter I had received from Dumont the day I left N . Dear, painful, sweet employment! How did my throbbing heart melt into sympathizing grief at every soft complaint! how glow with tender extacy at each dear assurance of eternal love! I kissed the mournful lines a thousand times, and almost obliterated them with my tears; when, hearing Mrs. Blandon's step, I hastily wiped my eyes, and, hiding the letter I had been reading, assumed as much composure in my looks as I was able, in the present situation of my mind.

My governess, after asking me how I did, threw herself into a chair, with so many marks of uneasiness on her countenance, that I was alarmed; and, recollecting the plaintive accent in which she spoke, asked her why she appeared so reserved and melancholy. "Really, my dear, said she, (with a tone of concern) had I thought it probable so many disagreeable accidents would have happened to us, I would not have consented to accept the charge of you in this voyage, having much reason to wish you was under a more powerful protection than mine. To be plain, miss Harriot, the captain loves you." "Well, madam, replied I (a little recovered from the fright her first words had thrown me into) and has he declared himself in an impertinent manner to you?" "I ought not, indeed, resumed she, to give the name of love to the base designs he has upon your honour." "How, madam! interrupted I, (glowing with shame and resentment) has he dared to entertain any injurious hopes of me?" "Never sure, said my governess, (lifting up her eyes) was there a man possessed of such consummate assurance! You must know then, my dear, when I went into the great room, I found the captain alone: seeing me come without you, he asked me abruptly how you did; when, I informing him you was a little sea—sick, he smiled, and said that would soon be over. And then, obliging me to sit down, and drawing his chair near mine, "Mrs. Blandon, said he, (in a graver tone) I have something to communicate to you, which my mind has long laboured with. You are surprised, I see, continued he; but suspend your answer till I have fully acquainted you with my sentiments: know then, I love miss Stuart; nay more, I love her with so much violence, that I will leave no methods untried to obtain her. I am sensible she follows your advice implicitly, and you would do well to give her such as may ascertain my happiness and her own interest. I will be plain with you, Mrs. Blandon; it is not in my power to marry her, being already a husband, tho' without the smallest inclination for the woman to whom I am tied; but the riches I possess, will enable me to support the charmer of my soul in so splendid a manner, that she shall have no reason to repent the concessions she makes me. Provided she will be mine, let her make her own conditions: there is none so extravagant with which I would not comply." "Oh heavens! cried I, (no longer able to help interrupting my governess) how did he dare to treat you in this manner, and think so meanly of me! What is there so indiscreet either in my words or actions, that could authorize suspicions so injurious to my virtue! But tell me, dear madam, what did you say to all this?" "For some moments, said she, my astonishment and rage deprived me of the power of speaking; but my looks, I believe, anticipated my answer. At last I told him, he was the most unworthy man in the world, to take advantage of our helpless situation, and load us with affronts, not to be endured by persons who had any pretensions to modesty and virtue. I bid him carry his licentious proposals some where else, when he had an opportunity; as there might possibly be found some persons in the world, who would fall in with his infamous views; and not dare to attempt the ruin of a young lady, who, for her birth and qualities, merited a better fate than to become the prey of a wretch like him. These words, which a just indignation forced from me, did not at all discompose the captain. He only smiled with a scornful air: "And is this all the assistance I am to expect from

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you? said he. Well, madam, cherish your romantic notions, and forfeit a real advantage for chimerical principles of honour and virtue, and such like trash. If you could have entered justly into my views, and forwarded my designs upon miss Harriot, there was nothing you might not have expected from my gratitude and generosity: but 'tis no matter. I am not to be repulsed by your senseless anger. 'Tis to be hoped the young lady will not be blind to her own interest, and refuse the offers of a man, both disposed and able to make her happy." Don't, replied I, continued Mrs. Blandon, (bursting into tears) don't wound the ears of that unhappy young creature, with offers so repugnant to her principles. How wretchedly blind has a licentious passion made you! Do you imagine you are likely to make any impression on a heart, which has been taught to relish the beauty of virtue, by such loose and infamous proposals? Conceal your odious designs, if you would not be hated by her; and remember, it is not the part of a base ensnarer you are to act, in order to be esteemed by her you love. I confess, my dear, pursued my governess, these words were not altogether disobliging: for, I am of opinion, we ought not to irritate him while we are in his power. All I aimed at, was to preserve you from being obliged to listen to discourses so capable of wounding your modesty. My stratagem had its desired effect: the captain asked pardon for declaring himself in so free a manner, ascribing it to the natural sincerity of his temper, which never suggested, to him the least disguise; promised to be intirely governed by me, if I would only consent to favour his passion, which, he assured me, should be confined within the bounds I should prescribe. Having brought him to the point I desired, I assured him, nothing but respect and distance, while you was so inevitably exposed to his solicitations, could have any effect on a heart like your's. I insinuated, that you was apt to be touched with any instance of respect and submission; and, if he observes this hint, as, from the alteration it immediately caused in him, I think he will, you have nothing to do but pretend an absolute ignorance of what I have told you, to hinder him from offending you with any impertinent declarations, as he is convinced that that is not the most likely way to succeed."

I easily comprehended Mrs. Blandon's views; and tho' it was an odious task to dissemble my aversion to the wretch, yet I looked upon it as the only means by which I could avoid his detested importunities. Tho' my governess gave me hopes that he would observe a respectful behaviour to me, while I continued on board; yet, reflecting how absolutely I was in his power, I thought I had great room for uneasiness. My mind was disturbed with a train of gloomy ideas; and not being able to endure the sight of the captain, without a visible disturbance, I continued to keep my chamber, on pretence that my indisposition increased. This excuse, however, did not avail me long: 'twas impossible to refuse a visit from him, on his repeated importunities. He came attended by his nephew, which seemed a favourable omen; and tho' I blushed excessively at the sight of him, yet I soon recovered myself well enough to be able to return, with some complaisance, the obliging concern they expressed for my illness. Indeed, I had no reason to doubt the truth of Mr. Campbel's professions: the extreme melancholy which appeared in his eyes, seemed to convince me of the share he took in every thing that related to me. After a short visit, they both withdrew, leaving me very well satisfied with the captain's moderation. Mrs. Blandon was highly pleased with his respectful behaviour; and, to prevent my receiving any more visits from him in my chamber, she advised me to go into the great room as usual.

For several days he maintained a distant behaviour, which was extremely obliging to me, yet my heart was far from being tranquil upon his account. I trembled, lest he had some latent designs concealed under this masque of respect. His assiduities, however polite and insinuating, carried in them something terrible to me. He never spoke to me but I was alarmed: every thing he said, or did, administered to my fears: and the agitations of my mind were but too visible in my behaviour. 'Tis certain, that, in some circumstances, dissimulation is but too necessary. This, however, was never a part of my character, except in little matters of coquetry, which my gay temper led me into. I had naturally an artless simplicity, which too often laid me open to the designs of my enemies. In my present situation, a little disguise had been pardonable. Why did I, by indiscreetly shewing my aversion, irritate a brutal lover, in whose power I then was?

He observed the emotions that shook my soul, whenever he approached me: it was impossible to impute them to love; that tender passion never shews itself in actions so disobliging. "You hate me, miss, said he, (one day, after having carefully observed my behaviour;) and a heart so obstinately proud as your's, is not to be moved, I see, with a respectful passion." "This is strange language, sir, replied I, (looking on him with a disdainful air;) and

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being ignorant, till this moment, of your sentiments, methinks you have not declared them in a very respectful manner." "Come, this is too much, miss, interrupted he, (reddening with anger;) you only affect to be ignorant of my passion, to have an opportunity of indulging that little tyranny your sex is fond of. You have known for some time, that I have loved you; nor are you unacquainted with my offers to Mrs. Blandon. Why then, continued he, (softening his voice) why, my lovely angel, do you persist in a behaviour so unbecoming the native sweetness of your disposition? Will you not give me hope I shall be one day happy? My fortune is your's, give me but yourself. Say but you will be mine, and the best part of it shall be your's. Why are you silent? Ought these offers to displease you? Is it possible a girl of your years can be insensible to the delights an affluent fortune brings with it? Riches, the idol of your sex! are you capable of rejecting them?" "Yes, insolent as you are, replied I, (bursting into tears) I despise riches, if they are to be the price of my honour. And you, who have dared to affront me in this manner, who are you, for heaven's sake, that I should listen to such proposals? Were you a king, such is the pride of virtue, I should look upon myself as injured by offers of this nature: and shall I bear with patience such an insult from you, mean and contemptible as you are in my opinion?" I was interrupted in this sally of rage by Mr. Campbel's coming into the room; upon which I hastily turned my face to the window, and took up a book. The captain walking away in a pet, he came up to me; and observing the tears stealing down my cheeks, "Oh heavens! cried he, (in a tender accent) what do I see! What is it that occasions these tears? Speak, miss, I beg you, and relieve me from the torturing perplexity I am in!" "If there be any truth in the professions of friendship you have made me, answered I, (with a voice interrupted with sobs) protect me from the insolence of your uncle!" Saying this, I went hastily out of the room, making a sign for Mrs. Blandon to follow me.

As she had been at too great a distance to hear what the captain had said to me, I repeated every word; and, giving way to the violence of my grief, I burst into a flood of tears, deploring my unhappy fate, which had subjected me to such cruel and mortifying affronts. My governess was not in a condition to comfort me: her apprehensions were possibly greater than mine. She recommended it to me to trust in the protection of heaven; and, by frequently casting up her eyes in a most ardent manner, she seemed to implore it for me.

In the evening, the boy, as usual, coming to attend us at supper, my governess begged me to appear as composed as possible, that the captain might not hear his behaviour had been able to fill me with any terrors. I took her advice, and, when supper was over, we dismissed the boy; and I was going to resume my conversation with her about the captain, when, observing her eyes had an unusual heaviness in them, I eagerly asked her if she was indisposed. "Let us go to bed immediately, said she: I am seized with such a strange drowsiness, that I cannot sit up a moment longer." Saying this, she began to undress: but, before she could unpin her gown, she fell back in her chair, and, tho' I called to her several times, she made no answer; but seemed so profoundly asleep, that at last I went to her, and, pulling her gently, begged her to go to bed. I was so surprised at her continuing to sleep in this posture, that I repeated my efforts, not without some violence, to wake her; but finding they were in vain, I screamed out, and should have believed her absolutely dead, had not her breathing very loud convinced me she was alive.

I had no time to make any reflexions on this accident; for, hearing the door burst open with some force, I turned quickly about, and saw the dreadful captain appear; who, seizing me immediately in his arms, endeavoured to hinder me from crying out, by stopping my mouth with kisses. "Monster, said I, (struggling to get loose) what do you mean by this unheard-of insolence?" The wretch, without replying, carried me by force into the great room, and fastening the door, "Now, miss, said he, be wise; and, e're I proceed to force, to give your fantastic virtue an excuse for yielding, consent to make me happy on your own terms." How shall I, my dear Amanda, make you comprehend the mingled shame and terror, the wild despair, that filled my soul at these inhuman words! I made no other reply than a loud shriek, by which I seemed to call for some assistance; when he, clasping me a second time in his arms, was bearing me into his chamber, swearing he would possess me or die. "Die then! cried I, (suddenly drawing his hanger from his side, and thrusting it with all my force into his body) die, villain! by her hands whom you have sworn to ruin." Then springing out of his arms, which had no longer strength to hold me, he reeled towards a chair; but, e're he could reach it, he fell on the floor, with a groan that freezed all the blood in my veins.

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I had stood all this time with the hanger still in my hand, immoveable as a statue, with looks all pale and wild fixed on my intended ravisher; when, seeing him fall, and his blood run in streams upon the floor, I dropt the hanger: "Oh my God! cried I, (lifting up my eyes swimming in tears) what have I done! what will become of me!" Then, running to the door, I unbolted it, with an intention to call for help to assist the bleeding captain, when Mr. Campbel met me, just as I was stepping out. At sight of him I turned back again into the room; "See, said I, (pointing to his uncle) what, in defence of my honour, I have dared to do." "My uncle murdered! cried he, (staring wildly at the body, and then fixing his mournful looks on me) and you, miss Harriot, have you done this?" Then running to him, he kneeled down by his side; and, after a moment, rising with precipitation, "He breathes! cried he, he is not dead! I must call for help. Retire, unhappy fair one, and leave me to manage this dreadful business." But observing I did not attempt to go, he took my hand, and was hurrying me out, when the room was filled with the officers and sailors, who pressed in in numbers, alarmed by the captain's boy, who was passing by when Mr. Campbel entered, and had beheld the dreadful scene.

Mr. Campbel started back when he saw them, and fearing that moment only for me, all the marks of horror and confusion were painted on his face. The room, in an instant, resounded with cries and exclamations of surprize: "My God, cried an officer, (pressing near the bleeding captain) who has done this?" "Ask no questions, said Mr. Campbel, my uncle is not dead let the surgeon dress his wound immediately." "What do you say, sir! said this lieutenant, (in a menacing tone) shall we find our captain wounded, perhaps mortally, and be forbid to enquire into the manner of his receiving it? Gentlemen, pursued he, (turning to the crowd about him) I charge Mr. Campbel with being accessory to this murder: let him be seized, till he can prove his innocence."

Shocked to the soul at this unjust accusation, I pressed between Mr. Campbel and the furious lieutenant, who was advancing to take hold of him, "Forbear, cried I, (raising my voice as high as I was able) and do not condemn the innocent; I only am guilty of the captain's death, if he be dead. He dragged me out of my chamber, with an intention to force me to be the victim of his brutal passion; but I delivered myself from his violence by a blow with his own hanger, which I drew from his side. My governess lies yonder in a stupid lethargy, caused, no doubt, by a dose he procured to be given her, in order to prosecute his impious designs on me. If your commander dies by the wound I have given him, I killed him in the attempt of a crime, for which our laws would have doomed him to death. 'Tis me then, that you must seize: I am willing to appear before a court of justice, when we arrive at England, and to remain your prisoner till then: but let me be treated with the respect and decency due to my sex and years."

As often as I reflect on this terrible circumstance of my life, I cannot but wonder at the prodigious fortitude with which I was inspired! The resolution and courage of my speech, held them for some moments in amazement: but at last, some of the sailors exclaimed in a tumultuous manner, "What, our captain murdered by a girl, for such a pualtry trifle as a rape, and not committed neither! Hang law, and a court of justice, as she talks of: deliver her up to us, noble lieutenant; let us punish her our own way." The loud clamour that followed this impious proposal, distracted my soul with such an excess of anguish, that, listening only to the sudden dictates of my despair, I sprung in an instant to a window, and, throwing it up, was going to precipitate myself into the sea, when I felt myself pulled back by a force I was not able to resist; and turning to see who it was that did me that ill office, "Ah, Mr. Campbel! said I, is it you who prevents me from escaping, by death, the more terrible evils that await me!" He made me no answer; but, turning to oppose the unruly crowd that was pressing on, he hastily snatched up the hanger I had thrown on the ground, and presenting the point of it, "By heaven, cried he, (in a thundering voice) whoever approaches this young lady, runs upon his death: not you, villains, but the law must judge her action. I will plunge this weapon into the breast of the first man that offers to touch her. Mr. Benson, pursued he, (addressing himself to a gentleman who stood near him) you are the first lieutenant: by this accident the command of the ship devolves upon you. Do your duty then, and quell this mutiny; and, as you are brave and generous, take this unfortunate young lady into your protection."

The consternation which seized the late clamorous crowd at the determined manner in which my generous protector spoke, had occasioned so universal a silence, that, finding myself a little re-assured, I moved towards

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the gentleman to whom Mr. Campbel had directed his words, and, throwing myself at his feet, "Oh, sir, said I, (melting into a flood of tears) have pity on my youth and distress, and do not abandon me to the power of those men. I fear death less than dishonour. Take my life, if you please, to expiate the guilt of your captain's murder; but suffer me not to fall a victim to brutal passion." I had the satisfaction to hear a soft murmur of pity run thro' the whole room when I had finished these words, and to observe the tears standing in the eyes of the officer to whom I addressed them; but as he reached out his hand to help me up, the surgeon came out of the captain's chamber, where he had been carried to have his wound dressed, and declared that it was not mortal; and that he had recovered from his swoon, which was occasioned by loss of blood: he, therefore, desired that the apartments might be cleared, that he might be kept as free from disturbance as possible.

Guess, if you can, my dear Amanda, the joy I felt at this news! The lieutenant, in an authoritative tone, ordered every man to withdraw, which they immediately did. Mr. Campbel, the surgeon, and this officer, only remaining in the room, I thanked them with tears of gratitude, for the share they had had in my preservation; while Mr. Benson and the surgeon expressed, tho' with some reserve, their admiration of my courage. By a glance which I threw at Mr. Campbel, I saw his eyes bathed in tears; when, hastily wiping them with his handkerchief, he asked the doctor if he might be permitted to see his uncle. Being told that it would not be proper to disturb him that night, he consented to defer his visit till the morning, telling me, with a tender accent, that I was now at liberty to return to my chamber, where I might depend upon being safe from any future alarms.

The condition in which I had left my governess, made me intreat the doctor to see her; and, he complying, we all went into the room, where we found her still asleep in the easy chair, happy in a state of insensibility, which had prevented her from bearing any part in the horrid incidents of the night. The doctor having observed her a little, and enquired how long she had slept, told us he would bring something that would help to revive her; and, after leaving us a few minutes, returned with some medicines, which he applied to her temples and her nose, till she sneezed several times, and at last opened her eyes, tho' she presently closed them again, like a person who was oppressed with sleep. At last he forced a cordial down her throat, upon which she soon after opened her eyes intirely; and, in a few minutes, she began to recollect her situation, and asked me softly, as I stood by her chair, how I came to have so much company in my chamber. As I did not think proper to acquaint her yet with what had happened, I made some slight answer; and the gentlemen taking their leave immediately, lest us to our repose. I spent some hours, before I went to bed, in revolving the dreadful scenes I had so lately passed thro'; and, filled with the most lively gratitude to that gracious power whose providence had so visibly protected me, I cast myself on my knees, and poured out my whole soul in the most fervent prayer.

Notwithstanding the pious glow of heartfelt sentiments, which seemed for some moments to lift me above myself; yet I was no sooner laid in bed than, the darkness aiding my disordered fancy, the image of the captain, weltering in his blood, rose every moment to my mind, and filled me with the most terrible apprehensions. The morning, however, soon appeared; and my uneasy fears lessening, in proportion as the room grew lighter, I fell at last into a sleep, from which I did not awake till the day was pretty far advanced. Finding my governess was not with me, I drew back the curtain with so much precipitation, that she started hastily from her chair, and, running to me, gave me an affectionate embrace; telling me, she was transported to find I had slept so tranquilly, after the cruel incidents of the preceding night. "Who has informed you of them, madam?" replied I, (with precipitation.) "Mr. Campbel, returned she, has related them to me, and with such extravagant praises on your courage and virtue, that I shall love him while I live, for the generous sentiments he expressed. The doctor has declared the captain is out of all danger from his wound; and his nephew paints him so tortured with remorse for his base attempt, that, could I believe his conversion sincere, I should be willing to pardon him the misery he has caused you. He has given repeated orders, that we should be treated with the greatest respect; and, as I am informed we are within a very few days sail of England, I hope we have nothing more to fear upon his account."

The assurance my governess gave me, that the captain was out of danger, filled me with a most sensible joy: I rose immediately, and, being now quite composed in my mind, I spent most part of the day in conversing with her on my surprising escape from so many dangers, which, the more I reflected on them, the greater and more

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alarming I thought them. In the evening Mr. Campbel sent for leave to wait on me, which, with Mrs. Blandon's allowance, I granted; and a few minutes after he came into the room. I could not look on him at first without some confusion, when I reflected on his uncle's shocking attempt; but the soft timidity and respectful passion that appeared in his eyes, insensibly took off my restraint, and I made him all the acknowledgements his generous defence of me deserved. "Alas, miss, said he, (in a tender fearful accent) ought I not to fear my near relation to one, who has dared to offend you, will sink me in your esteem? And shall I not be involved in that resentment which my uncle has so justly merited?" "You ought rather, replied I, (smiling) to fear I should be offended with you for this unjust suspicion. Do you think me incapable of judging between innocence and guilt; or so ungrateful as to refuse my utmost esteem to one who has so justly a title to it?" "Ah, miss, returned he, (with eyes sparkling with joy) how much does your esteem over-pay my trifling service! And how superlatively happy should I think myself, if my most ardent " Here he paused, and, casting his eyes on the ground, seemed at a loss in what manner to proceed, fearing he had said too much. My governess, observing his confusion, turned the discourse; and we talked of indifferent things during the remainder of his visit. When he took his leave, she launched into the most extravagant praises on the sweetness and modesty of his behaviour. "Confess, my dear, said she to me, that Mr. Campbel's merit, and the respectful passion he discovers for you, has taken away some part of that ill-natured pleasure you find in giving pain. For my own part, I wish sincerely that your heart may be disposed to favour him; for, in my opinion, he is worthy of you, agreeable and engaging as you are." "Ah, madam, said I, (smiling) I am young enough yet to think of establishing myself in the world; and I promise myself so much pleasure in living with my aunt, that I shall not be easily induced to quit that prospect for the sake of becoming a wife." My governess dropping this subject at present, I took care to divert her from returning to it, by asking her if she did not intend to leave the ship, as soon as we could possibly land, whatever part of England we first came to. Mrs. Blandon, who as eagerly desired to be out of this hated vessel as myself, assured me we should quit it the first opportunity.

It was near a week after this, before they discovered land. Mr. Campbel, who never failed to visit us once a day, brought me the welcome news. My transports were so great, that I did not observe the extreme concern which was spread over his countenance; 'till, after venting some sighs, he began to deplore his misfortune, in being so soon to be deprived of the pleasure of seeing me. "I am too much obliged to you, sir, said I, (a little moved at the affecting manner in which he spoke) to be capable of refusing you any alleviation of this terrible misfortune, as you call it; and will venture to assure you, that my aunt, to whom I am going, will be glad in person to return you thanks for the services I have received from you. You are then at liberty to make me a visit in London as soon as you think proper, if it suits with your conveniency to come there." Mr. Campbel thanked me with an excess of transport for this permission, assuring me he should not fail to make use of it; and I could observe, by Mrs. Blandon's looks, that she was not displeas'd at this instance of my complaisance. It would be certainly paying my goodnature too great a compliment, to impute this condescension in Mr. Campbel's favour, intirely to its influence: my vanity found a very sensible gratification in the sighs of so respectful an adorer; and I could not resist the pleasure of indulging it, without considering the inconveniences it might produce.

In the morning we were informed by the servant who attended us, that, if we would walk into the gallery, we might see the white cliffs of Dover. I did not stay a moment after this, but flew to the place he mentioned, eager to satisfy my longing eyes with a view of my dear native country. While I stood for some time wrapt up in pleasing contemplation, my governess and Mr. Campbel came to me: "I have taken upon myself, said Mrs. Blandon to me, to deliver a commission, with which Mr. Campbel was charged, as he is under some apprehensions of disobliging you by it. The captain, it seems, penetrated with the deepest contrition for what is past, begs you will give him an opportunity to ask your pardon, before you leave his ship." At the mention of this hated name, my whole face was covered with a deep blush: "What, madam, said I, (glowing with resentment and shame) is the captain so insensible of the greatness of the insult he offered me, as to imagine I can endure to behold him after it! How has he dared to expect I can be guilty of such a meanness! What! make him a visit in his chamber, to hear him whine out a dissembled tale of penitence and sorrow! No: be it my pride to scorn and detest him still; and the more for this insolent attempt to impose upon my understanding. Was his penitence sincere, he would not make a request, which, to grant, I must descend so greatly beneath myself." "But, my dear, interrupted Mrs. Blandon, it's very

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possible the captain's concern is as great as he expresses it; and, it must be confessed, you have taken a very severe vengeance on him, tho' no more than he deserved: but you ought to remember, that while he was in the greatest danger, by the wound you gave him; yet he never spoke of you but in the most respectful terms, and acknowledged the justice of your revenge." "Is it your opinion then, madam, replied I, (with some emotion) that I ought to see the captain?" "By no means, returned she, I shall never consent to your making him a visit; but I would have you act consistent with yourself: and since you have discovered so much courage in the defence of your honour, assert the same greatness of mind in generously forgiving the injury that was intended you." "Well, madam, replied I, Mr. Campbel may let his uncle know, that I am satisfied with the assurances he has given, that he repents of having offered me so daring an insult; and that I shall carry away no farther resentment against him, than what will only incline me most heartily to pray, that I may never behold him again." "Ah, said my governess, (smiling) you are not so generous as I thought you. However, added she, (leaving me, to speak to Mr. Campbel who was at some distance) I shall take care not to recede from the severity of your answer."

Having signified our desire to be set on shore at Dover, Mr. Campbel, some time after, brought us word, that the captain had ordered the pinnace to carry us to land. When it was time to depart, my obliging lover led me upon deck, where I could not appear without an excess of confusion; the eyes of all being fastened upon me, which renewed the remembrance of my late terrible adventure: but I was no sooner in the boat than I was perfectly at ease, and I thanked heaven, with an ardent ejaculation, for my deliverance from that detested ship. Mr. Campbel, who was resolved to accompany us to land, seated himself near me; and, in the most melting tone of voice, asked me, if he was now at liberty to speak to me of the passion I had inspired him with. "Your delicacy, added he, has surely been satisfied with the cruel restraint you laid on me aboard; and you have no longer any reason to offer against my acquainting you with the tender sentiments of my heart." "You certainly, said I, (smiling) attribute too great a degree of complaisance to me, when you imagine I shall trouble myself to search for reasons to support my request. No, if you are determined to wear my chains, you must expect I shall be a most arbitrary monarch, and always take my own will for the reason of every thing I do." "Well, miss, replied he, (adopting the gaiety of my humour) from this moment I acknowledge you the absolute mistress of my fate, and promise you an everlasting fidelity; but if you are cruel enough to make my slavery harder than I can bear, you must expect I shall take the liberty to complain." "Oh, returned I, (laughing) I'll give you freedom the moment you demand it." "Will you? said he, (taking my hand, which he respectfully kissed;) alas, I shall never be in a condition to make such a request; and, if my bondage is to continue 'till I wish for freedom, I am likely to be your slave for ever."

This sort of conversation lasted till we got to shore. Mr. Campbel begged my governess would allow him to attend us to the inn, where we intended to stay till the stage-coach set out. She made no difficulty to grant his request, and left the choice of the house to him, as best acquainted with the place. As soon as we were settled in a chamber, he enquired when the stage set out for London, and brought us word it was to go in two days. This respite was extremely agreeable to us, as we had need of some little rest, after a voyage of five weeks.

My lover, preparing to take his leave, begged me to acquaint him at what place in London he might wait on me: upon which I gave him a direction to my aunt's house in Grosvenor-street. He then departed, leaving me, if not absolutely concerned for his absence, yet a good deal moved with the unaffected sorrow that he expressed both in his looks and words.

We immediately took places in the coach, and at the time appointed set out for London, with inexpressible satisfaction; having the good fortune to find very agreeable company in the coach. As soon as it stopt at the house where we were to dine, a gentleman, who seemed to be waiting for its coming, ran from the window where he was sitting, and, as soon as the coach-door was opened, offered his hand to help the ladies out. I thought, when I looked at him at a distance, that he greatly resembled Mr. Campbel; but, to my infinite surprize, I found it was really he: and, far from being displeas'd at this meeting, I told him, smiling, as he led me into the house, that I hoped he was going to London, and would be our convoy on the road. "I have no other business, miss, said he, (whispering) than to attend you there. I had my uncle's permission to leave the ship for that purpose; but I would not acquaint you with it, lest, with your usual cruelty, you should deny me the pleasure of accompanying you."

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Mrs. Blandon, who was equally surprised at seeing Mr. Campbel, did not fail to acknowledge the favour he did us, in very respectful terms.

I will not trouble you, dear Amanda, with an exact relation of this journey, in which nothing happened worth recording. It will be sufficient to tell you, that it was a very agreeable one to a person of my temper, who could not but be pleased with the officious assiduities of a lover, whose whole care was to oblige me.

We came into London about five in the afternoon; and, leaving our trunks at the inn where we put up, ordered a hackney-coach to be called to carry us to Grosvenor-street. Mr. Campbel insisting upon seeing me safe at my aunt's, my governess consented to his going with us. As I had an exact direction in my pocket-book, even to the very house, I could not help being surprised to find, when the coach-man stopt, that the windows were all close shut; and, not being able to imagine my aunt was gone so soon into the country, I bid him inquire of some of the chair-men, who stood near, if that was not lady L 's house. The fellow, immediately drawing near the window of the coach, informed us that lady L had not been in town the whole winter, and that the house was to be lett. I was amazed my aunt had taken no measures to inform me she was in the country, as well as to hear she had intirely quitted her house, knowing that she never before had spent a whole winter out of town. Mrs. Blandon, finding it would be necessary to stay some time in London, ordered the coachman to drive to a house a sew doors off, where there was a bill for lodgings, and hired a genteel apartment, which was immediately put in order for our reception that night; and, while it was getting ready, the landlady intreated us to favour her with our company.

Mr. Campbel, after asking leave to wait on us the next day, went away; and our talkative landlady, having observed the house our coach had first stopt at, asked us who we were enquiring after there. My governess immediately told her, that we expected to find lady L in town, and that was the house to which we had a direction. "It must needs be, said the landlady, that you are quite strangers in town, otherwise you would have known that that lady has not been here this great while; and they say that she has lost her senses, and is confined at M Hall, under the care of her brother-in-law, sir Edward L ." "Oh my God! cried I, is my aunt mad? Alas, dear Mrs. Blandon, was there ever so cruel a misfortune!" "Hush, my dear, interrupted my governess, (observing my astonishment had deprived me of all caution) perhaps the gentlewoman may be mistaken: you must not suffer yourself to be too much alarmed." "What, madam, resumed she, is the young lady niece to lady L ? I am sorry, indeed, that I should be the first to acquaint her with this ill news; but, if she is inclined to enquire farther of this affair, there is a lady lodges in my house, who was very intimate with lady L . I am persuaded she can inform her of every thing that relates to her misfortune." "Dear madam, replied I, (trembling with anxiety) introduce me immediately to that lady, if she is at home. I cannot rest 'till I know whether my dear aunt be really in that unhappy condition." "Compose yourself, miss, said she, I'll send up one of the lady's servants to know if she can be spoke with." Saying this, she went out, and returned in a few minutes, telling me, that Mrs. Dormer (for that it seems was the lodger's name) desired I would do her the favour to walk up to her apartment. I made no scruple to comply instantly with this invitation, notwithstanding I was still in my riding-habit, and was shewed into a very grand drawing-room, where there was a large company assembled.

The unexpected sight of so many gentlemen and ladies, a little disconcerted me; and I told Mrs. Dormer, (blushing) that had I known she had been so much engaged, I would have suspended, for some time longer, my eager desire to enquire after my aunt. "I should have been sorry, miss, said the lady, (saluting me, and leading me to a chair) that any thing should have prevented me from the pleasure of seeing you. I had so great a regard for lady L , that I cannot chuse but be extremely glad of an opportunity to be acquainted with a young lady, who stands in so near a relation to her. I have often heard her ladyship speak with uncommon tenderness of a niece she had abroad; and, if I am not mistaken, her name was Stuart. You answer so exactly to the description she gave of her, that I am persuaded you are the same young lady, of whom, from your aunt's character, I have conceived so high an idea." "Ah, madam, replied I, (being able to return her compliment no otherwise than by a bow) how extremely unhappy has the news I have lately heard of this dear aunt made me! I would fain flatter myself the report of her indisposition is without foundation, and yet I dread to know the truth." Spite of my endeavours to the contrary, a starting tear trembled in my eyes as I spoke these words, which considerably increased the confusion I

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felt at seeing myself the object of the whole company's attention.

Mrs. Dormer, affecting not to hear me, turned to a lady that sat next her; "Did you ever see, said she, a stronger resemblance than that between this young lady and her aunt! The same lovely eyes and complexion! her elegance of shape! nay, the very tone of her voice!" The lady, observing I blushed excessively at these commendations, put an end to them, by asking me, how long I had been informed of the unhappy disorder into which my aunt had fallen. I told her in what manner I came to hear of it. "Was your aunt's indisposition a secret, miss, said Mrs. Dormer, I would not mention it with so much freedom as I do. It is publickly known, and I can ascribe your being unacquainted with it to nothing but your being just arrived in England; for I remember to have heard lady L. say she expected you. Your aunt, miss, pursued she, lost her only son about eight months ago, who died of a malignant fever. She was seized with it herself; and her excessive grief, together with the effects of that fatal distemper, deprived her of her senses. I am told too, that she has quite lost the use of her limbs, and is wheeled about her apartment in a chair. When I was in Essex, I would fain have paid her a visit; but her husband's relations allow no one to see her, but her own servants." Mrs. Dormer broke off abruptly here, observing, no doubt, the extreme concern that was visible in my countenance. Unable any longer to bear the painful restraint, which the presence of so many strangers laid on my grief, I rose up, and, begging Mrs. Dormer's permission to retire, I took leave of the company, who seemed greatly affected, and went down stairs.

Mrs. Blandon, hearing me, came out of the parlour, and led me to my own apartment. I was no sooner entered than, eagerly seizing her hands, and leaning my head on her bosom, I gave way to the gush of tears, which I had with difficulty restrained. All the misfortunes my aunt's unhappy situation would bring upon me, rose in an instant to my thoughts. I viewed my disappointment in its most aggravating colours; and my despair was considerably heightened by a tender reflection on her deplorable condition. Mrs. Blandon allowed some moments to the first violence of my grief; and then, obliging me to sit down, she placed herself near me, and endeavoured to reconcile me to this melancholy accident, by all the arguments her reason could suggest. When I grew calmer, she represented to me, that if fir Edward L. had any sentiments of honour and humanity, tho' my aunt was incapable of disposing of her fortune by will; yet he would consider how she would have disposed of it: and, since my mother and her children were the only relations she had, it was probable he would do them the same justice she had designed them. "You must, added she, go down to Essex, as soon as you have a little recovered yourself from the fatigue you have suffered. I am determined not to leave you, till I see your affairs happily settled; and, if there should be a necessity for your returning to your mother, I will bear you company in that voyage. For, my dear child, pursued she, (tenderly embracing me) my affection for you has been so confirmed by the surprising merit I have discovered in you, that my own interest is less dear to me than yours." "Ah, madam, answered I, (returning the affectionate embrace she gave me) how well has your tender care repaid the confidence my mother reposed in you! How happy ought I to think myself, in the midst of my cruel disappointments, that providence has given me a friend like you! But oh, Mrs. Blandon, cried I, (melting into tears) can you blame my too just grief on this melancholy occasion? My dear aunt, on whom my happiness depended, is not only incapable of affording me any, but languishes away her own days in a state of misery. I shall perhaps be obliged to return to my mother, loaded with disappointments and misfortunes; and, never being treated with any great degree of tenderness, shall I not see myself the perpetual object of her anger and reproaches!" "If you apprehend that, said Mrs. Blandon, (after a little pause) what hinders you from accepting Mr. Campbel for a husband? He has given you very convincing proofs of the purity of that passion he professes for you. His person and manners are unexceptionable, and his condition in life capable of making you happy. Listen then, my dear, to the dictates of your reason upon this occasion, and do not refuse the advantages that providence throws in your way. If your heart has not yet been sensible to the merit of Mr. Campbel, suffer it to make some impression on you now, when your situation renders such an offer of the greatest importance to you."

My affection for the dear Dumont was the only secret I preserved from Mrs. Blandon's knowledge; and tho' I foresaw I should be often pressed in Mr. Campbel's favour, yet I could not resolve to trust her with my weakness; knowing the severity of her virtue too well, to think she would not oppose, with the utmost warmth, a tenderness warranted by the weak hope of his changing his religion; and only to be indulged at the expence of breaking thro'

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his other engagement. I could no otherwise evade coming to some explanation, on this perplexing subject, than by intreating her to wave it for the present; which she immediately complied with, and changed the discourse to my journey to Essex, which was resolved on, in a few days.

You may well imagine, my dear Amanda, this night was far from being tranquilly spent. A thousand disagreeable reflections kept me waking till near morning. I did not rise till it was very late; and Mrs. Dormer had sent a message to enquire after my health, before I was in a condition to make any return to her compliment. My mother, having expected I should find my aunt in town, and that I should not be at any great expence, had only furnished me with a bill upon the agent for twenty pounds. Mrs. Blandon was going to present this bill, and get payment for it, when Mr. Campbel came in. My mind had retained so much of the melancholy my first disappointment had inspired, as to produce the following little ode; which, upon seeing my lover, I would have concealed, had he not prevented me, by taking it up, and reading it aloud to Mrs. Blandon, who did not always take notice of my little scrawls, it being so often my custom to employ myself in writing.

I.

Oppress'd with ev'ry anxious woe
A mortal can sustain,
While with the day my sorrows grow,
And life wears out in pain;

II.

Where shall I ease, or comfort find,
Oh! how relieve my care?
What can preserve my tortur'd mind
From sinking in despair?

III.

Thou canst, religion! whose bright beams
O'er my benighted soul
A smiling ray of comfort gleams,
And all my fears controul.

IV.

From earth my boundless wishes soar,
And thy bright tract pursue;
The world's false joys can please no more,
When heav'nly are in view.

V.

The frowns of partial fortune here
The virtuous may despise;
They're only happy who can fear,
Not poverty, but vice.

When he had finished reading, he cast a tender glance at me; and, looking over the last verse again, "I hope, miss, said he, you will have no reason to make this affecting complaint. Fortune can never be so unjust as to make you seel any of her rigours." "Ah, how much are you deceived, sir, interrupted I, fortune has always been my enemy; and I have experienced the most cruel effects of her hate, almost from the very moment of my birth."

Mrs. Blandon, taking up the discourse, told him of the disagreeable news I had heard of my aunt's illness, and the loss of all my expectations. He listened attentively to her relation, with a countenance that expressed a generous sympathy in my afflictions: then, all of a sudden, brightening into a smile of pleasure, he fixed his eyes, sparkling with redoubled tenderness, upon me, "Pardon me, miss, said he, if I cannot enter so deeply into this misfortune as becomes a man to whom your happiness is dearer than his own. My passion draws a favourable omen from an event, which appears so unfortunate for you. I can now have an opportunity of laying my fortune at your feet, without being suspected of any sordid views; and can have the pleasure of convincing you, 'tis your lovely self alone that I seek the possession of, and in which all my desires are bounded."

As generous as this declaration was, I could not hear it without some uneasiness, as it seemed to lay me under a sort of necessity of declaring myself immediately. I found the passion Mr. Campbel had for me, was too ardent to allow me the ridiculous pleasure of trifling with his addresses; and, to avoid the imputation of a base deceiver, I ought either to accept his offers, or give him at once an absolute refusal. This, however, I could not yet resolve to do; and, for the present, I contented myself with acknowledging, tho' with some reserve, the generosity and disinterestedness of his offers, assuring him, that I was extremely sensible of it: but added, my affliction was yet too recent to leave room for any thoughts of that nature, and begged he would press me no farther upon the subject at present. Then, assuming a more disengaged manner, I told him of my intention to go into Essex, in order to procure a sight of my aunt.

He was beginning to offer some reasons against this journey, when Mrs. Blandon happening to mention the affair she was going about, he told her, if she had no other business with the agent than to receive payment of a bill from him, he would transact that for her with great pleasure. She accepted his offer, and, giving him the order, he promised to go to him that afternoon, and wait on us again in the evening with the money. He took his leave soon after this; and, when dinner was over, our trunks being now come from the inn, I drest myself, in order to wait upon Mrs. Dormer, who had sent to intreat I would drink tea with her.

When I entered her apartment, I found no other company with her than an elderly clergyman; who, saluting me with an air of familiarity, told me, he had waited with impatience for the pleasure of seeing a young lady, of whose accomplishments Mrs. Dormer had given him the most delightful idea. After returning that lady my thanks, for the advantageous opinion she endeavoured to inspire of me, we began to enter into a more general conversation, when we were joined by two ladies, and a colonel in the army, remarkable for his wit and the excessive politeness of his manners, and the only man who joined the extremes of foppery to an elevated understanding, and whose very foibles were capable of pleasing.

My youth, and the peculiar sprightliness of my air, struck him immediately. He directed most of his conversation to me; and, beginning to understand some particulars of my family and affairs, offered me his services and interest in my applications at court for a pension, which, he said, my father's birth and long services gave me a

title to expect.

Mrs. Dormer, who seemed to have conceived a real friendship for me, was delighted with this prospect of retrieving my fortune: and telling me she had some relations at court, whose interest might be of use to me, promised to influence them in my favour, and persuaded me to defer my journey to Essex; adding, that a brother of sir Edward L had a post in the war-office, and might be of great use to me; and, as she had some acquaintance with him, she would take it upon herself to send for him, and introduce me to him; for I had before informed her, that I was a perfect stranger to my uncle L 's relations.

When the hour approached that I expected Mr. Campbel, I took leave of the company, extremely well pleased with the acquisition I had made of two acquaintance, who were likely to be of so much service to me. The colonel would wait on me to the door of my own apartment, and, taking leave of me with a thousand compliments, went up stairs the moment it was opened; yet Mr. Campbel, who was there with Mrs. Blandon, had a glimpse of him, as he advanced towards the door to receive me. "Is not that colonel F , miss, said he, that parted from you just now?" Upon which I answered in the affirmative, asking him, at the same time, if he knew him: "I am not personally acquainted with him, replied he; but there are sew people in London who have not heard of colonel F . He has made a figure in the gay world a great many years; and his wit and gallantry have distinguished him in most of the polite courts in Europe. I dare say, miss, pursued my lover, (smiling) that you would find it difficult to believe that colonel F is married; and that heart, which he offers to almost every lady he sees, either is, or ought to be, wholly in the possession of his wife." "I am glad, interrupted I, to hear the colonel is married, since I can accept, with more decency, the services he offers me." I then related what had past, concerning my petitioning the government for a pension, which was frequently granted to the daughters of officers of note. Mrs. Blandon highly approved the design, as I was likely to have such good interest; for Mrs. Dormer was of one of the best families in England, and was very capable of recommending me to powerful friends.

Mr. Campbel did not seem to relish this new scheme, and was now rather inclined to favour my journey to Essex; but when I told him, that I expected to see a brother-in-law of my aunt's, he agreed that it would be better to defer going till I had consulted him. When my lover withdrew, Mrs. Blandon, after discussing once more the affair of my applying for a pension, declared herself very well satisfied with the probability of its succeeding; but concluding with an ardent wish, that I would rather dispose my heart to return Mr. Campbel's generous affection, I put an end to such a perplexing discourse, by amusing myself with my pen till it was time to go to bed.

I ought to have informed you dear Amanda, that Mrs. Dormer having heard my aunt L mention my little talent in poetry, she had obliged me to put my small manuscripts into her hands, which she had not sailed to show to both the colonel and the clergyman; who was, as he afterwards told me himself, a great critic in these matters. Upon my going into Mrs. Dormer's apartment the next evening, for we lived now in a perfect intimacy together, she told me, (smiling) that the colonel and Mr. E (so was the clergyman called) had read my poems, and expressed great admiration of them. "See, pursued she, (giving me a paper) the colonel is no great poet, yet he made shift to write these lines extempore, upon reading your poems.

On reading the Poems of a very young lady.

As tender lambkins in the morn
Of life, presage the future horn;
So in Florella's early strains,
Amaz'd, we read the lover's pains:
Her heart too young by passion to be fir'd,

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Proves plainly that her poetry's inspir'd.

I had scarce time to express my approbation of this compliment, when Mr. E came in. He had brought me a present of a very neat edition of Dryden's Virgil, being resolved to make me acquainted with his favourite poet; and took occasion to display his learning and criticism for a full hour, in expatiating on the beauties of Virgil, who was, he said, in his opinion, a much greater poet than Homer.

As Mr. E, very often in the midst of his elaborate harangue, acknowledged himself, with great modesty, a very accurate critic; neither Mrs. Dormer or I thought proper to dissent from his judgment in matters he understood so well: and, therefore, concluding his argument, for want of opposition, he descended to talk of things of less importance; and told me, that Mrs. Dormer having favoured him with my manuscript-poems, he had put them into the hands of a lady of great distinction about court, remarkable for the brilliancy of her wit, and her taste for the Belles-Lettres. "She is so pleased with them, added he, that she obliged me to promise I would bring her acquainted with you; and therefore, miss, I'll introduce you to her ladyship whatever day you please." "I fancy, said Mrs. Dormer, (smiling) it is lady Cecilia you intend to introduce miss Stuart to. That lady, pursued she, (addressing herself to me) is very capable of doing you great service: she holds one of the first employments at court; and her generosity is so diffusive, that she is said to seek out persons, to whom her interest may be useful. I have heard of a number of people, who have had an intire dependence upon her." I did not, at that time, take any notice of the sarcastic turn of these words; but acknowledging myself obliged to Mr. E, for the favour he intended me, he said he would wait upon lady Cecilia that evening, and her ladyship should fix the day herself for my visit to her. When we had settled this point, I returned to my own apartment; and, finding Mrs. Blandon a little indisposed, I would not leave her the remainder of the day.

Next morning Mrs. Dormer sent to let me know, that Mr. L was with her, and desired I would come to her immediately. I found she had had some conversation with that gentleman concerning me; for, the moment I entered the room, he rose, and saluted me with much respect, declaring himself sensibly touched at the unfortunate disappointment I had met with. After relating to me the rise and progress of my aunt's fatal distemper, he added, that he would not have me think of going to Essex, as a sight of her in that melancholy condition would necessarily cause me a deep affliction; assuring me, at the same time, he would write to his brother, and acquaint him with the occasion of my coming to England. I thought I understood the meaning of these words, and was going to make him some reply, when, colonel F coming into the room, Mr. L immediately took his leave, telling me he would very soon wait on me again.

When he was gone, the colonel delivered an apology to me from Mr. E, who was obliged to go out of town upon some very urgent occasion, and could not have the pleasure of attending me next morning to lady Cecilia's: "And therefore, miss, added he, (bowing) I am to have the honour of introducing you. Her ladyship, pursued he, (laughing, and turning to Mrs. Dormer) has sent me a sort of challenge, which my profession, as a soldier, obliges me to comply with. She told Mr. E, that she had often seen me in the drawing-room, and, if I was not more afraid of her in her own apartment than at court, she would be glad to confirm our acquaintance there." "These ladies that are distinguished for their wit, replied Mrs. Dormer, may say and do any thing. Methinks there is something very new and agreeable in this gallant way of breaking thro' the little rules, that custom and decency have imposed on our sex." "Upon my word, said the colonel, (with an easy gaiety) you have so much of the prude in you, Mrs. Dormer, that I begin to hate you excessively. What a censorious speech have you made!" To say the truth, I did not know how to account for the strange manner in which Mrs. Dormer spoke of this lady; but time unravelled the mystery.

Mrs. Blandon's indisposition increasing every hour, she was obliged at last to take to her bed. The unfeigned grief which this accident occasioned me, received a most cruel addition when she told me, she was afraid her distemper was the small-pox. One of the landlady's children was then ill of it, and my dear governess caught the infection by accidentally going into the sick child's chamber. Mrs. Dormer, who came that afternoon to visit me, sent one of her servants for her own physician, who confirmed the truth of her apprehensions, by declaring she was seized

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with that dangerous disease. I past the greater part of that night by her bed-side, filled with the most painful anxiety; and could scarce prevail upon myself to leave her, to take a few hours rest, at her most earnest intreaties.

I found her so much worse in the morning, that I would, if possible, have avoided waiting on lady Cecilia that day; but I knew my governess's illness would not be taken as a sufficient excuse for disappointing her ladyship, and I therefore was drest at the hour the colonel was to call on me. He took occasion to remark, as he handed me into his chariot, that I was now beginning the work of dependence on a court, which possibly might not sit easy on a mind so exalted as mine: "But I flatter myself, miss, said he, that you will soon be settled in a condition suitable—to your birth and merit. Lady Cecilia's interest is sufficient to procure you a very genteel establishment at court; and, from the accounts she has received of you, she is so greatly prepossessed in your favour, that she has assured Mr. E she will make use of all her power to serve you." These agreeable assurances contributed a little to raise my spirits, from the damp Mrs. Blandon's illness had given them.

When we came to lady Cecilia's, we found her ladyship was not yet returned from chapel; but a servant ushered us into an elegant drawing-room, telling us that his lady would return in a few minutes. The colonel, like a man who had been used to that sort of dependence he had mentioned to me, told me, with a very significant look, and a peculiar gravity in his voice, that it was better to expect her ladyship a little, than make her wait for us; and was beginning to give me some account of her family and fortune, when a loud and continued rap at the door, informed us that her ladyship was coming. I thought however, a moment afterwards, that we had been mistaken; for the door was no sooner opened than the whole house echoed with the shrillness of a voice, that was uttering some very passionate exclamations, and chiding the chair-men for some fault they had committed, in a language so extremely coarse, that I should never have suspected it was the lady herself, had not the door of the room been instantly flung open, and lady Cecilia appeared at the entrance. The colonel and I immediately rose up, when her ladyship, speaking in the same loud key, which made me imagine it was the fashion at court, thanked the colonel for bringing her acquainted with such an ingenious young lady; and then saluting me, led us into her library, with which I was really prodigiously struck. The great number of books of which it was composed, gave me a very advantageous idea of a lady, who could be at such an expence to furnish herself with intellectual entertainments.

As soon as we were seated, lady Cecilia throwing herself into a great chair, on one side of which was a large reading-desk, and before her a table covered with books, papers, and other materials for writing, took a full survey of my whole person, as I sat directly opposite to her. I could not help discovering some little confusion at her ferutimising looks, which was so far from producing the effect I desired, that she gazed at me still with greater eagerness. At last, turning to the colonel, she entered into a conversation with him on the subject of my affairs; which being ended, she cast an obliging look at me, assuring me it should not be long before I should have no reason to regret the disappointment I had met with. "I take upon myself, miss, said she, the care of making your fortune; and you may depend upon the absolute promise I now give you, to procure you a genteel place about the princess." The colonel, upon this, told her, that he had resolved not to leave London till I was provided for; but, since her ladyship had taken me into her protection, there would be no occasion for his trifling interest.

There appeared something so singularly kind in this lady's generous offers, that, my heart glowing with the warmest gratitude, I expressed my acknowledgments in very ardent terms. When I took leave, she begged me to favour her often with my company; adding, with a smile, that I was now her charge, and she intended to assume the privilege of insisting upon my being often with her for the future. The colonel was just going to lead me to the door, when her ladyship, recollecting that she had something to say to him, desired me to walk into her dressing-room for a moment, and he should wait on me immediately. Accordingly I complied; but, I believe, I waited near half an hour before the colonel came; and could not help being surprised at this intimacy, contracted so suddenly, and improved already to such a height.

I conceived so much resentment at being lest alone so long, which I thought was an insupportable slight, that, when the colonel came, I was scarce able to hide my chagrin. As soon as we were seated in the chariot, he told me, her ladyship had expressed herself in very warm terms. "Of whom, sir?" interrupted I, (smiling.) "Why, of

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you to be sure, miss, said he. We were talking of you all the while; and she is so charmed with you, that I am persuaded it will not be long before she convinces you, how greatly she interests herself in your happiness." The colonel added a great deal more to the same purpose; but I was by no means satisfied with the freedom that had been used with me. And I should have indulged the satirical humour I was in at her ladyship's expence, had I not been restrained by the remembrance of some part of her behaviour to me, which had been in a particular manner obliging. When we got home, the colonel, having led me to my own apartment, went to pay a visit to Mrs. Dormer; and I flew into Mrs. Blandon's chamber, who, as ill as she was, listened with great pleasure to the account I gave her of lady Cecilia's reception of me.

Her distemper coming to a height in a few days, the physician declared her in great danger. No words can express the affliction I felt: I hardly ever left her; and shared with the person who attended her, in the fatigue of watching by her almost every night, till my health was greatly impaired.

Mrs. Dormer, and the still adoring Campbel, used every method to draw me from her bed-side, where I sat continually weeping; and my dear governess herself, often intreated me to leave her. But, alas, my extreme anxiety never gave me a moment's rest, when I was absent from her! And still, rather hoping than expecting some favourable alteration, I past the melancholy hours in continually offering up my ardent petitions to heaven for her recovery. I had but just left her one night, and retired to my own chamber, when her sister, who was the only relation she had, and who had been with her for some days past, rapped at my door; which I no sooner opened than she told me, with a face covered with tears, that my governess was just expiring, and begged to see me once more. Tho' I had expected this fatal news for some time, yet I could not receive it now without the most terrible agonies.

Mrs. Dormer met me as I came out of my chamber, and, apprehensive that I should be greatly affected, had hastened to me, in order, by her presence, to calm the first transports of my grief: "Oh, madam, said I, (pressing her hand, and my eyes streaming with tears) how shall I support this loss!" She had no time to reply, I ran with such an eager haste into my governess's room. They had called up the physician; but, alas, his art was no longer of any use! I approached her bed-side in a speechless agony of grief! "My dear child, said she, (in a weak voice) farewell! I only wanted to see you once more, to tell you, I feel no other regret in dying, than the leaving you in this unsettled condition. What comfort would it give me, had I any hopes that you would marry Mr. Campbel! But heaven, I hope, will direct your choice, and protect your innocence and virtue. Once more, farewell, my dear! said she, (grasping my hand with a faint pressure.) Let not my death afflict you: we shall meet again in a better world." Here her strength failing her, she desired to be left alone with the clergyman, who had attended her during her illness. Mrs. Dormer herself assisted in carrying me into my own room; and, half an hour afterwards, word was brought that she was dead. Tho' I had summoned all my strength of reason and reflection, to help me to support this cruel affliction; yet I no sooner heard that I had lost her for ever, her who had loved me with a parent's fondness, and who had taken such unwearied pains to form my mind to piety and virtue, than I resigned myself up to the most violent despair. "Ah, how wretched am I now! cried I, (raising my eyes all drowned in tears:) Exposed, at these early years, to the caprice of a world, into which I am cast helpless, and abandoned to all the injuries it may load me with! Who now shall direct my unexperienced youth! Whom shall I fly to, when dangers or disappointments threaten me! Alas, I am in the fullest sense an orphan! Not without parents alone, but have now neither friend or protector left!"

The END of the First Volume.

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Mrs. Dormer, in whom my passionate complaints had raised a most sensible concern, could not resolve to leave me in that affliction; and therefore intreated me to stay in her chamber that night. As I knew my excessive grief would not suffer me to take any rest, I declined this offer, fearing I should disturb her; but she declaring she would not leave me, I chose rather to go with her than suffer her to stay out of her own apartment. But I spent the night without being able to close my eyes; nor could I receive any consolation from the affecting arguments she used to assuage my grief. Mr. Campbel, who had never failed to visit me every day, and whose concern for my governess was near equal to mine, came early in the morning to my lodgings; and, understanding Mrs. Blandon was dead, had waited some time in expectation of seeing me. I stole out of bed from Mrs. Dormer, who was asleep; and, when I was drest, went down stairs, in order to indulge my grief in my own room. The sight of Mr. Campbel renewed all my affliction: I melted into tears, and we continued for some moments in a moving silence. "Oh, my adored Harriot, said he, (with a voice interrupted with sighs) how does the tears that fall from those lovely eyes give unutterable pangs to my heart! Could it be any consolation to my charming angel to tell her, that I feel her affliction with more force than my own, she should know the load of anguish which oppresses me this moment." "I shall always think myself obliged to you, sir, replied I, for the interest you take in what concerns me. One in such a distressful situation as I am, can never set a sufficient value on a friend, who " "Yes, miss, interrupted he, (eagerly) I glory in the title of your friend. My affection for you, tender and passionate as it is, takes in all the calmer qualities of friendship; and while I view your lovely person with the raptured eyes of a lover, as a friend your honour, your interest, and happiness, are dear to me as my own."

I should have been at a loss to reply to these generous sentiments, as I was not capable of making all the return they merited; had not the tender Mrs. Dormer broke in upon our conversation, and spared me the confusion of appearing ungrateful. "I am glad, miss, said she, (seeing Mr. Campbel) to find you are not alone. I was coming to seek you, fearing you was indulging your melancholy reflections by yourself." Mr. Campbel, to whom these instances of her friendly concern for me were highly acceptable, expressed the extreme pleasure it gave him in very obliging terms to Mrs. Dormer. She insisted upon my lover's coming with me into her apartment, and gave orders to be denied to all company that day, resolving, as she said, to devote it intirely to me.

My dear governess had settled all her little affairs exactly before she died, and had bequeathed me a very genteel present for a ring. I went into mourning for her immediately; and, as soon as her funeral was over, accepted an invitation from Mrs. Dormer to spend some days with her at her country house in Richmond.

Colonel F , who now visited lady Cecilia constantly, acquainted her with the death of my governess, and made my excuses for not waiting on her ladyship before I went out of town. As soon as I returned, I did not fail to pay my respects to her, and was received with the greatest testimonies of friendship. As I frequently spent whole days at her house, she took a pleasure in introducing me to her acquaintance; by which means I came to be generally known, and could have had an opportunity of strengthening my interest, by the addition of very powerful friends: but lady Cecilia, resolving no one should interpose in an affair she had taken the management of, prevented any solicitations for a provision from the government for me, by declaring, in all companies, she would procure me an establishment herself.

I had wrote to my mother an account of all that had happened to me, and was expecting her answer, and another order upon the agent, which I began to want, when Mr. Campbel told me, he fancied it would be some time before I could receive another order from my mother; and, since the agent had so much money in his hands, he would not scruple to advance it, without having a bill drawn upon him; and begged I would allow him to call upon him, and make the request. I could not help blushing a little at his mentioning this affair, and would have gone myself to the agent; but he intreated so tenderly, that he might be allowed to manage this little business for me, that I suffered him to go alone, not without some fears that the gentleman would refuse to advance the money, and lay me under the necessity of applying to lady Cecilia: for I had forgot to tell you, my dear Amanda, that she had frequently pressed me upon this subject, telling me, that she insisted upon furnishing me with what money I wanted, in case my remittances from my mother were too slow. Mr. Campbel, however, had received thirty pounds from the agent, and brought it to me, praising the politeness of that gentleman in very warm terms. I was

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startled at his receiving so large a sum, telling him, that as I expected a letter from my mother, in two months at farthest, much less would have done. And I was so apprehensive that my mother would be disobliged, that I mentioned some intention of going to the agent; but my lover begged me to be satisfied, acknowledging, after he had intreated my pardon for doing it without asking my leave, that he had given his note to the agent as a security, till he heard from N .

I was inexpressibly confused at the thoughts of receiving such an obligation from a lover; and, when I reflected still more upon it, began to imagine there was some mystery concealed under Mr. Campbel's officious services on this occasion. I was determined, however, to know the truth; and, when my lover went away, I ordered a chair to be called, and went directly to the agent. That gentleman, not knowing me, enquired if I had any commands for him; upon which I told him my name. "I believe, miss, said he, I paid a bill some months ago upon your mother's order, and am sorry I can't oblige you with any more till I hear again from her." I had now discovered Mr. Campbel's artifice, to make me accept of the money he had brought; but not caring to let the agent understand any thing of the matter, I concealed the real design of my visit, and took my leave, after expressing some little resentment at his extreme caution.

Tho' I could impute this conduct of Mr. Campbel's to nothing but his anxiety, lest I should be straiten'd for money till I heard from my mother; yet I was absolutely determined not to accept of this obligation, whatever difficulties I might bring upon myself; and waited, with some impatience, for his next visit, that I might return the money. Mr. L had been with Mrs. Dormer while I was abroad; and, as soon as I returned, she sent to let me know she had some particular business with me. I went to her directly, and she gave me a letter with a smile of pleasure, telling me, that Mr. L had wrote it before her. I made an apology for breaking it open while I continued in the room, being impatient to know the contents, and found it as follows.

Madam,

"My brother begs leave you will accept of the inclosed bill for your present expences; and, when your mother comes to England, he will settle all matters, relating to her expectations from her sister, intirely to her satisfaction. I am, &c."

In this laconic epistle there was inclosed a bank-bill for a hundred pounds, which was a very seasonable present, considering the resolution I had taken. Mrs. Dormer congratulated me on the prospect there was of Sir Edward's doing justice to our family: and, when I saw Mr. Campbel, I did not fail to acquaint him with it, telling him at the same time, I would give him the trouble to go to the bank and receive payment for this bill. I did not mention any thing concerning the stratagem he had used, till he had executed this commission; and then I insisted upon his keeping back thirty pounds, acknowledging my sense of the favour he had designed me, and his genteel manner of doing it. My lover was a little disconcerted at first; but he was too polite to insist any longer upon my accepting a sum I had now no occasion for: but methought I read in his eyes a tender concern, that he had lost an opportunity of being necessary to me.

My mind was just beginning to resume the tranquillity, which the loss of my governess had interrupted, when I received letters from my mother and sister, which acquainted me with the death of my beloved brother. This news, which was more dreadful than the stroke of death could have been, occasioned me a fit of illness, that lasted near two months. The physicians absolutely despaired of my recovery: the poignancy of my grief added force to my distemper. But, alas! my afflictions were not yet to have a period! I lived to suffer still more misfortunes.

As soon as I was in a condition to be moved, Mrs. Dormer took me to her country-house; and as she was now convinced of the ardent passion Mr. Campbel had for me, by his behaviour during my illness, which had almost bordered upon distraction, she allowed him to visit me sometimes there.

Notwithstanding the endeavours of this amiable lady to amuse me, and keep off the sad reflections which continually tortured my imagination, I indulged a gloomy melancholy, which rendered me insensible to all her

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obliging cares. My dearest brother was never one moment from my thoughts. I wept incessantly: I wished for death; and found no other consolation, but in the hope of shortly following him to the grave. That you may have some idea, my dear friend, of the melancholy state of my mind, I have inserted the following little pieces, which were wrote under too great a pressure of spirits to have any other merit, than that of giving a true picture of the anguish that consumed me.

To Death. An Irregular Ode.

I.

Oh Death! thou gentle end of human pain,
Why is thy stroke so long delay'd;
Why to a wretch, who breathes but to complain,
Do'st thou refuse thy welcome aid?
Still wilt thou fly the plaintive voice of woe,
And where thou'rt dreaded only aim the blow?

II.

Oh leave, fantastic tyrant! leave
The young, the gay, the happy, and the free;
On them bestow a short reprieve,
And bend thy fatal shafts at me:
The beauteous bride, or blooming heir,
Let thy resistless power spare;
And aim at this grief-wounded heart,
That springs half way to meet the welcome dart.

III.

Still must I view, with streaming eyes,
Another, and another morn, arise?
Are my days lengthen'd to prolong my pain?
Enough of life's distress I've seen;
A finish'd wretch in youth's first bloom,
By early sorrow ripen'd for the tomb!

An Evening Ode.

I.

How swift the shades of ev'ning rise,
And intercept the wand'ring sight;
While still, with ardent gaze, my eyes
Pursue the last faint streaks of light!

II.

Ah me! the still, the silent gloom,
Adds greater force to my despair;
With new disquiets fills my soul,
And wakens every terror there.

III.

'Tis now deep contemplation's hour;
The soul on reason's wings may rise,
All nature's boundless vast explore,
And, soaring, pierce beyond the skies.

IV.

Ah! by what heavy clogs confin'd,
Thus sinks my grov'ling thoughts to earth!
Why can't my free capacious mind
Trace the great source that gave it birth?

V.

Alas! no ray of beaming light
In my afflicted breast is found;
'Tis one continued endless night,
Dark as the awful gloom around.

Ought I not to blush, my dear Amanda, to own, that it was in the power of love to moderate an affliction so just, so reasonable, as mine? Alas! my heart was still enslaved by this enchanting passion; and what all the efforts of the most perfect friendship had failed to do, a letter from the dear Dumont produced in an instant. It had been left at my lodgings by a private hand, and sent by the post to Richmond. A gleam of joy darted thro' my soul at the sight of those welcome characters: I opened it with a trembling impatience! But, ah! my friend, how shall I describe the extacy which in a moment took possession of my whole soul, when the first words that met my eyes informed me my beloved Dumont was now a protestant! I threw down the letter, in order to indulge the swelling transport, the soft excess of almost painful joy!

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It was some time before my strong sensations would give me leave to read it thro'. He related with the utmost exactness the rise and progress of this change; and acknowledged, that his first design being to strengthen himself with arguments, in order to overthrow my principles, since he was fixed in his own; he applied himself to reading, with the greatest industry, the most famous books of controversy upon our two religions: but, to his great amazement and confusion, found, as he advanced, his faith begin to stagger. New and unthought-of doubts disturbed his mind: his eagerness to inquire more deeply redoubled; a ray of truth, something like conviction, dawned upon his soul. He studied the New Testament with the utmost care; and the fine reasoning of the learned Chillingworth completed the conquest. "Let it not, my lovely angel, said he, (concluding his affecting account) make me appear unfashionably grave in your opinion, if I tell you that, while my faith was thus fluctuating and unsettled, I continually offered up my most ardent petitions to heaven, to direct my choice to that religion that was best. I have reason to believe my prayers were heard, and tho' love was the first cause of my happy change, yet I am only a convert to reason and to truth." He added, that he was preparing to come to England with the next ships which sailed from N ; and ended his dear epistle with a thousand vows of everlasting passion.

When the first emotions of my joy were over, the remembrance of my beloved brother, rushing again upon my soul, seemed to reproach me for the transitory pleasure I had tasted. The two passions of grief and joy divided my heart between them; but my transports by degrees subsiding, my grief also grew less intense: and the violent despair, which for some time had wholly possessed me, was now (such was the force of successful love!) changed to a gentle melancholy, which did not hinder me from sometimes feeling a tender transport at the thoughts of being united for ever to my beloved Dumont.

At my return to town I waited on lady Cecilia, whose obliging behaviour drew several poetical compliments from me; amongst which I have transcribed the following ode for your entertainment.

To Flavia.

I.

If, Flavia, in thy faultless form
All that is heav'nly fair we find;
If ev'ry grace conspires to charm,
And speaks the beauties of thy mind:

II.

Why shouldst thou wonder, lovely maid,
At the soft passions you inspire?
Why those to hopeless love betray'd,
Or these feel friendship's fire?

III.

Heedless, thy charming eyes enslave,

To Flavia.

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Nor know the smiling deaths they dart;
Nought can the wretched gazer save,
Or rescue his devoted heart.

IV.

But, ah! to win the soul is more,
And friendship's noble fires impart,
The work of some diviner po'er,
While reason wings th' unerring dart.

V.

Let thy adorers justly praise
The wond'rous beauties of thy face;
Extol thy charms a thousand ways,
And with thy name their numbers grace.

VI.

Friendship a nobler theme shall find,
And to th' admiring world display
The graces that adorn thy mind,
A subject that will ne'er decay.

VII.

When thy bright eyes shall cease to wound,
And age thy fading charms embrace;
When in thy looks no trace is found,
Of what the lovely Flavia was:

VIII.

The lasting beauties of thy mind
The Muse in gentle strains shall sing;
In thy fair soul new charms shall find,
To raise her voice, and prune her wings.

Lady Cecilia was so pleased with the incense that my gratitude, for the friendship she honoured me with, induced me to offer her, that she loaded me with caresses, and read my poems to all her acquaintance. But tho' she herself had taken pains to force my little merit upon the observation of her friends, she began to grow uneasy at the flattering compliments that were paid me in her presence; and I could perceive an unusual coldness and constraint in her manner, which increased every visit I made her.

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As she had for some time forbore to mention the settlement she had promised to procure for me at court, I began to think my expectations were but weakly grounded: but I was not capable of feeling much pain from this disappointment. The chief bar to my union with my dear Dumont being near removed, all my ambition was bounded within the single wish of becoming his. Lady Cecilia, however, had made so much noise about providing for me, that I could not imagine how she would excuse herself to the world. Alas! I was almost the only person in it, who was ignorant of this lady's peculiar talent, in procuring dependents, by her affected benevolence, whom she never designed to serve, and raising hopes she never intended to gratify. Had she been contented with only imposing upon my credulity, and added me to the number of those whom she had deceived, I should not have had much reason to complain: but she was capable of meditating the blackest designs against me, and of endeavouring to sacrifice my same, to give a sanction to her base desertion. After some weeks of coldness and reserve, she, of a sudden, assumed an air of the tenderest friendship; and assured me one day, that she soon expected a vacancy of a very genteel place about one of the princesses, and that she had recommended me to it; adding, that tho' I was rather too young for such a public life, yet she was persuaded my merit would render me very conspicuous.

I have before observed to you, my dear Amanda, that I was apt to be carried away with appearances, and incapable of suspecting, or by consequence guarding against any attempts to deceive me. My suspicions of lady Cecilia's sincerity vanished in a moment. She could, when she pleased, assume an air of so much sweetness and affability, as in one of her high rank carried a peculiar charm with it. "I am thinking, miss Stuart, said she, (with inexpressible good-humour) how to dispose of you agreeably for two or three months. My sister the countess of is just come from her country-seat: one of her daughters is exactly of your own age, and her mamma would be infinitely pleased to have a companion for her of your exalted understanding. I have promised to propose it to you, as I think it will be an agreeable establishment, till you are better provided for." As this proposal appeared wholly calculated for my advantage, and I had naturally a fondness for living in the gaiety and hurry of the great world, I expressed my acknowledgments to lady Cecilia for the favour she did me; and assured her I would, with great pleasure, accept of the offer she made me.

I was preparing to go some little time after this, when a servant came to inform lady Cecilia that the countess was come. "I am extremely glad, said her ladyship to me, that my sister is here. I'll introduce you, miss, to her immediately." Saying this, she took me into the drawing-room, where the countess was; and, telling her I was that miss Stuart whom she heard her mention, this stately lady saluted me with more civility than I expected, from the harshness of her countenance and the extreme haughtiness of her air. I was surprised, however, in a few moments, to see her drop her supercilious behaviour, and talk to me immediately in a style of the greatest familiarity and friendship. She repeated, in an obliging manner, the offers her sister had made me; and when I had assured her of my consent, was so impatient to have me come, that I could scarce prevail upon her to give me a few days to prepare myself. This time, however, was no more than necessary: I employed it in putting myself in a condition to make a very genteel appearance; and was at an expence upon that account, not at all proportioned to my present circumstances.

Mr. Campbel, to whom I had always preserved a distance in my behaviour, which made him not dare to press me upon the subject of his passion, having indeed rightly conceived, that my sentiments for him did not exceed the bounds of friendship and esteem, no sooner heard of my design, than complaining, in very tender terms, to Mrs. Dormer, who interested herself greatly in his favour, he told her, he had now lost all hope of making any impression upon my heart; and frankly confessed, that he could not believe all the good-sense I was mistress of, could preserve me from being intoxicated with that life of grandeur and expence, into which I was going to be initiated.

Tho' a lover's fears might be pardonable upon this occasion, yet, when Mrs. Dormer related this conversation to me, I could not forbear expressing some little resentment. "However, miss, said she, you have other friends beside Mr. Campbel, who do not foresee any great advantages for you in this offer. Lady Cecilia's quality has not preserved her from very free reflections on her conduct. If one might believe the censorious world, she has had more than one intrigue. The countess does not escape; and, methinks, persons who lie under such unfavourable

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censures, are not very proper protectors for a young lady like you."

Tho' I was convinced Mrs. Dormer's friendship for me made her express herself thus freely, yet still I was inclined to believe her reflections were rather too severe. I will not pretend to say it was my good-nature alone, which dictated a contrary opinion of lady Cecilia: we always find a great facility in believing what we wish; and it was at present so much my interest to think well of that lady, that I could not persuade myself to search for reasons to lessen my esteem.

Mrs. Dormer, when she saw me preparing to go into the chair, which I had ordered to be called to carry me to the countess's, gave me a very affectionate embrace, telling me at the same time, that she feared I should repent taking this step. I thanked her for her generous concern; but was no farther affected with it, than as it gave me a stronger idea of her friendship.

I just came to the countess's when lady Cecilia was getting into her chair: as soon as she saw me, she cried out, with a sort of satisfaction in her looks and accent, "Oh, are you come, my dear! I am excessively glad I happened not to be gone: I'll introduce you to my niece myself." I followed her ladyship into the drawing-room, and was received by a young lady, who seemed to be about seventeen years of age. Her aspect had something so soft and agreeable in it, that I was immediately prepossessed in her favour. Lady Cecilia, having said all that was necessary to make us acquainted, hurried again into her chair; and the countess coming in a moment after, seemed excessively pleased to find me there.

I spent some weeks in a continual round of diversions, which could not fail of having charms for one of my gay temper. There being always deep play in the countess's drawing-room two or three times a week, lady Louisa, her daughter, who had a taste that way, was always engaged in cards: and as I never had any inclination for this amusement, I usually spent the evenings, that were devoted to it, in the nursery; where there were two young ladies, within a year or two as old as myself, and a little enchanting creature of six years old, who was a miracle of wit and beauty. The young viscount of , the eldest son of this family, made one in our little parties above stairs; and I so insensibly accustomed myself to stay there, that, by degrees, I found myself totally forgotten, and looked upon as an inmate of the nursery. This surprising change in the behaviour of the countess and lady Cecilia, who, tho' she visited there every day, had left off even enquiring after me, gave me so sensible a mortification, that I was resolved to come away immediately; and acquainted Mrs. Dormer with my reasons for taking such a resolution. "I told you, miss, said she, that you would repent your going to the countess's. I see plainly the scheme of lady Cecilia and her sister: they want to give you some disgust, in order to force you to leave them abruptly. By this means lady Cecilia will be freed from the obligation she has laid herself under to procure you a settlement at court, and have an opportunity of prejudicing you in the opinion of the world, who will be easily persuaded to think you have been very ungrateful to your benefactress. Let me advise you then, to stay the time you had at first intended, and disappoint the design they have certainly laid against you." I was the more inclined to take Mrs. Dormer's advice, as lady Louisa and myself were in perfect good intelligence; and, besides, I had conceived so strong a resentment at lady Cecilia's ungenerous behaviour, that I fancied to myself an extraordinary pleasure in breaking her measures, and forcing her to act without disguise.

You must not imagine, my dear Amanda, tho' I had but few opportunities of extending my conquests, that my eyes were intirely idle. During my short stay at the countess's, I had numbered two adorers in my train, who, as inconsiderable as I thought them, were still capable of doing me a great deal of mischief. A young foreigner, with no other advantage than a very genteel figure, and a tolerable birth, had been received into the family in the quality of governor to the young viscount. I could never hear he had any other recommendation to her ladyship's favour, than those accidental advantages I have mentioned, but the additional one of having fled his country for a murder: a circumstance, which, far from inspiring horror, had produced in the countess a great opinion of his bravery; and, possibly, was the cause of the respect and deference with which he was treated. As improbable as this may appear, yet it was only one of those whims, for which this great lady was eminently distinguished; and much of a piece with that which made her raise one of the lowest of her female domestics to a place in the house,

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of great trust and consequence, immediately after her lying-in of a base-born child. Mr. Repoli, for that was the name of the viscount's governor, was vain of his personal accomplishments, even to insolence. He fancied no woman ever looked on him without being captivated, and, in consequence of this opinion, carried something so assuming and confident in his air, that it was easy to discover how much his attention was fixed upon his dear self, and that he was triumphing in the conscious pleasure of giving love to all that beheld him. This ridiculous fellow afforded me a good deal of diversion, as I had often opportunities of observing it in its full extent. The young viscount, who doated on his governor, brought him every evening into the young ladies apartment, where I generally was; and I very soon had the pleasure of making this Narcissus admire another face besides his own.

As it was never a part of my character to be offended with any homage that was paid to my charms, I suffered the ardent glances of Repoli without any appearance of dislike; and while he expressed his passion only by sighs and looks, and those little officious assiduities which new-born affection suggests, I contemplated with pleasure the effects of my power on a heart, which before had been only filled with the enchanting emotions of self-admiration. But as it is the nature of love to inspire timidity and respect, the haughty Repoli, awed by the distance of my behaviour, (for, in spite of his embroidery, I could consider him only in the character of an upper domestic) did not presume to acquaint me with his sentiments. And while his passion for me was the subject of conversation to almost every one in the house, I only, to avoid the mortification of such unworthy addresses, affected to be ignorant of it.

Fortune, or rather love, presented me at the same time another votary, in whom I had a very formidable rival: no less than the countess herself. You may imagine perhaps, my dear Amanda, that the lover I speak of was a nobleman of the first rank, and that the countess was a widow, and at liberty to avow her affection: however, nothing of this was the case. Her ladyship had a very fond husband, who had so perfect a complaisance for her, as never to oppose her will in any thing. Possibly, indeed, he acted wisely in this respect; for it was better to resign his authority tamely, than have it wrested out of his hands; her ladyship being, next to lady Cecilia her sister, the highest-spirited woman of quality in England. The lover, then, which my unfortunate eyes procured me, and in whom her ladyship claimed a prior right, was no other than the chaplain, a young smooth-faced boy, who had been taken from Westminster-school to fill up this sacred office in the family, in which he was considered as one of the principal persons. My lord himself was so extremely fond of his company, that he would often drink, tête à tête, a bottle with him before he went to bed; and my lady would sit two or three hours alone with him afterwards, discoursing, no doubt, upon religious matters; for tho' the young chaplain had no great appearance of sanctity, yet her ladyship was fond of being reckoned very devout.

My temper was too much turned to gaiety, not to be excessively diverted with the absurd addresses of this young reverend. He had studied poetry and plays more than divinity; and was always repeating, with an affected emphasis, some rhapsody from the most celebrated dramatic performances. With this immoderate passion for theatrical flights, you may be sure the language of love was always bombast in his mouth, and therefore I was generally addressed in the stile of Alexander the Great. "Oh, my Statira! Oh, my angry Dear!" As I knew nothing mortified him more than to consider him in the light of a clergyman, I always affected to be more than ordinarily grave when he was with me, and generally turned the discourse upon religious subjects. Thus, when he was declaiming on some particular beauties in his favourite writings, poetry or plays, I assumed a serious air, and talked of sermons and homilies; and while he enlarged on the merit of Otway and Rowe, among the dramatic poets, to me, I recommended the study of Tillotson and Barrow, among the preachers, to him. He had too much penetration not to see that I diverted myself at his expence; and, finding my heart impenetrable to him, concluded it must be possessed by somebody else. In this, indeed, he was not mistaken. The united charms of the whole sex, would not have been able to rob my dear Dumont of one single wish: but why do I say the united charms! Was not the person of my Dumont loveliness itself? Alas! how little could I boast of my fidelity in preserving intire my tenderness for him, who had given me such exalted proofs of the sublimity of his passion!

The chaplain having observed the affection Repoli had for me, concluded I could not be insensible of his merit; and was so piqued at my fancied preference of this foreigner, that he would often rally me before him on my

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inclinations. My resentment at a suspicion, which my pride thought so injurious, discovered itself in shewing the utmost contempt for him. But Repeli, conceiving some hopes from the chaplain's insinuations, which his vanity improved into a settled belief that I really loved him, began to wear less constraint in his behaviour, and filled me with perpetual dread, lest he should take the liberty to declare himself.

Lady Louisa, as I have before observed, had conceived a very great esteem for me: we lived together in the utmost familiarity and friendship. She had an uncommon share of understanding, and so sprightly a temper, that I was quite charmed with her. Some of those evenings that she did not devote to cards, we spent together in her apartment with great satisfaction. But I now began to observe she had lost great part of her vivacity: an unusual thoughtfulness seemed wholly to engross her; and her eyes had so melancholy and tender a cast, that I was very sensibly affected with it.

As she seemed to allow me some share in her confidence, I one day took occasion to observe the alteration in her humour, and complained of her reserve, in not acquainting me with the cause of her affliction. "Dear miss Harriot, said she, (blushing, and pressing my hand) you have no reason to reproach me. 'Tis true, I have concealed from you an affair, on which my happiness depended; but it was because I feared you would condemn my weakness. I have wished a thousand times, that you would give me an opportunity of unloading my heart to you. Alas, I am the most unhappy creature in the world!" Her tears interrupted her here, and had so great an effect upon me, that, for some moments, I had not power to beg her to explain herself. "Would you think it, my dear, resumed she, (abruptly) I am weak enough to suffer the most tormenting disquiets for a man, who has rendered himself unworthy of my tenderness: but, in order to make you comprehend my misfortune, I must trace it from its source.

About a year and a half ago, the young earl of L came from his travels. I had heard great talk of the fine accomplishments of this nobleman, and had a violent inclination to see him; but, as he did not visit in our family, I could only expect to have my curiosity gratified at public places, where I sought him out with an eagerness that seemed to presage something extraordinary. I was one night at the Opera, when a gentleman came into the opposite box, whose figure in a moment fixed my attention. I could not help fancying that it was the earl of L ; and was going to ask the ladies who were with me if they knew who he was, when I observed him bow to them, and immediately after come into our box. The countess of S , who was with me, being very well acquainted with him, informed me, in a whisper, that it was the earl of L . My face, in an instant, was covered with blushes, and I was so conscious of the unusual disturbance in my behaviour, that I trembled, lest it should be taken notice of. When the opera was ended, lord L , who had directed most of his discourse to me, handed me to my chair. As I wished for nothing more ardently than to be able to make some impression on his heart, I drew a favourable omen from the gallant turn of his expressions to me. And I now visited lady S so constantly, that I had frequent opportunities of seeing the earl of L , who was not long before he declared a passion for me. You may imagine, my dear, pursued lady Louisa, that, prepossessed as I was in his favour, I could not refuse him all the encouragement that was consistent with decency. He made his pretensions known to my father and mother; and I received a command from them, in form, to admit his addresses. With persons of our quality, these sort of treaties are generally concluded in a short time. Our marriage was only to be deferred till the King's return from Hanover, to which place my lord L attended him. I thought myself happy beyond expression, when my lover, after an absence of six or seven months, brought me back a heart, as he told me, filled with my idea.

The necessary preparations for our marriage were making, when my father informed me, that he insisted upon having five thousand pounds more with me than he had offered. This sordid behaviour filled me with an excess of resentment at first; but my lover had the art to put such a gloss on it, that I insensibly restored him to my good opinion; or rather, my fatal tenderness made it impossible for me to quarrel with him. However, our marriage was delayed upon this dispute, which happened just as you came here. Lord L visited us still frequently; but you never chanced to be with me when he came. Oh Harriot! had you ever seen this dear youth, you would allow my weakness has some excuse. About a week ago, he thought proper again to mention our marriage to my father; but he continuing still to refuse this fatal sum, my unworthy lover resigned his pretensions: and my father has given me orders to return all his letters and presents, and never to see him more."

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Lady Louisa ended with a flood of tears; and then, bitterly exclaiming against the baseness of her lover, and lamenting as often the cruel obstinacy of her father, asked me, in a trembling accent, what she ought to do. "Shall I not see him once more, said she, to upbraid him with his infidelity, and treat him with the scorn and contempt he deserves?" "Ah, madam! said I, recollect yourself! The earl of L does not deserve that you should take the pains to reproach him. In my opinion, you ought to treat him with the most perfect indifference, and send back his letters and presents, without giving him an opportunity to excuse his ungenerous behaviour to you. If he still retains his former sentiments for you, this appearance of tranquillity on your side, will awaken his fears of losing your esteem, and force him to make some atonement for the injury he has offered your merit."

"Do you think it would have that effect?" interrupted she eagerly. Then pausing a little, "Yes, my indifference must shock him excessively: how strangely he'll be surprised, when he finds me return his trifles, without, as you observe, deigning to expostulate with him upon his falshood. Oh, that I could, concealed, observe him! Dear miss Harriot, pursued she, (in a sudden transport) I have thought of a way how to convince myself of his perfidy. My lady has left it intirely to me to return his letters in what manner I please: suppose I send for him, and " "Ah, lady Louisa, interrupted I, have you already changed your resolution?" "No, no, said she, I am still determined to act by your advice. Hear what I propose: lord L shall come here by my invitation; but I will not see him myself. You must not refuse, my dear, to serve me on this occasion. You shall deliver him, from me, the pledges of his false affection, without any instances of resentment; but let him imagine, that I obey, without reluctance, the commands of my father, never to see him more. I'll conceal myself, in order to observe his behaviour; and I promise you, if he receives your message with indifference, I'll drive him from my heart for ever."

As I had no aversion to the task lady Louisa enjoined me, I promised to acquit myself of it with the utmost regard to her honour. She seemed, for some time, quite transported with her project, and dispatched away a sealed card to the earl of L, desiring him to attend her at her father's in the evening.

When the hour approached that we expected his lordship, we both went down into the drawing-room. The countess was engaged till ten o'clock, so that we were in no fear of interruption. Lady Louisa concealed herself in a little room, that led to a pair of back-stairs; but as she had a mind to observe the changes in her lover's countenance, which she expected her message would occasion, she did not shut the door intirely: but, leaving it a little open, I placed a fire-screen before it, to prevent his getting the smallest glimpse of her, and to give her at the same time an opportunity of observing him with more ease.

She had just placed herself, when a servant opened the door, and the earl of L entered the room. He came forward at first with an air of tenderness and gaiety, supposing it was lady Louisa; for I had my handkerchief that moment at my face, being sensible it was all covered with blushes, occasioned by the novelty of the part I was to act. His lordship, however, discovering his mistake upon his nearer approach, looked for a moment stedfastly upon me, and, starting back, discovered in his eyes the strongest indication of a surprize, which seized me also at the same moment; for, in the person of the earl of L, I soon recollected the same lord S I mentioned in the beginning of my history, who, by the service he had done me, while I was yet a child, had filled my young bosom with the first tender emotions it had ever felt.

Tho' my astonishment was not inferior to his, yet I sooner recollected myself; and fearing the consequence of renewing our acquaintance at so dangerous a juncture, when the concealed lady Louisa would be racked with impatience to unravel the mystery, and possibly entertain some uneasy suspicions, I assumed an appearance of unconcern; and affecting not to have the least knowledge of him, "Your lordship, said I, (with a respectful air) no doubt, expected to see lady Louisa here; but her ladyship has been pleased so far to favour me with her confidence, as to give me a commission to return these letters and jewels into your hands: and to tell your lordship, that, since it is her father's commands she should see you no more, she hopes you will not be surprised if she is resolved to pay the exactest obedience to his will, by giving up all traces of a former correspondence between herself and your lordship."

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I might have gone on for half an hour in this strain, if I pleased, without interruption; for his lordship continued still in the same posture of astonishment, with his eyes fixed on my face; and, his silence giving me an opportunity to observe him with more attention, I thought I could discover much of the libertine in his looks and air, which, in my opinion, robbed him of great part of his agreeableness.

My lord L had suffered me to lay the letters and jewels (which consisted of a very fine necklace and ear-rings) upon the table, without offering to take them up; so much had his attention been engaged. "I don't know, madam, said he, (at last) whether you have been able to recollect me; but I am sure I am not mistaken, when I believe you to be miss Harriot Stuart." I found it was in vain to hope I could dissemble my knowledge of him any longer; and, after a short pause, I told him, smiling, That it was true I remembered something of his lordship's face; and his mentioning my name, convinced me I had seen him before. "Can you not remember where, miss?" said he, with an expressive look. "Yes, my lord, said I, (willing to let the listening anxious lady Louisa know how our acquaintance began) tho' your title is different from that of my lord S -, who assisted me, while I was yet a child, to escape from a very great danger at a little theatre in Westminster; yet I cannot help imagining you are the same nobleman, to whom I was so much obliged." "My title, replied he, is only changed to that of my father's, who has been dead these four years; and I am surprised you did not remember it: for I am certain, as you have often heard me mentioned here, you must recollect it belonged to the father of that happy youth, who had the good fortune to do you an inconsiderable service, which you have been so generous not to forget. But how, continued he, (while I trembled at the tone with which he had spoke these last words) how could you be so long in recollecting my person! If any thing could have kept your's from my knowledge, it would have been these thousand additional charms, with which a few years have adorned you. But yet, pursued he, (offering to take my hand) the sound of that enchanting voice would have brought you to my memory, had it been possible for me to forget you."

You may easily imagine, dear Amanda, how displeasing such discourse must be to poor lady Louisa! As for myself, my confusion was inexpressible: I would have given, that moment, worlds, if I had had them, to have been relieved from this perplexing situation. I felt all lady Louisa's pains; and dreading, by this beginning, the continuance of a conversation, so torturing both to her and myself, I endeavoured to put an end to it, by telling his lordship, that, since I had executed my commission, I must beg leave to retire.

"Is it possible, said he, that you are so extremely insensible of the pleasure I take in thus meeting you so unexpectedly, as to deny me a few moments conversation! Ah, miss Stuart, how unkind is this! But I am determined, pursued he, you shall not leave me till I have convinced you, that my heart, which was first devoted to you, burns this moment with an ardour infinitely greater than that those lovely eyes first kindled in it. How, beyond imagination, happy has this meeting made me!" "For heaven's sake, my lord, interrupted I, (forcing my hand out of his, which he had all this while struggled to keep) do not oblige me to listen to such discourses as these! I will not stay a moment longer." "Tell me only, replied he, when or where I shall see you, and I'll leave you this moment. By heaven, I shall not enjoy any rest till I see you again?"

He had scarce uttered these words when I heard lady Louisa sigh aloud, and immediately fall down, as I concluded, in a swoon. The earl of L starting at the noise, and possibly imagining the occasion, was running to the place from whence he heard it, when I stopt him; eager to preserve the unfortunate lady Louisa from being discovered in a situation, which would have convinced him of the undeserved affection she still felt for him. "Oh fly, my lord! said I. Will you ruin me by your stay!" "heavens! cried he, what can you mean by these words! I ruin you, my lovely angel! Who is in this room? Why are you so much alarmed?" "Leave me now, my lord, said I; and I promise you, upon my honour, you shall see me to-morrow." "Well, said he, (kissing my hand by force) I'll obey you then, upon that condition: but remember to keep your word." In saying this, he retired; and I eagerly ran to lady Louisa, whom I found extended on the ground, in a fainting fit. I raised her immediately; and, after rubbing her temples with a little Hungary-water, she came to herself.

I was in so much confusion at what had happened, that I could only ask how she did, without entering into the ungrateful subject of her lover's behaviour. However, I imagined that she seemed to expect I should first speak;

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for she continued silent, with her eyes fixed on the ground, for some minutes: at last, raising them, and observing the jewels and papers lying still upon the table, "What, said she, (sighing) did my lord L refuse to take those things? But, now I remember, he was too much taken up with his meeting you, to trouble himself about slighter matters." "You heard all that passed, madam, returned I, and must be sensible that I was no way accessory to this meeting." "Why, miss Harriot, interrupted her ladyship, I hope you don't imagine I am at all concerned in your meeting, or shall take the pains to reflect whether it was chance or design. I only know, that my lord L has treated me with great contempt; and that I stumbled upon a very improper person to deliver my message to him. However, let us speak no more upon the subject: I shall fall upon another method to restore him these things."

Saying this, she went up to her own apartment, to which I accompanied her. At the door she turned and made me a formal courtesy: I took the hint, and retired immediately, not a little mortified at the alteration in her behaviour. But when I reflected on the too just cause she had for uneasiness, I was not capable of feeling any resentment for the unjustifiable suspicions she seemed to entertain of me.

I am afraid you'll be apt to imagine, from what I have said of my prevailing foible, that the sentiments lord L expressed for me, were not able to give me much concern, notwithstanding my friendship for lady Louisa; and yet, I assure you, my friend, you are much mistaken. I conceived so great a dislike to him, for his sordid and ungenerous treatment of that young lady, that I could not prevail upon myself to believe he was capable of feeling a delicate passion for any one. Besides, as I have before observed, his every look and action had so much of the libertine, that I should have thought it highly imprudent to have conversed with him, upon any account. His rank and fortune made the sentiments he avowed for me, dangerous to my reputation; and I therefore determined, notwithstanding the promise which the necessity there was for sending him away extorted from me, to avoid all opportunities of seeing him.

In the morning lady Louisa sent to let me know, that she expected me in her own apartment. As soon as I went in, she dismissed her woman, and asked me, with some appearance of confusion, if I could pardon the ill-humour she was in when we parted. "If you discovered any ill-humour to me, madam, replied I, you certainly thought I merited it; and, in that case, I am rather to clear myself of any disingenuity you suspect me of, than to expect an apology from your ladyship." "But, dear miss, interrupted she, give me the satisfaction to know when, and in what manner, you became acquainted with the earl of L. I can't help being surprised, that you never acknowledged to me you knew him, when I mentioned him to you!" "I see, madam, answered I, that it will be difficult to persuade your ladyship that I might be acquainted with my lord S before I went abroad, and yet have no knowledge of the earl of L." "'Tis strange, resumed she, that you should never have heard his father's title!" "Possibly, madam, said I, I may have heard it; but 'tis certain, it was so intirely lost to my remembrance, that I never imagined lord S, with whom I had some acquaintance while I was a child, could be the earl of L, whom you desired I should see. And your ladyship must be certain, from his behaviour, that we had neither of us seen one another since my return to England." "Well, miss, said she, I was not questioning you about that. His behaviour, as you say, might have convinced me too, that, if you have not seen him since you came to England, you were, at least, very particularly acquainted before you left it."

Tho' the peevish manner in which lady Louisa spoke, assured me her mind was still tainted with suspicions to my prejudice; yet I assumed all the good-humour I was capable of, and related very exactly the occasion of my first knowing lord L, suppressing only some little circumstances, which, I feared, would give her pain. She paused, after I had ended my little narration, for a minute or two; and then asked me, what my lord said at parting, and if he had mentioned nothing of her. 'Twas here, my dear Amanda, that, affecting to act from prudent artifice, as I thought, and forsaking that simplicity that was natural to me, I drew upon myself a suspicion I did not deserve, which, nevertheless, I could never clear myself of.

Tho' my concern for lady Louisa, and the fear of her being discovered, was the cause of my promising lord L that I would see him again, in order to oblige him to go; yet I could not prevail upon myself to mention this circumstance to lady Louisa, which I feared would increase her distrust of me, and possibly make her apprehend

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that I really designed to keep a correspondence with the earl of L. I therefore took no notice of it; and we parted for that day, without any great appearances of resentment on lady Louisa's side: tho' I thought I could observe a certain coldness and reserve in her manner, which was very unusual.

This accident had contributed to increase my disgust against staying any longer in the countess's house; and I was thinking how to excuse my leaving her before the winter was ended, when the insolent Repoli, finding me alone one day in a room, which I used frequently to visit, because they were working tapestry in it, made me a frank declaration of love: and, supposing I was too much charmed with his fine person to be able to deny him, seemed to expect that his offer would fill me with infinite satisfaction.

As much confounded as I was at first with this unexpected assurance, I recollected myself soon enough to damp his triumph, before he had much time to indulge it; and chusing to express my contempt of him rather by scorn than anger, I had the pleasure to see the haughty Swiss grow pale with rage and disappointment. He went out of the room, muttering some words I could not understand, just as an elderly gentlewoman, who taught the young ladies embroidery, entered it.

Mrs. Ellis, for that was her name, was a woman of good sense, and the most friendly disposition in the world. She discovered a particular fondness for me all the while I was in the house, having opportunities of conversing with me very often, as I delighted extremely in learning to embroider, which she took great pains to teach me. "Has Mr. Repoli been speaking to you, miss? said she. Can it be you that he is vowing vengeance against!" "What, replied I, (laughing) is the furious Swiss in a fighting humour? I have given him, indeed, a very severe affront; but, thank heaven, I run no danger of a challenge." "Ah, my dear young lady, returned she, take care of yourself, I beseech you. Repoli is the most dangerous man in the world to quarrel with. His countrymen are remarkable for the keenness of their anger, and eager thirst of revenge. Repoli is distinguished for possessing those bad qualities in a very great degree. His temper is dark, cruel, and designing; and, from all that I can learn of his character, capable of the most daring acts of villainy to gratify his revenge, which is his predominant passion."

"Why sure, Mrs. Ellis, replied I, (a little startled) you don't think he'll poison me, do you? I wonder the countess entertains a man of such dangerous principles in her house!" "The countess, said the old gentlewoman, is often apt to misplace her favours; and Mr. Repoli is not the only instance of it. Besides, the young viscount dotes upon him, and that is sufficient to make him almost absolute here. I know, miss, pursued she, that what I now say would cost me my place, if it came to the countess's ear; but I love you, and think it my duty to put you upon your guard. My lady is your mortal enemy: she has been informed, that the chaplain is in love with you; and I am persuaded you'll shortly find the effects of her resentment."

The countess's regard for her chaplain had been whispered about for some time, and no one in the house could possibly be ignorant of it, as her ladyship's behaviour to him was indeed very extraordinary. I had, therefore, no difficulty in comprehending Mrs. Ellis's meaning; but as I had always treated that gentleman with great indifference, I thought I had no reason to apprehend any ill consequence from it. I would fain have persuaded Mrs. Ellis to tell me, how she came by her knowledge of her lady's sentiments with regard to me; but in this she begged to be excused: "Not, added she, that I think you would make any ill use of it. My confidence in your generosity, forbids me to suspect you; and, to say the truth, miss, I am under no great terrors upon that account. Thank heaven, my dependence is not upon the countess's favour: I do not pretend to that sort of merit, which intitles me to it. I cannot stoop to the grossest flattery and adulation. My behaviour, ever since I came to the house, has been decent and respectful; but I have the ill fortune, if I may term it so, to be liked by no one in it, but my lord and the young ladies."

The old gentlewoman being in a talking strain, continued to give me some very useful hints concerning my behaviour, if I had intended to stay much longer in the house. She concluded her discourse with intreating me again to take care of Repoli, who, she assured me, was one of the most profligate fellows in the world. 'Twas easy to see, by Mrs. Ellis's repeated cautions against him, that she thought him capable of forming some settled design

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against me: but, as she did not explain herself fully in this respect, I forbore to press her any farther; contenting myself with the resolution I had formed to leave this detested house, where I had been treated so unworthily. For I was now convinced, that lady Cecilia had basely imposed upon me; and that my hopes of procuring any settlement by her means, which would put it in my power to make some addition to the small fortune of my Dumont, were no longer to be depended upon.

I was sitting alone in my chamber, a day or two after this, the family being all gone to the earl of O 's, when, hearing somebody rap gently at the door, I rose and opened it; and seeing, to my great surprize, Repoli there, I was going to shut it again in a violent rage, when the villain rushed in, and, in an instant fastening it, immediately seized me in his arms: but before he had time to stop my mouth with his handkerchief, which he attempted to do, I had recovered from my astonishment, and cried out as loud as I possibly could. The infamous Repoli, hearing somebody run across the gallery, unfastened the door, and hurried away, having vented a dreadful execration; and two moments after Mrs. Ellis came in, to whom I related the astonishing insolence he had been guilty of. "Alas, dear miss, said she, I had a frightful presage of this from the principles I have heard the villain avow; but I could not imagine he would dare to make such an attempt here. You may judge, by this, of his influence." "I am resolved, returned I, to be gone to-morrow: I will stay no longer in a house where such enormous vices are allowed. But, tho' the countess should resolve to protect this monster, ought I not to acquaint her with his infamous designs?" "I am of opinion, miss, said Mrs. Ellis, that you will find but little redress; and her ladyship will be apt to turn your complaint into ridicule, and possibly make some ill-natured reflections on you: for, I believe, she would not disoblige her darling son, by turning his favourite away, tho' he was to make such an attempt upon one of her relations." I was determined, however, to quit the house the next day, and acquaint the countess, that that was one of my reasons for doing so.

Mrs. Ellis informed me in the morning, that lady Cecilia had been with her lady in the dressing-room some time. She had scarce done speaking, when a footman came to tell me, that the countess desired to speak with me. I followed him instantly, not being able to imagine the meaning of this message; and was beginning to fancy lady Cecilia had really done something in my affairs, when the countess, meeting me as I entered the room, threw the door after me, with a force that almost shook the house: and while my astonishment at this action, and the fury which sat upon her face, kept me silent, she loaded me with the most injurious expressions, calling me jilt, prostitute, and all the names that infamy could deserve.

"Can it be possible, madam, said I, (recovering from my surprize) that it is to me you direct this language!" "Yes, interrupted she, 'tis to you I speak! You who, at these early years, have dishonoured yourself and your family, and have dared to make even my house the scene of your guilt." "Oh my God! cried I, (almost beside myself with rage) what can this mean! Who has dared to asperse me in this barbarous manner? If you have any sense of justice and humanity, tell me, madam, I charge you, who are my accusers. Bring them before me: let them mention to my face, this guilt you reproach me with." "No, interrupted the cruel countess, (with a scornful smile) you shall never have that satisfaction." "What, resumed I, shall I hear myself charged with the vilest of crimes, and not know who accuses me! Hear me, madam, pursued I, (throwing myself, in a transport of grief, upon the ground, and catching hold of her gown, while she was endeavouring to get from me) either bring the wretches that have fixed this scandal on me before *my* face, or I shall think you have invented it yourself, for some private ends. I condescend to ask it on my knees, do justice to an unhappy young creature, whose character is all her dependence! Suffer me to clear myself! I ask no more! Bring the wretch before me!"

I had scarce breath to utter these last words; grief and indignation worked so forcibly upon my spirits, that I was no longer able to support the shock. I quitted my hold, and sunk almost breathless upon the floor; and, had I not been relieved by a deluge of tears, I believe the strong emotions of my soul would have been fatal to me. The countess rung her bell, upon which the housekeeper entered the room: the same person who had acquired her favour by being, in reality, what she desired I should be thought to be. "Take up that young dissembler, said she to this chaste person; don't let her grovel in the ground, with her tragic airs. Who would believe, continued she, (addressing herself still to the housekeeper) that all that innocence in her countenance is feigned! Would not one

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be almost persuaded she could not be guilty!"

"How dare you, madam, replied I, (pushing away the housekeeper, and rising in a rage) how dare you continue to load me thus with scandalous reproaches, yet deny what I have so ardently begged, the knowledge of my accusers! But your inhuman malice is too plain: I know the cause; and I am tempted to believe you sent the horrid ruffian into my chamber, to make me guilty indeed. But know, madam, whatever force your high rank and fortune may give to your base aspersions on my same, truth and innocence will still be too hard for you. My past conduct has been not only irreproachable, but worthy praise: and, to your everlasting confusion, my future behaviour shall prove the falshood of your censures. And since I am sensible the greatest revenge I can possibly take, for the wrong you do me, is to prove myself innocent, I will not be content with the private testimony of an unblameable life and a clear conscience; I will, for once, affect ostentation, to make that virtue remarkable, which you will endeavour, in vain, to blemish."

The countess, who seemed ready to expire with rage at the freedom of my language, was going to reply, when her lord came into the room. "What is the matter, for heaven's sake, madam? said he to his lady. What means all this noise and confusion, miss Harriot! pursued he to me. Will you not tell me the occasion of it?" "No, my lord, answered I, her ladyship can best inform you. I am going this moment out of your house, where I have reason to repent I ever came." Saying this, I flung out of the room, and went up to my own chamber; desiring a servant, who was in waiting in one of the outer rooms, to get me a coach to the door. A minute or two afterwards, lady Louisa's woman brought me a billet, which was as follows:

"You cannot wonder, miss, that I have not appeared in your cause, at a time when my friendship might possibly have been of some service. The treacherous part you acted by me, justifies the most unfavourable censures that can be made on you. Read the inclosed, and blush, if you are able."

I had opened this billet with so much precipitation, that I never minded a paper which fell out of it; but, having read it thro', I hastily looked on the ground, and seeing a letter directed to me in an unknown hand, upon my opening it, and casting my eyes at the bottom, I saw it signed L . My face was, in an instant, covered with blushes! My lord L , in the first lines, reproached me with breaking my promise, in not giving him an opportunity of seeing me the next day: complained of the cruel disappointment; and, in the most ardent terms imaginable, begged me to let him know where he could see me. I would scarce give myself time to finish this letter: I again read over lady Louisa's injurious billet; and, wholly ingrossed by my resentment for the reproaches it contained, I threw away both the letters with an air of disdain. And being told that instant, that the coach waited, I went immediately down stairs, leaving the woman to carry the letters back again to her lady, if she pleased; for I saw her take them up.

I ordered the coachman to drive to lady Cecilia's; resolved to try whether I could prevail upon her to explain herself upon this dark affair. I had the good fortune to hear she was alone, and, upon sending in my name, was admitted immediately. "Well, miss, said she, (putting on a severe countenance) what is your business with me?" "I am afraid, madam, replied I, that your ladyship will think my business very impertinent; but, however trifling it may appear to you, 'tis certainly of some consequence to me. I would fain be informed, madam, what reason the countess has for fixing the most barbarous aspersion upon me, which, if believed, must inevitably ruin my character, and make me despised by all who have any pretensions to virtue and modesty."

"The countess, replied her ladyship, has very sufficient reasons for thinking you lost to every principle of honour. Can a girl, like you, pretend to either modesty or virtue, who could invite a young fellow into her chamber, fasten the door upon him, and make him the most indecent advances? Certainly, child, if you are not yet a prostitute, you bid fair for being one in a very little time. You begin early, indeed, to run the race of infamy." "Then it should seem, madam, answered I, (very calmly) that my accuser is that very young fellow, who had the grace to slight the advances I made him!" "Yes, interrupted she, he has done us the favour to discover the wicked inclinations which lie hid under that appearance of innocence and virtue, and make me ashamed of having taken such a one

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under my protection." "But, madam, answered I, such an accusation from the mouth of Repoli, (for I think it can be no other than him you mean) would find difficulty in meeting with belief from persons less severely virtuous than the countess and your ladyship. Such instances of sublime chastity in young men, in this degenerate age, are very rare!" "He did not like you, interrupted her ladyship, (blushing with anger at the sarcastic manner in which I spoke) and he had too great a respect for my sister to dishonour a person under her protection. But, pursued she, (lowering her voice, as if conscious of the dignity of the person of whom she spoke) there was some one else, whom you had spread your impudent snares for." "I know what your ladyship means, madam, said I, (smiling maliciously:) and since there was a necessity for producing a Joseph in the house, in order to fix a guilt, something resembling Potipher's wife, upon me, methinks it would have sat better upon the reverend gentleman your ladyship hints at, than a young abandoned libertine like Repoli; whose aversion to me did not commence, till I had discovered the utmost contempt and scorn for the insolent addresses he presumed to make me, and which hardly any one in the house is ignorant of. As for the rest, madam, I refer your ladyship to Mrs. Ellis, who can inform you of the villainous attempt this mirror of chastity made on my honour. But I beg your ladyship's pardon, for supposing you will give yourself any further trouble to come at the truth of this affair. The story is mighty consistent, and will meet, no doubt, with great credit. But your ladyship, indeed, will draw some advantage from believing and propagating it; as it will free you from a person, whom your ladyship, no doubt, considers as a troublesome dependent, and silence any reflections that might otherwise be made, on the breaking a promise I never solicited the performance of." Saying this, I left the room immediately; not without having first observed the tempest of rage which was gathering on her brow, and which would have possibly vented itself in something more cruel and injurious than what I had yet heard.

As soon as I got into the coach, I made it hurry me to my dear Mrs. Dormer's; to whom I related all that had happened, with a flood of tears. "Indeed, my dear, said she, did not your affliction give me a very sensible concern, I should be tempted to laugh at the strange and unaccountable story they have raised against you. Methinks lady Cecilia's wit, and peculiar genius for scandal, might have invented something more probable, to ruin the reputation of a young lady, whom it was necessary she should quarrel with. What, does she think any body will believe an impudent libertine, like this Repoli, could be capable of slighting the advances of a young lovely creature, for whom he avowed a passion? Such a self-denial might appear consistent in the character of a mortified anchorite; but it will be very difficult to persuade any one, who has common sense, that a rake could be capable of acting in this manner." Mrs. Dormer added many other reasons to persuade me, that this scandal must necessarily fall of itself; but the eloquence of a Cicero, on this occasion, would have had less influence upon me than the silent testimony of my own conscience. Secure in my own untainted innocence, I could look down with scorn on the mean attempts of vice and infamy to degrade me to an equality with itself; and conscious virtue alone, enabled me to triumph over the base arts of my powerful accusers.

Mrs. Dormer, to whom my misfortunes had but the more endeared me, would not suffer me to lodge out of the house. My apartment having been let while I was at the countess's, she obliged me to stay with her. The friendship with which she favoured me, made me repose an intire confidence in her. I related all the accidents of my life, and did not conceal even my engagement with Dumont. The generosity of her soul inclined her to pity the unsuccessful passion of Mr. Campbell; yet she could not refuse her esteem to the character I gave of my beloved Dumont, and confessed that he merited the preference I gave him.

"I am so much obliged to you, my dear, said she one day, for the unlimited trust you have favoured me with, that I can do no less than return it in kind, and acquaint you with the history of my life. I have been unfortunate both in love and marriage; a maid, a widow, and a wife, at the same time. A strange paradox, you'll say; but the sequel of my story will convince you, that in my person was united the extremes of wretchedness, which all these characters could sustain."

My father, who was born to a very large paternal estate, possessed also some of the most eminent dignities in the law. I was the eldest of three children, and favoured with a peculiar indulgence from my father and mother, as I was the only daughter. In these early years of my life, pursued Mrs. Dormer, (with a smile) I was reckoned

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tolerably handsome. The reputation of my charms, joined to the fortune my father was able to give me, brought me a number of adorers; some of whom, for their rank and fortune, were highly acceptable to my father and mother. But my heart felt no tender emotions for any of them: and so great was my father's indulgence, that, in talking to me on the subject of my marriage, he always expressed himself like a tender friend, solicitous for my happiness, without ever mixing the authority of a parent, or giving the least hint that he expected, in such an affair, a negative voice should not be allowed me.

Alas, how ill did I repay this excess of goodness! The only man in the world whom my father would have forbidden me to think of, became the object of my love. The father of this young gentleman had formerly addressed my mother, at the same time that mine was courting her. This laid a foundation for that enmity between them, which my father's success in marrying the lady, for whom they contended, increased. Mr. Wilmot, after this, took all occasions to discover the deep aversion he had for my father; and it was with great difficulty that they were prevented from sealing their resentment in each other's blood.

The son of this gentleman happened to meet me at a visit to a young lady of my acquaintance. He had just come from making the tour of Europe; and appeared so agreeable in my eyes, notwithstanding he was the son of an enemy, that I could not refuse him my esteem. I soon found I had made some impression on his heart: he scarce ever took his eyes off my face while I staid; and, when I took leave, handed me to my chair, making me some very obliging compliments on the happiness my company had afforded him.

My thoughts were engrossed by this agreeable youth all night: I found so much sweetness in the hope of being beloved by him, that I never considered the enmity of our two fathers. The soft passion, which was kindling in my heart, inspired only the most flattering ideas; and representing the young Wilmot in every favourable and engaging light, assured me, that my father, won by the merit of his sacrificing his hereditary hatred to the affection he bore me, would not oppose our mutual happiness. I reasoned in this manner, from a perfect conviction that my eyes had inevitably wounded this too lovely enemy; and my heart was exulting with the most pleasing hopes, when my maid, entering my chamber, delivered me a letter from Mr. Wilmot, which contained a most passionate declaration of love. My mother came into the room, just as I had finished reading this welcome confirmation of the hopes with which I had flattered myself: at sight of her I blushed, and would have concealed my lover's letter in my pocket; but she, holding my hand, asked me, with a smile, what paper it was I was so earnest to hide. As I could possibly make no evasion, that would secure me from some suspicion, I gave her the letter, telling her at the same time, that, as I had never seen the writer of it but once, and had given him no sort of encouragement to address me in that manner, I hoped, if it was a crime, she would not think me accessory to it. "You are certainly guilty of no crime, said she, (with an air of good humour) in having, as I find by this letter, forced the son of your father's enemy to acknowledge the power of your charms. You have now a good opportunity to revenge the injuries Mr. Dormer complains of, in the person of a man who can't but be hateful to him, as descended from his old enemy and rival."

My mother looked earnestly in my face as she pronounced these words: I blushed excessively, and was pierced to the heart by the cruel disappointment they gave me; for, from her, at least, I expected less reluctance to an alliance, which would reconcile our houses, and which, in point of fortune, greatly exceeded the most sanguine hopes they could entertain for me. I therefore continued silent, with my eyes fixed on the ground. My mother, observing the changes in my countenance, asked me, if any thing she had said disturbed me. "I am almost tempted to believe, Polly, said she, that this young Wilmot is but too agreeable to you. However, don't be afraid to discover your sentiments: I promise you I will not acquaint your father with any thing that may draw his anger upon you." "Since you are so good, madam, replied I, (blushing still more than before) to allow me to declare myself freely, I must confess, that I do not hate this young gentleman; and, if my father could be brought to approve his addresses, it might be the happy means of reconciling him to Mr. Wilmot, and free you from any future alarms upon the account of that resentment, which subsists between them." "You have spoke my thoughts, replied my mother, (embracing me.) I rejoice sincerely at this event. If Mr. Wilmot can bring his father to consent to your union, I doubt not but my influence with Mr. Dormer will prevail upon him to remit the long hatred he has

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bore him. Your father cannot be insensible to the advantages of such an offer." "What answer, then, madam, interrupted I, shall I send to this letter?" "Let me see, child, said she, (looking over it again) he desires you would condescend to see him at the same young lady's to-day. Well, you may go; but take care not to own, that you have mentioned this matter to me. I would not have him imagine, there will be less difficulty in gaining us over than his father."

You may be assured, miss, pursued Mrs. Dormer, that my mother's approbation was highly agreeable to me. I went to the house of my friend, whom I found Mr. Wilmot had engaged to speak in his behalf. She kept me a long while from the sight of my lover, who was in another parlour, enumerating the many advantages that would arise from our mutual affection. At last, finishing a discourse, which I could not then help thinking tedious, she led me into the room where Mr. Wilmot was.

The excessive joy which my complying with his request, in meeting him, spread over his countenance, relieved me, by a pleasing sensation, from the confusion that had dyed my cheeks with a deep blush. I found myself, in a little time, quite re-assured; and the few minutes private conversation I had with him, so effectually convinced me that his passion was perfectly sincere, that I made no scruple to own the effect his merit had wrought in my heart. We parted with a thousand assurances of mutual fidelity; and I went home to give my mother an account of what had passed. She permitted me, in a few weeks after, to acknowledge to him, that I had acquainted her with his passion; and that she had promised to use her good offices with my father, provided Mr. Wilmot could prevail upon his to make the first proposal of a marriage between us.

My lover confessed, that he had not ventured yet to acquaint his father with his affection; but that he would, very soon, solicit his consent to our alliance, as the only means of making him happy. My mother, in the mean time, hinted the affair to my father, who replied at first with much heat; but at last, by her artful reasoning, was brought to say, that, if Mr. Wilmot would condescend to mention the affair first to him, he would consider of it.

I easily foresaw, that my lover's father would insist upon the same punctilio, and looked upon this declaration as a bar to all our hopes. However, I was much deceived in supposing that he was, in the least, inclined to favour his son's passion. My lover, after having for some time evaded the repeated requests I made to him to speak to his father, at last confessed, with the deepest concern, that he had threatned him with his eternal displeasure, if ever he dared to mention such a proposal again. "Yet, my dearest angel, pursued my lover, the cruel opposition my father makes to my union with you, can never prevail upon me to renounce my title to your heart. I never will be any other than your's; and, if you will consent to give me your hand privately, we'll put it out of the power of fate to part us."

This proposal, at first, filled me with horror; but love, more powerful than all the ties of duty, made me consent to it. I trembled, lest I should lose him for ever, if I refused to give him this instance of my affection; and desired a few days to consider of it. In which time my lover informed me, that he was going to spend a few months in Paris, having some affairs of consequence to manage there; and that he did not dare to refuse the absolute commands of his father, who, he believed, would have taken this journey himself, but that he feared his son still held a correspondence with me, and, by his absence, would be at liberty to prosecute it with more freedom.

There needed no more to make me come to a resolution. The idea of parting with him, e're I had fixed him mine, was not to be born! In that moment, forgetting all I owed to duty, and the indulgence of a father, who had suffered, without any marks of displeasure, my refusal of several matches that he had approved, I listened only to the dictates of my tenderness, and promised to marry him before he went away. As I had no reason to imagine my mother would approve of such a precipitate step, I resolved not to ask her consent; and only in the presence of the young lady, at whose house I first saw Mr. Wilmot, and my own maid, was joined to my lover, by, as I thought, the most indissoluble ties. Alas! heaven, who beheld this act of disobedience with horror, made my fatal marriage the source of the most cruel misfortunes.

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When the ceremony was over, I went home, filled with a thousand perplexing inquietudes. I could not see my dear father, whose tenderness I had so abused, without feeling a painful remorse. My husband insisted upon visiting me in the evening; and, as my maid was privy to the secret, I could find no pretence for refusing him: he therefore came privately to my chamber. My mother, who had allowed him to see me there, was not surprised that he came to take his leave; for he was to set out for Paris the next day. But as I knew his intention was to stay all night, which I was positively resolved to prevent, I made a sign to my mother not to leave the room. She, who thought I had some very urgent reason for this caution, never offered to stir. It grew late: my father was expected in every moment, and would be surprised to find her out of her chamber; she, therefore, put Mr. Wilmot in mind that it was time to retire. She was obliged to repeat this hint several times, before he thought proper to take any notice of it. At last, he rose from his chair, and, saluting my mother, took a cold leave of me; giving me, at the same time, a look that expressed how much he was disobliged at my behaviour.

When he was gone, my mother asked me, if he had ever treated me in a manner unbecoming the respect he owed me, that I was afraid to trust myself alone with him. I evaded this question as well as I was able, by telling her I was afraid, if we had parted in private, my tenderness might have betrayed me into too great weakness. She appeared satisfied with this answer; and lamented, with some warmth, the obstinacy of both our fathers, who seemed determined to prevent our union. Her affection for me, made her wish nothing more ardently than to see me married to a man she thought so deserving my tenderness, and whose fortune was so greatly above what mine intitled me to.

When my mother left me, and I was at liberty to reflect on the reproachful look my dear Wilmot gave me, I found something so painful in the fear of having offended him, that I passed the whole night in tears; and did not enjoy a moment's rest till I had a letter, which, as it was wrote in the warmest stile of tenderness, convinced me my innocent fraud was forgiven, and that I was still passionately beloved. For two months he continued to write constantly to me by every post; but I could not help observing, that he carefully avoided the stile of a husband, and never once acknowledged, by the most distant hint, that I was his wife.

Upon my first making this reflection, I was extremely uneasy; but imagining that he thought this reserve necessary, for fear of a discovery, or that he designed I should shew these letters to my mother, who approved of our mutual tenderness, I silenced any suspicions to the prejudice of his love, and waited with a tender impatience for his return; he having now greatly exceeded the time in which he proposed to see me again.

While I was torturing my imagination to find reasons for his stay, I accidentally heard that he was gone to Italy; and that his father had given him leave to spend some years abroad, which he had earnestly requested. The affliction this news occasioned me, was but too visible in my looks and behaviour; yet none in the family, but my mother, could guess the cause. She indeed rightly concluded, that Wilmot's absence was the ground of my uneasiness; but she did not imagine that I was lamenting the cruel perfidy of a husband, and not the indifference of a lover.

I now never heard from him at all: I knew not where to direct to him; and my resentment at his treachery, helped to free my heart from the torturing passion I had felt for him. All my care was to conceal my unfortunate marriage from my father. I loaded my maid with presents; but I had no reason to bribe her to be faithful: she continued so till her death, which happened two years after the departure of my faithless husband. Fate seemed resolved to put it out of my power to claim him; for the clergyman who married me, and the young lady my friend, the other witness of my unhappy nuptials, both died within a few months of each other.

My mother, who extremely resented the indifference I complained of in Mr. Wilmot, pressed me incessantly to drive him from my heart. I was still solicited and addressed by a number of lovers. My father often told me, he expected I would fix my choice; and filled me with inexpressible terror, when he threatened to abandon me for ever, if he found my aversion for marriage proceeded from any secret hope of being united to the son of his enemy. Who would imagine, that a heart, filled with the deepest resentment against the sex, for the base usage I

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had received from one man, should ever again become a victim to love!

As I have always considered every misfortune that has befallen me, in consequence of my marriage, as a just punishment for the crime of it, I am inclined to believe that providence permitted this fatal weakness, to make my sufferings more poignant.

A young gentleman named Clayton, who possessed every grace of mind and person, and who was master of a very large fortune, asked my father's permission to make his addresses to me. I had often viewed him with a particular delight; yet I only fancied I paid the same tribute of admiration to his merit, which it exacted from all who knew him. When my father mentioned his proposal to me, an involuntary transport, for a moment, took possession of my heart: but, recollecting my unhappy situation, a sigh unwillingly escaped me; and when I declined receiving a visit from him, in the quality of a lover, my face was overspread with blushes.

My father, observing my confusion, attributed it to what really was the cause, a secret liking of this young gentleman: but, a little offended at the disingenuity of my answer, he told me, with some sternness, that he would allow me to trifle no longer; and that Mr. Clayton was he, of all who had addressed me, whom he approved of most, and, therefore, he expected I should accustom myself to think of him with esteem. I saw my father expected I would now explain myself, which, to avoid, I begged for a few days to consider of what he had said; and retired to my room, oppressed with inconceivable affliction.

My heart had been too well acquainted with the soft emotions of love, to be any longer ignorant that I felt for Mr. Clayton all that passion could inspire; but my virtue took the alarm at this discovery. Mr. Wilmot, tho' he disclaimed the title, was still my husband. Could I rob him of any part of my affection, without an injury to my honour? I could find many instances, among my acquaintance, of wives who preserved an unblemished tenderness for husbands that loaded them with affronts; and it was not impossible but Mr. Wilmot might return to a sense of honour and justice, and restore me to the place I ought to hold in his affection. With this sort of reasoning I endeavoured to vanquish the flame that consumed me: but, alas! it increased by opposition; and all I could do, was to preserve the secret in my own breast. And, convinced that my father would never force me to marry against my inclination, I resolved to declare I had an unalterable aversion for Mr. Clayton. Alas! what pain did it not give me to dissemble in this manner! but my honour demanded this cruel sacrifice of me. And, amidst the severest pangs of my own heart, I would reflect, with a gloomy kind of pleasure, that this fatal love justly revenged the disobedience I had been guilty of; and, considering my sufferings in that light, I resolved to support them with submission and fortitude.

My father, amazed at the dislike I expressed for Mr. Clayton, discovered his displeasure in harsher terms than ever he had used to me; and declaring, that he expected I should endeavour to change my sentiments, permitted Mr. Clayton to have frequent opportunities of conversing with me alone. The respectful passion, the lively ardour of this too dangerous lover, put all my constancy to proof. I was cruel to the best and faithfullest of men, to preserve myself just to one of the worst. Severe necessity! fatal law! which my too rigid virtue imposed on me.

I had so well counterfeited a fixed indifference, or rather dislike, for Mr. Clayton, that my father began to despair of ever seeing me in a disposition to obey him willingly; when one night, as we were sitting at supper, a servant of Mr. Clayton's came to inform us, that his master, who had been that day at Richmond with another gentleman, had fallen off his horse coming home, and was so much hurt that his life was despaired of. My senses immediately forsaking me, at this terrible news, I fell back in my chair, after breathing a deep sigh; and continued so long in a swoon, that the whole family was greatly alarmed. My affection for my Clayton could now be no longer a secret; and my obstinate refusal of him was matter of surprize, to all who knew any thing of the affair.

I was put to bed extremely ill; and, conscious of the fatal discovery I had made, my disorder was increased by the terrible apprehensions with which I was tortured. My lover, however, in a few days was declared out of danger. In spite of myself, my eyes betrayed the transport I felt at the prospect of his recovery. My mother took occasion to

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question me upon this strange contradiction in my behaviour; but, tho' I could easily evade her inquiries, I could not, with the same facility, satisfy my father. He declared, that, as I was past the power of denying my affection for Mr. Clayton, the reluctance I expressed for marrying him must arise from some cause I was afraid to own; and he left it to my choice, either to marry him as soon as he was recovered, or disclose the reasons I had for refusing to accept, for a husband, the man whom I had given convincing proofs that I passionately loved. I saw it was impossible to avoid either inevitable ruin, or shame and infamy, but by applying to the generosity of my lover.

When he was able to leave his room, he came to pay me a visit; and, having heard something of my extraordinary concern for his illness, his looks and words expressed the most tender transport. As I was going to require him to make a sacrifice of his passion, to the cruel necessity my engagement with Mr. Wilmot laid me under, to banish him for ever, I made it a point of honour to acquaint him with the true state of my heart: I related to him succinctly the whole affair of my marriage with Mr. Wilmot, his base perfidy, and the resentment it had filled me with; and acknowledged, blushing, that my sense of his merit was so great, that, if my situation could have permitted it, I would never have been any other than his; but as I could never consider myself as freed from my engagements to Mr. Wilmot, by his ungenerous usage of me, the quality of his wife made it highly injurious to my honour to hear the language of love from any other man; and, whatever pain it would cost me, I was determined to avoid his sight. "But, added I, (melting into tears) 'tis from your generosity alone that I can expect to conceal my fatal marriage from my father; which, if known, would deprive me for ever of his affection. Let our parting seem wholly your fault: invent some pretence for proceeding no farther in your addresses, and, by this generous action, force me to confess that you, of all men in the world, deserve my affection best."

"Yes, madam, said my lover, (looking on me with eyes, in which surprize and grief were visibly painted) I will undertake this hard task to serve you, since you command it. You shall suffer no reproaches from Mr. Dormer upon my account." "There needs not, sir, said my father, (coming out of a closet, where he had hid himself to hear our discourse) there needs not this generous artifice to shield this degenerate girl from my indignation, unworthy as she is of my blood and name. From this moment I disclaim her! Fly, wretch! (pursued he to me, with a voice full of fury) fly from my sight, lest my just rage urge me to wash away my dishonour in thy blood. Go to that infamous husband who disclaims thee, and never hope that I will acknowledge thee for my child, or behold thee more while I have life." Saying this, he rushed out of the room.

My lover following him, to endeavour if possible to appease him, I remained for some moments so astonished with the greatness of my misfortune, that I lost even the power of reflecting upon my unhappy condition. My mother's woman, coming into the room, told me, with tears, that her lady desired her to let me know, that I had involved her also in my father's displeasure; and that there was a necessity for my quitting the house immediately; for my father had sworn that I should not stay a moment longer. "Where did my mother order me to go, Bell?" said I, with my heart almost breaking with affliction. "I am ordered, madam, said she, to attend you to my sister's, whose house, as she is the widow of a clergyman, and lives in a private manner, her ladyship thinks will be the most proper to take an apartment in for you, till my master can be brought to see you." "Let me go, then Bell, said I, (rising, my eyes all drowned in tears) let me go where I may be at liberty to indulge my sorrows. I was born to be miserable, and must fulfil my destiny." Saying this, I went down stairs, and stepped into a hackney-coach, that was waiting at the door; for my father would not allow me to use his upon this occasion. Bell, who accompanied me, ordered the coachman, in a whisper, to drive to Mrs. Wasler's in Jermyn-street, where we soon arrived.

I had never seen this gentlewoman before; but her looks were so friendly and benevolent, that my affliction was soothed at her sight. My mother's woman acquainted her sister with what was necessary she should know of my situation, and agreed for my board and lodging with her; she having a very genteel apartment to let, which was the only one in which she received any lodger. I was not permitted to have my own maid to attend me, that had lived with me at my father's; but one was hired that knew nothing of my affairs.

The friendly Mrs. Waller omitted no consolations, in her power to offer me. Alas! in my distressed condition, what comfort could I admit of! abandoned for ever by a once indulgent father, tortured with a despairing passion

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for the most generous of men, and doomed to bear the worst of indignities from another, to whom I had sacrificed all my hopes of happiness! I resigned myself up to the most piercing grief; and had no other hope, but that death would shortly free me from all my calamities.

Three weeks after my being placed with this worthy widow, I had the satisfaction to have a letter from my mother, which acquainted me, that she was reconciled to my father; but it was upon the hard condition of never seeing or speaking to me. However, she gave me hopes that she would not deny either me or herself that comfort, when she could, with safety, make me a visit. I also heard, at the same time, that Mr. Wilmot's father was dead; and the generous Clayton was waiting with impatience for the return of my husband, who was expected soon in England, to force him to do me justice, and acknowledge me for his wife.

This striking instance of the purest and most disinterested passion, that ever man was capable of feeling, afforded me only subject for complaint against the cruelty of my fortune, which had deprived me of the power of answering so shining an example of unfeigned affection. I trembled for the resolution he had taken, to force my unworthy husband to own me; and fearing every thing from a man, who could be capable of acting in so base a manner as Mr. Wilmot had done, my thoughts were continually filled with the most frightful apprehensions.

I had so accustomed myself to think of all the horrors, which might necessarily arise from a meeting between my lover and my husband, that when my mother's woman came to me, and, with a look of consternation and melancholy, told me, that my husband and Mr. Clayton had come to some explanation about the affair of my marriage, "Ah! replied I, (screaming) then one of them is dead!" "You have guessed too truly, madam, said Bell, one of them is dead, indeed; but 'tis he who deserved to fall, your perfidious husband, who, to the last moment of his life, persisted in disowning you." She had scarce uttered these dreadful words, when I fell into a fainting fit; and was no sooner recovered from that, than another followed: and I continued the whole day in such a deplorable condition, that my mother, alarmed by her woman's account of the danger to which my despair had reduced me, came to my lodgings, and, weeping over me with an excess of tenderness, conjured me to sacrifice my affliction, for the death of an unworthy husband, to the hope of being restored to my father's affection, which she did not despair of soon accomplishing.

"Ah, madam, said I, base as Mr. Wilmot was, yet still he was my husband; and tho' even the strictest laws of duty might dispense with my grieving for his death, who treated me so injuriously; yet my nature, tender and susceptible of melancholy impressions, starts with horror at the thoughts of murder. Will not his blood cry out for vengeance on me, who was the fatal cause that it was shed!" "Speak not so injuriously, interrupted my mother, of that justice which brought him to his end. The generous Mr. Clayton expostulated first mildly with your betrayer, and urged him to vindicate your injured honour, and fulfil your engagements, by owning you for his wife. He answered, that you had basely deceived him; and, having never returned the affection he once had for you, meant only to make him a convenient property. He added many other barbarous invectives. A quarrel ensued, and " "Ah, madam! cried I, (bursting into tears) spare the shocking repetition. Poor, unfortunate Wilmot! Can I chuse but lament thy death! And ought I not to give some tears to the misfortune of him, who, perhaps, must die to expiate the guilt of thy fate!" "No, interrupted my mother, Mr. Clayton is resolved to stand a trial; and tho' he had not such powerful friends as his own merit, and your father's interest is able to procure him, yet the justice of his cause would free him."

In effect, dear miss, pursued Mrs. Dormer, (whose eyes had for some time been bathed in tears, as well as my own) Mr. Clayton stood his trial, and was honourably acquitted: and this affair being the talk of the whole town, every one agreed that I ought to give him my hand, being the only recompence by which a love so faithful could be repaid. My father condescended to write to me upon this subject; and made it the only condition, by which his pardon could be obtained, to marry Mr. Clayton. My affection for this dear lover, put it past a doubt that I should gladly embrace this offer; but I could never persuade myself, that it was consistent with my religion, my virtue, or reputation, to marry the man that had killed my husband, tho', by that act, he had only justly punished his crime in disowning me.

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I will not pretend to give you any idea of the painful conflicts I suffered in my soul, while my excessive tenderness for Mr. Clayton, and regard to the memory of my unhappy husband, held the ballance between love and duty. However, I did not waver long; but determined to fall a victim to the severe rules I had prescribed myself: I wrote an answer to my father's letter, full of submission and remorse for having offended him by my fatal marriage; explained my reasons for declining to accept Mr. Clayton for a husband; and concluded with most earnest intreaties for his pardon; and a request that he would inform Mr. Clayton of my resolution, and absolute promise, that, since I could not be his, I never would be another's. My father was pleased to say, when he had read my letter, that he was so struck with the uncommon greatness of my mind, that he pardoned me from that instant, and restored me to the place I had formerly possessed in his affection. I was immediately sent for home, where I fell at his feet, and embraced them with tears of joy, sorrow, and contrition, which, from all these motives, flowed from my eyes.

My lover, being acquainted with my resolution, did not attempt to oppose it; but only intreated to see me once more, being determined, as he said, to go abroad, and endeavour to bury the remembrance of his unfortunate passion. All that was touching and mournful, on both sides, passed at this interview. I repeated to him, with tears, what I had before vowed to my father, that, since it was impossible I could be his, I would never be another's. And he likewise protested, that he would faithfully preserve my image in his heart; and changing, if possible, the ardent passion, he now felt for me, into a tender friendship, return and pass the rest of his life in that delightful commerce, which this calmer affection would yield.

When he was gone, my father and mother omitted nothing in their power to remove the painful grief which still engrossed me. Their endeavours, in time, produced the effect they desired: I recovered part of my usual gaiety; but still continued firm in my resolution never to marry, which nothing yet has been able to change. My father died two years after the departure of my lover; of whose death also I had an account, while I was still lamenting the loss of my father. He had divided his whole fortune equally between his two sisters and me, which made a very considerable addition to that my father left me.

During the life of my mother, I remained constantly with her; but her death plunging me into all my former disquiets, to soften them, in some measure, by a variety of new objects and the hurry of travel, I went to Paris; and, after seeing all that was remarkable in that court, I visited Italy, Holland, and the German Spa. And continuing a considerable time in these places, I returned to England, having acquired strength of mind enough to reflect on my misfortunes with calmness and resignation, and to pass the rest of my life in ease and tranquillity."

Mrs. Dormer here ended her story, leaving me in the most perfect admiration of her virtue and fortitude, which I expressed in terms equal to that esteem she had inspired me with. "No, miss, said she, (modestly interrupting me) I do not deserve the praises you load me with. My misfortunes had their rise from disobedience first. How differently, in that respect, have I behaved from you, who, at the most tender age, was capable of sacrificing your passion to duty." Mrs. Dormer accompanied these words with an affectionate look, which convinced me what she said was not a mere compliment of form; and I was prevented from replying, by the arrival of Mr. Campbel, who had received orders from his uncle to go on board his ship immediately, they being to sail upon a cruize.

My lover, when he informed me that he was come to take his leave, discovered so much despair in his looks and words, that I was deeply affected. "How happy, sir, said I, should I think myself, if, instead of that fatal passion which disturbs your quiet, you would only favour me with such sentiments as I have it in my power to return. Whatever the most sincere friendship can demand, my heart is disposed to pay. Your merit, and the obligations you have laid on me, claim this; but if I appear ungrateful to your love, be assured that " I would have proceeded; but my confusion was so great, at having, unawares, engaged myself almost into a confession of my attachment to another, that I held down my head, while my face was in an instant covered with blushes.

"Ah miss! replied Mr. Campbel, (who had earnestly gazed on me for some moments) I have no right to expect you should throw yourself into any embarrassment, to excuse your insensibility to me! My unhappiness, in being

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absolutely indifferent to you, has been long known to me. If that knowledge could have made me love you less, I should, e're this, have been at ease. However, I beg you to believe, that, as I prefer your happiness greatly to my own, my despair in losing you will be somewhat alleviated by the assurance that your felicity demanded me to be the sacrifice."

Mrs. Dormer, who sat at the other end of the room, observing my extreme confusion at the discourse Mr. Campbel held with me, joined us, in order to introduce a more general conversation. Upon which my lover, shortening his visit, took his leave of us with tears in his eyes and left me so excessively moved, with the tenderness and generosity of his sentiments, that it was a long time before I was capable of reassuming my usual gaiety.

The ships being again returned from N , brought me letters from my mother and sisters, with the agreeable news, that my dearest Fanny was married to a gentleman of good fortune there; and that her husband, proposing to return to England in a few months, she and my mother would very soon have the satisfaction of meeting me again. When my joy, at the thoughts of seeing persons so dear to me, was a little moderated, I began to feel some surprize at not having another letter from Dumont. I passed some days in the most terrible uneasiness, being convinced that nothing but neglect could be the cause of my not hearing from him, as we had settled the conveyance of our letters to each other with the utmost security; so that I could not imagine it had, by any accident, missed me.

I was talking one day to Mrs. Dormer, upon the subject of my fears, when one of that lady's servants came into the room, and informed me there was a gentleman below, who inquired for miss Harriot Stuart. Mrs. Dormer, imagining I should hear news of my lover, cast a pleasing smile upon me; and asked her servant, if he had shewn the gentleman into a room. Upon hearing he was in one of the parlours, I immediately went down stairs, with my heart trembling with expectation. But O, my dear Amanda! guess my excess of transport and surprize, when, the servant opening the door, I saw my beloved Dumont himself advancing eagerly to meet me! I stept back a few paces, lost in astonishment at a sight I so little expected; when my transported lover, catching me in his arms, pressed me to his bosom with an ardent embrace; while I, reclining my head upon his breast, suffered the soft pressure of his glowing lips upon my face, which was covered with tears of joy.

We continued for some moments in this posture, while, he still grasping me closer in his arms, I had neither the strength or inclination to get loose. Recollecting myself at last, and blushing at the liberty I had indulged myself in, I sprung in an instant from the dear inclosure, and, obliging him to be seated, asked a hundred questions in a breath; while my lover, with a look of mingled tenderness and delight, sat gazing on me in a speechless transport, unable to give utterance to the flow of melting thoughts which seemed to croud into his mind. I had now so well recovered myself from my first emotions, that I rallied, in a lively accent, the sublime silence with which he repaid my eager curiosity to hear all that had happened to him since I left N . He spoke at last; but, for a long time, all he said was in the language of transport, sweet unintelligible discourse, which the soft melting eloquence of his eyes were only able to explain.

I understood at length, that he had concealed his change of religion, with the utmost care, from his father; who, if he had suspected it, would not have allowed him to come to England: that his relations here, believing he intended to fulfil his engagements with his cousin, had received him with great joy. He added, that that young lady was in a very weak state of health; and tho' he had formerly reason to believe she had a very tender regard for him, yet she discovered so little sensibility at his coming, that he was convinced he might, with safety, acquaint her with the change in his principles; and, as she was generous and virtuous to excess, prevail upon her to let the dissolving their contract appear her own act; by which means he would not be obliged to forfeit the largest moiety of his fortune, which, in case of his refusal, would be insisted upon by her uncle.

"My delicacy, pursued my lover, suggested to me, that I ought not to see you 'till I could procure a certainty, that I should not bring an indigent wretch to your arms. But eager love could not be with held by forms, since I may

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flatter myself with being still beloved by my adorable Harriot, tho' I should fail in my scheme of preserving my fortune; yet, if she will not refuse the blessing of her hand, we shall still have enough to make us perfectly happy."

My lover concluding these words with a tender embrace, I gave him a short account of what had happened to me. And remembering, after a conversation of two hours, that Mrs. Dormer must necessarily be surprised at my long stay, I asked his permission to introduce him to this dear friend, to which he readily consented; and I ran up stairs immediately, in order to prepare her for receiving a visit from a person, whom I had already taught her to esteem.

I found her in her dressing-room; resolved, when she had finished dressing, out of an impatience to know if it was not my lover below with me, to step into the parlour before she went into her chair. I then told her, if her engagement abroad was not very urgent, I would beg her to allow me to introduce Mr. Dumont to her, who was really the person that had sent for me. "What, is he below still?" said she. "Let me see him, I beseech you: I am eager to know, if he is really worthy the possession of a heart like your's." I made her no answer, being convinced she would no sooner see him than she would be ready to confess, he exceeded the most lovely idea her imagination could form: and, indeed, the moment he appeared, and saluted her, with that irresistible grace which charmed all who beheld him, she turned to me with a speaking look, which seemed to say, she was agreeably surprized at the uncommon beauty of his person; and I had the pleasure to observe, she was no less struck with his lively wit, and the peculiar graces of his manner.

The conversation, in a little time, growing quite unreserved, Mrs. Dormer told my lover, with an obliging smile, That, as she was well acquainted with all our affairs, she expected he would visit me there with intire freedom. "And, till you rob me, pursued she, of my sweet friend, you must be contented that I share her conversation with you." Dumont replied with much complaisance to this obliging discourse, and, after a long visit, took his leave; telling Mrs. Dormer, he would use the liberty to call every day for the future, which she assured him would be highly agreeable to us both.

When he was gone, she did not give me time to ask her opinion of him; but, after telling me she thought his person the most lovely in the world, assured me, that she was no less pleased with the engaging qualities of his mind, which every look and word sufficiently declared.

My dear Dumont had promised to see me the next day, and I passed the tedious hours in a kind of sweet anxiety till he came. I observed in his looks, the moment I saw him, a pensiveness that alarmed me; and, eagerly asking the cause, he told me, with some concern, that all his hopes of preserving the forfeiture of his estate was over. "I pursued my intention, said he, of making my cousin the confidant of my change, which seemed to affect her even less than I expected. She replied, that her uncle would not approve her marrying a Protestant; and frankly confessed, that the ill state of her health had weaned her thoughts from the world; and she hoped that I had, with the change of my religion, left also the sentiments I once had for her, and would freely consent to her living unmarried, which she was now firmly resolved to do.

You may be assured, my lovely Harriot, pursued my lover, that I did not attempt to alter her resolution. She pressed me to tell her, if my heart was not engaged to some young lady, who possibly was the first cause of my changing my principles: upon which I candidly related the history of our loves; and expressing my fears, lest her uncle should insist upon the moiety of my fortune, and reduce me to a state of indigence and necessity, I saw a tender sensibility in her eyes, which gave me hopes she would come into any measures, I could propose, to save me from this misfortune.

We had been so indiscreet to converse in this manner, without considering that the room where we were sitting was next to her uncle's writing-closet; from whence, if he was there, he might hear every word we had said. In effect, my angel, it really was so: he came out of the closet, with looks full of fury; and, as he is one of the most rigid Papists in the world, he thundered out the most dreadful denunciation of divine vengeance against me for my impious change, declaring that, he would immediately write to my father, and pursue me to beggary, if

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possible. My cousin was so affected with the confusion this accident occasioned, that she fainted away; and I was too much concerned at the condition she was in, to be capable of calming the rage of her furious uncle. As soon as she was a little recovered, I hastened to you, my dearest Harriot, to unload my misfortunes on your dear bosom; and to conjure you to pardon my selfish passion, which makes me urge you to the performance of your promise to be mine, tho' I cannot place you in the situation your merit and birth deserve."

When I had tenderly chid my dear Dumont for the suspicion he seemed to entertain, that I could not be happy with him in any condition, I agreed to give him my hand in two or three weeks at farthest. Mrs. Dormer being consulted upon this occasion, she proposed to take me to her country-house, where the ceremony of our marriage might be performed with less noise; and she joining her reasons to the ardent intreaties of my lover, that I would not defer his happiness so long, I consented, at last, that we should be united in six days after. And, as soon as he left us, Mr. Dormer gave orders to her servants to get every thing ready for our journey to Richmond the next morning.

As I had before agreed with my lover not to expect him till the day before our marriage, I was not surprised at my not seeing him; but in all that time I received no letter from him, which filled me with a mortal uneasiness. I struggled, however, with myself to conceal my disquiets, even from Mrs. Dormer, who sometimes expressed her surprize at his neglect. But the appointed day came, and my lover not appearing, I could no longer suppress my apprehensions. Mrs. Dormer, tho' excessively alarmed, yet endeavoured to compose my fears, by alledging, that, perhaps, some very extraordinary affairs detained him longer than he expected; and that, to-morrow being the day we had fixed for our marriage, he would certainly be with us early in the morning. "But why does he not write, madam? said I, (bursting into tears.) Ah! you can never persuade me, that some fatal accident has not befallen him!"

Whatever arguments she could use to comfort me, were intirely fruitless. I passed the whole night in tears. When morning came, the agitations of my mind were so violent, that Mrs. Dormer proposed sending a servant to town, to go to his relation's house, which was in the midst of the city, and endeavour to give him a billet from me. I consented immediately to this expedient; and, having wrote a short letter to him, dispatched the servant away with it on horseback, with proper instructions to deliver the billet to none but Dumont himself. Mrs. Dormer, while he was away, endeavoured to soften my anxious impatience, by telling me she hoped my lover would arrive before the servant returned. But, alas! the hours past away in vain expectation and racking fear! 'Twas late in the evening before the servant returned; while my heart, tortured with the most cruel anxiety, thought every moment an age. My friend was perpetually ringing the bell, to ask if her man was come back. At last, we were told he was just entered the house, and two moments after came into the room. Mrs. Dormer, observing I was not able to speak, asked the servant, hastily, if he had delivered the letter, "No, madam, said he, (holding it out to her) I could not see Mr. Dumont himself. His servant was called, and he told me his master was married the evening before; that he could not possibly speak to him, he being engaged in company: but that, if I would leave the letter with him, he would take an opportunity to deliver it. But as you commanded me, madam, to bring it back, if " "Well, well, interrupted Mrs. Dormer, (seeing me ready to drop from my chair) you have done right: leave the room." Then, running to me, she held me up in her arms; and, forcing me to take some hartshorn, prevented me, with great difficulty, from falling into a swoon.

I will not trouble you, dear Amanda, with the complaints I made when I recovered the use of speech; which astonishment, grief, and despair, had for some time deprived me of. Mrs. Dormer knew too well, that to offer consolation, while my grief was yet new, would be in vain; she, therefore, contented herself with mingling her tears with mine, and ecchoing, with all the fervour of friendship, the epithets of base, perfidious, and ungrateful, with which I loaded the once dear Dumont. The torments I suffered this dreadful night, may be better imagined than described. That pride of spirit, which was natural to me when I received an affront, came however to my assistance on this cruel occasion; and, filling me with the sharpest resentment and disdain for the base infidelity of my lover, helped to fortify my heart against the first violent emotions of my grief. The resolution I had taken to see this betrayer once more, that I might upbraid him with his broken vows, gave me, in some intervals, a gloomy

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satisfaction. I eagerly longed for morning, that I might set out for London to execute this design; and, as soon as it appeared, I rose immediately, and, when I was drest, went into Mrs. Dormer's chamber to acquaint her with my intention. That lady, finding all the arguments she could use ineffectual to dissuade me, offered to bear me company; but this I absolutely refused. And, assuring her I would return the next day, she, with some reluctance, consented to my going; and gave orders for her chaise to be got ready. I left her so sensibly affected with this little parting, that I could not help expressing my surprize at it. Alas! I did not foresee that it would be long e're I should see her again, and that fortune was preparing the severest afflictions for me! I had ordered the servant to drive, with the utmost expedition, to town; but yet he went much too slow for my impatience. When we got to my friend's lodgings, the moment I alighted, one of the maid-servants informed me, that an elderly gentleman was enquiring for me, who said he brought some news from my mother. "Where is that gentleman?" said I, (eagerly.) "Is he gone?" "No, miss, said she, (pointing to a person who stood in the hall, whom I had not observed before) that is the gentleman: he came in just before you." Upon this he advanced towards me, when, desiring him to follow me into a parlour, I asked him if he had any letters from my mother. "Don't be surprised, miss, said he, tho' you should hear news you little expect. Your mother and youngest sister are now in London." "In London! cried I, (amazed.) Can it be possible! Why, it is not a month ago since I heard from them, and they gave me no hopes I should see them so soon!" "Your mother, miss, replied he, embarked with your sister and her husband on board a ship, which sailed from N a few days after that which brought you the letters you speak of: your brother-in-law having received some accounts from England, which obliged him to come away much sooner than he intended. I have the honour to be particularly acquainted with him and your sister, and came from N in the same ship with them. I left them all at the inn, where we arrived late last night; and, as I was obliged to be early in the morning at this end of the town, was desired to call here, and acquaint you with their arrival: and will, if you please, wait on you to the inn, where they impatiently expect you." I was so eager to see my mother and sister, that I did not hesitate a moment to comply with this offer. But resolving to defer sending a message to Dumont till another opportunity, congratulated myself on the prospect of having my dear Fanny to console me under this uneasiness; and stepping into the hackney-coach, which the gentleman came in, and which was still waiting at the door, we set forwards immediately for the place, to which my conductor ordered the coachman to drive. As he seemed to be much in years, I was not surprised that he intreated me to let the windows, which were of wood, to be drawn up, complaining that the air was too cool for him; yet I did not like this situation with a stranger, and began to think our journey had lasted very long, when, the coach stopping of a sudden, my companion opened the door himself, and gave me his hand to help me down. I was so perfectly unacquainted with the town, that I did not take much notice that we were set down at a wharf near the bridge; but I followed the gentleman, still thinking the inn was somewhere thereabouts, when, all of a sudden, he lifted me up in his arms, and put me into a boat, that I had reason to imagine was expecting us. The watermen rowing immediately from the shore, e're my astonishment would give me leave to cry out for help, I found myself wholly abandoned to the power of the wretch who had betrayed me; and, not being able to imagine his reasons for thus imposing on me, I asked him, in a trembling voice, where he intended to carry me, and if it was true that he had been sent by my mother. I was surprised to hear him answer, in an authoritative tone, That I should know that presently; urging the watermen, at the same time, to make haste. "My God! cried I, what can this mean! Am I betrayed, then! Yet, alas! who can have any interest in thus trepanning me!" "Foolish girl, said the old man, hold thy peace: what I do is for your good." My amazement at this strange language, from a man who was perfectly unknown to me, filled me with a terror and confusion not easily to be described. I was pressing him, with tears, to unfold the mystery, when, our boat coming up close to a small vessel that was in the river, he, with the help of a man who stood at the side, forced me to ascend it, in spite of my loud cries and exclamations. I now gave myself over for lost; and, having too much reason to imagine that something fatal was designed against me, I resigned myself up to the most violent despair. The old man, who had exhorted me several times to patience, offered to lead me down stairs into the cabbins, to avoid the sight of the men upon deck, who were taken up in gazing on us. "I know not, said I, (in an assured accent) for what purpose you have used this violence to me; but if, as I have too much reason to suspect, there is any design formed upon my honour, know, I am resolved to die in the defence of it." "Fear not, replied he, (in a low voice) that I would be accessory to such a villainous intention. I am no ruffian; and I admire the sentiment you have just now avowed: but I have very urgent reasons for getting your person in my power. The quiet of a whole family depended on it." Saying this, he gave me his hand to help me into the cabbins; which I did not refuse,

hoping I should prevail upon him to explain himself upon this dark affair. "I can't imagine, sir, said I, (when we were seated) how your seizing my person can promote the happiness of any people whatever; and before I pretend to expostulate with you, on the injustice of detaining me as your prisoner, and intention of conveying me far from my relations and country, I would fain know who those presons are, whose quiet I so innocently disturb, and to whom I am to be made a sacrifice?" "When you shall know, replied the old gentleman, that my name is Darcy, the uncle of that young lady to whom Mr. Dumont was engaged from his infancy, you will not be surprised that I have acted in this manner. Your artifices have seduced that young man to forsake the religion of his ancestors, in which he was bred, to espouse the doctrines of that heresy you profess, which must inevitably shut him out from salvation." "Ah! interrupted I, must my liberty be invaded upon the account of that perfidious man! Is he not married? What have you to fear from me?" "'Tis true, he is married, replied he; but it is to be feared, that the apprehensions of being a beggar made him consent to fulfil his engagement. And, since you have been the means of perverting his principles, and estranging his affections from her who had always a claim to them, it is fit you should be removed from his sight, that the endeavours of his wife and friends, to bring him back to the holy church he has forsaken, may have no obstructions from the fatal passion he had for you, and which your absence will not fail to extinguish." "Do you think, then, insolent as you are, said I, that I am capable of holding any correspondence with a married man; one who has betrayed me, and whom, for a thousand reasons, I am obliged to hate?" "I confess, miss, interrupted Mr. Darcy, that Dumont is unworthy of your esteem; for he has certainly deceived you, and there is no doubt but he has very dishonourable intentions towards you: therefore, in thus depriving him of the means of laying snares for your virtue, and giving any umbrage to his wife, I have taken the trouble to keep you out of his way for some time, till his affection for his wife is confirmed, and the heretical principles, he has imbibed by your means, eradicated." "And do you imagine, resumed I, that this action of your's would not subject you to some punishment, were it known? How dare you force me from my relations, and oblige me to abandon those upon whom my whole dependence was placed? Must my fame and happiness be sacrificed to your fears for your niece? Am I not as dear to my mother and sisters as she is to you? And must all my family be involved in misery, lest any jealousies should disturb her repose? But do not think, that I will quietly submit to this insolent treatment: I know not where you intend to carry me; but, depend upon it, the moment we land, I'll demand justice for the violence you have done me." "You are much deceived, said he, if you imagine I have taken my measures so ill, as to fear any clamours you can make. I will do nothing dishonourably by you: I am taking you to Paris, where I have a relation, who is prioress of a convent. 'Tis there I propose to place you; and will be at the expence of supporting you as a pensioner there, 'till your return to England may be effected without any ill consequences to my nephew. If you will submit patiently to this design, you shall be treated with all the respect you can desire; if not, take what measures you please: I am prepared against all you can do." Saying this, he went out of the cabbin, leaving me at liberty to reflect on the strangeness of my misfortunes. The thoughts of being confined in a monastery, and tore from my relations, whom it was not probable I might see again in a long time, were, I confess, to my shame, but secondary causes of my affliction. The perfidy of Dumont sunk deep into my soul. Spite of my just resentment, I loved him still; and was not capable of forming a wish to hurt the quiet of him, whose infidelity had made me completely miserable. Mr. Darcy, after an absence of two hours, came again into the cabbin, followed by the cabbin-boy, who laid the cloath, and served a cold collation to the table; of which Mr. Darcy intreated me, with much politeness, to partake of. I sat down to the table in a kind of sullen civility; but my grief was too violent to suffer me to eat much. When the things were removed, I again resumed my reproaches and threatnings; but, he continuing fixed in his resolution, I found there was no possibility of preventing his designs, which plunged me into the most frightful despair. I passed that night, and the following day, in ruminating on the most likely methods I could fall upon to get out of his hands; and I thought them all so improbable and hazardous, that I remained convinced I was doomed to be a prisoner as long as he should think it necessary. We did not arrive at Calais till about eleven o'clock the next night; an hour which favoured my ravisher's designs. When we landed, he made me pass for his niece, whom he was carrying to a convent at Paris. As all passengers pass thro' a kind of examination at the governor's, whither we went for the same purpose, I determined to explain my situation, and claim redress. The governor could not be seen at that time of night; but, it seems, it was sufficient if any of his servants saw the strangers: and I was beginning to speak to a person, who seemed to be in some authority, when Darcy eagerly interrupting me, "This unhappy girl, said he, has had the misfortune to be corrupted by the Heretick who had the care of her education. Her false zeal for their destructive

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principles, makes her look upon the resolution I have taken, to place her for a time in a monastery, where she may be brought to detest her fatal change, as an insupportable tyranny." I would have answered this horrid falshood; but I was not suffered to speak. These good Catholicks, conceiving, in an instant, the unfavourable impression Darcy designed they should, commended the pious intention of my pretended uncle, and loaded me with reproaches.

We performed our journey to Paris in two days and a half, Mr. Darcy telling the same story to every one whom we were obliged to speak to. The post-chaise we travelled in, set us down at the very gate of the convent. We were shewn into the parlour, and, in a few minutes, the prioress appeared. I was so taken up with observing objects so new and strange to me, that this lady and Mr. Darcy conversed softly together for a quarter of an hour, before I could recollect myself well enough to be able to speak. "Madam, (said I, at last, to this old Nun) I cannot imagine, as you are Mr. Darcy's relation, and, no doubt, intitled to his confidence, that he will attempt to impose upon you in the same manner he has done others, since I came into his power. You can't but know that I am not his niece, and that he has no right to confine me in this place, which he proposes to do. If I meet with no redress from you, madam, I am to believe that you join in the unjust violence which is offered me, and give the sanction of your approbation to the most cruel artifice that ever was practised." "Bless me, cousin, said the prioress, (affecting an air of astonishment) has this young creature lost her senses, that she talks in this manner? What am I to think of the incoherent stuff she has uttered! She denies that you have any right to interest yourself in her affairs, and complains of violence and artifice. What artifice, child! Is not this gentleman your uncle?" "Dear madam, interrupted Mr. Darcy, don't trouble yourself to ask her any questions. The foolish girl is distractedly in love; and she would disown her parents, were they alive, to be at liberty to indulge her infamous passion for the heretick that has helped to ruin her principles." "Pray, cousin, resumed the prioress, (with a starched gravity) be not in such heat. Permit me to examine a little what she has advanced: I will not give this child the least reason to accuse me of partiality and injustice: heaven forbid. What a scandal to our holy order! No, I will deal uprightly in this affair. Well, miss, you persist in saying you are not this gentleman's niece?" "Yes, madam, answered I, (eagerly) and I can easily put you in a method to be convinced that what I say is truth. I have relations in England of some rank; let them be wrote to." "Hold, hold, interrupted the prioress, (frowning) you talk too fast. Relations in England of rank! who doubts it? My cousin Darcy's family is a very wealthy and opulent one. You are very artful, indeed! very artful! Oh these abominable hereticks! how they contaminate the mind! Alas! they have quite ruined this poor child! I almost despair of bringing her back to salvation! But I will not be wanting in my most zealous endeavours to reclaim her. I will continually solicit the Holy Virgin in her behalf, that she would be pleased to assist my pious labours in restoring this lost sheep to the flock of Christ. Cousin, you may depend upon my care and fidelity: I will be answerable for her safety, and, I hope, conversion to the bosom of that holy church from which she hath strayed." "Sure, madam, replied I, (lost in astonishment at her impious artifice) you forget that you have not suffered me to explain the cruel treatment I have met with. From the beginning of your speech, I hoped you would do me justice; but, I find, I am most miserably mistaken. But heaven, that sees how basely I am betrayed, will, I hope, find out the means of deliverance for me." "Alas! said the prioress, (lifting up her eyes) she is quite incorrigible!" Saying this, she rung a bell; upon which a middle-aged nun appeared: "Sister Martha, said the prioress, I shall intrust this young lady to your care. She is delivered to me by her uncle, who informs me, she has been persuaded to forsake the holy Catholick religion, in which she was bred, thro' a prevailing passion she has for a heretick, who would undo her." At these words, the grate being opened, I was led into that fatal inclosure. "Oh, my God! cried I, (with an ardent tone of voice) protect and deliver me!" "Go, miss, said the prioress, follow that sister; she will conduct you to your chamber." I made no reply, but followed the nun; who, shewing me into a small chamber neatly furnished, desired me, very civilly, to sit down and compose myself; for, by this time, my face was all covered with tears. I threw myself into a chair; and, not being restrained by the presence of the nun, I gave way to the excess of anguish which oppressed me, and bewailed my fate in a deluge of tears. The nun, who had observed me heedfully, and, no doubt, made her own reflections upon the reproaches I had uttered, in the intervals of my weeping, against those who had betrayed me, asked me, in an obliging tone, Why I was so much afflicted; begged me to have patience; and observed to me, that my condition might not be so bad as my imagination represented it. As I had often heard very displeasing accounts of the inquisitive and insincere temper of the women in these religious communities, I resolved to be very cautious and reserved. The

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behaviour of the prioress had given me such an idea of holy hypocrisy, as would have inclined me to suspect the greatest appearance of piety to be a cheat. Possessed with these unfavourable opinions of the whole convent, it is not to be wondered at, that I could not resolve to place any confidence in her, under whose direction I was placed: I, therefore, contented myself with making civil replies to her offers of service; and answered her enquiries into my affairs, with only general complaints of the treachery and violence I had suffered. Near an hour was passed in this sort of conversation, when a young person, whom I afterwards found was called a lay-sister, opening the door, told the nun, that the prioress had called for her. After a short stay, sister Martha, returning, desired I would follow her to the prioress, which I immediately did; and being come into that lady's apartment, the nun withdrew, leaving me alone with her. When she had desired me, very civilly, to be seated, she began to question me about my affairs, keeping up the appearance of believing me Mr. Darcy's niece: and, notwithstanding all my protestations to the contrary, she seemed to persist in thinking I wanted to impose on her. I easily saw thro' her design. She would persuade me, by thus obstinately continuing in her error, that, in complying with the injunctions of Mr. Darcy, she only did her duty. It was, therefore, to no purpose to attempt to reason her out of a thing she was determined to believe, or rather to affect she did; and, for the remainder of the time I staid with her, I observed a sullen silence, without taking the trouble to answer the monastick cant in which she talked to me. "I find, pursued she, that I must be obliged to treat you with more severity than I at first intended; and that it will be necessary to keep you from any conversation with the ladies in this convent, lest you should attempt to impose upon them with your idle tales. You must, therefore, be contented to eat alone in your chamber; and when your behaviour and repentance convince me I may trust you with any of the pensioners in my convent, you shall be at liberty to enjoy their company, and mix in their amusements." Saying this, she ordered sister Martha to take me back again to my room, where I found the cloth laid, and my dinner served up, which consisted of some soup, and some other dish which I did not taste. I passed great part of this day alone. The prioress had sent me some monkish writings, which was all the entertainment I was allowed. In the evening I had a visit from sister Martha, who was ordered to reason with me on the subject of my change of religion. As I found her a woman of good sense, I did not refuse to listen to her arguments, which helped to wear away the time, which, otherwise, would have been spent in tears and complaint. As we often held long discourses together, I had the good fortune to increase every day in her esteem: she praised my understanding, and began to take a pleasure in talking to me on other subjects beside religion. I found myself insensibly engaged to like this nun; and observing that she had never pressed me to disclose more of my affairs than I thought proper to trust her with, I conceived the better opinion of her discretion and sincerity. And my confidence in her daily growing stronger, I related to her, at last, my whole history, without omitting the smallest circumstance. I took notice, with pleasure, that she seemed greatly affected with several parts of it; and, when I had ended, embraced me with tears in her eyes. "It must be confessed, miss, said she, that your story is very moving; and, considering your extreme youth, full of very extraordinary incidents. I am surprised at your courage and constancy, and, indeed, your last misfortune requires it all. You are not the first unhappy young creature, who have been betrayed into these places, thro' the artful contrivances of people, for whose interest it was they should be confined. There are two or three young ladies here at present, whose stories are still more melancholy than your's: they have been the prey of designing villains, who, after they had, by a mock-marriage, possessed themselves of their persons and fortunes, brought them here, where they are intirely secluded from all conversation with the world, and deprived for ever of the means of redress." "And does the prioress, resumed I, know of this injustice?" "You may judge of that, said she, by her behaviour to you. There is generally a handsome reward in these cases; and she holds herself obliged to believe whatever the betrayers of these innocent victims advance, and follows their orders strictly." "Alas! replied I, is there no hopes that I shall ever be freed from my confinement! Must I pass the rest of my days here, and never more see those dear relations, whom the loss of me will plunge into the most cruel distress." "I see no probability, resumed the nun, of your release, unless your friends can discover where you are, which will be a very difficult matter. However, by your account of the occasion of your being brought here, I cannot think you will be confined long. Perhaps your disappearing thus, all of a sudden, was necessary to answer some present purpose of Mr. Darcy's. 'Tis a mighty mysterious affair; and, if there is nothing more in it than what he told me, your stay may not be very long. But I can't flatter you, by saying, that there is any hopes of your escaping by any other means than those by which you were brought here.' This lady, who now sincerely pitied the melancholy life I led, endeavoured to soften it by all the good offices in her power. She spent as much of her time with me as she had to

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spare from the duties of her calling; and, despairing to work any change in my principles, she dispensed with my constantly reading the books the prioress put into my hands; and borrowed, from some of the young ladies who were pensioners in the convent, some others more calculated to divert me. She went so far as to advise me to seem more reconciled to my situation, when I discoursed with the prioress, which would be the only way of procuring the liberty of conversing with some of the young ladies. I was prevailed upon, by the extreme desire I had for society, to dissemble in the manner she hinted; and the prioress, having exacted a promise from me to take care, that I would throw no reflections on the character of her relation Mr. Darcy, permitted me to see some of the sisterhood, and one or two of the pensioners. Among the last who visited me, there was one who expressed a more than ordinary inclination to serve me. She was a native of England, and had been in the convent but six months when I came. She was but eighteen years of age; and joined to a sparkling and elegant wit, a beauty so soft and touching, and withal so exquisitely alluring, that it was impossible to look upon any thing else when she was present. I felt myself, by a powerful sympathy, obliged to love this charming young creature; and we soon contracted a friendship, which intirely banished all reserve between us. My adventures, which I related at her request, drew a thousand tears from her lovely eyes. She owned my misfortunes had been very great: "But, alas, dear miss, said she, (pressing my hand) my afflictions have been infinitely greater than your's! The few years I have lived, have been crouded with variety of wretchedness; yet my weakness and irresolution was possibly the first cause of my unhappiness. Never was there a temper so formed to give its owner pain; tender and fearful to excess; susceptible of every melting impression; and so incapable of resenting injuries, that I could never preserve a sense of them long enough, so as to be able to answer them with that spirit which is becoming innocence and truth.

In the relation of my history, I am obliged to speak, without disguise, of the faults of an only sister, who is now no more. Ah! ought I not rather to hide them for ever in oblivion! Poor undone Maria! shall I disturb thy ashes with a painful enumeration of the miseries thy fatal conduct brought on me! Alas! my fortune was so twisted with her's, that, in relating my distresses, I give, in effect, her history, whose actions were the only source from whence they sprung. My father, who was a very considerable merchant in London, had been married to two wives successively of great families; and tho' they brought him no fortune, yet he found himself obliged to support them in a manner suitable to the dignity of their birth: by which fatal compliance he insensibly involved his circumstances into irreparable ruin. The last of these ladies was mother to my sister Maria and me, who were the only children my father ever had. Maria, who was born fifteen years before me, was the darling both of my father and mother: they indulged her in every wish she could frame; and, tho' her behaviour had been ever so unexceptionable, it could hardly have repaid the unlimited confidence they reposed in her.

I am very unskilful, dear miss Stuart, in drawing characters; yet I will endeavour to give you some notion of my sister's, which, indeed, requires a much abler painter. Let me begin then, with her person. She was of the middle size, and had what is called a true shape; that is, she was perfectly strait, had a good neck and small waist. But she had none of that delicacy of composure, that genteel negligence and gracefulness of motion, which constitutes an elegant person. These defects, however, were in a great measure concealed by the extraordinary richness of her cloaths; for finery certainly affords great advantages to a tolerable figure, and her's, observed with a critical eye, could not be allowed any greater praise. Her face might have the same objections made to it, as her person; that is, it was neither striking nor genteel. She had a good complexion, and might be said to have tolerable features; but her mouth was too large, and her eyes too small. In short, her face was so equivocal, that it would have been hard to have called it handsome or disagreeable. Her eyes were not animated with any thing but motion, and they might more properly be said to see than to look. It will not be difficult to guess from this, that she was very deficient in her understanding. It was remarked by a very great author, that no woman could ever look well, that did not think well. I am of the same opinion; and it was to the want of thinking well, that I ascribed those unmeaning glances of my sister's, which spread an air of stupidity over her face. Yet this barrenness of wit was not so easily discovered in her as in many others: she seldom attempted to talk on any subjects out of her sphere of comprehension; and her silence, upon those occasions, was not very remarkable. She possessed an infinite share of cunning, and what by some people is called prudence; which means no more than a settled habit of masquing one's own sentiments, always speaking in disguise, and taking all advantages of the openness and sincerity of others. This, indeed, was

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her peculiar talent: never woman was more capable of assuming the appearance of modesty and virtue. My father, who believed her a miracle of chastity, never controuled any of her actions; but gave her an intire liberty to see what company, and frequent what diversions, she pleased. And I have often heard her say, she should think herself the basest of all creatures in the world, if she abused the generous confidence her parents put in her conduct. And yet, dear miss, my sister, even in the life of my father, allowed herself very scandalous liberties; and what, if known, would have been sufficient to ruin her reputation for virtue.

My father and mother died within a few months of each other. It was thought the bad condition of his affairs threw him into a melancholy, which brought on the fatal illness which deprived us of him. I was but fourteen when, by the death of both my parents, I was left intirely to the care of my sister Maria, with no more than five hundred pounds, to which she was left sole executrix, and which was to be divided between us. Most of our relations of any quality and fortune living in France, (for my mother was a native of this country) it was expected my sister would go there; but she, not finding they were very warm in their solicitations for that purpose, chose to remain in London; where she continued to maintain as much of the same elegance of living, as if my father had been still alive, and able to afford it. It may easily be imagined, that so poor a sum as five hundred pounds would be soon diminished at the rate we lived. People were at a loss to know what my sister designed by making so gay an appearance, when it was well known the trifle we had to depend upon. I have not yet touched upon my sister's distinguishing foible, which was vanity to such excess, that she did not think there was a woman upon earth who excelled her in beauty.

I am afraid, indeed, you may suspect my having handled her character with too much satire; but I cannot possibly avoid mentioning those defects in it, to which she owed her ruin. With this advantageous opinion of her person, which the adulation of a few lovers had helped to increase, she continued the gay life she had been used to, in hopes of making her fortune by marriage. Any one, less infatuated with vanity, would not have engaged their whole dependence in so hopeless a scheme; she being no longer in that bloom of youth, in which beauty is in its full lustre. And the world, which was pretty free in its censures on her conduct, insinuated that she aimed at being kept by some man of fortune, who could afford to settle a considerable allowance on her. Tho' I was sensible my sister had made two or three slips in her conduct, which might, with reason, have subjected her to great censure; yet I had too good an opinion of her, to believe any thing in the world could prevail upon her to forfeit her virtue: and looked upon the liberties she had allowed herself, to be the effects of an inordinate fondness for seeing herself the object of love. This desire in her, not being managed with that delicate art, which a coquet, who has wit, always uses, and which prevents any assuming confidence in the lover she would seem to favour, she was forced to submit to lower artifices, and grant very blameable favours, for the sake of hearing the language of love. This being my sense of those faults she was guilty of, it was not strange that my partial tenderness for her, which her surprising art in disguising the true bent of her inclinations confirmed, should so far influence my opinion, as to make me perfectly secure of her virtue. I was too young to be capable of reflecting seriously on the waste of our little fortune; and had been so used to reverence and obey my sister, who, by reason of her great advantage over me in years, I considered almost in the character of a mother, that I could hardly think any thing amiss she did. Some months had elapsed since the death of my mother, without my sister making the hoped-for market of her charms; for, in short, her admirers seldom went farther than a few superficial compliments, which, had her vanity given her leave to judge rightly of, was no great proof of their passion. Her own heart, however, was more sensible of the extent of that passion she aimed to inspire: she became in love with a gentleman, famous for the devastation his person had made among the unexperienced of our sex; and she no sooner resigned her heart, than she made a sacrifice of her fame, her honour, and her happiness. This shocking affair could not be long concealed from me. Maria, whose prudence once avoided the least occasion of censure, now made no scruple to lie out of our lodgings two or three times a week. Her temper was naturally violent; and she often treated me with most insupportable tyranny, if ever I dared to contradict her. I, therefore, durst only express my dislike of her conduct by distant hints, which she would not seem to understand. Her staying from me all night, shocked me beyond expression; for I was not only terribly afraid of lying alone, but was ready to die with the apprehension that her lying out would be discovered. For this reason I could not have the maid, who lived with us, to sleep with me; and was forced to hide myself under the bed-cloaths, for fear of spectres, while my sister stole down stairs, and went

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to her lover. As she was sure to return before our maid entered the chamber, who was used never to rise till she was called, her intrigue remained a secret to her; and the people with whom we lodged, were also intirely ignorant of her ever lying abroad, as they carried on great business, and, being always employed in their shop, had no opportunities of observing who went out or in at the other door, which was for the use of their lodgers.

Thus secure was the unhappy Maria in the practice of her guilt, to which I was doomed to be the victim. Young as I then was, I was capable of foreseeing some part of the misfortunes her ill conduct would bring upon us both. I lamented her crime with tears: I endeavoured to make her sensible of the fatal step she had taken; but she would silence me with the most insolent expressions of rage and contempt. And telling me, she never thought the laws of marriage binding, any farther than inclination gave them force, she looked upon herself as much married to Mr. Dalmer, while she continued constant to him, as if the priest had joined their hands.

By the way, dear miss, this sentiment was not her own; she had read or heard it somewhere, and applied it immediately to her own case, as she did several other things, which favoured her scheme of free and unrestrained love. I loved her with such tenderness, that I was easily persuaded to believe it was excess of love which occasioned her fault; and the first instance of indifference from her betrayer, would make her return to a sense of her duty, and give her a higher relish of a virtuous life for the future.

She still wore in her countenance and behaviour such an appearance of modesty and reserve, that no one could be capable of imagining she had been guilty of any offence to virtue. In the mean time, our money was almost spent. My sister, in the disposal of her person, consulted nothing but her inclinations. She scorned, she would say, to have any mercenary views, like wretches who sold themselves for gain: it was nobler, in her opinion, to be the victim of love. A prude would have said, perhaps, it was a filthy pride to value themselves upon falling a sacrifice to gross inclinations. Maria saw things in another light: she valued herself upon her nice taste in love; and would scorn to mix any mean, sordid views of interest with her gratifications in an unlawful passion. Maria, who was the most humble, creeping mistress that ever man had, was capable of exerting the violence of her temper only against me. Her profound dissimulation made her seize all opportunities, in public, of expressing an uncommon tenderness and care of me; while, in private, she indulged herself in the most tyrannical treatment. Unhappily for her, she had no relations in England, who thought themselves near enough in blood to her, to assume a right of censuring her conduct: she, therefore, contracted all the insolence of unreprieved vice; and dared not only justify her actions, but load me with the most injurious language, if I dared to insinuate the least dislike to the base principles she avowed.

Here, miss, I know you will condemn me for not leaving her immediately. Alas! I am sensible 'twas what I ought to have done! But, with all that native softness of constitution, that blameable tenderness, which somebody very rightly terms a milkyness of blood; how could I resolve to cast off, for ever, an only sister! Disclaim the endearing ties of nature! and, publishing her infamy by my abandoning her, destroy the reputation she still generally preserved of virtue! I could have sooner died than have consented to do this! I could not bear to wound her with the most distant hint, that it was necessary I should leave her, to preserve my own reputation. It never seemed to enter into her thoughts, that I might suffer from her guilt. My youth and innocence, confided to her care by a mother, who believed no temptation upon earth could win her from virtue, were so little the objects of her concern, that the superiority my virtue gave me over her, even in her own reflections, made me, perhaps, often be exposed to the violence of her temper, from a cause I could not guess; and which her pride, 'tis probable, would not allow her to confess even to herself. But she was now with child; and tho' this glaring proof of her guilt sent unutterable pangs to my heart, yet the severity of my reflections were so softened by a consideration of the danger of her condition, that I could only silently lament her shame and misery; which she seemed so intirely insensible of herself, that I could impute it to nothing else than an excess of stupidity, which rendered her wholly incapable of reflection.

Her lover now gave her so many marks of indifference, that she was convinced her charms, powerful as she thought them, had lost their influence on his heart. On this occasion, indeed, she discovered some reflection: she

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mourned this misfortune with a gloomy kind of melancholy, which made her so excessively ill-natured, that I hardly dared to speak to her. What uneasy days have I spent with her, while her condition obliged her to keep her chamber, lest she should be remarked. Her resentment against Dalmere would shew itself in such frantic humours, that I never enjoyed a moment's peace. Then, if it happened that her lover would condescend to dissemble a return of tenderness for her, she would grow so insolent and over-bearing upon it, that I was sure to suffer as much from the tyrannic exultings of her joy, as I did before from her rage and grief. Now, if I did any thing to displease her, Mr. Dalmere should know it; she would complain of my impertinence to Mr. Dalmere; he would not suffer her to be treated in this manner. This way of threatening me with her gallant's resentment, would sometimes throw me into violent fits of rage. Then I would resolve to leave her, and implore the protection of some of my relations: haughty as they were, I would conjure them to shelter me from her infamy and ill-usage. But these emotions of my anger died almost as soon as born; and the least expression of concern from her, soothed me again into a perfect calm.

My sister, who, in the pursuit of her amour, suffered no thought of future want to intrude upon her mind, wholly ingrossed by her fondness for her undoer, now found difficulties crowd upon her apace. Her lover very sparingly afforded her some assistance; and, but for some very considerable presents I received from my godmother, who was very fond of me, she must, in her affecting condition, have wanted the necessaries of life. Her lover, who had been bred to the law, had the management of a little lawsuit for us, which, if ended in our favour, would afford us but a very trifling assistance. But my relations here in France having wrote to invite me over, I determined, as soon as my sister was freed from her shameful burthen, to go to them; for my heart died within me, when I reflected that her life was perhaps drawing near a period, and that my leaving her in such a distressed condition, might have the most cruel effects. I therefore applied my godmother's bounty wholly to her assistance, which was designed to send me in a genteel manner to France; by which I laid myself under a necessity of depending upon the event of this little affair, which Dalmere was transacting.

In the mean time, my sister's unfortunate situation began to be suspected by some persons, who would not fail to whisper it about. I was aware of the ill consequences of such a report; but Maria, to stifle any reproaches she conceived I might make her, if her story became public, had the detestable art to throw all the blame of a discovery upon me. She said, my continual uneasiness at her leaving me for any time, made her chuse rather to stay in her lodgings with me, than consent to remain in a private manner in the country till her delivery; her lover having offered to be at all the expences of her retreat.

This, in fact, dear miss, was absolutely false; for Mr. Dalmere, either too indigent or too covetous, never made her such an offer; or, if he had, could I have been capable of expressing any dislike to it, as it was the only means of concealing her crime. I, indeed, often shewed an extreme concern at her lying out of her lodgings of nights; both because it was highly scandalous, and laid me under the necessity of sleeping alone, which I could not do, without feeling unaccountable fears and apprehensions; the effects of a disturbed imagination, and those tales of spirits and hobgoblins I had heard in my childhood. And, therefore, whenever she was going, I always burst into tears and complaints; partly thro' disgust at the indecency, and horror at being left to my terrible apprehensions. My sister would always rave at me, for thus opposing her going out, with a most surprising assurance; and make me as severe reproaches, as if the design of her leaving me was the most innocent and justifiable imaginable. Upon this she grounded her accusation of me, as the cause of her continuing in town, during her being with child; tho' I never heard a word of her intention to leave it, or the most distant expectation that her lover would propose it to her. However, Maria said it so often, that, I am of opinion, she at last persuaded herself it was true; for I could no otherwise account for those gusts of rage with which she would terrify me, whenever I contradicted so false an assertion. As she drew nearer the time of her delivery, the palpable indifference of her lover seemed more to affect her. I took this opportunity, to endeavour to wean her mind from the fatal passion that had ruined her. My arguments, at last, worked so forcibly upon her passions, that, when she was seized with the pangs of labour, and a coach was waiting at the door, to carry her to the place designed for her privately lying-in, I dictated a letter to her, which she sent to her betrayer, in which she bid him an eternal farewell, and solemnly vowed she would never see him more; wishing, that, in her present dangerous circumstances, her life or death might be determined

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by the sincerity and faithful performance of the resolution she had taken. Alas, I vainly flattered myself, that a returning sense of virtue, and remorse for her past guilt, aided my remonstrances, and disposed her to this favourable change. But resentment and despair inspired these sentiments; and, during the whole time of her illness, she was agitated by no other emotions than what his still-continued indifference made her feel.

As I could never discover in the unhappy Maria any sentiments of piety, or dependence on providence, for which last she insinuated an absolute contempt, I despaired of ever reclaiming her from motives of religion, which I had often attempted in vain. I grounded, therefore, all my hopes upon that resentment and disdain which his behaviour had inspired her with, and the solemn engagement she had made to give up all correspondence with him for the future. Yet this devoted girl was returned home to me but one day, before a message from her lover made her pass the next guilty night with him! Struck with inexpressible horror and grief, at seeing her thus abandoned to infamy, I gave her over for lost: and, eager now to preserve myself from the fatal contagion of her almost ruined character, I press'd her to hasten her lover in the prosecution of that little law-suit, that I might be furnished with the means of departing. Mr. Dalmere advising her to make up the affair, upon the consideration of receiving a small premium, which we had immediate occasion for, I also gladly consented, that I might no longer be kept from the asylum that was offered me. Accordingly all matters were amicably settled, and Maria went to receive the sum. I had already bespoke several things, which were necessary to my making a genteel appearance when I went to my relations; and hoped to leave England, in a few weeks, for ever: when my sister, returning, informed me, that Mr. Dalmere had stopt most of the money which had been paid, to discharge what she was indebted to him.

It will be impossible, dear miss, to give you a just idea of my astonishment at this account! How a man, who had possessed himself of her honour and reputation, at a time that her distresses were arrived to the last pitch, could be capable of acting the part of a merciless creditor; and, seizing all her little dependence, leave her to struggle with want and misery! How any man, I say, could do this, struck me with such amazement and horror, that I remained for some moments unable to utter a word. At last, a sense of my own helpless state made me burst into tears. Oh, my God! cried I, I am ruined! I am undone! Maria, whose thoughts had been wholly engrossed by rage, at this proof of her lover's small regard for her, loaded me with reproaches for making this pathetic complaint, and not rather pitying her greater misery, who had been deceived by the faithless vows of such a wretch. My ruin was little, it seems, in comparison of the injury offered to the affection she had born him. I could not, indeed, refuse her my pity; for she was truly miserable, and I therefore ceased my complaints immediately, and applied myself to think on some proper methods to extricate myself from the difficulties, into which I was likely to be involved.

My father, when he died, had a ballance of a hundred and forty pounds due to him from a gentleman, with whom he had had large dealings; but, thro' some errors in settling the accounts, the payment of the money was disputed. My sister, having other business upon her hands, had neglected this affair; but the pressing occasion we had for money, made me intreat an intimate friend of my father's to take it in hand. Accordingly he promised to procure payment of the debt; and I began to compose myself with the hopes of being enabled to leave my sister, from whom I designed to take no more than what was necessary for some little fineries, and the expences of my journey.

In the mean time, we continued in the same fine lodgings; and my sister not being able to conform to her circumstances, our manner of living was not altered from what it had formerly been. Maria, who would not have been sorry if I had espoused the same principles with herself, would frequently hint to me, that, as I had several lovers who would make very advantageous settlements upon me, I had no reason to fear being reduced to any extremities. Whether she desired I should sacrifice myself to these views, I know not; but 'tis certain, she took no care to preserve either my virtue or reputation. She was now with child a second time; and the sight of her in this condition, filled me with perpetual disgust and inquietude; for sure, if there can be any extenuations found for the first fault of that kind, no partiality can excuse the second. However, she thought it necessary to provide for her own security; and leaving me to answer for all the debts we had contracted, while we lived together, went off to her lover, and remained concealed in his lodgings.

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I believe, miss, few people could have forgiven an action, which, considering all its aggravating circumstances, could hardly be paralleled by any thing which I have yet heard. My sister, after first neglecting to provide for our future subsistence, by a proper application of the trifle we had left; after engaging in a scandalous intrigue, by which she exposed her own character and my innocence to inevitable ruin; after being the cause of my not seeking the protection of my relations, and reducing me to a precarious dependence upon what might never be obtained; left me, at last, at the most early years, to struggle with all the miseries her infamy had brought upon me!

Figure to yourself, my dear, a young creature, not yet seventeen, who, for near three years, had led a most disagreeable life with a sister, who had been almost all that time plunged in a criminal intrigue! left, at last, to encounter all the miseries of want, and the reproaches of the world, for the bad conduct of the nearest relation she had; and restrained from seeking assistance and relief, by the fear of exposing the crimes of a sister, who was still dear to her! This was my unhappy situation! I was ordered by Maria to tell every person, who enquired for her, that she was in the country: and tho' I obeyed my instructions exactly, as well for her sake as my own; yet my sister was the first to prove me an accomplice in her guilt, by receiving company in her lover's apartments, and being known to all his acquaintance: and was so infatuated, that she believed she could appear there with all imaginable freedom, and yet be thought only a visitant; and, great as she was with child, that no one could observe it.

As she sometimes ventured out of an evening to see me, I endeavoured to expostulate with her on this strange proceeding: but my daring to suppose there was a possibility of her being discovered by these means, threw her into such violent rages, that I was forced to be silent; for Maria had a way of silencing reason and conviction by the thunder of her voice. And she would pronounce a negative with a force, that might have been heard over all the house; for she knew I would rather give up the argument than expose her, by speaking loud enough to be heard amidst the echoes of her own voice, on so infamous a subject.

I lived thus for about three months by myself, in continual expectation that Mr. W , so was that friend of my father's called, would, by his interest and management, get this money I mentioned to you paid. The distresses I was reduced to, in this time, were almost greater than I could well support: I was teased with constant demands for money; and my sister's disappearing, giving cause for suspicion that they were designed to be imposed upon, made me often obliged to suffer very disagreeable reflections. I have sat in my own chamber for a week together, without tasting any thing, but tea, in all that time; till I was brought so extremely low, that I was hardly able to stir. It is not with any design to give you a high idea of my virtue, that I tell you, that, in this scene of distress, I had the alternative of affluence and splendor proposed to me, if I could have been capable of preferring wealthy infamy to indigent chastity and innocence. In those moments, when present misery, heightened by the expectation of greater, most disturbed me, I was sometimes tempted to think, that I had done all that virtue could demand of me; and that, if severe necessity forced me to resign my honour, fortune only could be to blame, which had reduced me to such terrible extremities. But this false reasoning made but little impression on my mind: I started at the thoughts of guilt, and dreaded my own weakness in trials so severe. I implored assistance from that power, who alone was able to afford it.

It cannot, dear miss, be imagined by any, who have not felt the same emotions, the heartfelt joy, the inward peace and conscious triumphs of my soul, when, by these ardent ejaculations, I found my wavering resolutions more confirmed, and virtue taking deeper root in my heart. I indulged the pleasing, (may I add) justifiable pride, which glowed in every thought that represented me suffering in so glorious a cause; and, thus supported, bore afflictions which my youth, and the delicacy of my constitution, rendered far more hard for me to suffer than many others.

I had dismissed the servant who attended us, as soon as my sister left me; and having little other entertainment than a few books, which, by frequent reading, grew tasteless, I resigned myself up to a melancholy and despair, which, every moment increasing, threatened me with some very dangerous illness. I don't know whether I have told you, that my sister, when she went away, left me very deep in arrears with the person with whom we lodged. This man, alarmed at my sister's disappearing all of a sudden, made me so extremely uneasy about the money that

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was due to him, that I acquainted Mr. W with his behaviour; and pressed him, if he really could do any thing in the affair he had undertaken, to do it as soon as possible. This gentleman, who was always profuse in his promises of service, assured me, he did not doubt but that he should settle that matter to our satisfaction: but added, that he was going out of town for a little time; and, for fear the landlord should make me uneasy, he would speak to him, and engage him to wait till he returned, when he was sure he could get our money paid.

Mr. W was a man of a large fortune; and, if I had seemed willing to accept of an obligation from him, there is no doubt but he would have offered to have paid this money himself: but I knew the danger of accepting favours of this kind. And Mr. W, having too great a regard for my dear father, to attempt any thing against the honour of his child, made no offers of an assistance, for which he neither expected or desired any return. He, however, did as much as I could with decency accept: when he came to take his leave of me, he desired Mr. C, the landlord, might walk up to my dining-room; and then, telling him the situation of my affairs, and that he had undertaken to get me a considerable sum paid, which was a debt due to my father, asked him, if he would be contented to wait for three months, which was the time he proposed staying in the country; and that, when he came to town, he would take care to see him discharged. Mr. C could have no objection to so reasonable a proposal; and assured Mr. W, that he would give the young lady no uneasiness till that time was expired. Upon which Mr. W went away, and left me very well satisfied with the ease he had procured me.

The wretched Maria was now near her time. Her lover had removed her to an obscure apartment in a house, with no creature in it but herself. Here she spent the melancholy hours: I will not say, tortured with remorse for her guilt; but almost distracted with the anguish that her lover's now more than indifference (for it was risen to disgust) gave her. I could not behold her in this affecting condition, without a heart bleeding with a sense of her distress. I went to see her two or three times a week; for I was in no danger of meeting Mr. Dalmere. He hardly ever saw her, and only sent his servant once or twice a day with what things were necessary for her subsistence. The thoughts of her being left alone in that helpless state, when she expected every moment to be taken ill, used to give me such terrible apprehensions upon her account, that I was miserable to excess. She was so lowly in her behaviour to her lover, that she resolved to bear any inconveniency rather than press him to place her in a properer place: and he, never troubling himself with any reflections about her condition, suffered her to remain in a house, as I said before, without any human creature but herself in it. At last, a place being pitched upon, where she was to remove in a few days, my heart was a little at rest; but, dreading lest she should be indisposed in the night, and no one near her, I could not prevail upon myself to leave her alone, but passed the two or three last nights, that she staid in this house, with her.

I returned home the same evening she was removed; and I was sitting at my desk reading, when I heard a man's step coming hastily up the stairs. The house being very large, and no one on the same floor with me, I was a little startled, reflecting that I had left the door of my apartment open. I was just going to rise, when a tall ill-looking man entered the room, and advanced with a slow step towards me. The dining-room being very large, and having only one candle, which was placed on the desk where I was reading, it afforded but a glimmering light to the rest of the room; and made the solemn stalking of the man, who approached me in a profound silence, appear so tremendous, that I sat immovable with terror, keeping my eyes fixed on his motions. At last, when he had got close up to me, he shewed a bit of paper he held in his hand, told me it was a writ, and that it empowered him to seize my person. The astonishment and terror with which I was seized, hindered me from replying; when Mr. C himself came in, "Miss, said he, you can't be surprised that I have taken this method to get my money. Your sister's leaving the house, without taking any notice of the debt, with reason alarmed me. A few weeks ago, when I happened to see her, as she came from you, I sent after her, to beg she would allow me to speak to her; upon which she replied, that she was going about a little business, and would call upon me in half an hour. I never saw her from that day. Could she expect that such a palpable falshood would not give me suspicions, that she did not mean to do me justice! And, since she has left you to answer for all, 'tis fit I should secure myself, and force you to pay." "But, replied I, (very innocently) I can't give you what I have not; and besides, you promised Mr. W to wait his coming to town. You know I have no other expectations but from that money he has promised to get paid. What is it you mean to do with me?" "To be plain with you, miss, said Mr. C, I am resolved to have my money,

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get it as you will. I know you can be at no difficulty, were it twenty times as much: you have friends who would be glad to oblige you" "I know of no friends, replied I, that I would accept such an obligation from; and, if you have grounded your hopes of immediate payment, upon my application to any one, you will find yourself much deceived." "Then you must go with me, miss," (said the terrible man that stood by me.) "Yet be advised, miss, said Mr. C . If you'll condescend to acquaint any person with your situation, my son here waits to carry the message; and you shall be at liberty to stay in your apartment all night, if you don't receive an answer before morning." "No, no, sir, said I, (rising) I see your design. Never imagine, that any extremity can force me to an action that may endanger my virtue. I am willing to suffer all the effects of your cruelty: do me the favour only to let your servant go for miss Granger, who is the only person I shall send to, upon this occasion; and I should be obliged to you too, if you would inform me whither I am to go?" "That honest man, miss, replied Mr. C , will take you to his house. He has a wife and family, and you may remain there a week, if you please; and consider, in that time, whether it will be better to apply to your friends, or be confined in a worse place." "'Tis very well, sir, replied I, (not at all daunted;) but since I am going away for some time, I hope you'll leave me at liberty to put up some linnen that I may have occasion for." At this they both withdrew; and, as soon as I had tied up some clean linnen, I told the man, who was waiting at the door, that I was ready. "I would give ten pounds, miss, said he, (taking my bundle, which he would not allow me to carry down stairs myself) that I had not been employed in this affair: I was never so much shocked in my life." I thanked him for his civility; and, by his advice, locking up the doors of my apartment, and taking the keys, went down stairs. I think, miss, said he, it will be better to walk to my house, which is but two streets off, rather than take a coach, which, as it is quite dark, will be unnecessary." I readily agreed; for I was by no means willing to trust myself alone in a coach with him. Just as I was stepping out of the house, Mr. C again asked me, if I was still determined not to send for any friend, but miss Granger: to which I answered with a negative full of scorn, and was conducted by the officer to his house.

I had scarce entered it, when Mr. C 's daughter came; and telling me, with tears in her eyes, that as she could not bear to let me be alone till miss Granger came to me, she had ventured out unknown to her father. I expressed myself greatly obliged to her, for this instance of her friendship; when the officer's wife, moved to some respect by my dress, conducted us to a genteel enough chamber; and, upon the arrival of my friend, miss C immediately withdrew. As soon as miss Granger and I were by ourselves, I gave free vent to my tears, which pride and indignation had hitherto restrained. She kept me company a long time, endeavouring to calm my affliction: and, being perfectly well acquainted with my affairs, confessed, that she saw no remedy for my present misfortunes, but by applying for the assistance of some of those persons, who, she knew, avowed a passion for me. "I see no harm, said she, in soliciting so trifling a service, which you have almost a certainty of repaying, without endangering your honour or reputation." "Ah, miss! interrupted I, say no more of it! I will never expose myself to the pain of being obliged to any man, who has a dishonourable design upon me. Besides, 'tis probable, that the money I expect may never be received. The person, in whose hands the papers were lodged, says he lost them in removing from one house to another; and, I am afraid, the most I can expect, from even Mr. W 's interposition, is some trifling consideration from the person who owes the money, and that rather as a present than an acknowledgment of the debt." "What do you resolve to do then?" said miss Granger. "I am resolved, replied I, to let Mr. C be convinced, by my staying here, that I have no expectations but from Mr. W 's coming to town; and, probably, he will be prevailed upon to change his measures, when he finds that what he has done has failed of procuring the effect he desired. Or, if not, I will rather be confined in a prison, as he says I must, than lay myself under such dreadful obligations." "Alas, returned miss Granger, you know not what you say! Compose yourself, if possible, to-night; and I'll come again in the morning, and consult upon some methods less disagreeable to you." Saying this, she took leave of me, and the woman of the house very obligingly helped me to undress.

I went to-bed, and passed that night in a distraction of mind not easily to be described. I was but just risen in the morning, when the maid let me know, that a young gentleman, named Belville, enquired for me, having some message to deliver from miss Granger. This gentleman I had seen a few months before: he was an intimate acquaintance of miss Granger's, and, from the first moment of his seeing me, had declared a very tender friendship for me. I call it friendship, tho' I was but too sensible that he really loved me passionately: but I had been so tired with hearing the language of love, which had only aimed hitherto at my ruin, that I made it a

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condition of our acquaintance, that Mr. Belville should never presume to talk to me in any other stile than that of a disinterested friend. As he seemed to dread nothing so much as displeasing me, he obeyed these injunctions very exactly; and concealing the ardent lover under the appearance of the tender friend, insensibly won my esteem and confidence.

As I found by this visit, that miss Granger had laid open my situation to him, I could not refuse to see him; and understanding they had shewn him into a parlour, I at last assumed courage to go down to him. The sight of me, oppressed as I was with inconceivable anguish, had so deep an effect on the heart of the tender Belville, that, for some moments, he was unable to utter a word. He cast himself at my feet in a transport of sorrow; and taking my hand, which I could not refuse him, bathed it with tears: and shewed in his actions such an excess of affliction and despair, that I was obliged to chide him for a weakness, which represented my own sufferings in so aggravating a light.

As soon as he was composed enough to talk upon my affairs, he told me, that he had already been with Mr. C , and offered him his note, which he had refused. "I am so unfortunate, miss, said he, (melting again into tears) as not to be able, at present, to raise the sum for which you are detained. I am wholly dependent upon a relation, who loves money better than even health and life." "Sure, sir, said I, (blushing) you don't imagine that I will accept of freedom from any one, but those from whom I have a right to desire it. I have a considerable sum due to me; and, if Mr. C will not be persuaded to wait till I can pay him conveniently, I am determined he shall not force me to be obliged to any one: and you have greatly offended me, by making any overtures to Mr. C , without consulting me."

Miss Granger coming in that moment, and hearing my last words, sharply reprov'd me for the severity of my behaviour. "Do not think, miss, said she, that I would advise you to any thing inconsistent with your honour. There is a necessity for your accepting an obligation for once; and I cannot believe any one would take an ungenerous advantage of this occasion of serving you." "Dear miss Granger, interrupted Belville, (eagerly) do not press your lovely friend to accept of assistance from any one, she has reason to apprehend will make an ill use of the favour she confers on him by it. Since she disapproves of every other method, but persuading Mr. C to have patience, suffer me to talk with him again: perhaps I may be able to prevail with him. Take no resolution, I conjure you, till I return." Saying this, he hurried out of the room, after giving me a look full of inexpressible tenderness and anxiety. Miss Granger continued with me the remainder of the day; and, indeed, I had every alleviation that such circumstances as mine could possibly admit of. I was treated with the greatest respect and tenderness by the woman of the house, who would not suffer her maid to attend me; but served me herself with as much submission, as I could have expected from a servant of my own. In the evening Mr. Belville returned, bringing with him the person who had arrested me, who told me, with a bow, that I was now at liberty, and might leave his house whenever I pleased. When he had said this, he withdrew immediately, to leave me at liberty to ask how this affair was composed. Mr. Belville would not explain any thing to me till I had quitted the house; but I positively refused to stir, till I knew how my freedom had been obtained. "'Tis so difficult a matter, miss, said he, to satisfy your delicacy, that I know not whether I shall not incur your resentment by what I have done. Mr. C was perfectly inexorable to all the reasons I could urge, to move him to withdraw your arrest. He insisted upon your finding him security; and the only person from whom I thought you would consent to accept it, was the gentleman to whom, by your orders, I had given your deceased father's manuscripts, which he was to publish. This circumstance, together with his being a married man, left no room for any scruples, and he showed such a readiness to serve you, upon this occasion, that I shall think myself obliged to him while I live." "I should be very unhappy, returned I, in receiving this obligation from any other; and since I have a certainty of the money being paid, when Mr. W comes to town, I hope he will run no danger by his good-nature." Alas, how little did I foresee, that this generous action would be attended with numberless inquietudes, and precipitate me, if possible, into still greater evils! As soon as I left this house, I went immediately to a distant relation's, a widow, who had a large family, and, having but a very small income, lived quite private. Here I proposed to stay till my affairs were settled, and I was in a condition to leave England. Belville, whose late services claimed the first place in my friendship, was the only visiter I saw, next to my most intimate female friend. I listened with unusual

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complaisance to the ardent passion he professed for me. Gratitude for the obligations he had laid on me, won him my esteem and affection. He told me, he must be miserable to the last degree, unless I gave him my hand. Could I see him wretched, to whom I owed more than my life! When I found all the reasons I urged against our union ineffectual, I consented to marry him; and as his whole dependence was on the interest of some persons of distinction here, who had promised to provide for him, we proposed to keep our marriage a secret, till that was effected. I continued still to stay at the house of my relation, and Mr. Belville at his own lodgings; yet our marriage was not concealed a week. All his and my acquaintance knew it; and the union of two young people, so dependent in their circumstances, furnished sufficient matter for discourse, on the extravagance of that passion which had formed it. Our marriage being now publicly known, Mr. Belville remained in the lodgings with me, continuing his solicitations for a provision with more ardour than before.

The time drew nigh when C's bill was to be paid. Mr. W not coming to town, I trembled lest Mr. Belville's friend should suffer upon my account; and sent every day for a fortnight to Mr. W's lodgings, but could hear no accounts of him. The horrors I suffered are not to be expressed! 'Twas from his influence alone, that I could ever hope to recover that money I depended upon. I employed other measures in vain. I had nothing to shew for the debt: and while I was racked with fruitless expectation, Mr. Belville's friend was obliged to pay the bill. From that moment my unfortunate husband was loaded with the most cruel censures. It was generally reported and believed, that he had drawn his friend into this scrape, only to marry me with the more security. Could any thing more effectually ruin a young man, whose whole dependence was upon the good offices of his friends, than to have the character of villain stamped upon him, at his first setting out in the world! In effect, my dear miss, it absolutely ruined us. Mr. Belville met with nothing but reproaches where-ever he went, the story was told with such aggravating circumstances: and his friend's distress heightened the general odium. Mr. W's interposition, at first, in the affair being thought only a falshood, invented by Mr. Belville and me; every thing that was cruel and malicious, was said of us both. While we groaned under the oppressive load of calumny thus laid on us, Mr. W came to town; but had so intirely forgot his promise, that he never went to Mr. C to enquire after me. 'Tis probable, indeed, that, hearing I was married, he thought I had no occasion for his assistance. As Mr. C had the villainy to deny Mr. W's having promised to see him paid, we had no means left of justifying ourselves but by calling upon Mr. W, by a public advertisement, to acknowledge the part he acted in this affair. However, considering the fortune and interest of that gentleman, it was thought a dangerous expedient.

I will not pretend to tell you the difficulties we sustained for a long time, under the pressure of want and calumny: yet love, more powerful than all our misfortunes, enabled us to bear them chearfully; and the never-dying affection of my dear Belville, in the midst of horrors, afforded me real happiness. His relations, at last, condescending to take notice of our situation, consented to do something for our support, upon the hard condition of parting us for two years. They sent him upon a trading voyage to Jamaica; and, till his return, I was determined to shut myself up in a monastery. At my request, he accompanied me here, where I remain as a pensioner; but am, in reality, as much secluded from the world as any of the nuns. What relations I have in this country living in Languedoc, I see no one but the ladies in the convent; and have never been out of these walls since I first entered them, which is now near a year. The absence of my dear Belville renews all my afflictions, and makes life almost insupportable."

Thus did the lovely mademoiselle Belville conclude her affecting history. My eyes had flowed with sympathizing tears, during the sad recital of so many cruel misfortunes. I embraced her with an excess of tenderness, and promised her an eternal friendship; and was charmed with the graceful and engaging manner in which she returned the protestations I made her.

I had been about two months in the convent, when I began to grow into some reputation for wit; and tho' ladies are seldom heard to praise each other's beauty, yet 'tis certain, those who saw me gave a very advantageous account of my person. My mind, which was still filled with the idea of Dumont, faithless and ungrateful as he was, suggested only the most passionate complaints, and love was still the favourite subject of my Muse. These pieces, however, I carefully concealed from sight; but my engaging friend, mademoiselle Belville, among other

books, having lent me Hutchinson on the Passions, when I returned it to her, I sent the following copy of verses with it; which I have inserted, because they were the first cause of the perplexing adventures in which I was afterwards engaged.

On reading Hutchinson on the Passions.

Thou who thro' Nature's various faults can rove,
And shew what springs the eager passions move;
Teach us to combat anger, grief, and fear,
Recal the sigh, and stop the falling tear.
O! be thy soft philosophy address,
To the untroubled ear, and tranquil breast:
To these be all thy peaceful maxims taught,
Who idly rove amidst a calm of thought;
Whose souls by love or hate were ne'er possest,
Who ne'er were wretched, and who ne'er were blest:
Whose fainter wishes, pleasures, fears remain,
Dreams but of bliss, and shadows but of pain;
Serenely stupid. So some shallow stream
Flows thro' the winding vallies still the same;
Whom no rude wind can ever discompose,
Who fears no winter rain, or falling snows;
But slowly down its flow'ry border creeps,
While the soft zephyr on its bosom sleeps.
O! couldst thou teach the tortur'd soul to know,
With patience, each extreme of human woe!
To bear with ills, and unrepining prove
The frowns of fortune, and the racks of love!
Still shou'd my breast some quiet moments share,
Still rise superior to each threat'ning care!
Nor fear approaching ills, or distant woes,
But in Philander's absence find repose.

My friend, coming to see me a few hours after, told me, she had broke thro' the promise I had extorted from her, never to shew any of my little compositions to any person whatever. "But, miss, pursued she, I had really a secret view in disobeying you this time. I have possibly procured you a powerful acquaintance, whose assistance may be of use to you, in freeing you from your present confinement. I am intimately acquainted with a young nun, lately professed, who is niece to the marchioness de . This lady is a remarkable lover of the Muses: she has travelled, and read a great deal. As she understands English perfectly well, I took an opportunity to shew your poem to her to-day, when she came to see her niece, who is a little indisposed. She read it, and (after expressing her surprize, that one so young, as I told her ladyship you was, should be able to write so well) she begged I would allow her to keep the poem, till she could take a copy of it; to which I immediately consented. When the marchioness went away, she told me, she was resolved to see you the next visit she made to the convent. I know this lady has great power with the prioress; and, I am persuaded, she will readily interest herself in your affairs, if you think proper to acquaint her with your story." Mademoiselle Belville seemed so delighted with the probability of my being released, by the marchioness's interposition, that I was not willing to throw a damp upon a thought which gave her so much pleasure, by expressing the little confidence I was capable of placing in the promises of the great. The

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behaviour of the countess and lady Cecilia had taught me to fear, rather than hope for, the friendship of persons of high rank; yet I thanked my obliging friend, for her care of my interests. And two or three weeks passing before we heard any more of the marchioness, I concluded she would never think more of the affair. However, in this I was mistaken. One day, when I least expected it, sister Martha told me, the prioress desired I would walk down to the parlour, where she expected me, accompanied with a lady of quality, who had desired to see me. As soon as I had a little adjusted my dress, I followed the nun, who, after introducing me into the parlour, retired. The marchioness de (for I understood immediately it was her) rose up, upon my appearing, and saluted me very civilly; and, after having eagerly surveyed me for the space of two or three minutes, turned to the prioress, as if she seemed to expect the continuation of a discourse, which my coming had interrupted. "Yes, madam, (pursued that pious lady) I have been greatly afflicted to find all the pains and labour I have bestowed, to bring this poor child back to salvation, ineffectual. I fear, indeed, she is quite lost; and I don't know what to make of her obstinately persisting to deny, that she is the niece of that gentleman who brought her hither! I am loth to suspect he could be guilty of so unjustifiable an action. The reasons he gave me for doing it, were not only just, but highly meritorious; yet there seems to be some mystery in the affair, which greatly perplexes me." I easily perceived, that the artful prioress designed to persuade the marchioness she had been imposed on herself, with regard to me; but, tho' I detested her profound dissimulation, I thought it highly imprudent to make her more my enemy by exposing her, while I was in her power. "'Tis easy, madam, (said I to the prioress) to disprove the fiction Mr. Darcy has made use of. If you'll allow me to write to a friend in England, I am certain, in a very little time, you'll be convinced I am no relation at all to Mr. Darcy." "Really, replied the marchioness, this seems to be a very reasonable request. Come, madam, permit the young lady to write to her friends. I suppose, miss, (pursued her ladyship, turning to me) you will not refuse to shew the prioress your letter!" "No, madam, answered I, I shall be glad if the prioress will take the trouble to read it. I am persuaded, it will help to convince her that Mr. Darcy has imposed upon her." The prioress, who did not expect my answer would have favoured her views so much, seemed quite pleased with my moderation; and giving me a more obliging look than I had ever yet received from her, told the marchioness, that I should be allowed to write, upon the condition her ladyship had prescribed, that of shewing the letter. And making, at the same time, a merit of this condescension with the marchioness, by assuring me it was to her request I owed this extraordinary favour, I did not fail to express my acknowledgments to that lady in very grateful terms; and also to thank the prioress, with much submission, for granting me this favour, as she called it: tho', in reality, it was no more than a piece of justice she owed both me and herself.

The marchioness, upon this, changing the conversation, talked of the extreme pleasure she had received from the perusal of the poem mademoiselle Belville had given her. "I flatter myself, said her ladyship, (with an obliging air): that, when we are better acquainted, you will not refuse to let me read the rest of your performances. If I thought I had interest enough with you now, to procure myself that favour, I would ask it immediately." It was impossible, after this, to deny the marchioness a sight of my papers; and, after acknowledging the honour she did me, I went to my chamber immediately, and returned with my manuscript, which I presented to her. The marchioness, receiving it with a profusion of compliments, took her leave, after promising to see me soon; and added, that she would take the care of my letter upon herself, desiring me to write as soon as she left me, and she would send a servant to the convent for it in the morning.

The moment I left the parlour, I retired to my chamber; and chusing to address myself rather to my dear Mrs. Dormer, than any other friend in London, I wrote her a large account of all that had happened to me, from the time I left her at Richmond; and, relying intirely upon her prudence, intreated her to take what measures she judged most proper to procure my deliverance from the monastery, and to invalidate the false accounts Mr. Darcy had given of me. When I had finished this letter, I went immediately and shewed it to the prioress; who, after reading it, told me, there was nothing in it which contradicted any of the facts I had urged against Mr. Darcy. She then desired I would direct it before her, and allow her to seal it with her own seal, to which I made no objection.

My heart being now more at ease, with the prospect of my liberty, I loaded mademoiselle Belville with embraces, for being the cause of so much happiness to me. That generous girl seemed charmed with my success; and greatly commended the reserve with which I had spoke, as to the part the prioress had acted in the affair. In the morning,

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the prioress sent to let me know that one of the marchioness's servants attended for my letter; upon which I went down to the parlour, and, finding the prioress there, I thought proper to let her see her own seal upon it, that she might be convinced I had not changed the letter, which was certainly her design in sealing it herself.

As I was now much less restrained than formerly, the prioress allowing me to see any company that came with the marchioness, I indulged the gaiety of my temper among persons, whose sprightliness was perfectly agreeable to me. The marchioness, still more prepossessed in my favour, brought several of her acquaintance with her to the convent, to have the pleasure, she said, of conversing with me. Among these a nobleman, called the count de R , distinguished me in a very particular manner; and I, who was ever fond of any gallantry which proved the influence of my charms, did not fail to improve the count's admiration of me, by every little ensnaring art I possessed.

By the marchioness's order, I had desired Mrs. Dormer to direct her letter, under cover, to her. That lady did me the favour to bring it herself to the convent. My transports were inexpressible when I opened this dear letter, to find my friend was resolved to come herself to Paris, to procure my liberty. Her letter was filled with the most ardent assurances of tenderness and regard; but I knew not what to imagine from a postscript, in which she added, that she had a most agreeable piece of news in reserve to acquaint me with, which she was resolved to have the pleasure of telling me herself. My imagination, perpetually filled with the dear idea of Dumont, immediately suggested, that what she had to say was concerning him. "Some misfortune has happened to him, said I to myself; and Mrs. Dormer, knowing the injuries I have received from him, thinks the news will give me pleasure. Alas, how ill does she judge of the state of my heart! Dumont, false as he is, will be for ever dear to me; and I can never rejoice at any thing which afflicts him." The prioress, to whom I shewed Mrs. Dormer's letter, appeared quite satisfied with the contents. "I am almost persuaded, said she, that I have been imposed on; yet I can never believe Mr. Darcy had any bad design in bringing you here. He has attempted to bring about some good intention, by perhaps unjustifiable measures. Alas, good man! we are all liable to be deceived! Well, miss, when your friend comes, you shall be at liberty to depart. I must hear what she has to say. You see, she desires you to stay here till she comes, which is really very prudent: I commend her for it." "I assure you, madam, replied I, I have no reluctance at staying here. The thoughts of being confined, indeed, sat a little uneasily upon me; but since it is left to my own choice, I can consent to it very gladly." The good lady expressed great satisfaction at this complaisance, and we parted that day upon very good terms with each other. The marchioness congratulated me, in a very obliging manner, upon my approaching liberty. And the count de R , who had been acquainted with my story, assured me, it would give him a very sensible pleasure to be able to see me, without a grate between us.

Mrs. Dormer had promised to be at Paris within a month at farthest: three weeks of that time was expired; and I was impatiently expecting the happiness of seeing her, when I was alarmed by a message from the marchioness, which informed me, that the prioress was secretly forming some design with Mr. Darcy, to remove me to a convent in some distant province. This news filled me with the most dreadful apprehensions; and I should have been incapable of any comfort, had not that generous lady also added, that she would think of some means for my deliverance. I passed the rest of this day distracted between fear and hope; and not having an opportunity of seeing mademoiselle Belville, to whom I communicated all my uneasiness, I never found solitude more disagreeable in my life. A message in the evening from the prioress, to attend her in the parlour, threw me into a mortal fear, lest she was going to execute her cruel intentions. But as I could not imagine she could be able to force me away, without alarming the whole convent, I was too well prepared, to be deceived by any artifice she could use. Upon my entering the room, I was surprised to hear her ask me, if I distrusted her good intentions, and the arrival of my friend, that I had procured interest to be taken out of the convent, by an order from court. At these words lifting up my eyes, I suddenly met those of the count de R , whom I had not perceived to be at the grate. He gave me a significant look, by which I immediately comprehended the whole mystery: and judging the marchioness had fallen upon this way to procure my release, I told the prioress, that I had my own reasons for wishing to be out of the convent immediately; and, since it was now no longer in her power to detain me, I might venture to own, I did not think myself yet secure from any further attempts of Mr. Darcy. "Oh, mighty well, miss, said the prioress, (with a malicious smile) it is not hard to guess your reasons for acting thus. You may go when

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you please." The count, upon this, begged I would suffer him to convey me in his coach to the place where I chused to go. I accordingly complied, not doubting but he meant to carry me to the marchioness, from whom I imagined he was sent. Alas! my easy folly betrayed me a second time; and, for my punishment, I was going to be plunged into new misfortunes.

I took leave of the prioress immediately, and could not help expressing my transport to the count the moment I was out of those dreadful walls. The count, when he handed me into his coach, told me, that the marchioness was at a house of her's a few miles distance from Paris, and that she expected me there. I was a little uneasy at being obliged to make this journey alone with a nobleman, whom I was but slightly acquainted with: but there was no remedy; I must submit. I would have engaged him to let me know how the marchioness happened to be acquainted with the designs of the prioress against me; but he very gallantly evaded satisfying my curiosity, by telling me, the marchioness best knew the whole affair; and that he could not consent to waste the present agreeable moments in any discourse, that was not expressive of the passion I had inspired him with. As he had never spoke so plainly before, I was a little embarrassed how to answer him; but ascribing the compliments he entertained me with, to the peculiar genius of his country, absolutely refused to make any particular application of them. We very soon came to the house. The count having handed me into a room, I expected, with some impatience, when the marchioness would appear. I thought it strange, after staying a quarter of an hour, to find I was still alone with the count, who seemed greatly perplexed. "Am I not to see the marchioness, my lord?" said I, at last. Does her ladyship know I am here?" "Alas, miss, replied the count, you are deceived! I have not brought you to the marchioness, but to one who has an infinitely greater interest in you. 'Tis the earl of L whom you will shortly see." "The earl of L –! interrupted I. Is he in Paris? Have you betrayed me then, my lord, into the hands of a man, whose designs upon me can only be injurious to my honour? For heaven's sake, explain this mystery! How unfortunate am I, and how very cruel are you, to bring me into this situation!" "Is it possible, mademoiselle, returned the count, that you can be sincere! Do you really wish not to see the earl?" "Certainly, my lord, said I, I would avoid seeing that nobleman. My acquaintance with him is but very small, and I have no inclination to improve it; but if he has been capable of engaging your lordship in this stratagem to get me out of the convent, I have reason to apprehend he has some very unjustifiable views, and must therefore think it a great unhappiness to be thus betrayed into his power." "No, charming mademoiselle, (replied the count, in a rapture) do not fear that I will betray you into the hands of a man you would avoid. The sentiments you have discovered, have made me inexpressibly happy! Pardon the artifice I have used, to find whether you really loved the earl of L . But, alas, ought I not to fear the action I have been guilty of, will draw your resentment upon me! Yet a tender passion, and anxious concern left I should lose you, forced me to this expedient. Suspend your reproaches, till I have explained my motives for this conduct, and do not condemn me unheard. I am intimately acquainted with the earl of L , and, libertine as he is, I found some amiable qualities in him, which forced my esteem. Our acquaintance began while he was yet a youth, and sent to Paris under the care of a governor. As he is very fond of passing some of his time here, he generally comes once a year, which has improved our acquaintance to a great degree of intimacy. A fortnight ago he arrived in Paris: I had introduced him to the acquaintance of the marchioness de , and he happened to be there, when that lady mentioning you, asked him, if he had ever heard of you before. I observed an alteration in his countenance at the mention of your name: he enquired eagerly into the circumstances of your being brought here, which the marchioness related very exactly. As we came home together, he pressed my hand, and cried, "Dear count, it is in your power to do me a very considerable service. This dear girl, that the marchioness speaks of, I have loved from my childhood; but she has got that whim of virtue in her head, and I cannot prevail upon her to listen to my proposals. But, if I can but get her out of that convent into my own power, I do not despair of accomplishing my designs. You must, my dear count, procure me a lettre de cachet, by which I may oblige the prioress immediately to give her liberty." "But, said I, does your lordship think she will consent to receive it from you?" "Ah! as for that, replied he, we will contrive afterwards how to engage her consent. If you will procure the order, I'll invent some means to make her comply with it." This, pursued the count, was the scheme the earl proposed, from which I would have dissuaded him; but he continued obstinately bent to prosecute it. I therefore frankly confessed, I would have no hand in it, and we parted with mutual dissatisfaction. It immediately occurred to me, that the earl did not want acquaintance here, who had interest enough to procure him the order he wanted: I, therefore, resolved to prevent him; and, having got a lettre de cachet myself, I sent a

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message, as if from the marchioness, to warn you of some danger; imagining, with reason, that, upon that information, you would not refuse to consent to any measures, by which we might procure your liberty. The event has answered my expectation; and, if you will be persuaded to pardon the innocent deceit I have practised for your safety, my happiness will be complete." "Then, it seems, my lord, answered I, that I am not in the marchioness's house, and that lady has had no hand in this affair! 'Tis certain, that I have reason to rejoice the earl of L. has been prevented from executing his unjustifiable designs; but the manner of my deliverance gives me great pain, as it must subject me to very unfavourable censures. What will people think of my leaving the convent with your lordship! Will not the marchioness herself explain this affair to my disadvantage? Ah, my lord, I beseech you, let me return immediately to Paris, and implore that lady's protection. Since I am not safe at the convent, I must conceal myself till my friend arrives." "And where, interrupted his lordship, can you be so well concealed as in this house! None of my servants know you, and you may remain here in perfect security." "Certainly, replied I, (with some resentment) your lordship imagines I have very little regard for my character, if you can think to persuade me it will be decent for me to stay in your lordship's house! I am determined to return to Paris directly; and, if I am not so happy to find out the marchioness, I'll rather go back to the convent again, than hazard the loss of my reputation by staying here." "Indeed, but you must not, my charmer," said the count, (with an ironical air.) "How, my lord, answered I, must not! What do you mean?" "I tell you, interrupted he, I love you passionately! Your wit, your youth, and beauty, have made an absolute conquest of my heart. I have been an idolizer of your sex in general, but never felt the true force of love till I saw you. Judge if, with these sentiments, I could think with patience of my rival's designs! I have been obliged to incroach upon the respect I owe you, to secure you to myself. You shall be mistress of my heart and fortune; nor do I desire the possession of your person, till the tender passion I hope to inspire, shall make you bestow it willingly upon me. In the mean time, you shall have an absolute authority here. My servants are instructed in my intentions, and will treat you, in all respects, as their mistress. For myself, I'll return to Paris immediately, and declare at the convent, that I have left you at the marchioness's. As that lady is really not in town, no one can discover the falshood: and, as to her, I'll acquaint her, when I see her, with the earl's intentions; and assure her, I only assisted you in getting out of the convent, and sent one of my servants with you to Calais, from whence you proposed to go immediately to England. See, my charmer, how I have provided for your reputation! There are none in this house but two or three servants, whose fidelity I am assured of. Farewel, mademoiselle, said he, (rising) I am going this moment to Paris, to leave you free from apprehensions."

Saying this, he made me a low bow, and hurried out of the room. Confounded as I was, with surprize and grief, at this speech, I retained presence of mind enough to run to the window, which fronted the court before the house, to see if he really went away. It being now night, the flambeaux about the coach, which stood still at the door, gave me a plain view of the count, who stepping into the coach, it immediately drove away. I was a little re-assured at this sight; but beginning to reflect on my situation, I accused myself as being the first cause of this kind of misfortunes. Has not my fatal fondness for admiration, thought I, betrayed my virtue into numberless dangers! Shall I never grow weary of this folly, till it has undone me! Ah! let me profit by these accidents, and, for the future, spare myself such vexatious adventures!

I was lost in this sort of reasoning, when a middle-aged gentlewoman entered the room, and, with a great deal of troublesome ceremony, invited me to go into another room, where the cloth was laid for supper. "Sit down, madam, said I, (with a great deal of good-humour) and do me the favour to inform me where I am; for, I assure you, I am quite a stranger in your country." "What, mademoiselle, replied she, was you never at St. Dennis before? 'Tis but a mighty little way from Paris." The woman, being as talkative as I could wish, gave me information enough to carry me to Paris, if I could find means of getting out of the house. I endeavoured to discover by what name and character the count had introduced me here; but either she was absolutely unacquainted with both those circumstances, or affected to be so: and all I could gather from her was, that the count was a man of intrigue, and I had reason to believe I was in very dangerous hands.

Madam Diserre, (for that was her name) as soon as supper was ended, shewed me into a bedchamber, and then left me to my repose. I spent most part of the night in considering how I should get a letter conveyed to

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mademoiselle Belville at the convent. I judged it the most prudent way to get the marchioness, by her means, acquainted with the count's stratagem, and the place of my concealment, from which she was best able to procure my liberty. The thoughts of escaping from the house, and going to Paris, first presented themselves to my imagination; but, upon deeper reflection, I held that a more unsafe way than waiting a little for the assistance of my friends. Tho' it had been possible to get out of the house, without being perceived by that woman, who, I had reason to imagine, was to watch me continually, where could I go, to be safe, when I was got to Paris? If I went to the convent, I was in danger of being forced out by lord L; for I was convinced, the count could not have invented the story of him: for how, unless that young nobleman had intrusted him with it, should he know of his inclination for me! 'Twas possible, indeed, the marchioness might be in town, and the count have his reasons for denying it. This supposition having escaped me at first, I began again to think I had best try to make my escape; for it was full as hazardous to attempt corrupting a servant to get a letter delivered, as to endeavour to leave the house. The perplexity I was in, hindered me from resolving on any thing. What I most apprehended was, that the count might take it into his head to confine me in a convent, in some distant province, to force me, by those harsh means, to comply with his desires. Unhappy state of youth and beauty! left unprotected, to the dangerous snares which powerful vice is ever ready to lay for them! The most solid virtue is not always a sufficient defence against the artifices of men, whose rank and fortune supply them with various means for the ruin of unsuspecting innocence. All I could do in this perplexing situation, was to dissemble my discontent; and, by making my spies secure of my willingness to stay, expect some favourable opportunity, by their neglect, to steal out of the house. Madam Diserre, entering my chamber early in the morning, assisted me to rise; and observing that she had brought me a very rich undress, together with other necessaries suitable to it, I remained a few moments in suspense, whether I ought to accept them. As there was a necessity for my appearing perfectly satisfied, I could not refuse these things, without bringing a contrary suspicion upon myself: I, therefore, suffered the officious Frenchwoman to dress me as she pleased, excepting only to the vermilion, with which she would have daubed my cheeks. When I was dressed, and had drank my chocolate, madam Diserre proposed walking in the gardens, which belonged to the house. "I would rather, replied I, take a view of the town. Shall we go together, and divert ourselves a little?" "Not for the world, mademoiselle! said she, (hastily.) My lord left strict orders to the contrary. He desired that you might not even look out of a window, for fear of being seen." "Well, resumed I, (smiling) I only tried your discretion: I have no inclination to stir abroad, till your lord thinks proper. I suppose you know his reasons." "No, really, mademoiselle, replied she, (with a simplicity I know not whether to call real or affected) My lord never explains himself, on any private affairs, to his servants. I have had the management of this little retreat a great many years. My lord seldom stays long here: he is only fond of it for its near neighbourhood to the city, from whence he often comes with a few select friends to divert himself" "I am persuaded, interrupted I, that my lord is too secure of your fidelity, not to tell you his motives for this uncommon care of me. Are you really ignorant who I am?" "I see, mademoiselle, said she, (smiling) you have a mind to tempt my curiosity; but you shall find me so discreet, that I will not presume to ask you to disclose yourself."

I found there was nothing to be made of this woman; and so I put an end to the conversation, by desiring to see the gardens she talked of. As they were of no very large extent, I walked round them several times, meditating the means of getting out, by a door, which I observed led into a small field, and was but slightly fastened. I fixed my eyes eagerly on this door; and sensible that it was the company of this woman only, that hindered me from escaping immediately, I thought of several stratagems to get rid of her; but all proved ineffectual. The rage I was in, at being thus hindered from procuring my liberty, took off all restraint: "What, cried I, (frowning) am I not to be left a moment to myself! Are you directed to watch my steps in this manner? Sure I may be allowed to walk here alone, if I please!" "Pardon me, mademoiselle, replied she, I dare not disobey my lord, who ordered me to attend you continually. You may walk here as long as you please; but I must wait upon you." "Really, interrupted I, (beginning to recollect myself) I could spare this needless piece of ceremony: I am fond of solitude, and love nothing so much as the liberty of indulging my own reflections sometimes." I had scarce finished these words, when I saw the count, at the end of the same alley in which we were walking. As he advanced nearer, madam Diserre struck into another walk, when the count, hastily running towards me, snatched my hand, which he kissed several times, in spite of my efforts to draw it away. "How cruel are you, mademoiselle, said he, (with a languishing air, when I had forced my hand from him) to deny me so small a favour! Methinks a passion, so

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tender and respectful as mine, merits a kinder return." "Certainly, my lord, replied I, you think me an ill judge of a respectful passion, to imagine I can mistake your's for such! You have got me into your power by a stratagem, not at all advantageous to my character, and treat me as if I was your prisoner. Why am I not allowed the liberty of retiring to any other place, more consistent with my honour? Have you any right, to detain me here?" "My regard for your safety, answered the count, obliges me to intreat you will remain here, till the earl goes from Paris: I saw him but this morning; and my refusing to assist his designs of getting you out of the convent, has enraged him violently. He swears he will find out some means of forcing you away, be the attempt ever so difficult. It was very happy, that the marchioness, in relating your story, never mentioned the particular convent in which you was confined; so that, 'tis probable, it will be some time before he knows of your being removed. You see the necessity of concealing yourself, mademoiselle! I know the earl of L , when he is resolutely bent to accomplish any design, is most indefatigable in his pursuit; and, if you wish to avoid him, 'tis only here you can be safe." "Were you only a disinterested friend, my lord, replied I, there might be some excuse for accepting the asylum you offer me for a few days; but, since you expect I should look on you as a lover, it is not so decent to lay myself under an obligation." "You shall regard me in what light you please, resumed his lordship, provided you will but consent to stay here. Possibly you will be disposed to listen to the offers my love will force me to make you. I would make myself master of your heart, before I solicited the possession of your person; and, by the sincerity of my love, oblige you to confess I deserve you." As I could not imagine the count had any honourable views in the passion he professed for me, the more he endeavoured to convince me of the truth of it, the more I was alarmed.

The only prospect of deliverance I could foresee, at present, was by applying to the marchioness, which, if I could get a letter conveyed to mademoiselle Belville, might be easily effected. I dissembled the uneasiness I was under to the count; and, willing to oblige him to leave me more at liberty, I gave him hopes I would not think of leaving his house, till I might do it with safety. The count seemed over-joyed at having brought me to this point; and it being near the hour when he was to be at the Louvre, as he told me, he took his leave, after first leading me into the house.

I had observed, while I was in the garden, a young man, who was employed in it; and concluded, if I could meet with an opportunity of speaking to him alone, I might prevail upon him, with a bribe, to get a letter delivered to my friend at Paris. As soon, therefore, as dinner was over, I retired to my chamber, and wrote a long letter to mademoiselle Belville, in which I related all that happened to me, and conjured her to let the marchioness know immediately where I was, and implore her assistance to get me out of the count's hands. I also begged her to see Mrs. Dormer, if she came to the convent before I was at liberty; but charged her to recommend it to this dear friend, to be very secret in her attempts to rescue me: for I was apprehensive, if the count heard that the place of my retreat was discovered, he would send me to some other place, where I could receive no assistance.

I waited several days, without any opportunity offering of speaking to the young man, tho' I walked every morning and evening in the garden, where I saw him constantly employed: but madam Diserre being always at my elbow, I never could execute my design. One evening, after two or three unsuccessful stratagems to elude the vigilance of madam Diserre, I retired to my chamber, more affected with my condition than I had yet been; and after having, for two or three hours, been taken up in forming different projects for my escape, which all, upon greater reflection, appeared impracticable, I burst into a flood of tears, deploring the misery into which my fatal credulity, and the count's ungenerous arts, had plunged me.

While I was thus employed, from a large closet in the room, a young man, very richly dressed, rushed out, and, preventing my crying out by holding his hand upon my mouth, told me, at the same time, not to be alarmed; for he was come to do me service. These words, and the tone of his voice, which was inexpressibly soft and insinuating, a little re-assured me, and gave me spirits enough to ask his intention in concealing himself in my chamber. "Speak softly, mademoiselle, replied the youth; your watchful spy, madam Diserre, is but in the next chamber. If she discovers me, it will be impossible for me to give you liberty, which is what I intend; and, to calm the fears which I see you still labour under, know, I am a woman, and have only taken this disguise in order to accomplish my design." Saying this, she discovered her bosom, which intirely banished my apprehensions. "Is it possible,

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said I, (quite transported) that in a stranger I should find so much friendship! Tell me, I beseech you, madam, who you are, that I may know to whom I am so greatly obliged!" As I spoke this, I looked earnestly in the face of the pretended youth, who was now seated by me, and thought I had never beheld any thing more beautiful. "My story, mademoiselle, said she, is too long to relate, in our present dangerous circumstances. For your satisfaction, I shall inform you that my name is Danville. The count de R courted me, while I was yet very young, and under the guardianship of an uncle, my parents being both dead. I was charmed with his person; and, too young to be sensible of the danger of his addresses, (his quality rendering him a husband I could never, with reason, expect) I suffered myself to be seduced by his artifices, and followed him to Paris, where I have remained near three years, in absolute possession, as I thought, of his heart. The count, sensible that I had forsaken every thing for him, has always treated me with uncommon tenderness; and 'tis but within a very little while that I have suspected a change in his inclinations. From the first moment that I entertained this doubt, I lost all repose; and determined, if possible, to find out if my lover had any new engagement upon his hands. I have had him watched to every place he went, and intelligence brought me of the most trifling of his actions. It was not long before I was informed, that the count had a young lady in this house, and also of the restraint in which you was kept. I could not conceive it possible, that you was here contrary to your inclinations; and resolving to be convinced, I took the disguise you see, and was, by my faithful informer, introduced privately into the house and your closet. I saw your tears. I heard your complaints, and must confess I admire your virtue, and wish my own had been equal to it. I should not, then, be a despised, abandoned mistress; for, whatever false raptures our lovers may utter, 'tis what all must come to, who fall a sacrifice to a guilty passion." This sentiment, notwithstanding I was prepossessed against this lady, from her story, restored her to some part of my good opinion; and I pressed her, earnestly, to put me in a method to make my escape. "I am afraid, replied the lady, there will be some difficulty in effecting it. La Valere the valet, who has served me thus far, will hardly consent to your stealing away; and, indeed, I never made this proposal to the fellow, as it would inevitably ruin him with his master. My only design, I told him, was to satisfy my curiosity, by seeing you." "Alas, madam, interrupted I, have you only flattered me then, with a vain hope of procuring my liberty? How unfortunate am I!" "Hold, mademoiselle, said she, do not despair. Do you think I am not greatly interested in your getting out of the count's power? I have thought of an expedient, if you have courage enough to put it in execution. La Valere is provided with a false key to your closet-door, by which he introduced me: I expect he will be at the door in an hour at farthest, to conduct me out. It will not be so light but he may easily mistake you for me, when you are dressed in the cloaths I have on. Will you consent to be thus disguised? I'll stay in your stead, and, when the count comes, shall have an opportunity of upbraiding him with his infidelity. Madam Diserre cannot know any thing of the matter, till you are quite out of danger; and I'll take care she shall send no one after you. She knows me very well, and will not dare to contradict me. Come, continued she, if you cannot resolve to do this, I shall not scruple to think you have a greater inclination to stay here than accept your liberty." "No, madam, replied I, (vexed at her insinuation) you shall find I am ready to run any hazard, to escape from the count; and, considering I am an absolute stranger both to this place and Paris also, it will be no mean enterprize to venture abroad in man's cloaths, at so early an hour, without knowing where to go." "Sure, mademoiselle, said the count's mistress, (in a softer accent) you do not imagine I would provide so ill for your safety! La Valere will conduct you to a house at a small distance, where my woman attends me with other apparel; for I dressed myself for this adventure there, the mistress of the house being a person with whom I have a strict friendship. As soon as you are entered, deliver this ring, which I will give you for that purpose, either to her or my woman, and tell them the artifice we have used. I ordered the coach to come for me very early in the morning; and, when you have changed your dress, you may be at Paris before madam Diserre will be risen: so that you need not fear any pursuit, or that the count should be soon informed of your flight. You may, if you please; conceal yourself at my house, till you have resolved what to do; and my woman may attend you there. It will be the last place in the world, where the count will expect to find you; and there is no probability that he will come to pay me a visit, as he informed me, that he was going to Versailles for three weeks: a pretence he invented to conceal his new affections, which ingrossed all his moments." "Ah, madam, interrupted I, let us haste to change cloaths! I am convinced there will be no difficulty in this affair; and I only tremble now, lest this Valere should come too soon." Madam Danville, smiling at my impatience, began to undress; and, as soon as she had slipped on my gown, took a great deal of pains in dressing me in her man's cloaths. As we were almost of an equal height, and not much different in shape, they fitted me near as well as her: but I thought myself so extremely awkward in

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this habit, that I was apprehensive the valet would never mistake me for his lady. As soon as I was thus metamorphosed, madam Danville pulled off a rich diamond from her finger, and gave it me for a passport: "Valere, said she, will just conduct you to the door; and, if you can avoid speaking much to him, by holding a handkerchief up to your face, you'll effectually conceal yourself from his knowledge."

She had just finished her instructions, when we heard the key turn in the door; upon which madam Danville hastily put out the candle, and I went into the closet with a trembling heart. "Come, madam, said the valet, (hearing me enter) 'tis almost light." I gave him my hand, and he led me down a little pair of stairs, and a—cross two or three rooms, till we came to the hall. "What a villain am I, said he, (in a muttering voice) to betray my master in this manner, who confides so greatly in me! But your ladyship is so good, and so generous, 'tis impossible to deny you any thing. Well, madam, what do you think of this young girl my master has stolen? Is she handsome?" "Yes, answered I, (in a whisper.)" "Not half so handsome as your ladyship tho', said the valet. Well, your curiosity was certainly wound up to a high pitch, that you could patiently suffer so long a confinement for a sight of your rival. This jealousy is a terrible passion: thank heaven, 'tis only you great folks that are plagued with it. Such as we, love after another fashion." It was happy for me, that this fellow loved to hear himself talk. I found myself under no necessity of speaking to him; for he continued his harangue, without interruption, till we got to the house.

As soon as he had knocked at the door, I bid him leave me, in a muttering voice; which, had I not accompanied with a wave of my hand, 'tis probable he would not have understood. He had just turned from me, when the door was opened by a woman, who, having a candle in her hand, by which she plainly saw my face, "Oh heavens! cried she, this is not my lady!" "Shut tho door, said I, and compose yourself. Do you know what your lady's errand was at the count de R 's?" "Yes, I do," replied she. "Well, resumed I, I am the person of whom she entertained a jealousy; but, having discovered that I had no inclination to stay at the count's, she changed dresses with me, to facilitate my escape, and remains there in my stead. To convince you this is truth, here is a ring she bid me give you." "Ah, mademoiselle, said the waiting—woman, (receiving the ring) pardon me, if I entertained some doubts, at first seeing you in my lady's habit. Well, sure this is the strangest adventure! So, my lady will stay till the count comes! There will be a sad quarrel between them, I fear. But, really, mademoiselle, 'twas a generous action of your's, to resign the count to your rival. I think my lady is greatly obliged to you." "I have no interest in the count, I assure you, answered I; and I am more obliged to your lady, for assisting me to get out of that house, than she is to me for quitting it. But, if you'll help me to change my dress, you'll do me a favour; for I must not stay here long." Madam de Danville's woman, asking my pardon for keeping me so long in the entry, immediately shewed me into a chamber; and, having helped to disrobe me, dressed me anew in her lady's cloaths, which were extremely elegant, and fitted me exactly. The woman, who understood the duties of her place perfectly well, loaded me with compliments all the while she was assisting me to dress. "I protest, mademoiselle, said she, I never saw a more lovely face and shape in my life. How graceful is your air! What eyes! What a complexion is there! But, permit me to tell you, you want a little red. There is a certain languid sweetness in the pale colour of the English ladies, which is very becoming perhaps in that country, but here it is too remarkable."

She was going on in this manner, when the mistress of the house entered the room: "What, madam, said she, (with a familiar air) you are out of your masculine habit, I see: but I long to know the particulars of this whimsical expedition." Upon this, I turned towards her; for, as I was still at the toilet, she had only seen my back. "Bless me, resumed she, (starting back) who is this? Toinet, where is your lady? How has this metamorphosis happened?" Toinet, as she called her, having ended a violent fit of laughter, satisfied her curiosity by repeating all I had told her; to which I added something, which let her into the whole affair. "It highly concerns me, madam, pursued I, to leave this place as soon as possible; and, if madam de Danville's coach is come, I would set out for Paris immediately." "It will be here in half an hour, replied the lady, (looking on her watch;) and in the mean time, mademoiselle, you may drink some chocolate, which I'll order in an instant." I accepted this invitation, and followed her to a parlour: and the coach being come, soon after we had breakfasted, I told Toinet she might go to Paris with me; for her lady did not desire her attendance there any longer, as she was uncertain when she should want her."

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As soon as we began our little journey, I debated with myself, whether it would be proper to go to madam de Danville's house, or endeavour to find out the marchioness, and implore her protection; for I was determined never to go near that fatal convent, tho' I passionately longed to see mademoiselle Belville. As I was extremely apprehensive of seeing the count, or the earl of L , I thought it the safest way to let the coach set me down at madam de Danville's, where I might stay till I had wrote to the marchioness, and sent to the convent to know if Mrs. Dormer had been there. Accordingly I resolved upon this last expedient; and, being now come into Paris, I drew up the windows, lest I should be seen. The inquisitive woman, observing this action, asked me, if I had any particular reasons for keeping myself concealed, beside the fear of being seen by the count. I replied, that, indeed, was my principal motive for desiring not to be seen; but that I had also some other reasons, which made it necessary: and asked her, if she thought I could pass unobserved into the house. "Depend upon it, mademoiselle, said she, no one, that sees you just step out of the coach, will take you for any other than my lady; and none of our servants dare to mention any thing that passes here. Besides, you are a stranger to them: they don't know your name, and it is impossible they should make any discovery." "Well, answered I, I'll venture to stay there a couple of hours, till I have taken some necessary precautions to secure myself." "You may depend upon my fidelity, said the officious Toinet: I shall be glad of an opportunity to serve you."

We had now reached the house; and the door being opened, I went in as quick as possible. Toinet followed me, and shewed me into her lady's room. I had just seated myself, when somebody rapping loud at the door, threw me into a terrible consternation; and I earnestly conjured Toinet to see who it was, before any of the other servants could answer them. Accordingly she ran down stairs, and left me in the most cruel anxiety till her return. "Who would have thought, said she, (when she entered the room) that you could be so soon discovered! There is a gentleman below, who asks to see the young lady that just now came in a coach to this house." "What sort of a man?" cried I, (quite alarmed.) "He is young, and appears to be some Englishman of distinction," replied she. I had at first imagined it might be Mr. Darcy; but this description made me immediately conclude, that it was no other than the earl of L . "For heaven's sake, said I, persist that it was your lady whom he saw; and, if you can bring me off at this dangerous juncture, you may depend upon my gratitude." Toinet, who perfectly understood my meaning, assured me she would do her best. "He asked me, pursued she, if you did not live here; and I told him that you did: upon which he desired to see you. Now, mademoiselle, if you please, you may, for a little while, assume the character of mistress of this house, and send him word that you are engaged, and can't possibly see him." "Say what you will, said I, so you can get him away." Toinet immediately hurried down stairs; but staid so long this time, that I began to fear he was resolved not to stir till he saw me. My perplexity increased every moment. Toinet relieved me, at last, from part of my fears: "I have sent him away, madam, said she; but I have been forced to tell a hundred falsehoods." "Why, what have you said? answered I, (smiling.) "Why, mademoiselle, said she, I told him, that you could not possibly be the lady he took you for; that you was not acquainted with any foreigner, and was at present engaged. He replied, that he could not be mistaken; he knew your face perfectly well. Do me the favour only, said he, to tell me whether your lady receives the visits of the count de R , Yes, yes, sir, answered I; and what then: I find you know something of her then. How came you to imagine she is the person you asked for. He seemed at this to be in a great disturbance; and, after asking me when the count de R was expected here, which I did not think proper to tell him, he went away." "Alas, Toinet, said I, (putting a guinea into her hand) I fear we have fallen upon a bad stratagem! If that gentleman insisted that he saw my face plainly, he'll carry away the notion that I am really the count de R 's mistress. I would have passed for madam Danville, if I could; but, since he was convinced he knew me, I have, by this means, only assumed her character, without her name. However, if I can contrive to get safe out of the house, he may soon be convinced of his mistake; for he'll certainly call again. In the mean time, favour me with some paper and pens, that I may write a letter or two, and procure me a messenger to dispatch away with them." Toinet immediately furnished me with what I wanted; and, while she went to seek for a proper messenger, I wrote a short billet to the marchioness and mademoiselle Belville. In each, I gave some little account of my being carried away; and intreated the marchioness to afford me her protection, till I could leave Paris with safety. I had just finished these two letters, when Toinet introduced a person to me, who, she said, would deliver them faithfully. As he was perfectly well acquainted with the town, he immediately knew in what quarter of it the marchioness de lived, and where the convent of the stood. I gave him my letters, charging him to wait for answers, and to return as soon as possible.

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He came back, indeed, soon enough; but brought me most afflicting news: the marchioness was not in town, and mademoiselle Belville had left the convent five days before. I ordered him to go back again to the convent, and get information from the prioress, whether an English lady, called Mrs. Dormer, had been there; directing him, at the same time, not to own from what place he was sent; and, to bribe his fidelity, promised to reward him handsomely. This message was as unsuccessful as the former: the prioress would not give any answer to the question, till she was told who and where the person was, who had sent him. In this distracting dilemma, I knew not what to resolve on. It was absolutely unsafe for me to remain any longer in madam Danville's house; and I deferred all reflections upon what course I should pursue, till I was in a less dangerous place.

Toinet, who saw my perplexity, offered to go to a milliner's, who lived a few streets from that, and hire an apartment for me; and, to prevent my being known, advised me to change my name. I consented to this proposal immediately; for I was in the utmost uneasiness while I staid in this house. And as soon as every thing was agreed on between us, I went in a chair to my new lodgings.

As I observed the house was very large, I asked the mistress of it, if she had any more lodgers in it beside myself, and what they were: upon which she informed me, that her best apartments were let to an English gentleman and his lady, who were to set out shortly for Calais, upon their return to England. "I should be glad to know their name," replied I. "'Tis Belville, mademoiselle, said the milliner. Perhaps you know them!" "Yes, cried I, (in a transport) I am very intimately acquainted with the lady you speak of! This is the most fortunate accident! I'll make her a visit immediately, if she is at home." The milliner, upon this, called a servant of madam Belville's, whom I ordered to tell his lady, that an English lady of her acquaintance desired to see her. Madam Belville, followed the messenger out, eager to see who it was; but the moment she cast her eyes on me, they lost some part of the pleasing surprize they expressed before; yet she saluted me with an engaging air, tho' more reserved than I expected, and led me into her apartment. During some moments, madam Belville maintained a distant behaviour, which so surprised me, that I sat silent, looking on her with a perplexed air, at a loss in what manner to begin a conversation, which I foresaw would have nothing of that openness and friendship in it which all our others had. At length, no longer able to continue in a restraint, which seemed so extremely painful to her, the tender madam Belville took my hand, and pressing it with much affection, "Oh, miss Stuart I said she, how difficult is it to behold you, and entertain suspicions to your prejudice! But why do I say suspicions! Is it not certain, that you left the convent with the count de R ? Could I ever have thought that my dear friend would have acted so inconsistent with that virtue, of which her story gave me so high an idea?"

Had any one but madam Belville talked to me in this manner, I should have been excessively disobliged; but there was so much sweet sincerity in her looks, such engaging softness in her accent, that I thought of nothing but drawing her out of the mistake she was in, without conceiving any resentment at the injury it did me. As I had had no opportunity of seeing her, after the alarming message I received, as I imagined, from the marchioness, I related it to her now, together with the count de R 's continued artifice, and my escape, by the interposition of his mistress. Madam Belville would hardly allow me to finish my story, her eagerness to atone for the injury her suspicion had done me, made her interrupt me with a tender embrace; asking me pardon, at the same time, with tears, for the harsh language she had used to me. "Ought I to expect, said she, (with inexpressible tenderness) that my dearest miss Harriot will restore me to that friendship and esteem I have forfeited, by the unworthy suspicions I have suffered myself to entertain of her?" "Ah, say no more, dear madam! cried I, (embracing her:) appearances were against me, and, till I had an opportunity of justifying my conduct, your censure was not only pardonable, but just. But before I ask you by what happy means Mr. Belville is restored to you sooner than you expected, inform me if Mrs. Dormer was at the convent to enquire for me before you left it?" "I never heard of that lady's calling, replied my friend; but there was a young English gentleman, who, they say, appeared to be of distinction, that enquired for you; to whom the prioress related the manner of your going away with the count de R ." "Did you see this gentleman?" interrupted I. "No, answered madam Belville; but, by the grief and rage that he expressed at what the prioress told him concerning you, 'tis believed in the convent, that it was some lover of your's: and I am inclined to think it was the same person, who, you say, saw you enter madam Danville's house." "Ah, undoubtedly it was the same, answered I, it can be no other than the earl of L . How unhappy am I, in being

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so often the object of libertine pursuits! Either he or the count de R will certainly discover me, notwithstanding all my precautions; and in a country like this, where orders, signed by the king, are so easily procured, and prostituted to the basest designs, how can I think myself secure from the attempts of two men, who seem absolutely determined to accomplish my ruin." "I am of opinion, said madam Belville, that you ought to quit France immediately. Let Mr. Belville and I have the pleasure of conducting you safe to England. We shall leave Paris to-morrow. Don't let me have the mortification of going without you: your society is all I want to make my happiness complete. My dear Mr. Belville received, while he was abroad, news of the death of an uncle; to whose estate, which is very considerable, he succeeds. This brought him immediately from the place of his banishment: he came with a lover's haste to take me from the monastery; and our affairs requiring us to be in England as soon as possible, we have determined to set out for Calais to-morrow. It will be dangerous for you to stay here, expecting Mrs. Dormer: we may chance to meet her in our journey, if she is not yet come; and, that you may be satisfied as to that point, I'll go myself this evening to the convent, and enquire if she has been there since I left it. If she has not, you can have no occasion to expose yourself to any further stratagems, by staying here; and, I believe, you will not find it difficult to be ready for going to-morrow." As I had reason to be perfectly satisfied with my friend's proposal, I did not hesitate a moment to comply with it, provided I could be assured Mrs. Dormer had not yet been at the convent.

Madam Belville was just preparing to go, in order to deliver me from my uncertainty, when Mr. Belville came in; to whom she introduced me, with a thousand expressions of the tenderest friendship. And this young gentleman, who, to praise him sufficiently, I need only say was worthy to possess my lovely friend, assured me, in the politest manner, of his esteem and respect. Madam Belville, having informed him of her intended visit to the convent, intreated him to bear me company till she returned; but my impatience was so great, to hear news of my dearest Mrs. Dormer, that I begged leave to retire to my own chamber, in order to conceal my anxiety. Here I revolved a thousand painful tender ideas; and the expectation of seeing this amiable friend, renewed my affliction for the infidelity of Dumont, and brought back every soft remembrance of his once tender passion for me, heightening the cruel contrast, which his perfidious change had made, and doubling my grief by reflections I was not able to suppress.

Madam Belville, when she came back, found me in tears: "Alas, my dear, said she, I wish I had any news to tell you, that would banish your uneasiness. Mrs. Dormer has not been at the convent; and you have no reason to think she is in Paris." "Well then, madam, replied I, I am determined to set out with you tomorrow. Mrs. Dormer, no doubt, has been prevented by some misfortune from performing her promise; or, perhaps, I am no longer happy in her affection. Whatever is the cause of her disappointing me, I shall languish with impatience till I know it. But I am too much inured to misery, to be surprised at any new misfortune that can befall me." Madam Belville endeavoured, by the most obliging tenderness, to dispel the melancholy reflections which engrossed me.

We spent the rest of the day in making preparations for our journey. As I had a riding-dress, and other necessaries, to provide, my friend intreated me to make use of her purse for that purpose, if I was straitened for money: but this not being the case, as I had a considerable sum in my purse when Mr. Darcy took me away, I declined this generous offer, with the graceful acknowledgments it merited.

We left Paris early the next morning in a coach and four; and reached Calais in three days; and, after resting there one night, went on board a packet-boat next morning: but, having contrary winds, we had a very tedious passage. My heart was oppressed with inconceivable disquiet the moment I was landed in England. 'Tis here, thought I, where I shall be continually exposed to the torturing remembrance of Dumont! or, perhaps, have the mortification of seeing him enjoying his triumph over my peace and happiness! I accompanied Mrs. Belville, at her earnest intreaty, to the lodgings her husband had provided for her in Hanover-square; and, having just waited on her to her apartment, I took leave of her, to visit Mrs. Dormer, who lived very near. Mrs. Belville and her husband would not let me go, till I had promised them, in case Mrs. Dormer was not in town, to return and stay with them, they having a spare chamber to accommodate me with. I made no scruple to promise them I would comply with this obliging proposal, if I should be so unfortunate as not to meet with my friend. I then stepped into a chair, and

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was carried to the house where Mrs. Dormer lodged; but was informed she had left those lodgings, and now lived in the very square. I was so impatient to see her, that I could not prevail upon myself to stay a moment with my old landlady, who was transported to see me again; but hurried immediately to the house, to which she had directed me.

Mrs. Dormer having only remained in this woman's lodgings till her house was fitted up, I was not surprised to hear she was moved; but was quite elated with the hopes of seeing her, when a servant, having opened the door, informed me his lady had set out for Paris three days before. This cruel disappointment determined me to return to Mrs. Belville, to whom I related my misfortune in missing my friend. She was beginning to comfort me for this accident, when a servant, coming in, told me, that a young lady was below, who enquired for me, as he supposed, by the name of miss Stuart. I immediately ran down stairs into a parlour, where I was told she was, and was received with an eager embrace by my dear sister Fanny; for it was she herself, who had sent for me: "Oh, heavens! cried I, (with a mixture of surprize and joy) can it be you, my dearest Fanny, that I see so unexpectedly! How long have you been in town, and how came you to know I was here?" "I have not been in town a week, said my lovely sister; and I was visiting a relation of my husband's, who lives in this square, when I saw you, from the window where I sat, pass by in a chair. I knew you immediately; and was so surprised, that I had like to have fainted away: for I was informed, by the person where you lodged, of the strange manner in which you were taken away but yesterday, the direction you gave me being mislaid; so that I knew not, for some time, where to find you, and was just distracted at the accident which kept me so long from seeing you. Guess my affliction then, my dear Harriot, at the news I heard of your disappearing, by such strange means, as convinced me you was in the power of some villain! And my surprize, at such a sudden sight of you, was pretty near as fatal; for I could not, for some moments, utter a word: at last, I hastily threw up the window, and had another glimpse of you, just as you came out of the chair into this house. Upon which I told the company the occasion of my surprize, and came directly to you myself; for I could not be persuaded to stay, as they would have had me, till I sent a servant to enquire if you was really here." I embraced the tender Fanny a second time; and acknowledging the goodness of providence, for sending me such unexpected comforts, at a time when I so greatly needed them, I begged my sister to finish her visit immediately, that I might be no longer kept from paying my duty to my mother. She then left me, to go and excuse herself to her company, promising to call and take me up in her way home.

This interval I employed in relating to Mrs. Belville our happy meeting, and in taking leave of this obliging friend, who would wait on me to the door of my sister's coach, in order to pay her compliments to one so dear to me.

As soon as we drove away, my sister eagerly enquired after my affairs: I gave her a short sketch of my history, which filled her with the most tender concern. She wept almost all the time I was relating it. "Alas, my dear, said she, what dangerous trials have you had! How nobly have you maintained the honour of your family! Doubt not, my dearest sister, but your uncommon virtue and fortitude will one day meet with a large reward. In the mean time, I conjure you to banish the base Dumont from your remembrance; and let not such an unworthy wretch have the power of disturbing your tranquility." I could only answer by a sigh to this affecting advice. My soul, tho' filled with resentment, was not yet capable of hating Dumont; but my pride hid part of my weakness even from myself: and I often attributed the emotions which agitated my heart, when he rose to my remembrance, to scorn and rage, which, in reality, were the effects of a too tender and lasting passion for this lovely deceiver.

As my sister lived in St. James's-street, we had opportunity for a long conversation before I saw my mother; and being told by Fanny, that she was intirely ignorant of any engagement between Dumont and myself, there being no talk of it at N when they came away, I was freed from some part of my uneasiness; for I did not doubt but the news had reached the father of Dumont, who would not fail to spread it about. And as I expected many reproaches from my mother, my sister thought it prudent to prepare her for seeing me, lest the too great surprize might affect her; and tho' I thought this caution needless, as my mother never discovered any extraordinary sensations of tenderness for me; yet I did not oppose her, and waited in a parlour she conducted me into, till it was proper I should appear.

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I was greatly surprised, a little time afterwards, to find my mother come hastily into the room. It seems, her impatience to see me would not suffer her to wait till I was sent for to her apartment. This condescension transported me with an excess of filial joy: I cast myself at her knees, and, while she stooped to embrace me, bathed her loved face with my tears, unable to utter a word. At last, my mother obliged me to rise; and, after having satisfied her curiosity with telling her the most important things which had happened to me since I left her, my sister Fanny desired leave to introduce a brother-in-law to me, who was impatient to see me. "Come, child, said my mother, (taking my hand) Mr. S is in my apartment: I will have the pleasure of presenting you to this worthy son, who, in some measure, repairs the loss of your dear brother." I followed my mother, with my eyes flowing at the mention of my dearest brother; and could scarce compose myself well enough to be able to receive, as I ought, the affectionate compliments Mr. S paid me. When our first congratulations were over, my mother made me repeat my adventures in some order; and, when I had ended my little history, she embraced me several times, assuring me, my conduct had given her the highest satisfaction.

Had it been possible for me to lose the remembrance of Dumont, I might have thought myself extremely happy. My mother's tenderness for me was greatly increased; and my sister and her husband seemed to vie with each other, in giving me the most obliging testimonies of their affection.

The presence and endearments of these loved relations, softened, a little, my impatience for the return of Mrs. Dormer; who, by the account I had given of my obligations to her, was become dear to them all. I had the mortification to hear, from her housekeeper, that her lady had writ her word she was gone to Montpelier, for the recovery of an indisposition, which threatened her with a consumption. My concern, at this news, was equal to the friendship I bore her. Being informed, by her housekeeper, where to direct to her, I wrote immediately: but receiving no answer, my apprehensions were considerably increased, especially as I heard her family also were ignorant of the state of her health.

I passed the remainder of this winter in a constant attendance on my mother, who was much indisposed. The country air being judged necessary for the recovery of her health, we removed, early in the spring, to a beautiful retreat near Hampstead. Here I employed myself in my usual diversions, reading and writing. My mother having desired me to invite my engaging friend Mrs. Belville, with whom I preserved a constant correspondence, to pass a few days with us in the country, I sent her the following poetical invitation, which procured me, with her, a very unexpected visiter.

To Delia.

Inviting her to a retreat in the country.

Now spring, returning, decks the year,
With all that's lovely, all that's fair;
The fields in lively green array'd,
With deeper glooms the silent shade:
Soft descend the gentle show'rs:
And wake to life the springing flow'rs:
Hence ambrosial sweets exhale,
And various colours paint the vale;
Refreshing airs the zephyrs blow,
The streams with pleasing murmurs flow,

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While nightly, 'midst the silent plain,
Thy fav'rite bird renews her strain.
Come then, my Delia, come and share
My joys, and breathe a purer air:
Together let us range the plains,
Among the rustick nymphs and swains;
In rural dress, devoid of care,
Give to the winds our flowing hair,
And round the meadows gaily roam;
For youth does sober mirth become.

Now, straining up you airy height,
We'll entertain the wand'ring sight
With flow'ry fields, and waving woods,
Hills and dales, and falling floods:
Or, to relieve the searching eyes,
See distant spires and temples rise.

Come now, my Delia, let us rove
Together thro' the mazy grove;
Here, while with gentle pace we walk,
Beguile the time with pleasing talk:
Here show thy melting eloquence,
Thy sprightly wit, thy manly sense;
Thy virtuous notions, void of art;
And, while you charm, correct the heart.

Or now, together careless laid,
Beneath a cypress' spreading shade,
Our thoughts to heav'nly numbers raise,
Repeating Pope's harmonious lays:
Now Homer's awful leaves turn o'er,
Or graver history explore;
Or study Plato's sacred page,
Uncommon to our sex and age.

Now, wand'ring by the moon's pale light,
Amidst the silent shades of night,
Where, on the late deserted plains,
A pleasing melancholy reigns;
Softly thro' the rustling trees,
Sobs the sweetly dying breeze;
The ecchoes catch the plaintive sound,
And gentle murmurs breathe around.

Now sing, my friend, and let thy strain
Recount the arts of faithless man:
Thy notes, sweet Philomel shall join,
And mix her soft complaints with thine.

But raise, my Delia, raise thy song,

To Delia.

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To friendship nobler strains belong.
O, sing its tender chaste desires,
Its equal, pure, and lasting fires;
Such as in thy bosom burns,
Such as my fond soul returns.
Friendship is but love refin'd,
Not weakens, but exalts the mind;
And when its sacred pow'r we prove,
We guess how heav'nly spirits love.

Mr. Belville, while he was at Jamaica, had contracted an acquaintance with Mr. Campbel, that generous lover I have often mentioned in the course of my history. Having met again in London, Mr. Belville introduced him to his lady; and he was then in her apartment, when my letter was brought to her. In the relation of my history to this lovely friend, I concealed the names both of this gentleman and his uncle, as well as some other persons I had occasion to mention; so that she was intirely ignorant of our acquaintance. Upon receiving my letter, she read my poem aloud, telling him, it was the composition of a young lady; and asked his opinion of it. Mr. Campbel, knowing I sometimes amused myself in this way, eagerly enquired the name of the lady, which Mrs. Belville did not think proper to conceal: upon which my lover declared he had the honour to know me, and begged her permission to attend her in her visit to me.

You may imagine, my dear Amanda, that I was excessively surprised at seeing Mrs. Belville thus accompanied! My friendship for Mr. Campbel had not been lessened by his absence; and I introduced him to my mother and sister with a peculiar satisfaction. As I had before acquainted them with the nature of my obligations to this gentleman, they received him with the utmost esteem and respect. My brother-in-law and he soon became acquainted; and he, having received a general invitation, did not fail to visit us two or three times a week.

Mr. Campbel, who had frequent opportunities of talking to me alone, employed them in assuring me of the never-dying passion his heart still felt for me. When I reflected on the indifference with which I had repaid his tender sentiments, I could not help being surprised, that he still retained them. "Ah, how unlike my faithless Dumont, thought I, is this too generous lover! How happy should I be, could I transfer the affection, I once bore that ingrate, to him!"

My mother and sister, who soon discovered the ardent passion of Mr. Campbel, pressed me incessantly in his behalf. My reason aided their solicitations, and represented him so deserving of my utmost tenderness, that I accused myself of the basest ingratitude, for being so long insensible of his merit. With these favourable dispositions towards him, I listened, with an unusual complaisance, to his vows of unalterable love. As I ardently wished to dispose my heart in his favour, my looks often wore a softness and sensibility, which filled him with the most agreeable hopes; and, e're I was aware, the change in my behaviour convinced my transported lover, that my heart was wholly his.

But, while I was ignorant of this effect of my endeavours to answer his passion, guess my surprize, dear Amanda, to see him one day throw himself at my feet in an extacy, and conjure me no longer to defer his happiness, but name the day when I would bestow myself upon him. "Oh, heavens! sir, cried I, (obliging him to rise) why do you talk to me in this manner! Have I given you any reason to think I have been able to take such a resolution? Alas, pursued I, (bursting into tears at the remembrance of Dumont) my heart is far from being in the disposition you wish it, and which perhaps I myself desire it should!" "What, miss, interrupted my lover, (with a countenance quite altered) have I then deceived myself with imaginary hopes of having been able to overcome your insensibility! And is it so impossible for you to cease hating me, that you acknowledge 'tis not in your power to do otherwise!" "Ah, do not wrong the sentiments I have for you, replied I, by such an injurious suspicion! I have all the esteem and friendship for you, that your uncommon merits deserve. I am sensible, the tenderness and delicacy of your passion may claim a still more grateful return; and I regret my incapacity to bestow it." "Well, miss,

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replied my lover, (with a voice interrupted with sighs) you now speak plain, indeed; and I comprehend the whole extent of my misfortunes. You love where you wish you did not, my dear, my adorable Harriot; and that heart, which to obtain is the first ambition of my soul, is bestowed upon one unworthy of its tenderness. Ah! I am more unhappy by this knowledge, than when I left you, as I thought, to the possession of a beloved rival, who deserved you! Then I alone was miserable; and it was some alleviation of my grief, to think that you was happy." Was it possible to listen to sentiments so tender and generous, without being extremely moved! I acknowledged, without reserve, that he alone was worthy of my utmost tenderness; and, in order to acquaint him with the true state of my heart, I related to him exactly the history of my engagement with Dumont, concealing only his name, his base infidelity, and the stratagem of his uncle to prevent my ever seeing him more. I acknowledged, that my heart had not yet recovered its former tranquillity; and that, tho' I had ceased to love the ungrateful man, I could not yet intirely banish him from my remembrance. "Be assured, pursued I, (giving him my hand) that, when I am worthy of your affection, I will be your's. You are already possessed of my utmost esteem: I am not naturally ingrateful; and it is not improbable but time, and my own efforts to dispose my heart in your favour, will produce those sentiments you wish to inspire me with." I could not finish these words without blushing excessively; while my lover, keeping my hand pressed with inconceivable tenderness to his lips, was some moments incapable of answering me any otherwise than by a look, more intelligible than any language he could have used. "Is it possible, said he, (at last, lifting up his eyes) that there is on earth a wretch, who could forego the possession of so divine a creature, for any other advantage the world could offer him! Oh, miss Harriot, thy story unfolds a thousand beauties in thy character I never knew before! Thy amiable sincerity, tho' it destroys my hopes, confirms my admiration! I foresee I never shall be so happy to possess your heart; but despair itself cannot hinder me from adoring you!"

The mutual confidence that was now established between Mr. Campbel and me, produced such a behaviour to each other, as convinced my mother that I would not refuse him my hand. My sister was transported to find I had gained such a conquest over myself. Her husband and she were perpetually talking of the amiable qualities Mr. Campbel possessed; and the satisfaction with which I listened to such discourses, persuaded them I grew every day more sensible of his merit.

In effect, my dear, if Mr. Campbel's faithful passion, the solicitations of my friends, and my own endeavours to be grateful, did not actually produce in me such sentiments as I wished; yet I no longer felt any repugnance to become his wife. I knew enough of my own temper, to be convinced, when once it became my duty to love him, my heart would quickly feel a disposition to do so, possessed as it was already with the most perfect esteem for his virtues. But, as I was determined to use no disguise in so important an affair, when I gave my ravished lover my promise to be his, I gave him a true description of the state of my heart. I acknowledged that the sentiments I felt for him did not yet merit the name of love; but that my soul, being wholly free from any passion for another, and penetrated with the utmost gratitude and friendship for him, I left it to his choice to take me now, and trust to my principles of religion and virtue to produce an affection worthy of his; or to wait till time, and his continued tenderness, had inspired me with still more grateful sentiments. My lover accepted my first proposition with inexpressible transports; and, impatient to have his happiness confirmed by the consent of my family, went immediately to acquaint my mother with the resolution I had taken. My mother received the news with the greatest satisfaction; and my sister and brother-in-law expressed the most tender joy, for an event they judged so fortunate for me.

My mother, at my lover's earnest request, determined to have our marriage delayed no longer than a fortnight; in which time, the necessary preparations for it might be easily made.

Mr. Campbell, besides his commission, was possessed of an estate of three hundred pounds a year; and his uncle, the captain, whom I have formerly mentioned, designed to leave him the bulk of his fortune, which was very large. That gentleman had always preserved a very tender esteem for me; and when Mr. Campbel asked his consent to our marriage, he gave it with a peculiar satisfaction, adding an eulogium upon me; which, tho' it greatly exceeded my merits, was assented to with rapture by my lover.

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The captain desiring to be introduced to my mother, upon the designed union of their families, he came in a very grand equipage to pay us a visit. 'Twas impossible for me to see him without some confusion, at the painful remembrance of what had past; but I composed my looks with the utmost care, that he might not observe the least trace of uneasiness upon my countenance. He assured my mother, in the politest manner, that he looked upon his nephew's marriage with me, as the utmost happiness that could befall him. "And, pursued he, (turning to Mr. Campbel) that this young lady, with all her other accomplishments, may also bring you a fortune worth your acceptance, upon the day of your marriage I shall present her with three thousand pounds; for which I expect you'll make her a suitable settlement."

I need not say, my dear Amanda, how much I was touched with this generous action! I believe you are convinced, I am extremely susceptible of grateful impressions. I expressed my acknowledgments in the strongest terms; while Mr. Campbel, with a silent rapture, kissed his hand, unable to express any otherwise, for a long time, his grateful sense of a favour, which, conferred on me, made it infinitely greater. My mother also joined in our thanks to the generous captain, who, soon after, took his leave, with repeated assurances of his esteem and regard.

There remained now but a few days before that on which I was to give my hand to Mr. Campbel, when I was surprised with a visit from Mrs. Dormer. Her equipage no sooner stopt at the door, than, seized with a transport of joy, I hastily flew to receive her; and, just as she entered the house, met her with an eager embrace. My mother and sister welcomed her with the greatest expressions of respect; and Mr. Campbel, who was then present, expressed a joy, at seeing her, but little inferior to mine. When the first compliments were over, and I was at liberty to observe the looks and behaviour of my dear friend, I thought there appeared in her somewhat of melancholy and restraint, which gave me an unusual disturbance. Mrs. Dormer frequently fixed her eyes upon Mr. Campbel, and then turned them upon me with a look so piercing, that I was not able to sustain it. My heart fluttered with a painful anxiety! My thoughts were all alarmed, and I trembled, as if some terrible misfortune was just going to befall me! Mrs. Dormer, after near an hour's general conversation, expressing a desire to walk, Mr. Campbel, my sister, and I, prepared to accompany her. When we were in the fields, she engaged me in a particular discourse; which Mr. Campbel and my sister observing, walked on without us, to leave us the liberty of conversing without being heard. "Well, miss Harriot, said my friend, am I to wish you joy? Are you married yet to the gentleman who walks before us?" "Not yet, madam, replied I, (blushing;) but the day is fixed, and I shall think myself inexpressibly happy to have you present at that sacred ceremony." "What, are you not married, then?" interrupted Mrs. Dormer, (with a look and accent expressive of the greatest pleasure.) Mrs. Belville, who acquainted me with all your affairs, informed me that it would be impossible I could arrive soon enough to prevent it; for she imagined the ceremony was already over. You having resolved to have it as private as possible, only your own family would know the day. Heaven be praised, you are not yet lost! Dumont may still be happy! What is it you say, madam, interrupted I, (with a faltering accent) did you name Dumont!" "Oh, my dear, cried my friend, I have been too rash! I see I have greatly alarmed you! Compose yourself: I have some very extraordinary things to tell you. How I repent of not explaining myself, when I wrote to you at the convent! All this would have been prevented!" "Alas, madam, cried I, (trembling) keep me no longer in suspence! Tell me, I conjure you, what am I to think of what you uttered concerning Dumont? How can my marriage affect him? Explain this mystery, which perplexes me with a thousand different inquietudes! Ah, I am not near that happy indifference, with which I so vainly flattered myself; since his very name is capable of giving me so much disturbance." "I have so much to say to you, replied Mrs. Dormer, that I must intreat you to give me an opportunity of being alone with you, when we return. I will not ask you to go with me to town, for fear of raising suspicions, which at this time must be avoided."

My impatience to hear what Mrs. Dormer had to say to me, made me immediately propose returning to the house; where we were no sooner entered, than I took her to my chamber. The friendship which subsisted between us, made it not surprising that we should desire to be alone, after so long an absence. "I cannot persuade myself, said Mrs. Dormer, that any thing but a firm belief of Mr. Dumont's infidelity, could make you think, yourself at liberty to marry any man but himself. And yet, my dear miss, in spite of appearances, this has not been the case: your Dumont has ever been faithful to you; and 'tis owing to a train of unlucky circumstances, as well as the basest

artifice, that you have been thus long deceived."

Mrs. Dormer stopt here, observing I was greatly affected with so unexpected a discovery. "Proceed, madam, said I: I will listen very composedly to your relation. Do not apprehend any weaknesses from me: I have been the sport of fortune ever since I was born, and ought not to be surprised at any of her changes." "I will tell my story in order, said Mrs. Dormer; and must therefore begin with my surprize at seeing my chaise return to Richmond, the same evening, without you. But when the man informed me of the occasion, and that you was gone to meet your mother and sister, I was excessively pleased with the news; imagining, with reason, their presence would greatly alleviate your affliction. The next morning, when I was in expectation either of seeing or hearing from you, word was brought me that Mr. Dumont was come. I hastily ordered his admittance, not without an extreme surprize at what might be the occasion of his visit, which was increased by observing him in deep mourning. "This is an ill-omened dress for a happy bridegroom, madam, said he; but tho' gratitude obliges me to wear it for a little time, yet my heart can be only sensible to the greatest excess of joy. But where is my lovely angel? Pardon me, madam: my impatience to see her, makes me neglect the exact rules of ceremony; and I must beg you to let her know I am here." 'Tis hardly possible to conceive the resentment with which I was filled, at a speech so extremely insulting, as I thought it: to own, at the same time that he asked for you, that he was a happy bridegroom, seemed such an excess of insolence, that, for some moments, I was not able to reply. "For heaven's sake, madam, resumed he, tell me if any accident has happened to my dearest Harriot! Why do I not see her? What does this alarming silence mean?" The distraction which appeared in his looks and accent, spite of myself, disarmed part of my anger. "Sure, sir, replied I, you do not mean to triumph in the uneasiness your infidelity has given that young lady, that you desire to see her. But whatever are your motives for such an inconsistent behaviour, it is not here that you can find miss Harriot, since she is not at present in my house." "Good God, madam! interrupted your lover, what infidelity is this you accuse me of! What crime have I committed? I thought I explained, in my letter to my angel, the reasons that would hinder me from coming at the day appointed. Can she be so unjust as to believe any thing to the prejudice of my love for her? Tell me, madam, I beg you, where she is, that I may fly to her immediately! I cannot bear the thought of her accusing me with neglect!" These words, pursued Mrs. Dormer, convinced me we both laboured under some strange mistake. I desired him to sit down, and hear me patiently; and then related to him our surprize at his not coming according to his promise; the message you had sent to his uncle's, and the account his servant had given of his marriage with his cousin. I had no time to add any thing concerning the affliction this news had given you: he interrupted me with a furious exclamation; and striking his breast with a vehement action, "Oh, my adored Harriot, cried he, (lifting up his eyes) what a wretch am I, this moment, in thy opinion! But, madam, pursued he, will you not tell me where she is, that I may haste and undeceive her?" I then told him, that my servant had informed me you was gone to meet your mother and sister, who were just arrived from N ; that you had met the messenger at my lodgings, and was gone to the inn, where they expected you. I pressed him, therefore, to compose himself, and stay some time at my house, being assured I should very soon either see or hear from you. I also added, that I should not be able to acquit him in my own thoughts, till I knew what affairs had detained him beyond the time he proposed to be with us; and how the report of his marriage had been spread among the servants in his uncle's house. 'Twas with some difficulty, that I could prevail upon him to stay, he was so eager to go and justify himself to you. But when I represented the improbability of his being able to find you, as you was now with your mother; and the certainty of his missing you, in case you came to Richmond, which I imagined, with reason, that you would; he consented to stay some time, in expectation of your coming.

I was still, pursued Mrs. Dormer, impatient to have him unfold the mystery of his stay; but, for a long time, all I could get from him was sighs and complaints. "I know not, madam, said he to me, (with a most melancholy air) whether I ought to suffer myself to be deprest with the sad presages I have, that this cruel mistake my Harriot labours under, will deprive me of her for ever. My soul is distracted with a thousand different apprehensions!" "I cannot give you any comfort, answered I, till I am certain of your innocence. For aught I know, you may be really married, notwithstanding all this grimace." This raillery, pursued my friend, forced a smile from your afflicted lover.

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"I suppose, madam, said he, my lovely Harriot told you, that I had left my cousin extremely indisposed with my uncle's unexpected appearance, and his menaces against me. When I returned, I found her in a high fever: the physicians were sent for, who pronounced her in great danger; she being so extremely weak before she was seized with this illness, that they thought it impossible for her to struggle with the violence of the distemper. My concern at this accident was considerably heightened, when I considered how great a share I had in causing her indisposition: my thoughts were so perplexed, that I was incapable of considering of measures to prevent my uncle from executing his threats of ruining me, which I knew was in his power. My cousin in the mean time grew worse; her life was despaired of, and she was given over by the doctors. The evening before I proposed so set out for Richmond, as it would have been highly indecent for me to leave the house while she continued alive, I wrote to miss Harriot, to acquaint her with the reasons of my not coming the day I proposed. As I did not care to trust my own servant to carry this letter, I ordered a porter to be called, and directed him to leave the letter at your lodgings, madam, in town, knowing it would be immediately sent to you; for I would not direct it to Richmond myself, lest if any accident happened, such as the messenger being watched, or asked any questions, the place where my Harriot was might not be known; for I dreaded the extravagant sallies of my uncle's temper. I had just dispatched this messenger, when my cousin's woman came to call me to her lady. When I came into the room, she desired me to sit down by her bedside, those who attended her retiring to a little distance. "Cousin, said she, I am sensible I have but a few hours to live, and this short period will be disturbed by the thoughts of what uneasiness our fatal contract will produce you: my uncle, I know, will be very severe, and render you unhappy if he can. Are you yet married?" Here she paused, while my affliction, at observing the difficulty with which she pronounced these few words, that seemed to exhaust the little strength she had left, kept me for some moments silent; at last I answered in the negative. "Then, resumed she, our engagement is not yet broke. If you will condescend to defer your marriage, and conceal your intentions, till I am no more, I shall be justified in leaving you, as my designed husband, the best part of my fortune. Do you promise me, Mr. Dumont, to marry no one while I am alive?" "Yes, dearest cousin," said I, stooping, and pressing my lips to her hand, while my eyes flowed with involuntary tears. "'Tis enough, interrupted she, faintly; my honour is satisfied. Retire now, and let me employ my few remaining moments as I ought." I left this generous lady, pursued your lover, with my heart penetrated with the most lively sentiments of sorrow, gratitude, and admiration. I passed that night in her anti-chamber; but saw her no more. She was seized with convulsions, and died about eleven o'clock the next morning. Her will was opened in the presence of her relations, in which she had declared the promise I made her, to keep our contract, while she lived, inviolable; and, as her designed husband, she had bequeathed me thirty thousand pounds: and the remainder of her fortune was to be disposed of to charitable uses, except some few legacies for rings to her relations, who were all too rich to need any thing she had left from them. This disposition of her fortune was resented by none of her relations, but her uncle, who alone doubted of my intentions to fulfil our engagements. He contented himself, however, with only giving me some furious looks. The death of my cousin, upon the very day I proposed being with you at Richmond, obliged me, thro' decency, to deny myself the happiness of seeing my Harriot; and, as I never doubted but she had received my letter, I thought she would easily imagine the cause of my not coming. The thoughts of being able now to place her in the situation she merited, filled me with a transport, which the tender remembrance of my departed cousin could scarce moderate.

My uncle, I was informed, kept his chamber, and had left to some of his friends the care of my cousin's funeral, which I resolved should be very magnificent, and gave orders for her lying in state. But I could not suppress, any longer, my eager desire to see my dearest Harriot: and giving directions to my servant, this morning, to tell any one, who enquired for me, that I would not be seen, I stole out by a back door; and mounting my horse, which my man had ready for me at a little distance, I hastened here, in order to have a moment's sight of my angel, and inform her of what had passed; not doubting but I should be back, ere it was suspected I had been abroad. But this disappointment of not meeting her, and the knowledge of the fatal deception she is in, so distracts me, that I can no longer behave with any decorum. Tho' my cousin is unburied, I cannot return till I have seen her!" This, pursued Mrs. Dormer, was what your lover said to me, and easily accounted for the words he had uttered when he came in, which had increased my indignation. Had you not been so precipitate, my dear, how many miseries would you have spared yourself?"

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"Ah, madam, interrupted I, who would have thought it possible my Dumont was innocent!

What injustice have I been guilty of! continued I, (melting into tears.) I have not only endeavoured to drive him from my heart, but I have even engaged to marry his rival! Alas, dear Mrs. Dormer, how shall I draw myself out of this cruel perplexity? My faith engaged to both! My whole soul devoted to one! Can I give myself to my dear Dumont, without fearing the fatal consequences of Mr. Campbell's resentment? My relations too will interpose in his favour and strengthen his claim. Ah, madam, had you been pleased to explain yourself, when you wrote to me at the convent, I had now been happy!" "'Tis true, my dear, replied Mrs. Dormer; but I did not think it quite safe to trust such an important discovery to a letter, which I believed you would be obliged to shew the prioress; and which, notwithstanding her promises, might have been the means of protracting your release. Besides, I proposed being with you soon; and was willing to have the pleasure of unfolding the mystery myself." "But, madam, answered I, you have not yet told me how the report of Mr. Dumont's marriage came to be believed among the servants." "It was all a contrivance of Mr. Darcy, replied my friend: he was bent upon parting you. He had corrupted his nephew's servant, who informed him of the letter he had seen his master deliver to a porter; who, for a bribe was prevailed upon to betray his trust. By this letter Mr. Darcy discovered where you lodged; and it was he who ordered Mr. Dumont's servant to tell your messenger his master was married, which he expected would produce some mistakes between you, that might forward his designs. Mr. Dumont's servant, struck with remorse at the agonies he saw his master in, at the news I sent him, that you could not be sound, confessed what he knew of the affair; and assured your lover, that Mr. Darcy was not gone to his country-house, as he had given out; but that he feared the young lady was in his power, the questions he had asked him concerning the condition of her family at N , making it probable that he had some design to ensnare her. I will not, continued Mrs. Dormer, pretend to describe the distraction Mr. Dumont was in, when, comparing circumstances, we found that he was certainly the person who had carried you away. All that prudence, impelled by the most tender passion, could suggest, your lover did, to discover where his uncle had carried you; for his not being at his country-house, put it past a doubt that you was in his power.

Upon Mr. Darcy's return, he refused to see your lover, or have any conversation with him; nor was it to be supposed, that all Mr. Dumont's remonstrances could prevail upon him to tell where you was. The continual anxiety which preyed upon his spirits, threw him into a fever, which threatened his life. While he lay in this dangerous condition, I received your letter; but the physicians being absolutely against my acquainting him with any thing that might surprize him, I contented myself with writing to you; resolving to attend your lover's recovery, that we might set out together to free you. Tho' I used all imaginable caution in letting him know where you was, yet the excessive joy threw him into a delirium, which had like to have caused his death, and kept him near three weeks longer in bed. His impatience at being prevented from going to you, contributed to retard his recovery. And tho' he was still too weak to venture, with safety, out of his chamber; yet he resolved to defer no longer his journey to Paris. I was prevented from going with him by a little vexatious lawsuit, that made my presence necessary some time longer in London; but I promised to meet you both at Paris, Mr. Dumont having determined to spend some time there, to give you the diversions of the place. Accordingly, as soon as I had dispatched this affair, I set out for Paris, and was met at by Mr. Dumont; who filled me with inconceivable surprize and affliction, by the relation he gave me of your leaving the convent with the count de R . I saw him too much affected with this accident, to increase his distraction by my own reflections, which, I must confess, were greatly to your disadvantage. I endeavoured to persuade him, there might be some mistake in all this; that the prioress had possibly imposed upon him; and that, to be better convinced of the truth of what she had affirmed, it would be necessary to see the marchioness de , who might possibly know more of the affair. As soon, therefore, as I came to Paris, and was a little recovered from the fatigues of my journey, I sent to the marchioness to acquaint her with my intention of waiting on her; but her ladyship was not in town. They sent word, however, that she was expected the next day; and I resolved to defer going to the convent, till I had seen her. Mr. Dumont, who was wholly employed in endeavouring to discover where you was, came to me, just as I returned from paying a visit to the marchioness, who knew no more of your leaving the convent than what the prioress had told her, having not yet seen the count de R ; and told me, with the most violent transports of rage and grief, that he had seen you come out of a coach, and enter a house in the street ; that, enquiring who lived in that house, he was

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informed it was a lady that was mistress to a certain French nobleman, whom they would not name. Upon which he immediately went to the house; but being absolutely refused admittance to you, and finding you was resolved not to own who you was, he enquired if it was not the count de R who visited there, and was answered in the affirmative."

"Oh heavens! cried I, (interrupting Mrs. Dormer) was it then Dumont from whom I was so solicitous to conceal myself! Alas, I thought it was the earl of L ! Was there ever so cruel an accident!" "Can you wonder, my dear, pursued Mrs. Dormer, if I was now convinced of what at first I could only suspect; notwithstanding the many circumstances which appeared to condemn you. I thought of you now with the deepest indignation, and counselled your enraged lover to drive you from his remembrance. I drew but an ill omen from his silence, which had a gloomy thoughtfulness in it, that made me imagine he meditated some designs of revenge against the count de R . I would have been glad to have consulted the marchioness upon this occasion; and, as she know the count, prevail upon her to question him concerning the part he had acted. But that lady, who had only staid in Paris a few hours, was again gone to her house at Versailles, and I was wholly at a loss what to do. Mr. Dumont went away in an agony of grief, which all his endeavours could not conceal. In the evening I had a letter from him, in which he informed me that he had left Paris, and intreated my pardon for not seeing me before he went, urging his extreme uneasiness as the cause, which he would not increase by a melancholy farewell. I was greatly surprised at this sudden resolution, continued my friend: but I determined, if possible, to see you before I left France, and sent a message to the house Mr. Dumont had mentioned, to be delivered to you; but my servant brought me word, there was no such person, as the lady he enquired for, there. I saw it was in vain to expect you would discover yourself, and was preparing to return to England, when I found myself seized with an indisposition; for which the physicians recommended the air of Montpelier. I set out for that place, where I staid some months before my recovery was perfected. But even then I could not resolve to leave France, till I made another effort to see you; for it was not yet in my power to forget you. I returned, therefore, to Paris; and, with a view of seeing the count de R , paid a visit to the marchioness, who told me, with a very sensible pleasure, the whole stratagem of the count to get you out of the convent; your generous refusal of his offers, and your escape from him, by the assistance of a lady, who pretended a claim: and the count had related this to the marchioness himself, in order to do justice to your character, of which he is still a passionate admirer. You may imagine, my dear, pursued Mrs. Dormer, how agreeable this discovery was to me! Madam Danville's woman having told where you had lodged, I learned the name of the lady with whom you came to England. Upon my return, I enquired of my servants if they had seen you, and was told that you had called at my house, and had also got a direction where to write to me; but I never received any letter. My servants knowing where Mrs. Belville lodged, to whom, it seems, you had desired they would send notice when I arrived; I sent to desire that young lady would see me, and from her I learned your intended marriage; to which, as I believed nothing but a firm belief of your Dumont's infidelity could persuade you to consent, I hastened to you immediately, to prevent an action, which the knowledge of his innocence would make you for ever repent."

During Mrs. Dormer's discourse, I listened with an anxious impatience for a further account of Dumont; but finding she left off speaking, "Ah, madam, said I, (trembling) have you no more to say? What is become of Dumont? Does he still continue to think me the count de R 's mistress? But, alas, you told me he left Paris in despair! Ah, without doubt, I shall never see him more!" "Why should you wish to see him! interrupted Mrs. Dormer. You are not yet resolved whether you ought to keep to your first engagement. Do you think Mr. Dumont would find much greater happiness in seeing you the wife of Mr. Campbel, than suspecting you to be the mistress of the count de R ?" "Do not imagine, interrupted I, that I am capable of so perfidious an action! No, since I am so unfortunately circumstanced, that I cannot fulfil my engagements to Dumont, without the deepest reproaches from Mr. Campbel, who may pretend an equal claim to my hand, I will be the wife of neither; and, like you, madam, disclaim marriage for ever." "Ah, returned Mrs. Dormer, (smiling) you will not be able to keep this resolution when you see Dumont, and know what he has suffered for you. To keep you no longer in suspense, pursued she, your lover is in London. He knows not yet of your intended marriage: I leave it to him to acquaint you with his adventure in France, when he sees you. In the mean time, my dear, let me advise you to acquaint Mr. Campbel with the truth of this affair: he has too much honour to expect you will break a prior engagement, to be

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his. It shall be my care to prevent Mr. Dumont from coming to the knowledge of any thing that has happened; but I must insist upon hearing from you to-morrow. 'Twill be impossible, any longer, to keep your lover from seeing you."

The confusion and perplexity of my mind, divided between joy and grief. fear and anxiety, made it impossible for me to thank, as I ought to do, the generous Mrs. Dormer, for the interest she took in my affairs: that lady, at length, took her leave of me with a tender embrace; and having staid, some little time, with my mother and sister, returned home. My mother observing that I was more than ordinary melancholy, asked me the cause; as I had concealed from her every thing relating to Dumont, I evaded giving her an answer; but, retiring with my sister, related to her all that Mrs. Dormer had told me; my sister, who was extremely sprightly, and so little capable of laying things to heart, that she was often accused of insensibility, rallied me in a lively manner upon the affliction I discovered at the news of my lover's fidelity. "Though I should have been glad, said she, to have seen you married to Mr. Campbell, while I believed Mr. Dumont had betrayed you; yet, now I hear he is innocent, I shall be much better pleased to see you the wife of Dumont; I know you love him, and I am persuaded he deserves you; therefore, I advise you to follow your inclinations, and never fear that Mr. Campbell will have recourse to either a sword or pistol to dispatch himself for your loss."

Mr. Campbell, that moment entering the room, heard my sister pronounce these words, which the gaiety of her accent might, probably, have hindered his suspecting, had he not cast his eyes on my face, at the same time, and read in my eyes a trouble and confusion, which was very uncommon: he paused for a moment, while a languid paleness overspread his face; when fixing a melancholy look upon me: "Is it not true, miss, said he, that I am the most wretched of men, and that Mrs. Dormer's arrival has confirmed me so. I know not, Sir, replied I, melting into tears, how to acquaint you with the news Mrs. Dormer has brought me, since your unmerited tenderness for me, will make it a source of affliction to you, which I have it not in my power to alleviate: tis certain, that I am no longer at liberty to give you my hand, since by a discovery of Mr. Dumont's innocence, my first engagement continues in force." I then related, succinctly, by what unfortunate circumstances I had been led to believe, that Mr. Dumont had betrayed me: and concluded with an assurance, that though this discovery had restored him all my affection; yet, I would take no resolution in his favour, to which he would not consent. Is it possible, miss, said Mr. Campbell, that I hear you tell me of the innocence of a lover tenderly beloved, and yet see you dissolved in tears; and do you also resolve to sacrifice this mutual passion to my repose? this unexampled generosity teaches me what to do; you shall find, miss, that I prize your happiness infinitely beyond my own; I resign you from this moment to the deserving Dumont; and, that your tranquility may not be disturbed by the knowledge of my unhappiness, I will remove myself from your sight, till I am able to behold you with more constancy." With these words he kissed my hand respectfully, and hastened out of the room. I was so deeply affected with the behaviour of this generous man, that I burst into a violent transport of tears, when he left me; and Fanny, insensible as she was thought, confessed she was greatly moved. My mother having met Mr. Campbell in the disorder in which he left us, came into the chamber in a great hurry, to know the cause; and seeing me incapable to speak, commanded my sister to unfold the mystery which so perplexed her. My sister accordingly took the story from the beginning, and acquainted my mother with the whole history of Dumont's passion. My mother, who was greatly struck with the circumstance of his having chang'd his religion for my sake, as she said; and being satisfied by my sister of the large fortune he was in possession of, seem'd truly convinced of his superior claim to Campbell. Upon which my sister told her of the whimsical resolution I had taken to marry neither of my lovers. How, said my mother, in a passion, will the foolish girl, because she has the choice of two very advantageous matches, accept of neither. It seldom happens, interrupted my sister smiling, that a parent's authority is necessary to oblige a young lady to marry the man she loves; but Harriot is an extraordinary girl, and every thing that concerns her must be out of the common way; so, mamma, I hope you will compel her to marry Dumont, whom she loves so much." My sister's gaiety had not the power to divert me from the concern I felt for Campbell. I intreated her to send some one to his lodgings, to know if he was still in Hampstead: and, in the mean time, listened to a long discourse of my mother's, upon the merits of my two lovers; and must confess, I was not a little pleased to hear her decide in favour of Dumont, who had won her heart intirely by his conversion to the Protestant religion.

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My sister, at her return, having told us that Mr. Campbel had certainly left Hampstead, increased my uneasiness upon his account: when, late in the evening, my brother-in-law was informed, that Mr. Campbel had been attacked by foot-pads in the road to London, and was brought home by a gentleman, who had rescued him, dangerously wounded.

This terrible news filled me with the deepest affliction: I went with my mother and sister immediately to visit him. The surgeon, who had dressed his wound, informed us, that it was not mortal; which considerably lessened our fears. But what was my surprize, when, upon entering his chamber, I saw a gentleman standing by his bed-side; the first glimpse of whom convinced me it was Dumont. I stood for a moment motionless, when my sister, observing the change of my countenance, and being now sensible of the cause, hurried me into another room, which I no sooner entered than I fainted away. Upon my recovery I saw Dumont at my side, who held one of my hands, which he bathed with his tears. Our transports, at this meeting, may be better imagined than described; nor could even the presence of my mother put any restraint on them. My curiosity, at length, to hear what had happened to him, made me put an end to the rapturous expressions of his joy, that he might satisfy this desire.

"Mrs. Dormer told me, said I, (smiling) you suffered some great miseries upon my account. If they were caused by any thing else than absence, I insist upon your relating them." "'Tis certain, my lovely angel, said Dumont, (in the same tone) that I endured a painful confinement in the bastile for some months, which yet was a less misfortune than the belief that you loved the count. And Mrs. Dormer, I suppose, informed you I wrote her word I would leave Paris, which was not really my intention. I was determined to be revenged on the count de R , for robbing me of your affections; and, for that purpose, I concealed myself there, in order to have an opportunity of meeting him. Being informed that he had a house at St. Dennis, I went there, and wrote him a challenge from the house where I had lodged; which I was so indiscreet to send by a porter the people provided me with. My design being suspected, my letter was examined: and the laws against duelling being very severe in France, I was seized by half a dozen archers, while I was composedly waiting an answer from the count, and hurried to the Bastile. I will not afflict you with a recital of what I suffered here, from the despair and rage with which I was agitated. I was released when I least expected it; and this welcome news was brought me, together with a message from Mrs. Dormer. The moment I was at liberty, I flew to the place where she expected me. I found the count de R with her, by whose interposition, and that of the marchioness de , my liberty was obtained. The count asked my pardon for the violence he had offered you; related the whole contrivance of your escape, and congratulated me on the prospect I had of having you restored to me. I attended Mrs. Dormer to England; and, while I was employed in seeking out Mrs. Belville, I heard that Mrs. Dormer was set out for Hampstead. Surprised that she had left me no orders to follow her, (for I concluded she had heard you was here) I followed her, late as it was in the evening; and came up with that gentleman in the next chamber, while he was struggling with two villains, one of whom had already wounded him. I had the good fortune to rescue him, and, by that, have been blest with the sight of my adored Harriot, where I so little expected that happiness."

Thus did the dear Dumont end his little relation. My brother-in-law insisting upon his staying that night at his house, we all returned home together; where my mother confirmed the mutual engagement between me and Dumont, by the sanction of her consent, which she gave him with the most obliging expressions of esteem.

Mr. Campbel being acquainted, by those about him, with the name of his deliverer, sent for him the next day; and, after returning him thanks, in the most grateful manner, for the assistance he had afforded him, promised him, in case he lived, to preserve an inviolable friendship for him. He then desired to see me, and intreated me no longer to defer my marriage with Dumont; assuring me, that the certainty of my happiness would contribute more than any thing to his cure.

Not all his remonstrances, however, could prevail upon me to consent to give my hand to Dumont, till his health was perfectly restored; and I had the pleasure to see him assist at that sacred ceremony, which united me for ever to my beloved Dumont, with a serenity in his countenance, which persuaded me his heart was entirely at ease.

Finis.