

СЭМЮЭЛ РИЧАРДСОН

THE HISTORY OF SIR
CHARLES GRANDISON,
VOLUME 4 (OF 7)

Сэмюэл Ричардсон

**The History of Sir Charles
Grandison, Volume 4 (of 7)**

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Samuel Richardson

The History of Sir Charles Grandison, Volume 4 (of 7)

LETTER I

MISS BYRON, TO MISS SELBY

Miss Byron, To Miss Selby.

O my Lucy! What think you!—But it is easy to guess what you must think.

I will, without saying one word more, enclose

DR. BARTLETT'S TENTH LETTER

The next day (proceeds my patron) I went to make my visit to the family. I had nothing to reproach myself with; and therefore had no other concern upon me but what arose from the unhappiness of the noble Clementina: that indeed was enough. I thought I should have some difficulty to manage my own spirit, if I were to find myself insulted, especially by the general. Soldiers are so apt to value themselves on their knowledge of what, after all, one may call but their trade, that a private gentleman is often thought too slightly of by them. Insolence in a great man, a rich man, or a soldier, is a call upon a man of spirit to exert himself. But I hope, thought I, I shall not have this call from any one of a family I so greatly respect.

I was received by the bishop; who politely, after I had paid my compliments to the marquis and his lady, presented me to those of the Urbino family to whom I was a stranger. Every one of those named by Signor Jeronymo, in his last letter, was present.

The marquis, after he had returned my compliment, looked another way, to hide his emotion: the marchioness put her handkerchief to her eyes, and looked upon me with tenderness; and I read in them her concern for her Clementina.

I paid my respects to the general with an air of freedom, yet of regard; to my Jeronymo, with the tenderness due to our friendship, and congratulated him on seeing him out of his chamber. His kind eyes glistened with pleasure; yet it was easy to read a mixture of pain in them; which grew stronger as the first emotions at seeing me enter, gave way to reflection.

The Conte della Porretta seemed to measure me with his eye.

I addressed myself to Father Marescotti, and made my particular acknowledgments to him for the favour of his visit, and what had passed in it. He looked upon me with pleasure; probably with the more, as this was a farewell visit.

The two ladies whispered, and looked upon me, and seemed to bespeak each other's attention to what passed.

Signor Sebastiano placed himself next to Jeronymo, and often whispered him, and as often cast his eye upon me. He was partial to me, I believe, because my generous friend seemed pleased with what he said.

His brother, Signor Giuliano, sat on the other hand of me. They are agreeable and polite young gentlemen.

A profound silence succeeded the general compliments.

I addressed myself to the marquis: Your lordship, and you, madam, turning to the marchioness, I hope will excuse me for having requested of you the honour of being once more admitted to your

presence, and to that of three brothers, for whom I shall ever retain the most respectful affection. I could not think of leaving a city, where one of the first families in it has done me the highest honour, without taking such a leave as might shew my gratitude.—Accept, my lords, bowing to each; accept, madam, more profoundly bowing to the marchioness, my respectful thanks for all your goodness to me. I shall, to the end of my life, number most of the days that I have passed at Bologna among its happiest, even were the remainder to be as happy as man ever knew.

The marquis said, We wish you, chevalier, very happy; happier than—He sighed, and was silent.

His lady only bowed. Her face spoke distress. Her voice was lost in sighs, though she struggled to suppress them.

Chevalier, said the bishop, with an air of solemnity, you have given us many happy hours: for them we thank you. Jeronymo, for himself, will say more: he is the most grateful of men. We thank you also for what you have done for him.

I cannot, said Jeronymo, express suitably my gratitude: my prayers, my vows, shall follow you whithersoever you go, best of friends, and best of men!

The general, with an air and a smile that might have been dispensed with, oddly said, High pleasure and high pain are very near neighbours: they are often guilty of excesses, and then are apt to mistake each other's house. I am one of those who think our whole house obliged to the chevalier for the seasonable assistance he gave to our Jeronymo. But—

Dear general, said Lady Juliana, bear with an interruption: the intent of this meeting is amicable. The chevalier is a man of honour. Things may have fallen out unhappily; yet nobody to blame.

As to blame, or otherwise, said the Conte della Porretta, that is not now to be talked of; else, I know where it lies: in short, among ourselves. The chevalier acted greatly by Signor Jeronymo: we were all obliged to him: but to let such a man as this have free admission to our daughter— She ought to have had no eyes.

Pray, my lord, pray, brother, said the marquis, are we not enough sufferers?

The chevalier, said the general, cannot but be gratified by so high a compliment; and smiled indignantly.

My lord, replied I to the general, you know very little of the man before you, if you don't believe him to be the most afflicted man present.

Impossible! said the marquis, with a sigh.

The marchioness arose from her seat, motioning to go; and turning round to the two ladies, and the count, I have resigned my will to the will of you all, my dearest friends, and shall be permitted to withdraw. This testimony, however, before I go, I cannot but bear: Wherever the fault lay, it lay not with the chevalier. He has, from the first to the last, acted with the nicest honour. He is entitled to our respect. The unhappiness lies nowhere but in the difference of religion.

Well, and that now is absolutely out of the question, said the general: it is indeed, chevalier.

I hope, my lord, from a descendant of a family so illustrious, to find an equal exemption from wounding words, and wounding looks; and that, sir, as well from your generosity, as from your justice.

My looks give you offence, chevalier!—Do they?

I attended to the marchioness. She came towards me. I arose, and respectfully took her hand.—Chevalier, said she, I could not withdraw without bearing the testimony I have borne to your merits. I wish you happy.—God protect you, whithersoever you go. Adieu.

She wept. I bowed on her hand with profound respect. She retired with precipitation. It was with difficulty that I suppressed the rising tear. I took my seat.

I made no answer to the general's last question, though it was spoken in such a way (I saw by their eyes) as took every other person's notice.

Lady Sforza, when her sister was retired, hinted, that the last interview between the young lady and me was an unadvised permission, though intended for the best.

I then took upon me to defend that step. Lady Clementina, said I, had declared, that if she were allowed to speak her whole mind to me, she should be easy. I had for some time given myself up to absolute despair. The marchioness intended not favour to me in allowing of the interview: it was the most affecting one to me I had ever known. But let me say, that, far from having bad effects on the young lady's mind, it had good ones. I hardly knew how to talk upon a subject so very interesting to every one present, but not more so to any one than to myself. I thought of avoiding it; and have been led into it, but did not lead. And since it is before us, let me recommend, as the most effectual way to restore every one to peace and happiness, gentle treatment. The most generous of human minds, the most meek, the most dutiful, requires not harsh methods.

How do you know, sir, said the general, and looked at Jeronymo, the methods now taken—

And are they then harsh, my lord? said I.

He was offended.

I had heard, proceeded I, that a change of measures was resolved on. I knew that the treatment before had been all gentle, condescending, indulgent. I received but yesterday letters from my father, signifying his intention of speedily recalling me to my native country. I shall set out very soon for Paris, where I hope to meet with his more direct commands for this long-desired end. What may be my destiny, I know not; but I shall carry with me a heart burdened with the woes of this family, and distressed for the beloved daughter of it. But let me bespeak you all, for your own sakes, (mine is out of the question: I presume not upon any hope on my own account,) that you will treat this angelic-minded lady with tenderness. I pretend to say, that I know that harsh or severe methods will not do.

The general arose from his seat, and, with a countenance of fervor, next to fierceness—Let me tell you, Grandison, said he—

I arose from mine, and going to Lady Sforza, who sat next him, he stopt, supposing me going to him, and seemed surprised, and attentive to my motions: but, disregarding him, I addressed myself to that lady. You, madam, are the aunt of Lady Clementina: the tender, the indulgent mother is absent, and has declared, that she resigns her will to the will of her friends present—Allow me to supplicate, that former measures may not be changed with her. Great dawns of returning reason did I discover in our last interview. Her delicacy (never was there a more delicate mind) wanted but to be satisfied. It was satisfied, and she began to be easy. Were her mind but once composed, the sense she has of her duty, and what she owes to her religion, would restore her to your wishes: but if she should be treated harshly, (though I am sure, if she should, it would be with the best intention,) Clementina will be lost.

The general sat down. They all looked upon one another. The two ladies dried their eyes. The starting tear would accompany my fervor. And then stepping to Jeronymo, who was extremely affected; My dear Jeronymo, said I, my friend, my beloved friend, cherish in your noble heart the memory of your Grandison: would to God I could attend you to England! We have baths there of sovereign efficacy. The balm of a friendly and grateful heart would promote the cure. I have urged it before. Consider of it.

My Grandison, my dear Grandison, my friend, my preserver! You are not going!—

I am, my Jeronymo, and embraced him. Love me in absence, as I shall you.

Chevalier, said the bishop, you don't go? We hope for your company at a small collation.—We must not part with you yet.

I cannot, my lord, accept the favour. Although I had given myself up to despair of obtaining the happiness to which I once aspired; yet I was not willing to quit a city that this family had made dear to me, with the precipitation of a man conscious of misbehaviour. I thank you for the permission I had to attend you all in full assembly. May God prosper you, my lord; and may you be invested with the first honours of that church which must be adorned by so worthy a heart! It will be my glory, when I am in my native place, or wherever I am, to remember that I was once thought not unworthy of a rank in a family so respectable. Let me, my lord, be entitled to your kind remembrance.

He pulled out his handkerchief. My lord, said he, to his father; my Lord, to the general; Grandison must not go!—and sat down with emotion.

Lady Sforza wept: Laurana seemed moved: the two young lords, Sebastiano and Juliano, were greatly affected.

I then addressed myself to the marquis, who sat undetermined, as to speech: My venerable lord, forgive me, that my address was not first paid here. My heart overflows with gratitude for your goodness in permitting me to throw myself at your feet, before I took a last farewell of a city favoured with your residence. Best of fathers, of friends, of men, let me entreat the continuance of your paternal indulgence to the child nearest, and deserving to be nearest, to your heart. She is all you and her mother. Restore her to yourself, and to her, by your indulgence: that alone, and a blessing on your prayers, can restore her. Adieu, my good lord: repeated thanks for all your hospitable goodness to a man that will ever retain a grateful sense of your favour.

You will not yet go, was all he said—he seemed in agitation. He could not say more.

I then, turning to the count his brother, who sat next him, said, I have not the honour to be fully known to your lordship: some prejudices from differences in opinion may have been conceived: but if you ever hear anything of the man before you unworthy of his name, and of the favour once designed him; then, my lord, blame, as well as wonder at, the condescension of your noble brother and sister in my favour.

Who, I! Who, I! said that lord, in some hurry.—I think very well of you. I never saw a man, in my life, that I liked so well!

Your lordship does me honour. I say this the rather, as I may, on this solemn occasion, taking leave of such honourable friends, charge my future life with resolutions to behave worthy of the favour I have met with in this family.

I passed from him to the general—Forgive, my lord, said I, the seeming formality of my behaviour in this parting scene: it is a very solemn one to me. You have expressed yourself of me, and to me, my lord, with more passion, (forgive me, I mean not to offend you,) than perhaps you will approve in yourself when I am far removed from Italy. For have you not a noble mind? And are you not a son of the Marquis della Porretta? Permit me to observe, that passion will make a man exalt himself, and degrade another; and the just medium will be then forgot. I am afraid I have been thought more lightly of, than I ought to be, either in justice, or for the honour of a person who is dear to every one present. My country was once mentioned with disdain: think not my vanity so much concerned in what I am going to say, as my honour: I am proud to be thought an Englishman: yet I think as highly of every worthy man of every nation under the sun, as I do of the worthy men of my own. I am not of a contemptible race in my own country. My father lives in it with the magnificence of a prince. He loves his son; yet I presume to add, that that son deems his good name his riches; his integrity his grandeur. Princes, though they are entitled by their rank to respect, are princes to him only as they act.

A few words more, my lord.

I have been of the hearing, not of the speaking side of the question, in the two last conferences I had the honour to hold with your lordship. Once you unkindly mentioned the word triumph. The word at the time went to my heart. When I can subdue the natural warmth of my temper, then, and then only, I have a triumph. I should not have remembered this, had I not now, my lord, on this solemn occasion, been received by you with an indignant eye. I respect your lordship too much not to take notice of this angry reception. My silence upon it, perhaps, would look like subscribing before this illustrious company to the justice of your contempt: yet I mean no other notice than this; and this to demonstrate that I was not, in my own opinion at least, absolutely unworthy of the favour I met with from the father, the mother, the brothers, you so justly honour, and which I wished to stand in with you.

And now, my lord, allow me the honour of your hand; and, as I have given you no cause for displeasure, say, that you will remember me with kindness, as I shall honour you and your whole family to the last day of my life.

The general heard me out; but it was with great emotion. He accepted not my hand; he returned not any answer: the bishop arose, and, taking him aside, endeavoured to calm him.

I addressed myself to the two young lords, and said, that if ever their curiosity led them to visit England, where I hoped to be in a few months, I should be extremely glad of cultivating their esteem and favour, by the best offices I could do them.

They received my civility with politeness.

I addressed myself next to Lady Laurana—May you, madam, the friend, the intimate, the chosen companion of Lady Clementina, never know the hundredth part of the woe that fills the breast of the man before you, for the calamity that has befallen your admirable cousin, and, because of that, a whole excellent family. Let me recommend to you, that tender and soothing treatment to her, which her tender heart would shew to you, in any calamity that should befall you. I am not a bad man, madam, though of a different communion from yours. Think but half so charitably of me, as I do of every one of your religion who lives up to his professions, and I shall be happy in your favourable thoughts when you hear me spoken of.

It is easy to imagine, Dr. Bartlett, that I addressed myself in this manner to this lady whom I had never before seen, that she might not think the harder of her cousin's prepossessions in favour of a Protestant.

I recommended myself to the favour of Father Marescotti. He assured me of his esteem, in very warm terms.

And just as I was again applying to my Jeronymo, the general came to me: You cannot think, sir, said he, nor did you design it, I suppose, that I should be pleased with your address to me. I have only this question to ask, When do you quit Bologna?

Let me ask your lordship, said I, when do you return to Naples?

Why that question, sir? haughtily.

I will answer you frankly. Your lordship, at the first of my acquaintance with you, invited me to Naples. I promised to pay my respects to you there. If you think of being there in a week, I will attend you at your own palace in that city; and there, my lord, I hope, no cause to the contrary having arisen from me, to be received by you with the same kindness and favour that you shewed when you gave me the invitation. I think to leave Bologna to-morrow.

O brother! said the bishop, are you not now overcome?

And are you in earnest? said the general.

I am, my lord. I have many valuable friends, at different courts and cities in Italy, to take leave of. I never intend to see it again. I would look upon your lordship as one of those friends; but you seem still displeased with me. You accepted not my offered hand before; once more I tender it. A man of spirit cannot be offended at a man of spirit, without lessening himself. I call upon your dignity, my lord.

He held out his hand, just as I was withdrawing mine. I have pride, you know, Dr. Bartlett; and I was conscious of a superiority in this instance: I took his hand, however, at his offer; yet pitied him, that his motion was made at all, as it wanted that grace which generally accompanies all he does and says.

The bishop embraced me.—Your moderation, thus exerted, said he, must ever make you triumph. O Grandison! you are a prince of the Almighty's creation.

The noble Jeronymo dried his eyes, and held out his arms to embrace me.

The general said, I shall certainly be at Naples in a week. I am too much affected by the woes of my family, to behave as perhaps I ought on this occasion. Indeed, Grandison, it is difficult for sufferers to act with spirit and temper at the same time.

It is, my lord; I have found it so. My hopes raised, as once they were, now sunk, and absolute despair having taken place of them—Would to God I had never returned to Italy!—But I reproach not any body.

Yet, said Jeronymo, you have some reason—To be sent for as you were—

He was going on—Pray, brother, said the general—And turning to me, I may expect you, sir, at Naples?

You may, my lord. But one favour I have to beg of you mean time. It is, that you will not treat harshly your dear Clementina. Would to Heaven I might have had the honour to say, my Clementina! And permit me to make one other request on my own account: and that is, that you will tell her, that I took my leave of your whole family, by their kind permission; and that, at my departure, I wished her, from my soul, all the happiness that the best and tenderest of her friends can wish her! I make this request to you, my lord, rather than to Signor Jeronymo, because the tenderness which he has for me might induce him to mention me to her in a manner which might, at this time, affect her too sensibly for her peace.

Be pleased, my dear Signor Jeronymo, to make my devotion known to the marchioness. Would to Heaven—But adieu! and once more adieu, my Jeronymo. I shall hear from you when I get to Naples, if not before.—God restore your sister, and heal you!

I bowed to the marquis, to the ladies, to the general, to the bishop, particularly; to the rest in general; and was obliged, in order to conceal my emotion, to hurry out at the door. The servants had planted themselves in a row; not for selfish motives, as in England: they bowed to the ground, and blessed me, as I went through them. I had ready a purse of ducats. One hand and another declined it: I dropt it in their sight. God be with you, my honest friends! said I; and departed—O, Dr. Bartlett, with a heart how much distressed!

And now, my good Miss Byron, Have I not reason, from the deep concern which you take in the woes of Lady Clementina, to regret the task you have put me upon? And do you, my good Lord and Lady L—, and Miss Grandison, now wonder that your brother has not been forward to give you the particulars of this melancholy tale? Yet you all say, I must proceed.

See, Lucy, the greatness of this man's behaviour! What a presumption was it in your Harriet, ever to aspire to call such a one hers!

LETTER II

MISS BYRON, TO MISS SELBY

This Lady Olivia, Lucy, what can she pretend to—But I will not puzzle myself about her—Yet she pretend to give disturbance to such a man! You will find her mentioned in Dr. Bartlett's next letter; or she would not have been named by me.

DR. BARTLETT'S ELEVENTH LETTER

Mr. Grandison, on his return to his lodgings, found there, in disguise, Lady Olivia. He wanted not any new disturbance. But I will not mix the stories.

The next morning he received a letter from Signor Jeronimo. The following is a translation of it:

My dearest Grandison!

How do you?—Ever amiable friend! What triumphs did your behaviour of last night obtain for you! Not a soul here but admires you!

Even Laurana declared, that, were you a Catholic, it would be a merit to love you. Yet she reluctantly praised you, and once said, What, but splendid sins, are the virtues of a heretic?

Our two cousins, with the good-nature of youth, lamented that you could not be ours in the way you wish. My father wept like a child, when you were gone; and seemed to enjoy the praises given you by every one. The count said, he never saw a nobler behaviour in man. Your free, your manly, your polite air and address, and your calmness and intrepidity, were applauded by every one.

What joy did this give to your Jeronimo! I thought I wanted neither crutches, helps, nor wheeled chair; and several times forgot that I ailed any thing.

I begin to love Father Marescotti. He was with the foremost in praising you.

The general owned, that he was resolved once to quarrel with you. But will he, do you think, Jeronimo, said he, make me a visit at Naples?

You may depend upon it, he will, answered I—

I will be there to receive him, replied he.

They admired you particularly for your address to my sister, by the general, rather than by me. And Lady Sforza said, it was a thousand pities that you and Clementina could not be one. They applauded, all of them, what they had not, any of them, the power to imitate, that largeness of heart which makes you think so well, and speak so tenderly, of those of communions different from your own. So much steadiness in your own religion, yet so much prudence, in a man so young, they said, was astonishing! No wonder that your character ran so high, in every court you had visited.

My mother came in soon after you had left us. She was equally surprised and grieved to find you gone. She thought she was sure of your staying supper; and, not satisfied with the slight leave she had taken, she had been strengthening her mind to pass an hour in your company, in order to take a more solemn one.

My father asked her after her daughter.

Poor soul! said she, she has heard that the chevalier was to be here, to take leave of us.

By whom? by whom? said my father.

I cannot tell: but the poor creature is half-raving to be admitted among us. She has dressed herself in one of her best suits; and I found her sitting in a kind of form, expecting to be called down. Indeed, Lady Sforza, the method we are in, does not do. So the chevalier said, replied that lady. Well, let us change it, with all my heart. It is no pleasure to treat the dear girl harshly—O sister! this is a most extraordinary man!

That moment in bolted Camilla—Lady Clementina is just at the door. I could not prevail upon her—

We all looked upon one another.

Three soft taps at the door, and a hem, let us know she was there.

Let her come in, dear girl, let her come in, said the count: the chevalier is not here.

Laurana arose, and ran to the door, and led her in by the hand.

Dear creature, how wild she looked!—Tears ran down my cheeks: I had not seen her for two days before. O how earnestly did she look round her! withdrawing her hand from her cousin, who would have led her to a chair, and standing quite still.

Come and sit by me, my sweet love, said her weeping mother.—She stept towards her.

Sit down, my dear girl.

No: you beat me, remember.

Who beat you, my dear?—Sure nobody would beat my child!—Who beat you, Clementina?

I don't know—Still looking round her, as wanting somebody.

Again her mother courted her to sit down.

No, madam, you don't love me.

Indeed, my dear, I do.

So you say.

Her father held out his open arms to her. Tears ran down his cheeks. He could not speak.—Ah, my father! said she, stepping towards him.

He caught her in his arms—Don't, don't, sir, faintly struggling, with averted face—You love me not—You refused to see your child, when she wanted to claim your protection!—I was used cruelly.

By whom, my dear? by whom?

By every body. I complained to one, and to another; but all were in a tone: and so I thought I would be contented. My mamma, too!—But it is no matter. I saw it was to be so; and I did not care.

By my soul, said I, this is not the way with her, Lady Sforza. The chevalier is in the right. You see how sensible she is of harsh treatment.

Well, well, said the general, let us change our measures.

Still the dear girl looked out earnestly, as for somebody.

She loosed herself from the arms of her sorrowing father.

Let us in silence, said the count, observe her motions.

She went to him on tip-toe, and looking in his face over his shoulder, as he sat with his back towards her, passed him; then to the general; then to Signor Sebastiano; and to every one round, till she came to me; looking at each over his shoulder in the same manner: then folding her fingers, her hands open, and her arms hanging down to their full extent, she held up her face meditating, with such a significant woe, that I thought my heart would have burst.—Not a soul in the company had a dry eye.

Lady Sforza arose, took her two hands, the fingers still clasped, and would have spoken to her, but could not; and hastily retired to her seat.

Tears, at last, began to trickle down her cheeks, as she stood fixedly looking up. She started, looked about her, and hastening to her mother, threw her arms about her neck; and, hiding her face in her bosom, broke out into a flood of tears, mingled with sobs that penetrated every heart.

The first words she said, were, Love me, my mamma! Love your child! your poor child! your Clementina! Then raising her head, and again laying it in her mother's bosom—If ever you loved me, love me now, my mamma!—I have need of your love!

My father was forced to withdraw. He was led out by his two sons.

Your poor Jeronymo was unable to help himself. He wanted as much comfort as his father. What were the wounds of his body, at that time, to those of his mind?

My two brothers returned. This dear girl, said the bishop, will break all our hearts.

Her tears had seemed to relieve her. She held up her head. My mother's bosom seemed wet with her child's tears and her own. Still she looked round her.

Suppose, said I, somebody were to name the man she seems to look for? It may divert this wildness.

Did she come down, said Laurana to Camilla, with the expectation of seeing him?

She did.

Let me, said the bishop, speak to her. He arose, and, taking her hand, walked with her about the room. You look pretty, my Clementina! Your ornaments are charmingly fancied. What made you dress yourself so prettily?

She looked earnestly at him, in silence. He repeated his question—I speak, said she, all my heart; and then I suffer for it. Every body is against me.

You shall not suffer for it: every body is for you.

I confessed to Mrs. Beaumont; I confessed to you, brother: but what did I get by it?—Let go my hand. I don't love you, I believe.

I am sorry for it. I love you, Clementina, as I love my own soul!

Yet you never chide your own soul!

He turned his face from her to us. She must not be treated harshly, said he. He soothed her in a truly brotherly manner.

Tell me, added he to his soothings, Did you expect any body here, that you find not?

Did I? Yes, I did.—Camilla, come hither.—Let go my hand, brother.

He did. She took Camilla under the arm—Don't you know, Camilla, said she, what you heard said of somebody's threatening somebody?—Don't let anybody hear us; drawing her to one end of the room.—I want to take a walk with you into the garden, Camilla.

It is dark night, madam.

No matter. If you are afraid, I will go by myself.

Seem to humour her in talk, Camilla, said the count; but don't go out of the room with her.

Be pleased to tell me, madam, what we are to walk in the garden for?

Why, Camilla, I had a horrid dream last night; and I cannot be easy till I go into the garden.

What, madam, was your dream?

In the orange grove, I thought I stumbled over the body of a dead man!

And who was it, madam?

Don't you know who was threatened? And was not somebody here to night?

And was not somebody to sup here? And is he here?

The general then went to her. My dearest Clementina; my beloved sister; set your heart at rest. Somebody is safe: shall be safe.

She took first one of his hands, then the other; and looking in the palms of them, They are not bloody, said she.—What have you done with him, then? Where is he?

Where is who?

You know whom I ask after; but you want something against me.

Then stepping quick up to me: My Jeronymo!—Did I see you before? and stroked my cheek.—Now tell me, Jeronymo—Don't come near me, Camilla. Pray, sir, to the general, do you sit down. She leaned her arm upon my shoulder: I don't hurt you, Jeronymo: do I?

No, my dearest Clementina!

That's my best brother.—Cruel assassins!—But the brave man came just in time to save you.
—But do you know what is become of him?

He is safe, my dear. He could not stay.

Did any body affront him?

No, my love.

Are you sure nobody did?—Very sure? Father Marescotti, said she, turning to him, (who wept from the time she entered,) you don't love him: but you are a good man, and will tell me truth. Where is he? Did nobody affront him?

No, madam.

Because, said she, he never did any thing but good to any one.

Father Marescotti, said I, admires him as much as any body.

Admire him! Father Marescotti admire him!—But he does not love him.

And I never heard him say one word against Father Marescotti in my life.

—Well, but, Jeronymo, what made him go away, then? Was he not to stay supper?

He was desired to stay; but would not.

Jeronymo, let me whisper you—Did he tell you that I wrote him a letter?

I guessed you did, whispered I.

You are a strange guesser: but you can't guess how I sent it to him—But hush, Jeronymo—
Well, but, Jeronymo, Did he say nothing of me, when he went away?

He left his compliments for you with the general.

With the general! The general won't tell me!

Yes, he will.—Brother, pray tell my sister what the chevalier said to you, at parting.

He repeated, exactly, what you had desired him to say to her.

Why would they not let me see him? said she. Am I never to see him more?

I hope you will, replied the bishop.

If, resumed she, we could have done any thing that might have looked like a return to his goodness to us (and to you, my Jeronymo, in particular) I believe I should have been easy.—And so you say he is gone?—And gone for ever! lifting up her hand from her wrist, as it lay over my shoulder: Poor chevalier!—But hush, hush, pray hush, Jeronymo.

She went from me to her aunt, and cousin Laurana. Love me again, madam, said she, to the former. You loved me once.

I never loved you better than now, my dear.

Did you, Laurana, see the Chevalier Grandison?

I did.

And did he go away safe, and unhurt?

Indeed he did.

A man who had preserved the life of our dear Jeronymo, said she, to have been hurt by us, would have been dreadful, you know. I wanted to say a few words to him. I was astonished to find him not here: and then my dream came into my head. It was a sad dream, indeed! But, cousin, be good to me: pray do. You did not use to be cruel. You used to say, you loved me. I am in calamity, my dear. I know I am miserable. At times I know I am; and then I am grieved at my heart, and think how happy every one is, but me: but then, again, I ail nothing, and am well. But do love me, Laurana: I am in calamity, my dear. I would love you, if you were in calamity: indeed I would.—Ah, Laurana! What is become of all your fine promises? But then every body loved me, and I was happy!—Yet you tell me, it is all for my good. Naughty Laurana, to wound my heart by your crossness, and then say, it is for my good!—Do you think I should have served you so?

Laurana blushed, and wept. Her aunt promised her, that every body would love her, and comfort her, and not be angry with her, if she would make her heart easy.

I am very particular, my dear Grandison. I know you love I should be so. From this minuteness, you will judge of the workings of her mind. They are resolved to take your advice, (it was very seasonable,) and treat her with indulgence. The count is earnest to have it so.

Camilla has just left me. She says, that her young lady had a tolerable night. She thinks it owing, in a great measure, to her being indulged in asking the servants, who saw you depart, how you looked; and being satisfied that you went away unhurt, and unaffronted.

Adieu, my dearest, my best friend. Let me hear from you, as often as you can.

I just now understand from Camilla, that the dear girl has made an earnest request to my father, mother, and aunt; and been refused. She came back from them deeply afflicted; and, as Camilla fears, is going into one of her gloomy fits again. I hope to write again, if you depart not from Bologna before to-morrow: but I must, for my own sake, write shorter letters. Yet how can I? Since, however melancholy the subject, when I am writing to you, I am conversing with you. My dear Grandison, once more adieu.

O Lucy, my dear! Whence come all the tears this melancholy story has cost me? I cannot dwell upon the scenes!—Begone, all those wishes that would interfere with the interest of that sweet distressed saint at Bologna!

How impolitic, Lucy, was it in them, not to gratify her impatience to see him! She would, most probably, have been quieted in her mind, if she had been obliged by one other interview.

What a delicacy, my dear, what a generosity, is there in her love!

Sir Charles, in Lord L—'s study, said to me, that his compassion was engaged, but his honour was free: and so it seems to be: but a generosity in return for her generosity, must bind such a mind as his.

LETTER III

MISS BYRON, TO MISS SELBY

In the doctor's next letter, enclosed, you will find mention made of Sir Charles's Literary Journal. I fancy, my dear, it must be a charming thing. I wish we could have before us every line he wrote while he was in Italy. Once the presumptuous Harriet had hopes, that she might have been entitled—But no more of these hopes—It can't be helped, Lucy.

DR. BARTLETT'S TWELFTH LETTER

Mr. Grandison proceeds thus:

The next morning I employed myself in visiting and taking leave of several worthy members of the university, with whom I had passed many very agreeable and improving hours, during my residence in this noble city. In my Literary Journal you have an account of those worthy persons, and of some of our conversations. I paid my duty to the cardinal legate, and the gonfaloniere, and to three of his counsellors, by whom, you know, I had been likewise greatly honoured. My mind was not free enough to enjoy their conversation: such a weight upon my heart, how could it? But the debt of gratitude and civility was not to be left unpaid.

On my return to my lodgings, which was not till the evening, I found, the general had been there to inquire after me.

I sent one of my servants to the palace of Porretta, with my compliments to the general, to the bishop, and Jeronimo; and with particular inquiries after the health of the ladies, and the marquis; but had only a general answer, that they were much as I left them.

The two young lords, Sebastiano and Julianio, made me a visit of ceremony. They talked of visiting England in a year or two. I assured them of my best services, and urged them to go thither. I asked them after the healths of the marquis, the marchioness, and their beloved cousin Clementina. Signor Sebastiano shook his head: very, very indifferent, were his words. We parted with great civilities.

I will now turn my thoughts to Florence, and to the affairs there that have lain upon me, from the death of my good friend Mr. Jervois, and from my wardship. I told you in their course, the steps I took in those affairs; and how happy I had been in some parts of management. There I hope soon to see you, my dear Dr. Bartlett, from the Levant, to whose care I can so safely consign my precious trust, while I go to Paris, and attend the wished-for call of my father to my native country, from which I have been for so many years an exile.

There also, I hope to have some opportunities of conversing with my good Mrs. Beaumont; resolving to make another effort to get so valuable a person to restore herself to my beloved England.

Thus, my dear Dr. Bartlett, do I endeavour to console myself, in order to lighten that load of grief which I labour under on the distresses of the dear Clementina. If I can leave her happy, I shall be sooner so, than I could have been in the same circumstances, had I, from the first of my acquaintance with the family, (to the breach of all the laws of hospitality,) indulged a passion for her.

Yet is the unhappy Olivia a damp upon my endeavours after consolation. When she made her unseasonable visit to me at Bologna, she refused to return to Florence without me, till I assured her, that as my affairs would soon call me thither, I would visit her at her own palace, as often as those affairs would permit. Her pretence for coming to Bologna was, to induce me to place Emily with her,

till I had settled every thing for my carrying the child to England; but I was obliged to be peremptory in my denial, though she had wrought so with Emily, as to induce her to be an earnest petitioner to me, to permit her to live with Lady Olivia, whose equipages, and the glare in which she lives, had dazzled the eyes of the young lady.

I was impatient to hear again from Jeronymo; and just as I was setting out for Florence, in despair of that favour, it being the second day after my farewell visit, I had the following letter from him:

I have not been well, my dear Grandison. I am afraid the wound in my shoulder must be laid open again. God give me patience! But my life is a burden to me.

We are driving here at a strange rate. They promised to keep measures with the dear creature; but she has heard that you are leaving Bologna, and raves to see you.

Poor soul! She endeavoured to prevail upon her father, mother, aunt, to permit her to see you, but for five minutes: that was the petition which was denied her, as I mentioned in my last.

Camilla was afraid that she would go into a gloomy fit upon it, as I told you—She did; but it lasted not long: for she made an effort, soon after, to go out of the house by way of the garden. The gardener refused his key, and brought Camilla to her, whom she had, by an innocent piece of art, but just before, sent to bring her something from her toilette.

The general went with Camilla to her. They found her just setting a ladder against the wall. She heard them, and screamed, and, leaving the ladder, ran, to avoid them, till she came in sight of the great cascade; into which, had she not by a cross alley been intercepted by the general, it is feared she would have thrown herself.

This has terrified us all: she begs but for one interview; one parting interview; and she promises to make herself easy: but it is not thought advisable. Yet Father Marescotti himself thought it best to indulge her. Had my mother been earnest, I believe it had been granted: but she is so much concerned at the blame she met with on permitting the last interview, that she will not contend, though she has let them know, that she did not oppose the request.

The unhappy girl ran into my chamber this morning —Jeronymo; he will be gone! said she: I know he will. All I want, is but to see him! To wish him happy! And to know, if he will remember me when he is gone, as I shall him!—Have you no interest, Jeronymo? Cannot I once see him? Not once?

The bishop, before I could answer, came in quest of her, followed by Laurana, from whom she had forcibly disengaged herself, to come to me.

Let me have but one parting interview, my lord, said she, looking to him, and clinging about my neck. He will be gone: gone for ever. Is there so much in being allowed to say, Farewell, and be happy, Grandison! and excuse all the trouble I have given you?—What has my brother's preserver done, what have I done, that I must not see him, nor he me, for one quarter of an hour only?

Indeed, my lord, said I, she should be complied with. Indeed she should.

My father thinks otherwise, said the bishop: the count thinks otherwise: I think otherwise. Were the chevalier a common man, she might. But she dwells upon what passed in the last interview, and his behaviour to her. That, it is plain, did her harm.

The next day drive the thoughts of that out of her head, returned I.

Dear Jeronymo, replied he, a little peevishly, you will always think differently from every body else! Mrs. Beaumont comes to-morrow.

What do I care for Mrs. Beaumont? said she.—I don't love her: she tells every thing I say.

Come, my dear love, said Laurana, you afflict your brother Jeronymo. Let us go up to your own chamber.

I afflict every body, and every body afflicts me; and you are all cruel. Why, he will be gone, I tell you! That makes me so impatient: and I have something to say to him. My father won't see me: my mother renounces me. I have been looking for her, and she hides herself from me!—And I am a prisoner, and watched, and used ill!

Here comes my mother! said Laurana. You now must go up to your chamber, cousin Clementina.

So she does, said she; now I must go, indeed!—Ah, Jeronymo! Now there is no saying nay. —But it is hard! very hard!—And she burst into tears. I won't speak though, said she, to my aunt. Remember, I will be silent, madam!—Then whispering me, My aunt, brother, is not the aunt she used to be to me!—But hush, I don't complain, you know!

By this I saw that Lady Sforza was severe with her.

She addressed herself to her aunt: You are not my mamma, are you, madam?

No, child.

No, child, indeed! I know that too well. But my brother Giacomo is as cruel to me as any body. But hush, Jeronymo!—Don't you betray me!—Now my aunt is come, I must go!—I wish I could run away from you all!

She was yesterday detected writing a letter to you. My mother was shewn what she had written, and wept over it. My aunt took it out of my sister's bosom, where she had thrust it, on her coming in. This she resented highly.

When she was led into her own chamber, she refused to speak; but in great hurry went to her closet, and, taking down her bible, turned over one leaf and another very quick. Lady Sforza had a book in her hand, and sat over-against the closet-door to observe her motions. She came to a place —Pretty! said she.

The bishop had formerly given her a smattering of Latin—She took pen and ink, and wrote. You'll see, chevalier, the very great purity of her thoughts, by what she omitted, and what she chose, from the Canticles. *Velut unguentum diffunditur nomen tuum &c.*

[In the English translation, thus: Thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee. Draw me; we will run after thee: the upright love thee.

Look not upon me because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me. My mother's children were angry with me: they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth! where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?]

She laid down her pen, and was thoughtful; her elbow resting on the escritoire she wrote upon, her hand supporting her head.

May I look over you, my dear? said her aunt, stepping to her; and, taking up the paper, read it, and took it out of the closet with her, unopposed; her gentle bosom only heaving sighs.

I will write no more, so minutely, on this affecting subject, my Grandison.

They are all of opinion that she will be easy, when she knows that you have actually left Bologna; and they strengthen their opinion by these words of hers, above-recited; 'Why he will be gone, I tell you; and this makes me so impatient.'—At least, they are resolved to try the experiment. And so, my dear Grandison, you must be permitted to leave us!

God be your director and comforter, as well as ours! prays

Your ever affectionate

JERONYMO.

Mr. Grandison, having no hopes of being allowed to see the unhappy lady, set out with a heavy heart for Florence. He gave orders there, and at Leghorn, that the clerks and agents of his late friend Mr. Jervois should prepare every thing for his inspection against his return from Naples; and then he set out for that city, to attend the general.

He had other friends to whom he had endeared himself at Sienna, Ancona, and particularly at Rome, as he had also some at Naples; of whom he intended to take leave, before he set out for Paris: and therefore went to attend the general with the greater pleasure.

Within the appointed time he arrived at Naples.

The general received me, said Mr. Grandison, with greater tokens of politeness than affection. You are the happiest man in the world, chevalier, said he, after the first compliments, in escaping dangers by braving them. I do assure you, that I had great difficulties to deny myself the favour of paying you a visit in my own way at Bologna. I had indeed resolved to do it, till you proposed this visit to me here.

I should have been very sorry, replied I, to have seen a brother of Lady Clementina in any way that should not have made me consider him as her brother. But, before I say another word, let me ask after her health.

How does the most excellent of women?

You have not heard, then?

I have not, my lord: but it is not for want of solicitude: I have sent three several messengers: but can hear nothing to my satisfaction.

Nor can you hear any thing from me that will give you any.

I am grieved at my soul, that I cannot. How, my lord, do the marquis and marchioness?

Don't ask. They are extremely unhappy.

I hear that my dear friend, Signor Jeronymo, has undergone—

A dreadful operation, interrupted the general.—He has. Poor Jeronymo! He could not write to you. God preserve my brother! But, chevalier, you did not save half a life, though we thank you for that, when you restored him to our arms.

I had no reason to boast, my lord, of the accident. I never made a merit of it. It was a mere accident, and cost me nothing. The service was greatly over-rated.

Would to God, chevalier, it had been rendered by any other man in the world!

As it has proved, I am sure, my lord, I have reason to join in the wish.

He shewed me his pictures, statues, and cabinet of curiosities, while dinner was preparing; but rather for the ostentation of his magnificence and taste, than to do me pleasure. I even observed an increasing coldness in his behaviour; and his eye was too often cast upon me with a fierceness that shewed resentment; and not with the hospitable frankness that became him to a visitor and guest, who had undertaken a journey of above two hundred miles, principally to attend him, and to shew him the confidence he had in his honour. This, as it was more to his dishonour than mine, I pitied him for. But what most of all disturbed me, was, that I could not obtain from him any particular intelligence relating to the health of one person, whose distresses lay heavy upon my heart.

There were several persons of distinction at dinner; the discourse could therefore be only general. He paid me great respect at his table, but it was a solemn one. I was the more uneasy at it, as I apprehended, that the situation of the Bologna family was more unhappy than when I left that city.

He retired with me into his garden. You stay with me at least the week out, chevalier?

No, my lord: I have affairs of a deceased friend at Florence and at Leghorn to settle. To-morrow, as early as I can, I shall set out for Rome, in my way to Tuscany.

I am surprised, chevalier. You take something amiss in my behaviour.

I cannot say that your lordship's countenance (I am a very free speaker) has that benignity in it, that complacency, which I have had the pleasure to see in it.

By G—! chevalier, I could have loved you better than any man in the world, next to the men of my own family; but I own I see you not here with so much love as admiration.

The word admiration, my lord, may require explanation. You may admire at my confidence: but I thank you for the manly freedom of your acknowledgment in general.

By admiration I mean, all that may do you honour. Your bravery in coming hither, particularly; and your greatness of mind on your taking leave of us all. But did you not then mean to insult me?

I meant to observe to you then, as I now do in your own palace, that you had not treated me as my heart told me I deserved to be treated: but when I thought your warmth was rising to the uneasiness of your assembled friends, instead of answering your question about my stay at Bologna, as you seemed to mean it, I invited myself to an attendance upon you here, at Naples, in such a manner as surely could not be construed as insult.

I own, Grandison, you disconcerted me. I had intended to save you that journey.

Was that your lordship's meaning, when, in my absence, you called at my lodgings, the day after the farewell-visit?

Not absolutely: I was uneasy with myself. I intended to talk to you. What that talk might have produced, I know not: but had I invited you out, if I had found you at home, would you have answered my demands?

According as you had put them.

Will you answer them now, if I attend you as far as Rome, on your return to Florence?

If they are demands fit to be answered.

Do you expect I will make any that are not fit to be answered?

My lord, I will explain myself. You had conceived causeless prejudices against me: you seemed inclined to impute to me a misfortune that was not, could not be, greater to you than it was to me. I knew my own innocence: I knew that I was rather an injured man, in having hopes given me, in which I was disappointed, not by my own fault: whom shall an innocent and an injured man fear?—Had I feared, my fear might have been my destruction. For was I not in the midst of your friends? A foreigner? If I would have avoided you, could I, had you been determined to seek me?—I would choose to meet even an enemy as a man of honour, rather than to avoid him as a malefactor. In my country, the law supposes flight a confession of guilt. Had you made demands upon me that I had not chosen to answer, I would have expostulated with you. I could perhaps have done so as calmly as I now speak. If you would not have been expostulated with, I would have stood upon my defence: but for the world I would not have hurt a brother of Clementina and Jeronymo, a son of the marquis and marchioness of Porretta, could I have avoided it. Had your passion given me any advantage over you, and I had obtained your sword, (a pistol, had the choice been left to me, I had refused for both our sakes,) I would have presented both swords to you, and bared my breast: It was before penetrated by the distresses of the dear Clementina, and of all your family—Perhaps I should only have said, 'If your lordship thinks I have injured you, take your revenge.'

And now, that I am at Naples, let me say, that if you are determined, contrary to all my hopes, to accompany me to Rome, or elsewhere, on my return, with an unfriendly purpose; such, and no other, shall be my behaviour to you, if the power be given me to shew it. I will rely on my own innocence, and hope by generosity to overcome a generous man. Let the guilty secure themselves by violence and murder.

Superlative pride! angrily said he, and stood still, measuring me with his eye: And could you hope for such an advantage?

While I, my lord, was calm, and determined only upon self-defence; while you were passionate, and perhaps rash, as aggressors generally are; I did not doubt it: but could I have avoided drawing, and preserved your good opinion, I would not have drawn. Your lordship cannot but know my principles.

Grandison, I do know them; and also the general report in your favour for skill and courage. Do you think I would have heard with patience of the once proposed alliance, had not your character—And then he was pleased to say many things in my favour, from the report of persons who had weight with him; some of whom he named.

But still, Grandison, said he, this poor girl!—She could not have been so deeply affected, had not some lover-like arts—

Let me, my lord, interrupt you—I cannot bear an imputation of this kind. Had such arts been used, the lady could not have been so much affected. Cannot you think of your noble sister, as a daughter of the two houses from which you sprang? Cannot you see her, as by Mrs. Beaumont's means we now so lately have been able to see her, struggling nobly with her own heart, [Why am I put upon this tender subject?] because of her duty and her religion; and resolved to die rather than encourage a wish that was not warranted by both?—I cannot, my lord, urge this subject: but there never was a passion so nobly contended with. There never was a man more disinterested, and so circumstanced. Remember only, my voluntary departure from Bologna, against persuasion; and the great behaviour of your sister on that occasion; great, as it came out to be, when Mrs. Beaumont brought her to acknowledge what would have been my glory to have known, could it have been encouraged; but is now made my heaviest concern.

Indeed, Grandison, she ever was a noble girl! We are too apt perhaps to govern ourselves by events, without looking into causes: but the access you had to her; such a man! and who became known to us from circumstances so much in his favour, both as a man of principle and bravery—

This, my lord, interrupted I, is still judging from events. You have seen Mrs. Beaumont's letter. Surely you cannot have a nobler monument of magnanimity in woman! And to that I refer, for a proof of my own integrity.

I have that letter: Jeronymo gave it me, at my taking leave of him; and with these words: 'Grandison will certainly visit you at Naples. I am afraid of your warmth. His spirit is well known. All my dependance is upon his principles. He will not draw but in his own defence. Cherish the noble visitor. Surely, brother, I may depend upon your hospitable temper. Read over again this letter, before you see him.'—I have not yet read it, proceeded the general; but I will, and that, if you will allow me, now.

He took it out of his pocket, walked from me, and read it; and then came to me, and took my hand—I am half ashamed of myself, my dear Grandison: I own I wanted magnanimity. All the distresses of our family, on this unhappy girl's account, were before my eyes, and I received you, I behaved to you, as the author of them. I was contriving to be dissatisfied with you: Forgive me, and command my best services. I will let our Jeronymo know how greatly you subdued me before I had recourse to the letter; but that I have since read that part of it which accounts for my sister's passion, and wish I had read it with equal attention before. I acquit you: I am proud of my sister. Yet I observe from this very letter, that Jeronymo's gratitude has contributed to the evil we deplore. But—Let us not say one word more of the unhappy girl: It is painful to me to talk of her.

Not ask a question, my lord?—

Don't, Grandison, don't!—Jeronymo and Clementina are my soul's woe—But they are not worse than might be apprehended. You go to court with me to-morrow: I will present you to the king.

I have had that honour formerly. I must depart to-morrow morning early. I have already taken leave of several of my friends here: I have some to make my compliments to at Rome, which I reserved for my return.

You stay with me to-night?—I intend it, my lord.

Well, we will return to company. I must make my excuses to my friends. Your departure to-morrow must be one. They all admire you. They are acquainted with your character. They will join with me to engage you, if possible, to stay longer.—We returned to the company.

LETTER IV

MISS BYRON, TO MISS SELBY

Receive now, my dear, the doctor's thirteenth letter, and the last he intends to favour us with, till he entertains us with the histories of Mrs. Beaumont, and Lady Olivia.

DR. BARTLETT'S THIRTEENTH LETTER

Mr. Grandison set out next morning. The general's behaviour to him at his departure, was much more open and free than it was at receiving him.

Mr. Grandison, on his return to Florence, entered into the affairs of his late friend Mr. Jervois, with the spirit, and yet with the temper, for which he is noted, when he engages in any business. He put every thing in a happy train in fewer days than it would have cost some other persons months; for he was present himself on every occasion, and in every business, where his presence would accelerate it; yet he had embarrassments from Olivia.

He found, before he set out for Naples, that Mrs. Beaumont, at the earnest request of the marchioness, was gone to Bologna. At his return, not hearing any thing from Signor Jeronymo, he wrote to Mrs. Beaumont, requesting her to inform him of the state of things in that family, as far as she thought proper; and, particularly, of the health of that dear friend, on whose silence to three letters he had written, he had the most melancholy apprehensions. He let that lady know, that he should set out in a very few days for Paris, if he had no probability of being of service to the family she favoured with her company.

To this letter Mrs. Beaumont returned the following answer:

SIR,

I have the favour of yours. We are very miserable here. The servants are forbidden to answer any inquiries, but generally; and that not truly.

Your friend, Signor Jeronymo, has gone through a severe operation. He has been given over; but hopes are now entertained, not of his absolute recovery, but that he will be no worse than he was before the necessity for the operation arose. Poor man! He forgot not, however, his sister and you, when he was out of the power of the opiates that were administered to him.

On my coming hither, I found Lady Clementina in a deplorable way: Sometimes raving, sometimes gloomy; and in bonds—Twice had she given them apprehensions of fatal attempts: they, therefore, confined her hands.

They have been excessively wrong in their management of her: now soothing, now severe; observing no method.

She was extremely earnest to see you before you left Bologna. On her knees repeatedly she besought this favour, and promised to be easy if they would comply; but they imagined that their compliance would aggravate the symptoms.

I very freely blamed them for not complying, at the time when she was so desirous of seeing you. I told them, that soothing her would probably then have done good.

When they knew you were actually gone from Bologna, they told her so. Camilla shocked me with the description of her rage and despair, on the communication. This was followed by fits of silence, and the deepest melancholy.

They had hopes, on my arrival, that my company would have been of service to her: but for two days together she regarded me not, nor any thing I could say to her. On the third of my arrival, finding her confinement extremely uneasy to her, I prevailed, but with great difficulty, to have her restored to the use of her hands; and to be allowed to walk with me in the garden. They had hinted to me their apprehensions about a piece of water.

Her woman being near us, if there had been occasion for assistance, I insensibly led that way. She sat down on a seat over-against the great cascade; but she made no motion that gave me apprehensions. From this time she has been fonder of me than before. The day I obtained this liberty for her, she often clasped her arms about me, and laid her face in my bosom; and I could plainly see, it was in gratitude for restoring to her the use of her arms: but she cared not to speak.

Indeed she generally affects deep silence: yet, at times, I see her very soul is fretted. She moves to one place, is tired of that, shifts to another, and another, all round the room.

I am grieved at my heart for her: I never knew a more excellent young creature.

She is very attentive at her devotions, and as constant in them as she used to be: Every good habit she preserves; yet, at other times, rambles much.

She is often for writing letters to you; but when what she writes is privately taken from her, she makes no inquiry about it, but takes a new sheet, and begins again.

Sometimes she draws; but her subjects are generally angels and saints. She often meditates in a map of the British dominions, and now and then wishes she were in England.

Lady Juliana de Sforza is earnest to have her with her at Urbino, or at Milan, where she has also a noble palace; but I hope it will not be granted. That lady professes to love her; but she cannot be persuaded out of her notion of harsh methods, which will never do with Clementina.

I shall not be able to stay long with her. The discomposure of so excellent a young creature affects me deeply. Could I do her either good or pleasure, I should be willing to deny myself the society of my dear friends at Florence: but I am persuaded, and have hinted as much, that one interview with you would do more to settle her mind, than all the methods they have taken.

I hope, sir, to see you before you leave Italy. It must be at Florence, not at Bologna, I believe. It is generous of you to propose the latter.

I have now been here a week, without hope. The doctors they have consulted are all for severe methods, and low diet. The first, I think, is in compliment to some of the family. She is so loath to take nourishment, and when she does, is so very abstemious, that the regimen is hardly necessary. She never, or but very seldom, used to drink any thing but water.

She took it into her poor head several times this day, and perhaps it will hold, to sit in particular places, to put on attentive looks, as if she were listening to somebody. She sometimes smiled, and seemed pleased; looked up, as if to somebody, and spoke English. I have no doubt, though I was not present when she assumed these airs, and talked English, but her disordered imagination brought before her her tutor instructing her in that tongue.

You desired me, sir, to be very particular. I have been so; but at the expense of my eyes: and I shall not wonder if your humane heart should be affected by my sad tale.

God preserve you, and prosper you in whatsoever you undertake!

HORTENSIA BEAUMONT

Mrs. Beaumont staid at Bologna twelve days, and then left the unhappy young lady.

At taking leave, she asked her, what commands she had for her?—Love me, said she, and pity me; that is one. Another is, (whispering her,) you will see the chevalier, perhaps, though I must not. —Tell him, that his poor friend Clementina is sometimes very unhappy!—Tell him, that she shall rejoice to sit next him in heaven!—Tell him, that I say he cannot go thither, good man as he is, while

he shuts his eyes to the truth.— Tell him, that I shall take it very kindly of him, if he will not think of marrying till he acquaints me with it; and can give me assurance, that the lady will love him as well as somebody else would have done.—O Mrs. Beaumont! should the Chevalier Grandison marry a woman unworthy of him, what a disgrace would that be to me!

Mr. Grandison by this time had prepared everything for his journey to Paris. The friend he honoured with his love, was arrived from the Levant, and the Archipelago. Thither, at his patron's request, he had accompanied Mr. Beauchamp, the amiable friend of both; and at parting, engaged to continue by letter what had been the subject of their daily conversations, and transmit to him as many particulars as he could obtain of Mr. Grandison's sentiments and behaviour, on every occasion; Mr. Beauchamp proposing him as a pattern to himself, that he might be worthy of the credential letters he had furnished him with to every one whom he had thought deserving of his own acquaintance, when he was in the parts which Mr. Beauchamp intended to visit.

To the care of the person so much honoured by his confidence, Mr. Grandison left his agreeable ward, Miss Jervois; requesting the assistance of Mrs. Beaumont, who kindly promised her inspection; and with the goodness for which she is so eminently noted, performed her promise in his absence.

He then made an offer to the bishop to visit Bologna once more; but that not being accepted, he set out for Paris.

It was not long before his Father's death called him to England; and when he had been there a few weeks, he sent for his ward and his friend.

But, my good Miss Byron, you will say, That I have not yet fully answered your last inquiry, relating to the present situation of the unhappy Clementina.

I will briefly inform you of it.

When it was known, for certain, that Mr. Grandison had actually left Italy, the family at Bologna began to wish that they had permitted the interview so much desired by the poor lady: and when they afterwards understood that he was sent for to England, to take possession of his paternal estate, that farther distance, (the notion likewise of the seas between them appearing formidable,) added to their regrets.

The poor lady was kept in travelling motion to quiet her mind: for still an interview with Mr. Grandison having never been granted, it was her first wish.

They carried her to Urbino, to Rome, to Naples; then back to Florence, then to Milan, to Turin.

Whether they made her hope that it was to meet with Mr. Grandison, I know not; but it is certain, she herself expected to see him at the end of every journey; and, while she was moving, was easier, and more composed; perhaps in that hope.

The marchioness was sometimes of the party. The air and exercise were thought proper for her health, as well as for that of her daughter. Her cousin Laurana was always with her in these excursions, and sometimes Lady Sforza; and their escort was, generally, Signors Sebastiano and Giuliano.

But, within these four months past, these journeyings have been discontinued. The young lady accuses them of deluding her with vain hopes. She is impatient, and has made two attempts to escape from them.

She is, for this reason, closely confined and watched.

They put her once into a nunnery, at the motion of Lady Sforza, as for a trial only. She was not uneasy in it: but this being done unknown to the general, when he was apprised of it, he, for reasons I cannot comprehend, was displeased, and had her taken out directly.

Her head runs more than ever upon seeing her tutor, her friend, her chevalier, once more. They have certainly been to blame, if they have let her travel with such hopes; because they have thereby kept up her ardour for an interview. Could she but once more see him, she says, and let him know the cruelty she has been treated with, she should be satisfied. He would pity her, she is sure, though nobody else will.

The bishop has written to beg, that Sir Charles would pay them one more visit at Bologna.

I will refer to my patron himself the communicating to you, ladies, his resolution on this subject. I had but a moment's sight of the letters which so greatly affected him.

It is but within these few days past that this new request has been made to him, in a direct manner. The question was before put, If such a request should be made, would he comply? And once Camilla wrote, as having heard Sir Charles's presence wished for.

Mean time the poor lady is hastening, they are afraid, into a consumptive malady. The Count of Belvedere, however, still adores her. The disorder in her mind being imputed chiefly to religious melancholy, and some of her particular flights not being generally known, he, who is a pious man himself, pities her; and declares, that he would run all risks of her recovery, would the family give her to him: and yet he knows, that she would choose to be the wife of the Chevalier Grandison, rather than that of any other man, were the article of religion to be got over; and generously applauds her for preferring her faith to her love.

Signor Jeronymo is in a very bad way. Sir Charles often writes to him, and with an affection worthy of the merits of that dear friend. He was to undergo another severe operation on the next day after the letters came from Bologna; the success of which was very doubtful.

How nobly does Sir Charles appear to support himself under such heavy distresses! For those of his friends were ever his. But his heart bleeds in secret for them. A feeling heart is a blessing that no one, who has it, would be without; and it is a moral security of innocence; since the heart that is able to partake of the distress of another, cannot wilfully give it.

I think, my good Miss Byron, that I have now, as far as I am at present able, obeyed all your commands that concern the unhappy Clementina, and her family. I will defer, if you please, those which relate to Olivia and Mrs. Beaumont, ladies of very different characters from each other, having several letters to write.

Permit me, my good ladies, and my lord, after contributing so much to afflict your worthy hearts, to refer you, for relief under all the distresses of life, whether they affect ourselves or others, to those motives that can alone give true support to a rational mind. This mortal scene, however perplexing, is a very short one; and the hour is hastening when all the intricacies of human affairs shall be cleared up; and all the sorrows that have had their foundation in virtue be changed into the highest joy: when all worthy minds shall be united in the same interests, the same happiness.

Allow me to be, my good Miss Byron, and you, my Lord and Lady L—, and Miss Grandison,
Your most faithful and obedient servant,

AMBROSE BARTLETT.

Excellent Dr. Bartlett!—How worthy of himself is this advice! But think you not, my Lucy, that the doctor has in it a particular view to your poor Harriet? A generous one, meaning consolation and instruction to her? I will endeavour to profit by it. Let me have your prayers, my dear friends, that I may be enabled to succeed in my humble endeavours.

It will be no wonder to us now, that Sir Charles was not solicitous to make known a situation so embarrassing to himself, and so much involved in clouds and uncertainty: but whatever may be the event of this affair, you, Lucy, and all my friends, will hardly ever know me by any other name than that of

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER V

MISS HARRIET BYRON, TO MISS LUCY SELBY FRIDAY, MARCH 31

You now, my dear friends, have before you this affecting story, as far as Dr. Bartlett can give it. My cousins express a good deal of concern for your Harriet: so does Miss Grandison: so doth my Lord and Lady L—: and the more, as I seem to carry off the matter with assumed bravery. This their kind concern for me looks, however, as if they thought me a hypocrite; and I suppose, therefore, that I act my part very awkwardly.

But, my dear, as this case is one of those few in which a woman can shew a bravery of spirit, I think an endeavour after it is laudable; and the rather, as in my conduct I aim at giving a tacit example to Miss Jervois.

The doctor has whisper'd to me, that Lady Olivia is actually on her way to England; and that the intelligence Sir Charles received of her intention, was one of the things that disturbed him, as the news of his beloved Signor Jeronymo's dangerous condition was another.

Lady Anne S—, it seems, has not yet given up her hopes of Sir Charles. The two sisters, who once favoured her above all the women they knew, have not been able to bring themselves to acquaint a lady of her rank, merit, and fortune, that there can be no hopes; and they are still more loath to say, that their brother thinks himself under some obligation to a foreign lady. Yet you know that this was always what we were afraid of: but, who, now, will say afraid, that knows the merit of Clementina?

I wish, methinks, that this man were proud, vain, arrogant, and a boaster. How easily then might one throw off one's shackles!

Lord G— is very diligent in his court to Miss Grandison. His father and aunt are to visit her this afternoon. She behaves whimsically to my lord: yet I cannot think that she greatly dislikes him.

The Earl of D— and the Countess Dowager are both in town. The Countess made a visit to my cousin Reeves last Tuesday: she spoke of me very kindly: she says that my lord has heard so much of me, that he is very desirous of seeing me: but she was pleased to say, that, since my heart was not disengaged, she should be afraid of the consequences of his visit to himself.

My grandmamma, though she was so kindly fond of me, would not suffer me to live with her; because she thought, that her contemplative temper might influence mine, and make me grave, at a time of life, when she is always saying, that cheerfulness is most becoming: she would therefore turn over her girl to the best of aunts. But now I fancy, she will allow me to be more than two days in a week her attendant. My uncle Selby will be glad to spare me. I shall not be able to bear a jest: and then, what shall I be good for?

I have made a fine hand of coming to town, he says: and so I have: but if my heart is not quite so easy as it was, it is, I hope, a better, at least not a worse heart than I brought up with me. Could I only have admired this man, my excursion would not have been unhappy. But this gratitude, this entangling, with all its painful consequence—But let me say, with my grandmamma, the man is Sir Charles Grandison! The very man by whose virtues a Clementina was attracted. Upon my word, my dear, unhappy as she is, I rank her with the first of women.

I have not had a great deal of Sir Charles Grandison's company; but yet more, I am afraid, than I shall ever have again. Very true—O heart! the most wayward of hearts, sigh if thou wilt!

You have seen how little he was with us, when we were absolutely in his reach, and when he, as we thought, was in ours. But such a man cannot, ought not to be engrossed by one family. Bless me, Lucy, when he comes into public life, (for has not his country a superior claim to him beyond every private one?) what moment can he have at liberty? Let me enumerate some of his present engagements that we know of.

The Danby family must have some farther portion of his time.

The executorship in the disposal of the 3000£. in charity, in France as well as in England, will take up a good deal more.

My Lord W— may be said to be under his tutelage, as to the future happiness of his life.

Miss Jervois's affairs, and the care he has for her person, engage much of his attention.

He is his own steward.

He is making alterations at Grandison-hall; and has a large genteel neighbourhood there, who long to have him reside among them; and he himself is fond of that seat.

His estate in Ireland is in a prosperous way, from the works he set on foot there, when he was on the spot; and he talks, as Dr. Bartlett has hinted to us, of making another visit to it.

His sister's match with Lord G— is one of his cares.

He has services to perform for his friend Beauchamp, with his father and mother-in-law, for the facilitating his coming over.

The apprehended visit of Olivia gives him disturbance.

And the Bologna family in its various branches, and more especially Signor Jeronymo's dangerous state of health, and Signora Clementina's disordered mind—O, Lucy!—What leisure has this man to be in love?—Yet how can I say so, when he is in love already? And with Clementina.—And don't you think, that when he goes to France on the executorship account, he will make a visit to Bologna?—Ah, my dear, to be sure he will.

After he has left England, therefore, which I suppose he will quickly do, and when I am in Northamptonshire, what opportunities will your Harriet have to see him, except she can obtain, as a favour, the power of obliging his Emily, in her request to be with her? Then, Lucy, he may, on his return to England, once a year or so, on his visiting his ward, see, and thank for her care and love of his Emily, his half-estranged Harriet!—Perhaps Lady Clementina Grandison will be with him! God restore her! Surely I shall be capable, if she be Lady Grandison, of rejoicing in her recovery!—

Fie upon it!—Why this involuntary tear? You would see it by the large blot it has made, if I did not mention it.

Excellent man!—Dr. Bartlett has just been telling me of a morning visit he received, before he went out of town, from the two sons of Mrs. Oldham.

One of them is about seven years old; the other about five; very fine children. He embraced them, the doctor says, with as much tenderness, as if they were children of his own mother. He enquired into their inclinations, behaviour, diversions; and engaged equally their love and reverence.

He told them, that, if they were good, he would love them; and said, he had a dear friend, whom he revered as his father, a man with white curling locks, he told the children, that they might know him at first sight, who would now-and-then, as he happened to be in town, make enquiries after their good behaviour, and reward them, as they gave him cause. Accordingly he had desired Dr. Bartlett to give them occasionally his countenance; as also to let their mother know, that he should be glad of a visit from her, and her three children, on his return to town.

The doctor had been to see her when he came to me. He found all three with her. The two younger, impressed by the venerable description Sir Charles had given of him, voluntarily, the younger, by the elder's example, fell down on their knees before him, and begged his blessing.

Mr. Oldham is about eighteen years of age; a well-inclined, well-educated youth. He was full of acknowledgments of the favour done him in this invitation.

The grateful mother could not contain herself. Blessings without number, she invoked on her benefactor, for his goodness in taking such kind notice of her two sons, as he had done; and said, he had been, ever since his gracious behaviour to her in Essex, the first and last in her prayers to Heaven. But the invitation to herself, she declared, was too great an honour for her to accept of: she should not be able to stand in his presence. Alas! sir, said she, can the severest, truest penitence recall the guilty past?

The doctor said, that Sir Charles Grandison ever made it a rule with him, to raise the dejected and humbled spirit. Your birth and education, madam, entitle you to a place in the first company: and where there are two lights in which the behaviour of any person may be set, though there has been unhappiness, he always remembers the most favourable, and forgets the other. I would advise you, madam, (as he has invited you,) by all means to come. He speaks with pleasure of your humility and good sense.

The doctor told me, that Sir Charles had made inquiries after the marriage of Major O'Hara with Mrs. Jervois, and had satisfied himself that they were actually man and wife. Methinks I am glad for Miss Jervois's sake, that her mother has changed her name. They lived not happily together since their last enterprise: for the man, who had long been a sufferer from poverty, was in fear of losing one half at least of his wife's annuity, by what passed on that occasion; and accused her of putting him upon the misbehaviour he was guilty of; which had brought upon him, he said, the resentments of a man admired by all the world.

The attorney, who visited Sir Charles from these people, at their request, waited on him again, in their names, with hopes that they should not suffer in their annuity, and expressing their concern for having offended him.

Mrs. O'Hara also requested it as a favour to see her daughter.

Sir Charles commissioned the attorney, who is a man of repute, to tell them, that if Mrs. O'Hara would come to St. James's-square next Wednesday about five o'clock, Miss Jervois should be introduced to her; and she should be welcome to bring with her her husband, and Captain Salmonet, that they might be convinced he bore no ill-will to either of them.

Adieu, till by and by. Miss Grandison is come, in one of her usual hurries, to oblige me to be present at the visit to be made her this afternoon, by the Earl of G— and Lady Gertrude, his sister, a maiden lady advanced in years, who is exceedingly fond of her nephew, and intends to make him heir of her large fortune.

FRIDAY NIGHT

The earl is an agreeable man: Lady Gertrude is a very agreeable woman. They saw Miss Grandison with the young lord's eyes; and were better pleased with her, as I told her afterwards, than I should have been, or than they would, had they known her as well as I do. She doubted not, she answered me, but I should find fault with her; and yet she was as good as for her life she could be.

Such an archness in every motion! Such a turn of the eye to me on my Lord G—'s assiduities! Such a fear in him of her correcting glance! Such a half-timid, half-free parade when he had done any thing that he intended to be obliging, and now and then an aiming at raillery, as if he was not very much afraid of her, and dared to speak his mind even to her! On her part, on those occasions, such an air, as if she had a learner before her; and was ready to rap his knuckles, had nobody been present to mediate for him; that though I could not but love her for her very archness, yet in my mind, I could, for their sakes, but more for her own, have severely chidden her.

She is a charming woman; and every thing she says and does becomes her. But I am so much afraid of what may be the case, when the lover is changed into the husband, that I wish to myself now and then, when I see her so lively, that she would remember that there was once such a man as Captain Anderson. But she makes it a rule, she says, to remember nothing that will vex her.

Is not my memory (said she once) given me for my benefit, and shall I make it my torment? No, Harriet, I will leave that to be done by you wise ones, and see what you will get by it.

Why this, Charlotte, replied I, the wise ones may have a chance to get by it—They will, very probably, by remembering past mistakes, avoid many inconveniencies into which forgetfulness will run you lively ones.

Well, well, returned she, we are not all of us born to equal honour. Some of us are to be set up for warnings, some for examples: and the first are generally of greater use to the world than the other.

Now, Charlotte, said I, do you destroy the force of your own argument. Can the person who is singled out for the warning, be near so happy, as she that is set up for the example?

You are right as far as I know, Harriet: but I obey the present impulse, and try to find an excuse afterwards for what that puts me upon: and all the difference is this, as to the reward, I have a joy: you a comfort: but comfort is a poor word; and I can't bear it.

So Biddy, in 'The Tender Husband,' would have said, Charlotte. But poor as the word is with you and her, give me comfort rather than joy, if they must be separated. But I see not but that a woman of my Charlotte's happy turn may have both.

She tapped my cheek—Take that, Harriet, for making a Biddy of me. I believe, if you have not joy, you have comfort, in your severity.

My heart as well as my cheek glowed at the praises the earl and the lady both joined in (with a fervor that was creditable to their own hearts) of Sir Charles Grandison, while they told us what this man, and that woman of quality or consideration said of him. Who would not be good? What is life without reputation? Do we not wish to be remembered with honour after death? And what a share of it has this excellent man in his life! —May nothing, for the honour-sake of human nature, to which he is so great an ornament, ever happen to tarnish it!

They made me a hundred fine compliments. I could not but be pleased at standing well in their opinion: but, believe me, my dear, I did not enjoy their praises of me, as I did those they gave him. Indeed, I had the presumption, from the approbation given to what they said of him by my own heart, to imagine myself a sharer in them, though not in his merits. Oh, Lucy! ought there not to have been a relation between us, since what I have said, from what I found in myself on hearing him praised, is a demonstration of a regard for him superior to the love of self?

Adieu, my Lucy. I know I have all your prayers.

Adieu, my dear!

LETTER VI

MISS BYRON.—IN CONTINUATION

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

Dr. Bartlett is one of the kindest as well as best of men. I believe he loves me as if I were his own child: but good men must be affectionate men. He received but this morning a letter from Sir Charles, and hastened to communicate some of its contents to me, though I could pretend to no other motive but curiosity for wishing to be acquainted with the proceedings of his patron.

Sir Charles dined, as he had intended, with Sir Hargrave and his friends. He complains in his letter of a riotous day: yet I think, adds he, it has led me into some useful reflections. It is not indeed agreeable to be the spectator of riot; but how easy to shun being a partaker in it! Ho easy to avoid the too freely circling glass, if a man is known to have established a rule to himself, from which he will not depart; and if it be not refused sullenly; but mirth and good humour the more studiously kept up, by the person; who would else indeed be looked upon as a spy on unguarded folly! I heartily pitied a young man, who, I dare say, has a good heart, but from false shame durst not assert the freedom that every Englishman would claim a right to, in almost every other instance! He had once put by the glass, and excused himself on account of his health; but on being laughed at for a sober dog, as they phrased it, and asked, if his spouse had not lectured him before he came out, he gave way to the wretched raillery: nor could I interfere at such a noisy moment with effect: they had laughed him out of his caution before I could be heard; and I left him there at nine o'clock trying with Bagenhall which should drink the deepest.

I wish, my good Dr. Bartlett, you would throw together some serious considerations on this subject. You could touch it delicately, and such a discourse would not be unuseful to some few of our neighbours even at Grandison-hall. What is it, that, in this single article, men sacrifice to false shame and false glory! Reason, health, fortune, personal elegance, the peace and order of their families; and all the comfort and honour of their after-years. How peevish, how wretched, is the decline of a man worn out with intemperance! In a cool hour, resolutions might be formed, that should stand the attack of a boisterous jest.

I obtained leave from Dr. Bartlett, to transcribe this part of the letter. I thought my uncle would be pleased with it.

It was near ten at night, before Sir Charles got to Lord W-'s, though but three miles from Sir Hargrave's. My lord rejoiced to see him; and, after first compliments, asked him, if he had thought of what he had undertaken for him. Sir Charles told him, that he was the more desirous of seeing him in his way to the Hall, because he wanted to know if his lordship held his mind as to marriage. He assured him he did, and would sign and seal to whatever he should stipulate for him.

I wished for a copy of this part of Sir Charles's letter, for the sake of my aunt, whose delicacy would, I thought, be charmed with it. He has been so good as to say, he would transcribe it for me. I will enclose it, Lucy; and you will read it here:

I cannot, my lord, said Sir Charles, engage, that the lady will comply with the proposal I shall take the liberty to make to her mother and her. She is not more than three or four and thirty: she is handsome: she has a fine understanding: she is brought up an economist: she is a woman of good family: she has not, however, though born to happier prospects, a fortune worthy of your lordship's acceptance. Whatever that is, you will, perhaps, choose to give it to her family.

With all my heart and soul, nephew: but do you say, she is handsome? Do you say, she is of family? And has she so many good qualities?—Ah, nephew! She won't have me, I doubt.—And is she not too young, Sir Charles, to think of such a poor decrepit soul as I am?

All I can say to this, my lord, is, that the proposals on your part must be the more generous—

I will leave all those matters to you, kinsman—

This, my lord, I will take upon me to answer for, that she is a woman of principle: she will not give your lordship her hand, if she thinks she cannot make you a wife worthy of your utmost kindness: and now, my lord, I will tell you who she is, that you may make what other inquiries you think proper.

And then I named her to him, and gave him pretty near the account of the family, and the circumstances and affairs of it, that I shall by and by give you; though you are not quite a stranger to the unhappy case.

My lord was in raptures: he knew something, he said, of the lady's father, and enough of the family, by hearsay, to confirm all I had said of them; and besought me to do my utmost to bring the affair to a speedy conclusion.

Sir Thomas Mansfield was a very good man; and much respected in his neighbourhood. He was once possessed of a large estate; but his father left him involved in a law-suit to support his title to more than one half of it.

After it had been depending several years, it was at last, to the deep regret of all who knew him, by the chicanery of the lawyers of the opposite side, and the remissness of his own, carried against him; and his expenses having been very great in supporting for years his possession, he found himself reduced from an estate of near three thousand pounds a year, to little more than five hundred. He had six children: four sons, and two daughters. His eldest son died of grief in two months after the loss of the cause. The second, now the eldest, is a melancholy man. The third is a cornet of horse. The fourth is unprovided for; but all three are men of worthy minds, and deserve better fortune.

The daughters are remarkable for their piety, patience, good economy, and prudence. They are the most dutiful of children, and most affectionate of sisters. They were for three years the support of their father's spirits, and have always been the consolation of their mother. They lost their father about four years ago: and it is even edifying to observe, how elegantly they support the family reputation in their fine old mansion-house by the prudent management of their little income; for the mother leaves every household care to them; and they make it a rule to conclude the year with discharging every demand that can be made upon them, and to commence the new year absolutely clear of the world, and with some cash in hand; yet were brought up in affluence, and to the expectation of handsome fortunes; for, besides that they could have no thought of losing their cause, they had very great and reasonable prospects from Mr. Calvert, an uncle by their mother's side; who was rich in money, and had besides an estate in land of 1500£. a year. He always declared, that, for the sake of his sister's children, he would continue a single man; and kept his word till he was upwards of seventy; when, being very infirm in health, and defective even to dotage in his understanding, Bolton, his steward, who had always stood in the way of his inclination to have his eldest niece for his companion and manager, at last contrived to get him married to a young creature under twenty, one of the servants in the house; who brought him a child in seven months; and was with child again at the old man's death, which happened in eighteen months after his marriage: and then a will was provided, in which he gave all he had to his wife and her children born, and to be born, within a year after his demise. This steward and woman now live together as man and wife.

A worthy clergyman, who hoped it might be in my power to procure them redress, either in the one case or in the other, gave me the above particulars; and upon inquiry, finding every thing to be as represented, I made myself acquainted with the widow lady and her sons: and it was impossible to see them at their own house, and not respect the daughters for their amiable qualities.

I desired them, when I was last down, to put into my hands their titles, deeds, and papers; which they have done; and they have been laid before counsel, who give a very hopeful account of them.

Being fully authorized by my lord, I took leave of him over-night, and set out early in the morning, directly for Mansfield-house. I arrived there soon after their breakfast was over, and was received by Lady Mansfield, her sons, (who happened to be all at home,) and her two daughters, with politeness.

After some general conversation, I took Lady Mansfield aside; and making an apology for my freedom, asked her, If Miss Mansfield were, to her knowledge, engaged in her affections?

She answered, she was sure she was not: Ah, sir, said she, a man of your observation must know, that the daughters of a decayed family of some note in the world, do not easily get husbands. Men of great fortunes look higher: men of small must look out for wives to enlarge them; and men of genteel businesses are afraid of young women better born than portioned. Every body knows not that my girls can bend to their condition; and they must be contented to live single all their lives; and so they will choose to do, rather than not marry creditably, and with some prospect.

I then opened my mind fully to her. She was agreeably surprised: but who, sir, said she, would expect such a proposal from the next heir to Lord W—?

I made known to her how much in earnest I was in this proposal, as well for my lord's sake, as for the young lady's. I will take care, madam, said I, that Miss Mansfield, if she will consent to make Lord W— happy, shall have very handsome settlements, and such an allowance for pin-money, as shall enable her to gratify every moderate, every reasonable, wish of her heart.

Was it possible, she asked, for such an affair to be brought about?

Would my lord—There she stopt.

I said, I would be answerable for him: and desired her to break the matter to her daughter directly.

I left Lady Mansfield, and joined the brothers, who were with their two sisters; and soon after Miss Mansfield was sent for by her mother.

After they had been a little while together, my Lady Mansfield sent to speak with me. They were both silent when I came in. The mother was at a loss what to say: the daughter was in still greater confusion.

I addressed myself to the mother. You have, I perceive, madam, acquainted Miss Mansfield with the proposal I made to you. I am fully authorized to make it. Propitious be your silence! There never was, proceeded I, a treaty of marriage set on foot, that had not its conveniencies and inconveniencies. My lord is greatly afflicted with the gout: there is too great a disparity in years. These are the inconveniencies which are to be considered of for the lady.

On the other hand, if Miss Mansfield can give into the proposal, she will be received by my lord as a blessing; as one whose acceptance of him will lay him under an obligation to her. If this proposal could not have been made with dignity and honour to the lady, it had not come from me.

The conveniencies to yourselves will more properly fall under the consideration of yourselves and family. One thing only I will suggest, that an alliance with so rich a man as Lord W—, will make, perhaps, some people tremble, who now think themselves secure.

But, madam, to the still silent daughter, let not a regard for me bias you: your family may be sure of my best services, whether my proposal be received or rejected.

My lord (I must deal sincerely with you) has lived a life of error. He thinks so himself. I am earnest to have him see the difference, and to have an opportunity to rejoice with him upon it.

I stopt: but both being still silent, the mother looking on the daughter, the daughter glancing now and then her conscious eye on the mother, If, madam, said I, you can give your hand to Lord W—, I will take care, that settlements shall exceed your expectation. What I have observed as well as heard of Miss Mansfield's temper and goodness, is the principal motive of my application to her, in preference to all the women I know.

But permit me to say, that were your affections engaged to the lowest honest man on earth, I would not wish for your favour to my Lord W—. And, further, if, madam, you think you should have but the shadow of a hope, to induce your compliance, that my Lord's death would be more agreeable to you than his life, then would I not, for your morality's sake, wish you to engage. In a word, I address myself to you, Miss Mansfield, as to a woman of honour and conscience: if your conscience bids you doubt, reject the proposal; and this not only for my lord's sake, but for your own.

Consider, if, without too great a force upon your inclinations, you can behave with that condescension and indulgence to a man who has hastened advanced age upon himself, which I have thought from your temper I might hope.

I have said a great deal, because you, ladies, were silent; and because explicitness in every case becomes the proposer. Give me leave to withdraw for a few moments.

I withdrew, accordingly, to the brothers and sister. I did not think I ought to mention to them the proposal I had made: it might perhaps have engaged them all in its favour, as it was of such evident advantage to the whole family; and that might have imposed a difficulty on the lady, that neither for her own sake, nor my lord's, it would have been just to lay upon her.

Lady Mansfield came out to me, and said, I presume, sir, as we are a family which misfortune as well as love, has closely bound together, you will allow it to be mentioned—

To the whole family, madam!—By all means. I wanted only first to know, whether Miss Mansfield's affections were disengaged: and now you shall give me leave to attend Miss Mansfield. I am a party for my Lord W—: Miss Mansfield is a party: your debates will be the more free in our absence. If I find her averse, believe me, madam, I will not endeavour to persuade her. On the contrary, if she declare against accepting the proposal, I will be her advocate, though every one else should vote in its favour.

The brothers and sister looked upon one another: I left the mother to propose it to them; and stepped into the inner parlour to Miss Mansfield.

She was sitting with her back to the door, in a meditating posture. She started at my entrance.

I talked of indifferent subjects, in order to divert her from the important one, that had taken up her whole attention.

It would have been a degree of oppression to her to have entered with her upon a subject of so much consequence to her while we were alone; and when her not having given a negative, was to be taken as a modest affirmative.

Lady Mansfield soon joined us—My dear daughter, said she, we are all unanimous. We have agreed to leave every thing to Sir Charles Grandison: and we hope you will.

She was silent. I will only ask you, madam, said I, to her, if you have any wish to take time to consider of the matter? Do you think you shall be easier in your mind, if you take time?—She was silent.

I will not at this time, my good Miss Mansfield, urge you further. I will make my report to Lord W—, and you shall be sure of his joyful approbation of the steps I have taken, before your final consent shall be asked for. But that I may not be employed in a doubtful cause, let me be commissioned to tell my lord, that you are disengaged; and that you wholly resign yourself to your mother's advice.

She bowed her head.

And that you, madam, to Lady Mansfield, are not averse to enter into treaty upon this important subject.

Averse, sir! said the mother, bowing, and gratefully smiling.

I will write the particulars of our conversation to Lord W—, and my opinion of settlements, and advise him (if I am not forbid) to make a visit at Mansfield House. [I stopt: they were both silent.] If possible, I will attend my lord in his first visit. I hope, madam, to Miss Mansfield, you will not dislike him; I am sure he will be charmed with you: he is far from being disagreeable in his person: his temper is not bad. Your goodness will make him good. I dare say that he will engage your gratitude; and I defy a good mind to separate love from gratitude.

We returned to company. I had all their blessings pronounced at once, as from one mouth. The melancholy brother was enlivened: who knows but the consequence of this alliance may illuminate his mind? I could see by the pleasure they all had, in beholding him capable of joy on the occasion, that they hoped it would. The unhappy situation of the family affairs, as it broke the heart of the eldest brother, fixed a gloom on the temper of this gentleman.

I was prevailed upon to dine with them. In the conversation we had at and after dinner, their minds opened, and their characters rose upon me. Lord W— will be charmed with Miss Mansfield. I am delighted to think, that my mother's brother will be happy, in the latter part of his life, with a wife of so much prudence and goodness, as I am sure this lady will make him. On one instance of her very obliging behaviour to me, I whispered her sister, Pray, Miss Fanny, tell Miss Mansfield, but not till I am gone, that she knows not the inconveniencies she is bringing upon herself: I may, perhaps, hereafter, have the boldness, to look for the same favour from my aunt, that I meet with from Miss Mansfield.

If my sister, returned she, should ever misbehave to her benefactor, I will deny my relation to her.

You will soon have another letter from me, with an account of the success of my visit to Sir Harry Beauchamp and his lady. We must have our Beauchamp among us, my dear friend: I should rather say, you must among you; for I shall not be long in England. He will supply to you, my dear Dr. Bartlett, the absence (it will not, I hope, be a long one) of your

CHARLES GRANDISON.

Sir Charles, I remember, as the doctor read, mentions getting leave for his Beauchamp to come over, who, he says, will supply his absence to him —But, ah, Lucy! Who, let me have the boldness to ask, shall supply it to your Harriet? Time, my dear, will do nothing for me, except I could hear something very much amiss of this man.

I have a great suspicion, that the first part of the letter enclosed was about me. The doctor looked so earnestly at me, when he skipt two sides of it; and, as I thought, with so much compassion! —To be sure, it was about me.

What would I give to know as much of his mind as Dr. Bartlett knows! If I thought he pitied the poor Harriet—I should scorn myself. I am, I will be, above his pity, Lucy. In this believe your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER VII
MISS BYRON.—IN CONTINUATION
SUNDAY NIGHT, APRIL 2

Dr. Bartlett has received from Sir Charles an account of what passed last Friday between him and Sir Harry and Lady Beauchamp. By the doctor's allowance, I enclose it to you.

In this letter, Lucy, you will see him in a new light; and as a man whom there is no resisting, when he resolves to carry a point. But it absolutely convinces me, of what indeed I before suspected, that he has not an high opinion of our sex in general: and this I will put down as a blot in his character. He treats us, in Lady Beauchamp, as perverse humoursome babies, loving power, yet not knowing how to use it. See him so delicate in his behaviour and address to Miss Mansfield, and carry in your thoughts his gaiety and adroit management to Lady Beauchamp, as in this letter, and you will hardly think him the same man. Could he be any thing to me, I should be more than half afraid of him: yet this may be said in his behalf;—He but accommodates himself to the persons he has to deal with:—He can be a man of gay wit, when he pleases to descend, as indeed his sister Charlotte has as often found, as she has given occasion for the exercise of that talent in him:—Yet, that virtue, for its own sake, is his choice; since, had he been a free liver, he would have been a dangerous man.

But I will not anticipate too much: read it here, if you please.

LETTER VIII
SIR CHARLES GRANDISON, TO DR.
BARTLETT [ENCLOSED IN THE PRECEDING.]
GRANDISON HALL, FRIDAY NIGHT, MARCH 31

I arrived at Sir Harry Beauchamp's about twelve this day. He and his lady expected me, from the letter which I wrote and shewed you before I left the town; in which, you know, I acquainted Sir Harry with his son's earnest desire to throw himself at his feet, and to pay his duty to his mother, in England; and engaged to call myself, either this day or to-morrow, for an answer.

Sir Harry received me with great civility, and even affection. Lady Beauchamp, said he, will be with us in a moment. I am afraid you will not meet with all the civility from her on the errand you are come upon, that a man of Sir Charles Grandison's character deserves to meet with from all the world. We have been unhappy together, ever since we had your letter. I long to see my son: your friendship for him establishes him in my heart. But—And then he cursed the apron-string tenure, by which, he said, he held his peace.

You will allow me, Sir Harry, said I, to address myself in my own way to my lady. You give me pleasure, in letting me know, that the difficulty is not with you. You have indeed, sir, one of the most prudent young men in the world for your son. His heart is in your hand: you may form it as you please.

She is coming! She is coming! interrupted he. We are all in pieces: we were in the midst of a feud, when you arrived. If she is not civil to you—

In swam the lady; her complexion raised; displeasure in her looks to me, and indignation in her air to Sir Harry; as if they had not had their contention out, and she was ready to renew it.

With as obliging an air as I could assume, I paid my compliments to her. She received them with great stiffness; swelling at Sir Harry: who sidled to the door, in a moody and sullen manner, and then slipped out.

You are Sir Charles Grandison, I suppose, sir, said she; I never saw you before: I have heard much talk of you.—But, pray, sir, are good men always officious men? Cannot they perform the obligations of friendship, without discomposing families?

You see me now, madam, in an evil moment, if you are displeased with me: but I am not used to the displeasure of ladies: I do my utmost not to deserve it; and, let me tell you, madam, that I will not suffer you to be displeased with me.

I took her half-reluctant hand, and led her to a chair, and seated myself in another near her.

I see, sir, you have your arts.

She took the fire-screen, that hung by the side of the chimney, and held it before her face, now glancing at me, now turning away her eye, as if resolved to be displeased.

You come upon a hateful errand, sir: I have been unhappy ever since your officious letter came.

I am sorry for it, madam. While you are warm with the remembrance of a past misunderstanding, I will not offer to reason with you: but let me, madam, see less discomposure in your looks. I want to take my impressions of you from more placid features: I am a painter, madam: I love to draw lady's pictures. Will you have this pass for a first sitting?

She knew not what to do with her anger: she was loath to part with it.

You are impertinent, Sir Charles—Excuse me—You are impertinent.

I do excuse you, Lady Beauchamp: and the rather, as I am sure you do not think me so. Your freedom is a mark of your favour; and I thank you for it.

You treat me as a child, sir—

I treat all angry people as children: I love to humour them. Indeed, Lady Beauchamp, you must not be angry with me. Can I be mistaken? Don't I see in your aspect the woman of sense and reason?—I never blame a lady for her humoursomeness, so much as, in my mind, I blame her mother.

Sir! said she. I smiled. She bit her lip, to avoid returning a smile.

Her character, my dear friend, is not, you know, that of an ill-tempered woman, though haughty, and a lover of power.

I have heard much of you, Sir Charles Grandison: but I am quite mistaken in you: I expected to see a grave formal young man, his prim mouth set in plaits: But you are a joker; and a free man; a very free man, I do assure you.

I would be thought decently free, madam; but not impertinent. I see with pleasure a returning smile. O that ladies knew how much smiles become their features!—Very few causes can justify a woman's anger—Your sex, madam, was given to delight, not to torment us.

Torment you, sir!—Pray, has Sir Harry—

Sir Harry cannot look pleased, when his lady is dis-pleased: I saw that you were, madam, the moment I beheld you. I hope I am not an unwelcome visitor to Sir Harry for one hour, (I intend to stay no longer,) that he received me with so disturbed a countenance, and has now withdrawn himself, as if to avoid me.

To tell you the truth, Sir Harry and I have had a dispute: but he always speaks of Sir Charles Grandison with pleasure.

Is he not offended with me, madam, for the contents of the letter—

No, sir, and I suppose you hardly think he is—But I am—

Dear madam, let me beg your interest in favour of the contents of it.

She took fire—rose up—

I besought her patience—Why should you wish to keep abroad a young man, who is a credit to his family, and who ought to be, if he is not, the joy of his father? Let him owe to your generosity, madam, that recall, which he solicits: it will become your character: he cannot be always kept abroad: be it your own generous work—

What, sir—Pray, sir—With an angry brow—

You must not be angry with me, madam—(I took her hand)—You can't be angry in earnest—

Sir Charles Grandison—You are—She withdrew her hand; You are, repeated she—and seemed ready to call names—

I am the Grandison you call me; and I honour the maternal character. You must permit me to honour you, madam.

I wonder, sir—

I will not be denied. The world reports misunderstandings between you and Mr. Beauchamp. That busy world that will be meddling, knows your power, and his dependence. You must not let it charge you with an ill use of that power: if you do, you will have its blame, when you might have its praise: he will have its pity.

What, sir, do you think your fine letters, and smooth words, will avail in favour of a young fellow who has treated me with disrespect?

You are misinformed, madam.—I am willing to have a greater dependence upon your justice, upon your good-nature, than upon any thing I can urge either by letter or speech. Don't let it be said, that you are not to be prevailed on—A woman not to be prevailed on to join in an act of justice, of kindness; for the honour of the sex, let it not be said.

Honour of the sex, sir!—Fine talking!—Don't I know, that were I to consent to his coming over, the first thing would be to have his annuity augmented out of my fortune? He and his father would be in a party against me. Am I not already a sufferer through him in his father's love?—You don't know, sir, what has passed between Sir Harry and me within this half-hour—But don't talk to me: I won't hear of it: the young man hates me: I hate him; and ever will.

She made a motion to go.

With a respectful air, I told her, she must not leave me. My motive deserved not, I said, that both she and Sir Harry should leave me in displeasure.

You know but too well, resumed she, how acceptable your officiousness (I must call it so) is to Sir Harry.

And does Sir Harry, madam, favour his son's suit? You rejoice me: let not Mr. Beauchamp know that he does: and do you, my dear Lady Beauchamp, take the whole merit of it to yourself. How will he revere you for your goodness to him! And what an obligation, if, as you say, Sir Harry is inclined to favour him, will you, by your generous first motion, lay upon Sir Harry!

Obligation upon Sir Harry! Yes, Sir Charles Grandison, I have laid too many obligations already upon him, for his gratitude.

Lay this one more. You own you have had a misunderstanding this morning: Sir Harry is withdrawn, I suppose, with his heart full: let me, I beseech you, make up the misunderstanding. I have been happy in this way—Thus we will order it—We will desire him to walk in. I will beg your interest with him in favour of the contents of the letter I sent. His compliance will follow as an act of obligingness to you. The grace of the action will be yours. I will be answerable for Mr. Beauchamp's gratitude.—Dear madam, hesitate not. The young gentleman must come over one day: let the favour of its being an early one, be owing entirely to you.

You are a strange man, sir: I don't like you at all: you would persuade me out of my reason.

Let us, madam, as Mr. Beauchamp and I are already the dearest of friends, begin a family understanding. Let St. James's-square, and Berkley-square, when you come to town, be a next-door neighbourhood.

Give me the consideration of being the bondsman for the duty of Mr. Beauchamp to you, as well as to his father.

She was silent: but looked vexed and irresolute.

My sisters, madam, are amiable women. You will be pleased with them. Lord L— is a man worthy of Sir Harry's acquaintance. We shall want nothing, if you would think so, but Mr. Beauchamp's presence among us.

What! I suppose you design your maiden sister for the young fellow—But if you do, sir, you must ask me for—There she stopt.

Indeed I do not. He is not at present disposed to marry. He never will without his father's approbation, and let me say—yours. My sister is addressed to by Lord G—, and I hope will soon be married to him.

And do you say so, Sir Charles Grandison?—Why then you are a more disinterested man, than I thought you in this application to Sir Harry.

I had no doubt but the young fellow was to be brought over to marry Miss Grandison; and that he was to be made worthy of her at my expense.

She enjoyed, as it seemed, by her manner of pronouncing the words young fellow, that designed contempt, which was a tacit confession of the consequence he once was of to her.

I do assure you, madam, that I know not his heart, if he has at present any thoughts of marriage.

She seemed pleased at this assurance.

I repeated my wishes, that she would take to herself the merit of allowing Mr. Beauchamp to return to his native country: and that she would let me see her hand in Sir Harry's, before I left them.

And pray, sir, as to his place of residence, were he to come: do you think he should live under the same roof with me?

You shall govern that point, madam, as you approve or disapprove of his behaviour to you.

His behaviour to me, sir!—One house cannot, shall not, hold him and me.

I think, madam, that you should direct in this article. I hope, after a little while, so to order my affairs, as constantly to reside in England. I should think myself very happy if I could prevail upon Mr. Beauchamp to live with me.

But I must see him, I suppose?

Not, madam, unless you shall think it right, for the sake of the world's opinion, that you should. I can't consent—

You can, madam! You do!—I cannot allow Lady Beauchamp to be one of those women, who having insisted upon a wrong point, can be convinced, yet not know how to recede with a grace.—Be so kind to yourself, as to let Sir Harry know, that you think it right for Mr. Beauchamp to return; but that it must be upon your own conditions: then, madam, make those conditions generous ones; and how will Sir Harry adore you! How will Mr. Beauchamp revere you! How shall I esteem you!

What a strange impertinent have I before me!

I love to be called names by a lady. If undeservedly, she lays herself by them under obligation to me, which she cannot be generous if she resolves not to repay. Shall I endeavour to find out Sir Harry? Or will you, madam?

Was you ever, Sir Charles Grandison, denied by any woman to whom you sued for favour?

I think, madam, I hardly ever was: but it was because I never sued for a favour, that it was not for a lady's honour to grant. This is the case now; and this makes me determine, that I will not be denied the grant of my present request. Come, come, madam! How can a woman of your ladyship's good sense (taking her hand, and leading her to the door) seem to want to be persuaded to do a thing she knows in her heart to be right! Let us find Sir Harry.

Strange man!—Unhand me—He has used me unkindly—

Overcome him then by your generosity. But, dear Lady Beauchamp, taking both her hands, and smiling confidently in her face, [I could, my dear Dr. Bartlett, do so to Lady Beauchamp,] will you make me believe, that a woman of your spirit (you have a charming spirit, Lady Beauchamp) did not give Sir Harry as much reason to complain, as he gave you?—I am sure by his disturbed countenance—

Now, Sir Charles Grandison, you are downright affronting. Unhand me!

This misunderstanding is owing to my officious letter. I should have waited on you in person. I should from the first have put it in your power, to do a graceful and obliging thing. I ask your pardon. I am not used to make differences between man and wife.

I touched first one hand, then the other, of the perverse baby with my lips—Now am I forgiven: now is my friend Beauchamp permitted to return to his native country: now are Sir Harry and his Lady reconciled—Come, come, madam, it must be so—What foolish things are the quarrels of married people!—They must come to an agreement again; and the sooner the better; before hard blows are struck, that will leave marks—Let us, dear madam, find out Sir Harry—

And then, with an air of vivacity, that women, whether in courtship or out of it, dislike not, I was leading her once more to the door, and, as I intended, to Sir Harry, wherever he could be found.

Hold, hold, sir! resisting; but with features far more placid than she had suffered to be before visible—If I must be compelled—You are a strange man, Sir Charles Grandison—If I must be compelled to see Sir Harry—But you are a strange man—And she rang the bell.

Lady Beauchamp, Dr. Bartlett, is one of those who would be more ready to forgive an innocent freedom, than to be gratified by a profound respect; otherwise I had not treated her with so little ceremony. Such women are formidable only to those who are afraid of their anger, or who make it a serious thing.

But when the servant appeared, she not knowing how to condescend, I said, Go to your master, sir, and tell him that your lady requests the favour—

Requests the favour! repeated she; but in a low voice: which was no bad sign.

The servant went with a message worded with more civility than perhaps he was used to carry to his master from his lady.

Now, dear Lady Beauchamp, for your own sake; for Sir Harry's sake; make happy; and be happy. Are there not, dear madam, unhappinesses enow in life, that we must wilfully add to them?

Sir Harry came in sight. He stalked towards us with a parade like that of a young officer wanting to look martial at the head of his company.

Could I have seen him before he entered, my work would have been easier.

But his hostile air disposed my lady to renew hostilities.

She turned her face aside, then her person; and the cloudy indignation with which she entered at first, again overspread her features. Ought wrath, Dr. Bartlett, to be so ready to attend a female will?—Surely, thought I, my lady's present airs, after what has passed between her and me, can be only owing to the fear of making a precedent, and being thought too easily persuaded.

Sir Harry, said I, addressing myself to him, I have obtained Lady Beauchamp's pardon for the officious letter—

Pardon, Sir Charles Grandison! You are a good man, and it was kindly intended—

He was going on: anger from his eyes flashed upon his cheek-bones, and made them shine. My lady's eyes struck fire at Sir Harry, and shewed that she was not afraid of him.

Better intended, than done, interrupted I, since my lady tells me, that it was the occasion of a misunderstanding—But, sir, all will be right: my lady assures me, that you are not disinclined to comply with the contents; and she has the goodness—

Pray, Sir Charles, interrupted the lady—

To give me hopes that she—

Pray, Sir Charles—

Will use her interest to confirm you in your favourable sentiments—

Sir Harry cleared up at once—May I hope, madam—And offered to take her hand.

She withdrew it with an air. O Dr. Bartlett, I must have been thought an unpolite husband, had she been my wife!

I took her hand. Excuse this freedom, Sir Harry—For Heaven's sake, madam, (whispering,) do what I know you will do, with a grace—Shall there be a misunderstanding, and the husband court a refused hand?—I then forced her half-unwilling hand into his, with an air that I intended should have both freedom and respect in it.

What a man have we got here, Sir Harry? This cannot be the modest man, that you have praised to me—I thought a good man must of necessity be bashful, if not sheepish: and here your visitor is the boldest man in England.

The righteous, Lady Beauchamp, said Sir Harry, with an aspect but half-conceding, is bold as a lion.

And must I be compelled thus, and by such a man, to forgive you, Sir Harry?—Indeed you were very unkind.

And you, Lady Beauchamp, were very cruel.

I did not think, sir, when I laid my fortune at your feet—

O, Lady Beauchamp! You said cutting things! Very cutting things.

And did not you, Sir Harry, say, it should be so?—So very peremptorily!

Not, madam, till you, as peremptorily—

A little recrimination, thought I, there must be, to keep each in countenance on their past folly.

Ah, Sir Charles!—You may rejoice that you are not married, said Sir Harry.

Dear Sir Harry, said I, we must bear with ladies. They are meek good creatures—They—

Meek! Sir Charles, repeated Sir Harry, with a half-angry smile, and shrugging, as if his shoulder had been hurt with his wife's meekness— say, meek!

Now, Sir Charles Grandison, said my lady, with an air of threatening—

I was desirous either of turning the lady's displeasure into a jest, or of diverting it from the first object, in order to make her play with it, till she had lost it.

Women are of gentle natures, pursued I; and, being accustomed to be humoured, opposition sits not easy upon them. Are they not kind to us, Sir Harry, when they allow of our superiority, by expecting us to bear with their pretty perversenesses?

O, Sir Charles Grandison! said my lady; both her hands lifted up.

Let us be contented, proceeded I, with such their kind acknowledgments, and in pity to them, and in compliment to ourselves, bear with their foibles.—See, madam, I ever was an advocate for the ladies.

Sir Charles, I have no patience with you—

What can a poor woman do, continued I, when opposed? She can only be a little violent in words, and, when she has said as much as she chooses to say, be perhaps a little sullen. For my part, were I so happy as to call a woman mine, and she happened to be in the wrong, I would endeavour to be in the right, and trust to her good sense to recover her temper: arguments only beget arguments.—Those reconciliations are the most durable, in which the lady makes the advances.

What doctrine is this, Sir Charles! You are not the man I took you for. —I believe, in my conscience, that you are not near so good a man, as the world reports you.

What, madam, because I pretend to know a little of the sex? Surely, Lady Beauchamp, a man of common penetration may see to the bottom of a woman's heart. A cunning woman cannot hide it. A good woman will not. You are not, madam, such mysteries, as some of us think you. Whenever you know your own minds, we need not be long doubtful: that is all the difficulty: and I will vindicate you, as to that—

As how, pray, sir?

Women, madam, were designed to be dependent, as well as gentle, creatures; and, of consequence when left to their own wills, they know not what to resolve upon.

I was hoping, Sir Charles, just now, that you would stay to dinner: but if you talk at this rate, I believe I shall be ready to wish you out of the house.

Sir Harry looked as if he were half-willing to be diverted at what passed between his lady and me. It was better for me to say what he could not but subscribe to by his feeling, than for him to say it. Though reproof seldom amends a determined spirit, such a one as this lady's; yet a man who suffers by it cannot but have some joy when he hears his sentiments spoken by a bystander. This freedom of mine seemed to save the married pair a good deal of recrimination.

You remind me, madam, that I must be gone, rising and looking at my watch.

You must not leave us, Sir Charles, said Sir Harry.

I beg excuse, Sir Harry—Yours, also, madam, smiling—Lady Beauchamp must not twice wish me out of the house.

I will not excuse you, sir, replied she—If you have a desire to see the matter completed—She stopt—You must stay to dinner, be that as it will.

'Be that as it will,' madam!—You shall not recede.

Recede! I have not yet complied—

O these women! They are so used to courtship, that they know not how to do right things without it—And, pardon me, madam, not always with it.

Bold man—Have I consented—

Have you not, madam, given a lady's consent? That we men expect not to be very explicit, very gracious.—It is from such non-negative consents, that we men make silence answer all we wish.

I leave Sir Charles Grandison to manage this point, said Sir Harry. In my conscience, I think the common observation just: a stander-by sees more of the game, than he that plays.

It ever will be so, Sir Harry—But I will tell you, my lady and I have as good as agreed the matter—

I have agreed to nothing, Sir Harry—

Hush, madam—I am doing you credit.—Lady Beauchamp speaks aside sometimes, Sir Harry: you are not to hear any thing she says, that you don't like.

Then I am afraid I must stop my ears for eight hours out of twelve.

That was aside, Lady Beauchamp—You are not to hear that.

To sit, like a fool, and hear myself abused—A pretty figure I make! Sir Charles Grandison, let me tell you, that you are the first man that ever treated me like a fool.

Excuse, madam, a little innocent raillery—I met you both, with a discomposure on your countenances. I was the occasion of it, by the letter I sent to Sir Harry. I will not leave you discomposed. I think you a woman of sense; and my request is of such a nature, that the granting of it will confirm to me, that you are so—But you have granted it—

I have not.

That's charmingly said—My lady will not undervalue the compliment she is inclined to make you, Sir Harry. The moment you ask for her compliance, she will not refuse to your affection, what she makes a difficulty to grant to the entreaty of an almost stranger.

Let it, let it be so! Lady Beauchamp, said Sir Harry: and he clasped his arms about her as she sat—

There never was such a man as this Sir Charles Grandison in the world!—

It is a contrivance between you, Sir Harry—

Dear Lady Beauchamp, resumed I, depreciate not your compliment to Sir Harry. There wanted not contrivance, I dare to hope, (if there did, it had it not,) to induce Lady Beauchamp to do a right, a kind, an obliging thing.

Let me, my dearest Lady Beauchamp, said Sir Harry—Let me request—

At your request, Sir Harry—But not at Sir Charles's.

This is noble, said I. I thank you, madam, for the absent youth. Both husband and son will think themselves favoured by you; and the more, as I am sure, that you will by the cheerful welcome, which you will give the young man, shew, that it is a sincere compliment that you have made to Sir Harry.

This man has a strange way of flattering one into acts of—of—what shall I call them?—But, Sir Harry, Mr. Beauchamp must not, I believe, live with us—

Sir Harry hesitated.

I was afraid of opening the wound. I have a request to make to you both, said I. It is this; that Mr. Beauchamp may be permitted to live with me; and attend you, madam, and his father, as a visitor, at your own command. My sister, I believe, will be very soon married to Lord G—.

That is to be certainly so, interrupted the lady?

It is, madam.

But what shall we say, my dear, resumed Sir Harry—Don't fly out again— As to the provision for my son?—Two hundred a year—What is two hundred a year—

Why then let it be three, answered she.

I have a handsome and improvable estate, said I. I have no demands but those of reason upon me. I would not offer a plea for his coming to England, (and I am sure he would not have come, if I had,) without his father's consent: in which, madam, he hoped for yours. You shall not, sir, allow him either the two or three hundred a year. See him with love, with indulgence (he will deserve both;) and think not of any thing else for my Beauchamp.

There is no bearing this, my dear, said Sir Harry; leaning upon his lady's shoulder, as he sat, tears in his eyes—My son is already, as I have heard, greatly obliged to this his true friend—Do you, do you, madam, answer for me, and for yourself.

She was overcome: yet pride had its share with generosity. You are, said she, the Grandison I have heard of: but I will not be under obligations to you—not pecuniary ones, however. No, Sir Harry! Recall your son: I will trust to your love: do for him what you please: let him be independent

on this insolent man; [She said this with a smile, that made it obliging;] and if we are to be visitors, friends, neighbours, let it be on an equal foot, and let him have nothing to reproach us with.

I was agreeably surprised at this emanation (shall I call it?) of goodness: she is really not a bad woman, but a perverse one; in short, one of those whose passions, when rightly touched, are liable to sudden and surprising turns.

Generous, charming Lady Beauchamp! said I: now are you the woman, whom I have so often heard praised for many good qualities: now will the portrait be a just one!

Sir Harry was in raptures; but had like to have spoiled all, by making me a compliment on the force of example.

Be this, said I, the result—Mr. Beauchamp comes over. He will be pleased with whatever you do: at your feet, madam, he shall acknowledge your favour: My home shall be his, if you permit it: On me, he shall confer obligations; from you, he shall receive them. If any considerations of family prudence (there are such, and very just ones) restrain you from allowing him, at present, what your generosity would wish to do—

Lady Beauchamp's colour was heightened: She interrupted me—We are not, Sir Charles, so scanty in our fortune—

Well, my dear Lady Beauchamp, be all that as you will: not one retrospect of the past—

Yes, Sir Charles, but there shall: his allowance has been lessened for some years; not from considerations of family prudence—But—Well, 'tis all at an end, proceeded she—When the young man returns, you, Sir Harry, for my sake, and for the sake of this strange unaccountable creature, shall pay him the whole arrear.

Now, my dear Lady Beauchamp, said I, listing her hand to my lips, permit me to give you joy. All doubts and misgivings so triumphantly got over, so solid a foundation laid for family harmony—What was the moment of your nuptials to this? Sir Harry, I congratulate you: you may, and I believe you have been, as happy as most men; but now, you will be still happier.

Indeed, Sir Harry, said she, you provoked me in the morning: I should not else—

Sir Harry owned himself to blame; and thus the lady's pride was set down softly.

She desired Sir Harry to write, before the day concluded, the invitation of return, to Mr. Beauchamp; and to do her all the credit in it that she might claim from the last part of the conversation; but not to mention any thing of the first.

She afterwards abated a little of this right spirit, by saying, I think, Sir Harry, you need not mention any thing of the arrears, as I may call them—But only the future 600£. a year. One would surprise him a little, you know, and be twice thanked—

Surprises of such a nature as this, my dear Dr. Bartlett; pecuniary surprises!—I don't love them—They are double taxes upon the gratitude of a worthy heart. Is it not enough for a generous mind to labour under a sense of obligation?—Pride, vain-glory, must be the motive of such narrow-minded benefactors: a truly beneficent spirit cannot take delight in beholding the quivering lip indicating the palpitating heart; in seeing the downcast countenance, the up-lifted hands, and working muscles, of a fellow-creature, who, but for unfortunate accidents, would perhaps himself have had the will, with the power, of shewing a more graceful benevolence!

I was so much afraid of hearing farther abatements of Lady Beauchamp's goodness; so willing to depart with favourable impressions of her for her own sake; and at the same time so desirous to reach the Hall that night; that I got myself excused, though with difficulty, staying to dine; and accepting of a dish of chocolate, I parted with Sir Harry and my lady, both in equal good humour with themselves and me.

Could you have thought, my dear friend, that I should have succeeded so very happily, as I have done, in this affair, and at one meeting?

I think that the father and stepmother should have the full merit with our Beauchamp of a turn so unexpected. Let him not therefore ever see this letter, that he may take his impression of the favour done him, from that which Sir Harry will write to him.

My cousin Grandison, whom I hoped to find here, left the Hall on Tuesday last, though he knew of my intention to be down. I am sorry for it. Poor Everard! He has been a great while pretty good. I am afraid he will get among his old acquaintance; and then we shall not hear of him for some months perhaps. If you see him in town, try to engage him, till I return. I should be glad of his company to Paris, if his going with me, will keep him out of harm's way, as it is called.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

I have had compliments sent me by many of my neighbours, who had hoped I was come to reside among them. They professed themselves disappointed on my acquainting them, that I must go up early on Monday morning. I have invited myself to their Saturday assembly at the Bowling-green-house.

Our reverend friend Mr. Dobson has been so good as to leave with me the sermon he is to preach to-morrow on the opening of the church: it is a very good discourse: I have only exceptions to three or four compliments he makes to the patron in as many different places of it: I doubt not but he will have the goodness to omit them.

I have already looked into all that has been done in the church; and all that is doing in the house and gardens. When both have had the direction and inspection of my dear Dr. Bartlett, need I say, that nothing could have been better?

Halden is just arrived from my lord, with a letter, which has enabled me to write to Lady Mansfield his lordship's high approbation of all our proceedings; and that he intends some one early day in next week to pay to her, and Miss Mansfield, his personal compliments.

He has left to me the article of settlements; declaring, that his regard for my future interest is all that he wishes may be attended to.

I have therefore written, as from himself, that he proposes a jointure of 1200£. a year, penny-rents, and 300 guineas a year for her private purse; and that his lordship desires, that Miss Mansfield will make a present to her sister of whatever she may be entitled to in her own right. Something was mentioned to me at Mansfield-house of a thousand pounds left to her by a godmother.

Halden being very desirous to see his future lady, I shall, at his request, send the letter I have written to Lady Mansfield by him early in the morning; with a line recommending him to the notice of that lady as Lord W-'s principal steward.

Adieu, my dear Dr. Bartlett: I have joy in the joy of all these good people. If Providence graciously makes me instrumental to it, I look upon myself but as its instrument. I hope ostentation has no share in what draws on me more thanks and praises than I love to hear.

Lord W- has a right to be made happy by his next relation, if his next relation can make him so. Is he not my mother's brother? Would not her enlarged soul have rejoiced on the occasion, and blessed her son for an instance of duty to her, paid by his disinterested regard for her brother? Who, my dear Dr. Bartlett, is so happy, yet who, in some cases, so unhappy, as your

CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER IX

MISS BYRON, TO MISS SELBY MONDAY, APRIL 3

The Countess of D—, and the earl, her son, have but just left us. The countess sent last night, to let my cousin Reeves know of their intended morning visit, and they came together. As the visit was made to my cousin, I did not think myself obliged to be in waiting for them below. I was therefore in my closet, comforting myself with my own agreeable reflections. They were there a quarter of an hour before I was sent to.

Their talk was of me. I am used to recite my own praises, you know; and what signifies making a parade of apologies for continuing the use? I don't value myself so much as I once did on peoples favourable opinions. If I had a heart in my own keeping, I should be glad it was thought a good one; that's all. Yet though it has littlenesses in it that I knew nothing of formerly, I hope it is not a bad one.

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